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House of Representatives

The House met at 9 a.m. and was called to order by the Speaker.

PRAYER

Sister Jacquelyn Gusdane, SND, Notre Dame-Cathedral Latin School, Chardon, Ohio, offered the following prayer:

Creating God, this day we are surrounded by the immensity of Your universe as spring unfolds before us. You continually bestow hints of Your beauty, creative power, abundance, goodness, and provident care. You say to us, ''Look around and rejoice as new life bursts forth.''

With this perspective, we embrace our work this day. We come before You as men and women committed to the trust given to us by our Nation. Led by Your Spirit, we beg You to open our minds and hearts to our responsibilities; teach us how to exercise wisdom, courage, and our gifts for the common good by arriving at workable and reasonable solutions.

May our actions result in greater charity, justice, and the transformation of our world.

With Your guidance, this is our hope and prayer as we accept our call to serve as restorers of new life and give glory to You.

Amen.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER. 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.

Mr. COFFMAN. Mr. Speaker, pursuant to clause 1, rule I, I demand a vote on agreeing to the Speaker's approval of the Journal.

The SPEAKER. The question is on the Speaker's approval of the Journal.

The question was taken; and the Speaker announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

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

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER. Pursuant to clause 8, rule XX, further proceedings on this question will be postponed.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER. Will the gentleman from Oklahoma (Mr. BRIDENSTINE) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. BRIDENSTINE 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.

WELCOMING SISTER JACQUELYN GUSDANE

The SPEAKER. Without objection, the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. JOYCE) is recognized for 1 minute.

There was no objection.

Mr. JOYCE. Mr. Speaker, I'd like to thank Sister Jacquelyn Gusdane for leading the House in prayer and for making this trip from Chardon, Ohio. It was a beautiful prayer, and it's an absolute honor to have her here today.

I first met Sister Jacquelyn at Notre Dame-Cathedral Latin School in Chardon, where she is the president and all three of my children attended high school. Sister Jacquelyn is a model of grace, compassion, and humility, and I feel very lucky to have had my three kids under her watch.

Sister Jacquelyn leads a life of service, volunteering at WomenSafe in Geauga County, at the Hospice of the Western Reserve, and countless other schools, organizations, and churches in northeast Ohio.

She's also taken her service beyond our borders, making a trip to the Holy Land, to Israel and Jordan, and traveling to China, Brazil, El Salvador, Germany, and many other nations.

At NDCL, under her leadership, this small parochial school has allowed many children of middle class families such as ours to enjoy their college preparatory education while becoming leaders in the community, all the while keeping true to the mission of living the truth through love.

Sister Jacquelyn, it's an honor and a privilege to have you here this morning, and thank you very much for leading the House of Representatives in prayer.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. WEBER of Texas). The Chair will entertain five further requests for 1-minute speeches on each side of the aisle.

THE PAST CAME ALIVE YESTERDAY

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

Mr. COBLE. Mr. Speaker, yesterday our House Speaker indicated that it was our high honor to host Her Excellency, the President of the Republic of Korea. She expressed profound gratitude to us for our friendship with Korea and shared with us improvements realized by her country since the guns fell silent in 1953.

Many refer to the Korean war as the ''Forgotten War,'' but, Mr. Speaker, there was no evidence on Capitol Hill yesterday to suggest that this war has been forgotten.

The Korean President referred to this Chamber as ''this hallowed ground of freedom and democracy.'' The past came alive yesterday as our Congress hosted this very distinguished leader from Korea.

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ENHANCING EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING THROUGH EDUCATION ACT

(Ms. DELBENE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. DELBENE. Mr. Speaker, today I'm proud to introduce the bipartisan Enhancing Employment and Training through Education Act.

This bill will help improve access to opportunity for struggling families by helping people get jobs and an education while reducing the need for government assistance. It will spur pilot projects across the country, modeled after my home State of Washington's Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program's employment and training program.

Washington's program is an extraordinary example because it provides targeted education services leading to economic self-sufficiency. This focused strategy helps participants gain the necessary skills to succeed in their careers.

Even at the height of the recession, when jobs were scarce, 60 percent of those enrolled in Washington's programs found employment. In one study, less than half of the participants remained on government assistance 2 years after starting the program.

This jobs bill is a prime example of how the government can spend a little money now and save a lot in the future. I urge my colleagues to support this critical legislation.

MARKETPLACE FAIRNESS ACT

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

Mr. BRIDENSTINE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to oppose H.R. 684, the Marketplace Fairness Act.

Imagine if a State had the authority to reach beyond its borders into another State and compel a business in the other State to collect and remit taxes.

Imagine a business being forced to collect and remit taxes for over 9,600 different local tax jurisdictions, and being open to audit by 50 different States, yet only having representation in one of those tax jurisdictions.

This law would overturn a foundational American principle of no taxation without representation.

Imagine the same business losing market share to offshore businesses that cannot be compelled by Congress to collect taxes for local jurisdictions in the U.S. Now, imagine that business either closing its doors or leaving the country in order to compete.

The unintended consequences of the Marketplace Fairness Act have not been considered. I understand why some people support it, but this bill is not the right solution.

CELEBRATING NATIONAL NURSES WEEK

(Mr. BERA of California asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. BERA of California. Mr. Speaker, this week we're celebrating National Nurses Week. As a doctor, and on behalf of physicians all across this Nation, I want to salute the over 3 million registered nurses for their service to our patients. The partnership between physicians and nurses is critical to ensuring America's health, and this partnership will become even more important as we move to contain the cost of health care.

America's nurses will be key to making sure that every patient in America has access to affordable health care. So on this National Nurses Week, this doctor chooses to salute nurses everywhere for their service to America's patients. Thank you.

□ 0910

WHISTLEBLOWER PROTECTIONS FOR MILITARY SEXUAL ASSAULT VICTIMS

(Mrs. WALORSKI asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Mrs. WALORSKI. Mr. Speaker, according to the Department of Defense, in 2011, there were an estimated 19,000 victims of sexual violence in the military; however, only 2,700 servicemembers actually filed a sexual assault report. These numbers are daunting and completely inexcusable.

Earlier this week, I was proud to introduce bipartisan legislation with Congresswoman LORETTA SANCHEZ. This bill strengthens whistleblower protections for military sexual assault victims. These protections ensure victims of sexual crimes have the same rights as other military whistleblowers.

Today, we have the opportunity to provide servicemen and -women with the peace of mind that they can report sexual violence without fear of retaliation. I encourage all my colleagues to support H.R. 1864 and help eradicate sexual violence from the Armed Forces.

KEEPING ALL STUDENTS SAFE ACT

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

Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California. Madam Speaker, I rise today to introduce the Keeping All Students Safe Act to protect schoolchildren from abusive seclusion and restraint practices. These practices are at best cruel and at worst deadly, and they continue to be used in schools on children across the country.

In Indiana, an 8-year-old girl with Down syndrome had her shoes duct-taped painfully to her ankles because she refused to put her shoes on. In North Carolina, a 14-year-old boy with a traumatic brain injury was confined inside a cardboard box as a form of time-out.

In Minnesota, a 10-year-old boy with autism was pinned face down on the floor for 57 minutes by three staff members at his school after a tantrum he had while working on a puzzle. And in Virginia, a 13-year-old boy was placed in solitary confinement for 3 hours after he threw his lunch.

In some cases, children have even died with these improper restraints. My bill would stop these abusive practices. Congress needs to act. There's no room for torture in America's schools.

AFFORDABLE CARE ACCOUNTABILITY ACT

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

Mr. COFFMAN. Madam Speaker, we need to amend a fundamentally unfair provision within the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act, better known as ObamaCare. That is, many of the very people who have been responsible for writing, advocating for, passing, signing into law, and promulgating rules governing the implementation of ObamaCare are exempt from the coverage requirements mandated by this law.

That is why I am introducing the Affordable Care Accountability Act. This legislation will require the President, the Vice President, all of the Cabinet Secretaries, all political appointees, all Members of Congress, and all congressional staff, including those from committees and leadership, to receive their health care insurance coverage through the insurance exchanges required under ObamaCare.

Americans deserve to know that their government officials will never seek to pass legislation only to exempt themselves from all of its provisions.

HONORING BILL JENNINGS, GUARDIAN OF THE SAN JOAQUIN DELTA

(Mr. MCNERNEY asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. MCNERNEY. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor the work of one of my constituents, Bill Jennings. Mr. Jennings has a long and storied resume. Currently, he is the executive director and chairman of the California Sportfishing Protection Alliance, a board member of the California Water Impact Network, and an executive committee member of Restore the Delta, a group that educates the public about the importance of the San Joaquin Delta.

Mr. Jennings has been recognized numerous times for his work on behalf of our environment and has received

many awards, including the International Conservation Award from the Federation of Fly Fishers and the Director's Achievement Award from the California Department of Fish and Game.

Mr. Jennings is an outspoken guardian of the San Joaquin Delta, and I admire his tireless dedication to protecting water quality in our environment. Bill Jennings reminds us of the importance of taking action to safeguard our treasured natural resources for generations to come.

It's been an honor to know Mr. Jennings, and it's encouraging to know that people like Mr. Jennings are out there working on our behalf.

IMMIGRATION

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

Mr. BROOKS of Alabama. Madam Speaker, while America has the world's most generous immigration policy, we simply lack the resources to accept all the world's immigrants into America. The President and Senate Gang of Eight push an amnesty bill that, per The Heritage Foundation, costs American taxpayers a 50-year net tax loss of $6.3 trillion. That's a net tax loss of $126 billion per year—enough to eliminate sequestration.

In April 2013, a Pew Center poll revealed that 20 percent of all Mexicans—that's 22 million Mexicans—say they want to illegally immigrate to America if they can get away with it.

America cannot afford to open these massive floodgates anymore than we can afford an amnesty plan that rewards illegal conduct while adding $6.3 trillion to America's already dangerous and exploding national debt—a debt, I might add, that is already doing significant damage to America's economy and national security.

HONORING THE MEMORY OF WALTER ''FINCH'' KWIECINSKI OF DULUTH, MINNESOTA

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

Mr. WALZ. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor the memory and sacrifice of Walter ''Finch'' Kwiecinski of Duluth, Minnesota.

Walter's story is the story of his generation and should make each of us reflect on the sacrifices that were made to allow us the precious gift of democracy and self-government.

Born in 1914 on a farm near Duluth, Minnesota, to Polish immigrants, Walter enlisted in the Army at Fort Snelling, Minnesota, on February 6, 1941. After basic training, he was sent to Fort Mills on Corregidor Island in the Philippines.

Walter manned a 12-inch mortar on Battery Way and fought valiantly to repel the Japanese invasion of Bataan and Corregidor. Standing until the very end with his unit sustaining 77 percent casualty rates, Walter fought on until May 6, 1941, when Corregidor fell and General Wainwright cabled these words to President Roosevelt:

There is a limit of human endurance, and that point has long passed.

Walter was taken prisoner by the Japanese and survived hellish conditions in POW camps and transport on the ''hell ships'' to be slave labor in Japan. His family presumed him dead. He was liberated in August 1945 and returned home December 5, 1945.

He then humbly set about going back to work as a mechanic. Marrying Mary Anne Krebs, he raised a beautiful family and lived a life of dignity. Yesterday, May 8, marked the 25th anniversary of Walter Kwiecinski's death. We should all be thankful for his life.

□ 0920

FULL FAITH AND CREDIT ACT

Mr. CAMP. Madam Speaker, pursuant to House Resolution 202, I call up the bill (H.R. 807) to require that the Government prioritize all obligations on the debt held by the public in the event that the debt limit is reached, and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mrs. FOXX). Pursuant to House Resolution 202, the amendment in the nature of a substitute recommended by the Committee on Ways and Means, printed in the bill, is adopted. The bill, as amended, is considered read.

The text of the bill, as amended, is as follows:

H.R. 807

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 ''Full Faith and Credit Act''.

SEC. 2. PAYMENT OF PRINCIPAL AND INTEREST ON PUBLIC DEBT AND SOCIAL SECURITY TRUST FUNDS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—In the event that the debt of the United States Government, as defined in section 3101 of title 31, United States Code, reaches the statutory limit, the Secretary of the Treasury shall, in addition to any other authority provided by law, issue obligations under chapter 31 of title 31, United States Code, to pay with legal tender, and solely for the purpose of paying, the principal and interest on obligations of the United States described in subsection (b) after the date of the enactment of this Act.

(b) OBLIGATIONS DESCRIBED.—For purposes of this subsection, obligations described in this subsection are obligations which are—

(1) held by the public, or

(2) held by the Old-Age and Survivors Insurance Trust Fund and Disability Insurance Trust Fund.

(c) OBLIGATIONS EXEMPT FROM PUBLIC DEBT LIMIT.—Obligations issued under subsection (a) shall not be taken into account in applying the limitation in section 3101(b) of title 31, United States Code, to the extent that such obligation would otherwise cause the limitation in section 3101(b) of title 31, United States Code, to be exceeded.

(d) REPORT ON CERTAIN ACTIONS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—If, after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of the Treasury exercises his authority under subsection (a), the Secretary shall thereafter submit a report each week providing an accounting relating to—

(A) the principal on mature obligations and interest that is due or accrued of the United States, and

(B) any obligations issued pursuant to subsection (a).

(2) SUBMISSION.—The report required by paragraph (1) shall be submitted to the Committee on Ways and Means of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Finance of the Senate.

(3) TERMINATION.—The report requirement under paragraph (1) shall cease to apply after the date of the enactment of the first increase in the limitation in section 3101(b), United States Code, after the date of the enactment of this Act.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. After 1 hour of debate on the bill, as amended, it shall be in order to consider the further amendment printed in House Report 113–52, if offered by the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. CAMP) or his designee, which shall be considered read and shall be separately debatable for 10 minutes equally divided and controlled by the proponent and an opponent.

The gentleman from Michigan (Mr. CAMP) and the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. LEVIN) each will control 30 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. CAMP).

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. CAMP. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and to include extraneous material on H.R. 807.

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

There was no objection.

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

I rise today in support of H.R. 807, the Full Faith and Credit Act. This legislation credibly and permanently removes the threat of default on a U.S. debt payment and ensures that Social Security benefits are paid in full and on time.

The bill is really quite simple: it requires the Treasury Department to issue debt not subject to the statutory limit to make principal and interest payments. And here are the facts about who holds that debt: American families and businesses hold the overwhelming majority of U.S. debt—teacher pension funds, individual Americans, our military retirement fund, and the list goes on and on. So by ensuring that Treasury has the ability to honor our debt obligations, we are in fact ensuring Americans will be paid.

This legislation is the first step in protecting our credit rating. Two major credit rating agencies—Standard and Poor's and Moody's—have indicated that they differentiate between debt and other payments when determining whether or not to review our credit rating. To that end, this bill specifically addresses the default on U.S.

debt obligations that these agencies have identified.

Additionally, Standard & Poor's was crystal clear as to why it downgraded the U.S. credit rating following the debt negotiations in the summer of 2011, and I quote:

> The downgrade reflects our opinion that the fiscal consolidation plan that Congress and the administration recently agreed to falls short of what, in our view, would be necessary to stabilize the government's medium-term debt dynamics.

In plain English, they downgraded the U.S. credit rating because we have not addressed the primary drivers of our debts and deficits.

It's nearly 2 years later, and neither the President nor congressional Democrats have offered a serious plan that would address the problems that caused the downgrade in the first place. This legislation places that responsibility on the Obama administration and encourages the President to be more involved with taming our debt, something Republicans have long called for.

Some critics of this legislation have claimed that it opens the door for Treasury to issue new debt for new spending or that it is simply raising the debt limit by another means. This is categorically false. This bill does not increase the debt limit. Instead, under this legislation, Treasury loses the authority to issue debt above the limit if doing so creates any room under the existing old debt limit.

Treasury may not issue new debt above the statutory limit again until the limit is reached. Additionally, any new debt issued to pay principal and interest is not exempt from the statutory limit unless issuing the new debt would cause Treasury to exceed the statutory limit.

The American people agree, and that support transcends party lines. A majority, 55 percent, support requiring the government to pay the principal and interest on the debt before it pays for other government expenses. Support for the proposal is strong among Republicans, 65 percent; Independents, 53 percent; while Democrat voters are split evenly between favor, 46, and opposed, 47.

Clearly, we cannot default on our debt. The consequences of doing so could be very serious. A default would at the very least hinder an already stagnant economic recovery, and, in a worst-case scenario, lead the country back into a recession.

□ 0930

Failure to make a debt payment will increase our borrowing costs and threaten our ability to make any of the other payments we owe. If signed into law, this legislation would prevent such an unacceptable situation.

The President and Congress must work to reduce the growing burden of our debt and deficits, but we must do so without imposing more tax increases on hardworking families and job creators. There are bipartisan policies we can enact to reduce wasteful Washington spending and preserve Social Security and Medicare for future generations.

The Ways and Means Committee has already begun to examine those policies and will continue to do so over the coming months. In the meantime, we must act to make it clear to the American people and the world economy that the U.S. will not default on a debt payment. The legislation before us accomplishes that important goal, and I would urge my colleagues to join me in voting for its passage today.

Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

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

I wanted to state the facts here so everybody understands them. We have called this—as the Speaker has, in essence—Paying China First, and so many others, except for Social Security beneficiaries, come last, come next, if at all. And here's the reason: of the prioritized debt covered by this bill, 47 percent is foreign owned, and China bondholders are the largest ones of that foreign ownership.

So, essentially, what this bill says is, okay, let's pay China and the other foreign bondholders first, not American troops, not disabled veterans, not physicians, providers who treat Medicare patients, not small businesses holding contract obligations from the United States, school lunch programs secondary, medical research, Pell grants, taxpayers due refunds, and, interestingly, other Federal trust funds holding Treasury bonds, Medicare, deposit insurance, et cetera, et cetera. That's the fact. That's the fact.

So why do this? Well, it is said let's do this because of the importance of paying the bonds in terms of our economy and in terms of our bond rating.

Let me just say a word about bond rating. Here's what Fitch has said:

> It is not assured that the Treasury would or legally could prioritize debt service over its myriad of other obligations, including social security payments, tax rebates, and payments to contractors and employees. Arrears on such obligations would not constitute a default event from a sovereign rating perspective, but very likely prompt a downgrade even as debt obligations continued to be met.

It was interesting that S&P, who already downgraded us, said this:

> Still, sudden cuts that shave off, say, 6 percent of the GDP-to-spending ratio would cause economic panic and could affect ratings.

So, why is this being done when a former Bush administration economist said the result is ''a bloody mess,'' or another Bush administration official said ''prioritization is impossible.'' Is the government really going to be in the position of withholding benefits, salaries, and rent contract payments in order to pay off Treasury bondholders?

So why is this being done? It's not going anywhere in the Senate. The President opposes it. I think the reason, apparently, it's being done is to satisfy some within the Republican caucus or maybe to try to provide some leverage in terms of bargaining with the Democrats.

This is playing with fire, though, with the economy of this country. Those who vote for playing with this fire are going to burn themselves. But I think most significantly, they're going to burn the economy of the United States of America.

I've tried to figure out who the Pied Piper is of this proposition. It's hard to figure it out. But those who followed that Pied Piper in the Republican ranks, those who vote for it essentially are moving towards the cliff following that Pied Piper; but, worse off, it places this country once again and its economy in danger of going over the cliff. This is not only a mistaken idea, it's really a rotten one. Let's vote ''no.''

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. CAMP. Madam Speaker, I yield myself 15 seconds.

Since the gentleman raised the question of who holds our debt, this chart shows that the vast majority of our debt is held by Americans. That's a fact. Thirty percent of the debt is held by citizens, pension funds, and you go down the list. Two-thirds of our debt is held by Americans. We need to make sure that Americans are paid first.

With that, I would yield 3 minutes to the distinguished gentleman from Texas, the chairman of the Social Security Subcommittee, Mr. JOHNSON.

Mr. SAM JOHNSON of Texas. Madam Speaker, as I meet with my constituents back home, they tell me loud and clear their concerns about our record debt and deficits. We are nearly $17 trillion in debt. That comes out to about $53,000 per person.

My constituents back home get it. They've had to make tough choices to live within their means and they expect Washington to do the same.

My Republican colleagues and I have been committed to getting our fiscal house in order, growing our economy, and getting America back to work. In fact, we passed a budget that balances in 10 years. On the other hand, the President's and the Senate Democrats' budgets never balance—ever.

Hardworking taxpayers and their children and grandchildren deserve better. We need to leave them a stronger and more secure America, not a mountain of debt.

Madam Speaker, the bill we are considering today, the Full Faith and Credit Act, would require Treasury to make good on debt payments. The bill also enables Treasury to pay Social Security benefits to seniors, survivors, and those with disabilities and their families. Madam Speaker, let me say that again. Under this bill, seniors will get their checks, and those on disability will get their checks.

Back in 1996, we passed similar legislation to H.R. 807. Then Social Security was getting more in revenues than it was paying out in benefits, so full

Social Security benefits could be paid without hitting the debt limit.

Today, there aren't enough revenues to pay Social Security benefits. To make up the difference, Treasury has to redeem the debt it owes Social Security by borrowing from the public. This may cause a small increase in the debt, because when Treasury redeems Social Security IOUs, it must pay any interest accrued on that debt. Our bill exempts this interest from counting against the debt limit.

Madam Speaker, according to CBO, Social Security's cash shortfall is projected to reach $77 billion this year. Over 10 years, Social Security's shortfall will total $1.3 trillion. These cash shortfalls are permanent and are growing each and every year.

Madam Speaker, in closing, we owe it to the American people. In fact, we must come together to preserve and protect Social Security.

□ 0940

Mr. LEVIN. It is now my pleasure to yield 3 minutes to our distinguished whip, the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. HOYER).

Mr. HOYER. I thank my friend, the ranking member.

I rise partly in sadness, wholly in disappointment, that we are playing this game. How sad. I tell my other friend from Michigan, his amendment is sad, too, I want to say. It's a device to try to get people to vote for a bill that has no merit by making Members' pay somehow present in this bill. We ought to consider things on their merit, not on this political gamesmanship.

Madam Speaker, for the second time, House Republicans have decided to put our country at risk by defaulting on its obligations. They know this bill is not going anywhere. They know the President would veto it, and they know Republican economists think this bill makes no sense. I won't ask the gentleman who chairs the Ways and Means Committee his real view on this bill.

This so-called ''debt prioritization'' bill mandates that, in the event we hit the debt limit, we will pay China first, not our contractors doing business with us, not our Federal employees, not veterans—yes, Social Security is taken care of—not our military. We'll pay China first. That's what this bill says. No major creditor in this country would have a debt prioritization. Now, the secondary lenders and tertiary lenders, yes, have prioritization, but no major lender, no big corporation. They say, if we incur a debt, we'll pay it—not we'll pay this one first and you second or third or fourth. We'll pay China first and other creditors before we pay our troops, seniors, health care and veterans benefits. Yes, you've made an exemption for Social Security, not in the original bill, but politically that was too hot to handle, so you added Social Security.

Just yesterday, Speaker BOEHNER admitted that this bill means the United States of America will voluntarily act like a bankrupt corporation and pay China before we pay our troops. How sad. How patently political. How transparent that we are trying to give a fig leaf so that we can play around with the national debt. Ronald Reagan would be deeply disappointed, and he expressed that.

Speaker BOEHNER said:

> Those who have loaned us money, like in any other proceeding . . . the bondholders usually get paid first. The same thing here—pay China first.

This partisan bill is not a feasible solution to our debt problem, and even Republicans recognize this won't work.

Tony Fratto, a former Bush administration spokesman on economic policy—this is a Republican spokesman—said:

> Prioritization is impossible. Is the government really going to be in the position of withholding benefits, salaries, rent, contract payments, et cetera, in order to pay off Treasury bondholders? That would be a political catastrophe.

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

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

Mr. HOYER. Former Bush chief economic adviser Keith Hennessey—this is an economic adviser, not a spokesperson—said this:

> If the U.S. Government legally commits to paying someone a benefit or agrees to pay a firm for a good or a service, the U.S. Government should fulfill that agreement in a timely fashion. To do otherwise is taking the first step to becoming a banana republic.

That's Hennessey, not HOYER, not a Democrat. That's a Bush economic adviser.

Madam Speaker, we should not be admitting defeat and ranking the losers as this bill would do. Instead of choosing to pay China or any other holder of our debt before we pay our troops—and we ought to pay them, and we ought to pay them on time, but that's not the issue. The issue is the United States of America, the most creditworthy Nation on Earth, ought to pay all its debt in a timely fashion—all—not prioritize—all—across the board. For our wounded veterans and for the seniors who have worked hard to build this country, we should be working to fix the problem by coming to a consensus on a big and balanced deal to reduce our deficit, including tax reform, which the chairman is so assiduously seeking.

Playing politically motivated games with the creditworthiness of the United States will only risk another downgrade.

Mr. CAMP. Madam Speaker, at this time, I yield 2 minutes to a distinguished member of the Ways and Means Committee, the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. YOUNG).

Mr. YOUNG of Indiana. Madam Speaker, I rise in support of the Full Faith and Credit Act.

Now, much has been said about how ridiculous it is that we find ourselves going through this debt limit routine so darned often, but this limit exists in order to induce this body to reflect on the folly of our mindless borrow-and-spend practices. Such reflection ought to lead us to serious debate and even to cooperation. It presents an opportunity for public servants to engage in thoughtful, respectful dialogue and to craft long-term solutions.

As we approach the limit for the third time in my 2½ years here, we have an opportunity to work together and finally make our largest programs of government sustainable. We have an opportunity to work together and finally tackle long-neglected issues like tax reform so that jobs and personal incomes can grow more quickly.

The Full Faith and Credit Act protects and advances such opportunities for Congress to accomplish big things, and it does this simply by removing the specter of default from the table altogether. No one is contemplating default over our Nation's obligations. America will always and forever pay its bills, and the Full Faith and Credit Act makes this crystal clear—by making default impossible.

Our support for this act simply cannot and should not be regarded as ideological or partisan, so I respectfully call on every one of my good colleagues, Republican and Democrat, to support this commonsense bill, to take default off the table, and to put the focus squarely on dealing with our real challenges. Let's harness this opportunity of an approaching borrowing limit to come together as problem solvers.

Mr. LEVIN. I yield myself 10 seconds.

Now, this bill not only contemplates default—it plans for it. Default is default is default.

I yield 1½ minutes to the distinguished former chairman of our committee, the gentleman from New York (Mr. RANGEL).

(Mr. RANGEL asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. RANGEL. I heard the last speaker, but there is no question in my mind that when a person from the other side said that the Republican Party's first priority is not the salvation of our country but to stop Barack Obama, I didn't take him too seriously after the election; but I see the campaign continues. As a political veteran, I understand that; but let me make it clear what we are doing today.

I had a friend who was deeply in debt. He owed so much money that he just knew he couldn't pay all of his creditors. Now, it was nowhere near $14 trillion, but it was a lot. The creditors harassed him day in and day out, telling him he had to make these payments. Finally, he got annoyed, he got angry, and he called his creditors and told them, If you keep harassing me, I will not put your name in the hat, because every month I put all of my creditors' bills into a hat; but the way you are treating me—calling the job, harassing me at home—your name will not go into the hat.

Now, that's pretty poor policy, I would think, but if I understand this correctly, we are telling our creditors that certain names will be in that hat and that other people will not be in that hat.

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

Mr. LEVIN. I yield the gentleman an additional 30 seconds.

Mr. RANGEL. So what names go into the hat?

Communist China goes into the hat. Iran and Venezuela go into the hat. Saudi Arabia goes into the hat. Russia goes into the hat.

Who's outside the hat?

Disabled veterans are out of the hat, and health providers are out of the hat. A lot of people who deserve to be considered as creditors to protect full faith and credit are out of the hat.

This is bad for my friend—it's worse for our country—and this is not the way those people to whom we owe money should be treated. America is greater than that.

□ 0950

Mr. CAMP. Madam Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Tennessee (Mr. DUNCAN) for the purpose of a unanimous consent request.

(Mr. DUNCAN of Tennessee asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. DUNCAN of Tennessee. Madam Speaker, I rise in support of this legislation and commend Chairman CAMP and Mr. MCCLINTOCK.

The Full Faith and Credit Act authorizes the Treasury Secretary to make only the principal and interest payments on our national debt if the United States reaches its current national debt limit of more than $16.4 trillion. The legislation also holds harmless Social Security benefits and requires a weekly report from the Treasury Department regarding the interest and principles payments it has made due to our ever-growing national debt.

As almost everyone knows, our national debt is more than $16.4 trillion, a number that is mind boggling and almost unimaginable. Our Federal Government has grown so large that trying to save a nickel for every dollar we spend is difficult.

To put $16.4 trillion in perspective, this equates to more than $111,500 in debt per taxpayer. If you stacked $16.4 trillion in one dollar bills, it would stack to the moon 4 times.

If we fail to get our spending under control, it will not just be our children and grandchildren who will suffer but everyone hoping to retire in five to ten years as well. If we continue on this path, we will soon be printing so much money that pensions will be worth very little.

In fact, the non-partisan Congressional Budget Office released a report on February 5th of this year projecting the United States will be making a total of more than $224 billion in interest payments on our national debt. By 2023 it is estimated we will be making $857 billion in interest payments on our national debt, almost quadrupling our yearly interest payment.

This legislation is a thoughtful, creative way to not dig ourselves further into this hole. We cannot continue our reckless spending ways and expect our creditors to continue funding a Nation that borrows money just to make its own interest payments.

Mr. CAMP. At this time, I yield 5 minutes to the sponsor of the bill, the distinguished gentleman from California (Mr. MCCLINTOCK).

Mr. MCCLINTOCK. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding.

I had hoped that amidst all the controversies that grip Congress, certainly we should at least be able to agree that the full faith and credit of the United States should not hang in the balance every time there's a fiscal controversy in Washington. I also want to thank Chairman CAMP and his Ways and Means Committee for revisions that make this solution much simpler and more practical than the original draft.

Madam Speaker, this bill simply guarantees that the sovereign debt of the United States Government will be paid in full and on time under any circumstances.

Most States have had similar provisions to guarantee their debt in their laws or constitutions for generations. Last year, in testimony to the Senate, Ben Bernanke praised these State provisions for maintaining confidence in their bonds. He told our House Budget Committee that a similar measure at the Federal level would help to protect us against a sovereign default, which he called a ''very high priority.''

And yet, this President and his followers in Congress, who have taken our Nation on the biggest borrowing binge in its history—who've run up more debt than almost all of his predecessors put together—oppose this commonsense measure to strengthen the credit upon which that debt depends.

This bill tells credit markets that even in the event of an impasse on the debt limit, their loans to this government are absolutely safe.

The Democrats have raised three arguments in opposition. First, the whip just said that guaranteeing the Nation's sovereign debt is just an excuse for not paying our other bills. What utter nonsense. I challenge him to name one Member of Congress who has ever suggested that this measure is an acceptable substitute for not paying our other bills. Do they actually suggest that all these other States that have guaranteed their sovereign debts for generations have ever used these guarantees as an excuse not to pay their other bills?

On the contrary, by providing clear and unambiguous mandates to protect their credit first, they actually support and maintain their ability to pay for all of their other obligations.

The second argument that we have heard ad nauseam is that this bill will pay China before it pays our troops. Well, I would remind them, as the chairman said, that more than half of our debt is actually held by Americans, often by American pension funds. China holds just 11 percent. So this measure actually protects Americans far more than the Chinese.

But whether our loans come from China or from grandma's pension fund, without the Nation's credit, we cannot pay our troops or any of our other obligations.

We are borrowing a quarter of every dollar that we spend, and under this administration we have amassed a debt that is now larger than our Nation's entire economy. Our Nation's credit now carries a greater strain and burden than it ever has before. This measure strengthens our credit by guaranteeing that our sovereign debt will be paid in full and on time.

Perhaps the most bizarre argument that we've heard is that by guaranteeing the Nation's credit, we actually undermine it and risk another downgrade in our credit rating. After all, as the ranking member said, a downgrade followed the last debt debate in Congress.

Here are the facts: Standard & Poor's officials had warned for months that Congress had to reduce the projected 10-year deficit by $4 trillion in order to maintain its AAA credit rating. Because of Democratic intransigence, this Congress could only reduce it by $1.2 trillion. So we lost the rating. Facts are indeed stubborn things.

But the opponents are correct in one point—that several officials did express a concern that the impasse could have caused a default in the Nation's sovereign debt. That is precisely what this measure would protect us from in the future.

No one advocates that the government delay paying any of our bills, and this legislation does no such thing. Indeed, this legislation protects our ability to pay all of our other bills because paying those bills depends on maintaining the Nation's credit.

Given the precarious state of our Nation's finances, principled disputes over how the debt limit is addressed are going to happen from time to time. Just a few years ago, then-Senator Barack Obama vigorously opposed an increase in the debt limit that was sought by the Bush administration.

When these controversies erupt, as they inevitably do in a free society, it is imperative that credit markets are supremely confident that their loans to the United States are secure. That's what this bill does.

For once, let us set aside all this partisan posturing and act in the Nation's interest.

Mr. LEVIN. Madam Speaker, I yield myself 15 seconds.

I want the record to be clear: of the public debt prioritized by this bill, foreign holders own 47 percent and China holds 22 percent of that.

I now yield 1½ minutes to another distinguished member of the Ways and Means Committee, Mr. MCDERMOTT.

(Mr. MCDERMOTT asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. MCDERMOTT. Madam Speaker, we haven't done anything in this House all week, and here we are working on a

plan on how the government can default on its debts. That's what this is really all about.

It reminds me of the derivation of the word ''bedlam.''

Bedlam was a large mental hospital in the middle of London. It was really called ''Bethlehem,'' but people locally called it ''Bedlam.'' This is a policy that came out of bedlam and will create bedlam.

If we don't pay our debts, we are going to create problems in our own country, as well as in the world economic system.

If you want to lose the United States dollar as the currency that is used by the world, start by not paying your debts. Everybody will say, Why do we want a dollar? Those folks don't pay. That's what you're creating—bedlam—here today.

I urge everyone to vote ''no.''

Mr. CAMP. At this time, I yield 2 minutes to a distinguished member of the Ways and Means Committee, Dr. BOUSTANY.

Mr. BOUSTANY. Madam Speaker, from the very origins of this country, the very beginnings, this country has always made good on its sovereign debt.

Let me be clear what this bill does. It ensures that the United States shall never default on its sovereign debt.

What does it not do? It's not a solution to the debt problem. We have a serious long-term liability problem in this country and a failure by our colleagues on the other side to recognize that we have to deal with this. Simply raising taxes ad nauseam is not a solution. We need to come to a real solution so that seniors are not left behind on their Medicare benefits and Social Security is taken care of.

What does it not do? It's not a pay China first bill. China's holdings are less than 8 percent, and the ranking member's figures were wrong because he failed to account for the Social Security trust fund in that calculation. What we have used are the accurate figures from the U.S. Department of the Treasury.

What does it not do? It does not authorize new spending and new debt. This bill just simply says the United States shall always make good on its sovereign debt. It doesn't provide a solution to the long-term problem. We've got to solve those problems. We need to come together and come up with solutions for the longer-term liability with Medicare and all the other spending programs that are bankrupting this country.

It's been said that the national debt of the United States is a threat to our national security in the long run. We need real long-term solutions and not demagoguery and not disingenuous arguments.

The language is very clear. We have seen what the language is in these credit rating agencies as they did this downgrade. It was basically a failure of Congress to come together and work with the administration to come up with a real long-term plan. That is the issue.

The United States will not default on its debt, and this provides an extra tool for Treasury.

□ 1000

Mr. LEVIN. I now yield 1½ minutes to the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. LEWIS), another very distinguished member of our committee.

Mr. LEWIS. Madam Speaker, I want to thank my friend, Mr. LEVIN, for yielding.

Madam Speaker, I rise in strong opposition to the Pay China First Act. We are the United States of America, and we pay our bills. Madam Speaker, I cannot believe that this body would even entertain or consider a bill that puts the Social Security check of 56 million seniors and people after China. How can we justify putting 2 million American military personnel, many of whom are in harm's way, after China? That is not right. That is not fair. As a Congress, we can do better, much better.

Let me be crystal clear. Default is not an option. The United States of America pays all of its bills as they come due. This is the American way.

Let's stop playing games and do what is right; do what is just; do what is fair. Let's do what every American citizen has to do, pay our debts. I urge each and every one of my colleagues to vote ''no'' on the Pay China First Act. We have a moral obligation to do what is right.

Mr. CAMP. Madam Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Arkansas (Mr. GRIFFIN), a distinguish member of the Ways and Means Committee.

Mr. GRIFFIN of Arkansas. Madam Speaker, I thank the chairman.

I think it is important to say first and foremost that no matter how passionate you are, no matter how loud you scream, it doesn't convert nonsense to facts. The point is China's debt holdings are less than 8 percent. It makes for a great talking point. I understand that.

Madam Speaker, nobody wants to hit the debt ceiling. In fact, no one wants to get anywhere near it. On the contrary, we are the ones that are trying to get Washington's spending under control so it will live within its means. That's why we talk about budgets and spending and living within our means, because House Republicans fight that fight. If we weren't doing it, we wouldn't even know that there are limits to our spending. The House budget does just that, balancing the Federal budget in 10 years.

We understand that we must take precautions to protect the creditworthiness of the United States. We can hope for the best, but we must prepare for the worst. And the worst that can happen with the debt ceiling is a government default. The bill before us today takes default off the table, period. No more, no less.

We've been told by the credit-rating agencies that the greatest factor affecting our national credit rating is the government's ability to pay its debtholders. This bill makes sure that it will. This bill requires—not allows—requires Treasury to continue to pay principal and interest on existing debt if, and only if, we hit the debt ceiling before a deal is reached. This is a backstop that takes default off the table.

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

Mr. CAMP. I yield an additional 30 seconds to the gentleman.

Mr. GRIFFIN of Arkansas. With it we can focus on the other issues of debt and spending that created the problem in the first place. We can have an honest debate about what is driving government debt and how to deal with it. I hope we don't get anywhere near the debt ceiling limit. I hope we use the next few months to negotiate and reach an agreement that avoids any risk of hitting the debt ceiling; but until then, we should agree that it's our duty to protect America's credit rating.

I look forward to voting for this measure, and I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting it.

Mr. LEVIN. I now yield 1½ minutes to the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. NEAL), another very distinguished member of our committee.

(Mr. NEAL asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. NEAL. Madam Speaker, I stand in opposition to the Republican proposal today to pay China first.

Now, I think that there is another way that we might describe this legislation from our Republican friends, and it would go like this: let's balance the budget when Bill Clinton is President, and let's balance the budget when Barack Obama is President. But in the intervening 8 years, let's go on a reckless spending spree and cut taxes by $2.3 trillion, engage two wars internationally, embrace a prescription drug bill, spend the country into oblivion, and cut taxes for the wealthiest people.

Recall: balance the budget when Bill Clinton is President, and balance the budget when Barack Obama is President. Worry about the debt not when George Bush is President, but only when you have Democratic Presidents.

This is a reckless proposal today, and everybody knows it.

Speaker BOEHNER is quoted in one of the dailies this morning as saying of course we pay the bondholders first. That's a fact. The previous speaker didn't mention that. He said, let's deal with the facts. So who are the bondholders? They emphasize, they suggest that it's the American people. Foreign debt is held by the Chinese and the Japanese second, and everybody knows it.

So it's austerity for the American people, but make sure that the bondholders are paid. It's cut back on everything for the American people, but

make sure the bondholders are paid. Cut taxes by $2.3 trillion, and not to worry about the austerity of the American people.

Recall: balance the budget when Bill Clinton is President; balance the budget when Barack Obama is President.

Mr. CAMP. I yield 2 minutes to the distinguished gentleman from Louisiana (Mr. SCALISE).

Mr. SCALISE. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Michigan for yielding and for bringing this bill forward, Congressman MCCLINTOCK's Full Faith and Credit Act. I'm proud to be a cosponsor of the bill because what the bill does is clearly take default off the table as an option when we're having negotiations over the debt ceiling.

Now, people would say why is this even an issue. Unfortunately, it's an issue because the only people in town who have been threatening default are President Obama and liberals in Congress. And you've heard some of the speakers against this bill today talking about the threat of default. What's so good about this bill is it takes default off the table. It takes away their ability to default on our Nation's debt.

In fact, President Obama in the last debt ceiling negotiation almost 2 years ago was the one running around the country threatening to default on our credit, so much so that it scared the markets and hurt our economy. And, in fact, it is one of the things that led to a downgrade, the first time in our Nation's history that our credit rating was downgraded because the problem that gets us to the debt ceiling is that Washington has a spending problem. It's spending that continues to force us to hit the debt ceiling.

And so when we're negotiating on the debt ceiling, we shouldn't be worried about the President running around threatening default; we should be focused on fixing the spending problem. Americans sent us here to tackle the tough issues, not to be clouded and confused by the President's threats of default. Unfortunately, the GAO has even said the President can prioritize. He should. It would be responsible to pay your debts, but the President himself has said he would consider defaulting if we hit the debt ceiling.

And so what this bill says is you pay Americans first. As the chairman of Ways and Means pointed out, it is American citizens who own the bulk of our debt. They would be paid. Social Security would be paid. But then we could focus on the spending problem, and the negotiations on debt ceiling would be about solving the spending problem in Washington that continues to force us to hit the debt ceiling so that we can stop living from crisis to crisis and finally get our economy moving again. I urge passage.

Mr. LEVIN. I now yield 1½ minutes to the gentleman from Connecticut (Mr. LARSON), another distinguished member of our committee.

Mr. LARSON of Connecticut. I thank the gentleman. I rise today to oppose the Pay China First Act, and I do this with a heavy heart because I know the number of talented individuals that we have on this committee and the process that we've been through where we're working together. It astounds me that somehow the ideological tail of the Tea Party wags the whole Republican effort in this area, and the ideological reach of the Tea Party exceeds the certainty that we should be bringing to the American people.

□ 1010

Instead, we're playing hostage politics again, holding up the American people, creating all the uncertainty that we don't need in this kind of climate instead of demonstrating that we can sit down and work together.

I get the politics. I understand how you have to accede to a group that continues to take us to the precipice and then pull back. The American people are through with it.

Let's sit down, deal with this, and then move on; create the certainty that will create the jobs here. Let's not find ourselves in a situation that becomes almost oxymoron, where we're paying China first, at the expense of Americans when there is no good reason why we should be dealing with this issue whatsoever, other than the hostage politics that it creates to deal with an ideological minority that drives the other side.

Mr. CAMP. I yield 2 minutes to the distinguished gentleman from California (Mr. LAMALFA).

Mr. LAMALFA I appreciate my colleague from Michigan allowing me to speak here today. My colleague from California, I'm glad to be a cosponsor of this very important measure.

''Full faith and credit,'' what does that mean? What does it mean to the American people? When we ask for them to send us to Washington, to send us to this august place, we're asking for their faith in what we do with their money, with their tax dollars.

And so when we report back to them, what does that look like to them? Have we upheld their faith? Have we done everything we can in this Nation to keep the credit rating of America on line?

This measure is a giant step towards keeping that faith, to paying our bills on time, to paying the types of things that keep our credit rating in a best possible fashion for our country.

We default on that, we put our whole economic system in peril. We drive up the cost of doing business for our government, and more tax dollars it costs to run our government when we do that.

We hear talk about pay China first. Well, that's kind of funny, because if we wouldn't do that kind of business with China, if we'd pay attention to our own level of spending and growing the economy of this country instead of having to do things that cause debt to go up higher, we wouldn't be having to contract with them for more debt.

So that comes back to this place here, reforming the way we do business. We don't need to run up more debt. We don't need to put ourselves in a position where we can't get together on getting the budget done, on getting the debt ceiling adjusted whatever it takes so we don't fall into this default position.

So I think this is a giant step in the right direction. I commend my colleagues for making this happen. And let's uphold the faith that we've asked of the people of this country by paying our bills on time, by paying the debt, the interest that it takes to keep our credit in line as best possible as we can in this country.

So this is a measure that deserves support and puts the priorities first. I ask for support for it.

Mr. LEVIN. I yield 1½ minutes to the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. BLUMENAUER), another distinguished member of our committee.

Mr. BLUMENAUER. I rise in opposition to the Pay China First Act. Simply by putting this legislation on the floor, it does real damage in terms of putting questions in the minds of people around the world who to this point have been giving billions of dollars to the United States Government to be able to pay for past spending at record low rates.

I listened to the last speaker opine that we need to do everything to justify the faith in the American people. Well, the reckless threats that we saw 2 years ago, where, for the first time, we really were staring into the face of the abyss and it was a real possibility that they would withhold the votes, deny increase in the debt ceiling and, for the first time in our history, not pay for spending already incurred, in fact, ironically, the Ryan budget would have required a massive increase in the debt ceiling. The American people know this, and no amount of subterfuge here is going to eliminate that doubt, that concern, that apprehension. It may give the illusion of a few more days' breathing room with the debt ceiling.

What we need to do is set this aside and get to business. I would note, with no small amount of irony, that my friends on the other side of the aisle who have been so interested in a budget now refuse to appoint members for a conference committee so that the House and the Senate can come together and do that. That would be a lot more productive than this charade.

Mr. CAMP. I reserve the balance of my time, Madam Speaker.

Mr. LEVIN. I yield 1½ minutes to the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. KIND), another distinguished member of our committee.

Mr. KIND. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding me this time, and I, too, rise in opposition to the Pay China First Act.

Madam Speaker, I, for the life of me, do not understand why we are even seriously considering this legislation which would call for the default on our Nation's financial obligations for the

very first time in our Nation's history, completely jeopardize the full faith and credit of the United States of America, jeopardize the economic recovery, which still needs help right now, and it would be the greatest unforced, self-inflicted wound that this body can commit against the U.S. economy in our Nation's history.

But let's be clear. This has very little to do about true fiscal responsibility. This issue, this legislation is being driven by a very narrow bunch on the other side with a radical governing philosophy which basically says, I hate my government so much that I'm willing to jeopardize the full faith and credit of the United States and bring this economy down until we get our way. That's what's driving this legislation right now. That's the jeopardy that we face with it.

And I doubt that this has a serious chance of passing. But what the answer to this is is for us to go to conference on the budget resolutions that have now passed the House and Senate and start talking and listening to each other to find the common ground we need to reach a long-term deficit reduction agreement.

But defaulting on some of our obligations will mean putting great doubt in the rest of the investors in the United States in regards to who will be next. And that's what this legislation is promising: a default with some, a payment of China and others at the expense of the U.S. economy.

I encourage my colleagues to vote ''no'' on this ill-conceived legislation.

Mr. CAMP. Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. LEVIN. I yield 1½ minutes to the gentleman from the great State of New Jersey (Mr. PASCRELL), another distinguished member of our committee.

Mr. PASCRELL. I rise, Madam Speaker, in strong opposition to the Pay China First Act. This is a Pyrrhic proposal if I ever saw one.

By the way, the firefighters are in town today and tomorrow, and I'm going to go to every firefighter I see in Washington, D.C., and tell them how foolish—you know, the sponsors of this legislation believe that the Federal Government has no responsibility to firefighters or police officers anyway. It's strictly a local thing. So they're not trying to balance a budget.

If this bill becomes law, the government will still be borrowing money and our deficit will increase. It's what this bill allows us to borrow money for that is so shameful.

Is the government allowed to pay our Active Duty military? No.

Can we add to our deficit to fund veterans' benefits? No.

What about Medicare? Sorry, we're not going to pay those bills.

However, the government is allowed to borrow to pay back foreign bondholders. The majority apparently believes it's okay to borrow money and add to our deficit to pay China, but not to honor the obligations we have to our troops, our veterans, our seniors, et cetera. Shameful. There is simply no other word.

The United States of America pays its bills, period, end of sentence, case closed. We've done it for 200 years, whether it's obligations that we have to our troops or seniors, we have to those who have bought our bonds.

We all saw what happened in the summer of 2011. We don't need a repeat.

□ 1020

Mr. LEVIN. I now yield 1½ minutes to another member of our committee, the distinguished gentleman from New York (Mr. CROWLEY).

(Mr. CROWLEY asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. CROWLEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong opposition to the Pay China First Act. This is a very dangerous debate that we are conducting today because I think it has ramifications beyond simple debate. It calls into question whether or not America will pay its bills. You could also call this bill the Put America Last Act because that's exactly what this bill does. It's a bill that will actually make the Tea Party policies a reality, turning us into a deadbeat nation, a nation that does not pay its bills.

This Republican bill will codify into law a new low for America. It will ensure U.S. taxpayers always pay China and other regimes and foreign banks before our veterans, before our seniors on Medicare, and even before our enlisted troops bravely serving overseas. That's right. We'll pay these folks before we pay these folks. We pay these folks under this bill if it were to become law before we pay these folks. That simply is wrong and unacceptable to the American people.

Even the sponsors of this bill admit that in addition to putting China first and America last, their bill will also increase the deficit. Let me say that again. This bill will also increase the deficit and will pay China first. What the Republican majority is doing with this bill is announcing to the world—everyone from small businesses who sell services to the government to grandmothers buying savings bonds for their grandchildren—that this Congress is not serious about paying our Nation's bill.

My colleagues, please, put Americans first, put our troops first and China last. Do not pass the Pay China First Act.

Mr. CAMP. I would like to include for the RECORD a letter from the Congressional Budget Office that says this bill has no budget impact.

U.S. CONGRESS,
CONGRESSIONAL BUDGET OFFICE,
Washington, DC, April 26, 2013

Hon. DAVE CAMP
Chairman, Committee on Ways and Means
House of Representatives, Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN: The Congressional Budget Office has prepared the enclosed cost estimate for H.R. 807, the Full Faith and Credit Act.

If you wish further details on this estimate, we will be pleased to provide them. The CBO staff contact is Jared Brewster.

Sincerely,

ROBERT A. SUNSHINE
(For Douglas W. Elmendorf, Director).

Enclosure.

CONGRESSIONAL BUDGET OFFICE COST ESTIMATE

H.R. 807—Full Faith and Credit Act

H.R. 807 would allow the Department of the Treasury to issue debt to pay principal and interest on debt held by the public and debt held by the Old-Age and Survivors Insurance Trust Fund and Disability Insurance Trust Fund, if the statutory limit on debt is reached. The bill would require the Treasury to provide a weekly report to the House Committee on Ways and Means and Senate Committee on Finance outlining the exempted transactions until a new debt limit is enacted.

CBO estimates that enacting H.R. 807, by itself, would result in no costs or savings to the federal government because it would not change any of the government's tax or spending policies. Therefore, pay-as-you-go procedures do not apply. In addition, CBO estimates that the bill would not significantly add to the Treasury's administrative costs.

H.R. 807 contains no intergovernmental or private-sector mandates as defined in the Unfunded Mandates Reform Act.

The CBO staff contact for this estimate is Jared Brewster. This estimate was approved by Peter H. Fontaine, Assistant Director for Budget Analysis.

Mr. CAMP. I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. LEVIN. It is now my real pleasure to yield 2 minutes to the ranking member on the Budget Committee, the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. VAN HOLLEN).

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Madam Speaker, I thank my friend and colleague from Michigan. I strongly oppose this bill which, as our colleagues have said, says we should pay the government of China before we pay our troops, before we pay our veterans, and before we pay other bills here in the United States.

Of all the bad ideas that have come to the floor of this House, this one is one of the worst. It's a reckless, irresponsible proposal that says the United States of America is not going to pay all the bills that are due and owing. That will have a terrible impact on our creditworthiness, it will undermine the full faith and credit of the United States, and it would wreak havoc in the economy.

Look, Madam Speaker, our constituents don't have the luxury of waking up one morning and saying: Do you know what? I'm only going to make my mortgage payment. I'm not going to make my car payment, and I'm not going to make my credit card payments.

If they did that, what would happen? They would lose their creditworthiness. For the United States of America to say we're going to pay some bills but not all would have hugely damaging impacts on the economy.

And it gets worse, because when they say, We've got to pay some, but not all, you've got to decide whom you're going to pay first. And what they decide here

is they're going to pay China first, and they have to decide who is not a priority. In this bill, our veterans are not a priority, and our troops risking their lives in Afghanistan are not a priority. China is a priority; they're not.

Now, Madam Speaker, what will happen here is that people will lose faith in whether or not the country pays its bills. People need to understand very clearly that this is not about expanding the debt ceiling in order to take on new obligations. This is about paying our existing obligations. And if we announce to the world that we're planning on not paying our obligations, whether they're to bondholders or to our troops, guess what happens? People will lose faith in the United States Government, and the economy will get hit hard.

Let's vote against this bill that says China comes before our troops and our veterans.

Mr. CAMP. In August of 2010, Chairman Admiral Mullen said that the most significant threat to our national security was our debt. And since that time, we have added hundreds of billions of dollars to our national debt.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. LEVIN. I now yield 1½ minutes to a distinguished Member, the gentlewoman from Pennsylvania, ALLYSON SCHWARTZ.

Ms. SCHWARTZ. I rise in strong opposition to this Republican pay China first bill, which would jeopardize the full faith and credit of the United States. This legislation dictates which of our Nation's bills we will pay and which we will not, and poses a serious, dangerous threat to our economy. The Republicans put foreign creditors ahead of our veterans, Active Duty military, Medicare recipients, and small businesses.

The Republicans' refusal to pay our Nation's bills inflicts another round of unnecessary wounds that weakened our economy in 2011. American families, American workers, and American small businesses have battled economic uncertainty for far too long, and this deeply irresponsible legislation will only exacerbate the challenges we face.

Instead of moving us closer to common ground on a balanced, responsible path for economic growth, Republicans' brinksmanship threatens to undermine consumer and investor confidence and slows economic growth.

I urge opposition to this legislation and instead that we do what we have always done as Americans: pay our bills, pay them on time, pay them in full and protect America's economy and our financial standing in the global economy.

Mr. LEVIN. Can I ask our distinguished Speaker how much time remains on each side?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Michigan (Mr. LEVIN) has 3½ minutes remaining. The gentleman from Michigan (Mr. CAMP) has 6½ minutes remaining.

Mr. CAMP. I have no further speakers.

Mr. LEVIN. I now yield 1½ minutes to the distinguished gentleman from Texas (Mr. VEASEY).

Mr. VEASEY. Madam Speaker, I rise in strong opposition to the Pay China First Act. Once again, the Republican majority has chosen to play politics with the credit of our Nation. Instead of coming to the table with solutions, they are ensuring that we will come to a default on our Nation's debt.

This bill accomplishes one simple goal: pay China first. If the Republicans cause a default on our debt, H.R. 807 would guarantee that bondholders in China and other foreign nations will get paid before our men and women in uniform. Honorable veterans and the doctors and the hospitals that take care of our senior citizens on Medicare will all lose out. Are these truly the right priorities for our country, Madam Speaker?

Democrats are focused on job recovery, job growth, and securing a future for our hardworking taxpayers and the middle class. We are ready to act now on commonsense budget proposals that are balanced and fair. I ask the majority now to stop playing political games and let's work together on commonsense solutions to strengthen our country.

Mr. LEVIN. So, Mr. CAMP, are you ready to close this part of our debate?

How much time remains?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Michigan (Mr. LEVIN) has 2½ minutes remaining.

Mr. LEVIN. I just want to read the facts why this bill essentially says ''China first.'' I want everybody to understand this isn't rhetoric; this is reality.

The Republicans, under this bill, prioritize $14.3 trillion in debt, of that, $2.7 trillion in Social Security and $11.6 trillion in public debt. Of that public debt, $5.6 trillion is foreign. So when you come up and talk about all of the American public, you are not talking about what is in this bill. And of that foreign debt, the largest creditor is China, with over $1 trillion.

□ 1030

So it's absolutely true that essentially what you're saying is pay the largest of the foreign creditors instead of American troops, veterans, physicians, school lunch programs, universities doing medical research, taxpayers getting refunds, and other Federal trust funds holding Treasury bonds, Medicare—these are Americans'—deposited insurance, highway trust funds, et cetera, et cetera. That's the fact.

Now, there's some effort here to say, oh, we're not defaulting. Yes, you are. You're not defaulting on sovereign debt, but you're defaulting, except for Social Security, on everything else. Republicans are becoming lead defaulters in terms of paying our debt.

As I said earlier, the credit agencies have said, and I'll close with this:

It is not assured that the Treasury would or legally could prioritize debt service over its myriad of other obligations . . . but very likely prompt downgrade, even as our debt obligations continued to be met.

This is a drastic, serious mistake. Vote ''no.''

I yield back the balance of my time.

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

Madam Speaker, I think it's helpful in a debate like this to start with the facts. And I would just say it's illustrative of just how out of touch and irresponsible the other side is when they assert that our debt is $14 trillion. Our debt is over $16 trillion. They've just lost $2 trillion? No wonder they don't think this is an urgent problem. They don't even know what our debt is.

This legislation is very similar to 1996, legislation that was passed in a bipartisan vote and was signed by then-Democrat President Bill Clinton.

Many States guarantee their government debt, or what is often called their sovereign debt, and they have done that for decades. If we default on our government or sovereign debt, the consequences are so severe that no one gets paid—our military, our seniors, our veterans, our farmers. All Americans deserve a strong economy, and that means getting our debt under control.

And let's just clear up another fact. The top two-thirds of our debt is held by Americans and their retirement funds, including the U.S. military retirement fund.

Now, one reason we're in this position is that this administration has racked up more than $5 trillion in debt, more than the previous four Presidents added together. That's why we're in this situation. We have a debt problem. This legislation ensures that the debt of the United States will be paid.

So I urge support for H.R. 807, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. All time for debate on the bill has expired.

AMENDMENT OFFERED BY MR. CAMP

Mr. CAMP. Madam Speaker, I have an amendment at the desk.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

Page 6, after line 17, insert the following (and redesignate succeeding subsections accordingly):

(c) PROHIBITION ON COMPENSATION FOR MEMBERS OF CONGRESS.—None of the obligations issued under subsection (a) may be used to pay compensation for Members of Congress.

Page 7, line 2, insert ''the authority is in use'' after ''week''.

Page 7, strike line 13 and all that follows through line 17.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to House Resolution 202, the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. CAMP) and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Michigan.

Mr. CAMP. Madam Speaker, H.R. 807, the Full Faith and Credit Act, permanently takes default off the table, as we've been debating, but this amendment makes a couple of simple

changes. It clarifies that any debt issued pursuant to this bill may not be used to pay salaries of Members of Congress—of the House and of the Senate.

It also makes clear that each and every time the Secretary of the Treasury uses the authority provided in the bill, that the Secretary must report weekly on the amount of debt issued and the reason for the issuance to ensure transparency so that Congress is fully informed.

So I urge support for my straightforward amendment and support for the underlying bill and reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. LEVIN. Madam Speaker, I rise in opposition to the amendment.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Michigan is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. LEVIN. I yield myself such time as I may consume. I'm just going to speak for a short time and then yield.

I respect the chairman of the committee; we've been friends for a long time. It's really sad this amendment is here. There can't be money used under the bill for salaries. There's no lack of clarity here. Essentially, this is an effort to give some kind of fig leaf, or whatever it is, for a terrible, terrible bill.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. CAMP. I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. LEVIN. I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. HOYER).

Mr. HOYER. I thank the gentleman for yielding.

I have already spoken about this amendment. I think this amendment is as sad as the bill.

We continue to play games because we think that, in a way, we will compel people to vote for something they don't want to vote for—and, in my view, are not going to vote for. I think it's sad. I think we continue to demagogue this institution and its Members. That's sad. We leaders should not do that. This is a serious bill.

Now, I want to tell the gentleman from Michigan, the chairman of the Ways and Means Committee, I know what the debt is. And I know that debt has been incurred because we bought a lot of things we didn't pay for, including over $1 trillion of Afghanistan and Iraq, including a prescription drug bill that projects over $2 trillion, including tax cuts that were $2.3 trillion that not a penny were paid for. I understand, and I think it's serious.

The sad thing is that this is not a serious response. This is an irresponsible response. This is a response that, as I said earlier, says that we will pay some people first, but we won't pay all our debts. The richest country on the face of the Earth, the most creditworthy nation on the face of the Earth, we won't pay all our debts.

There is a simple way to do this: stop demagoguing one another. And I want to say to the gentleman, as he knows, Democrats have demagogued this issue when we've had Republican Presidents and Republicans have demagogued it when we've had Democratic Presidents.

We all know that we've incurred debts and we're going to pay them. That's all this is. It's very simple: we're either going to pay our debts or we're not.

Now, I want to tell my friend, the gentleman from Michigan, I know about the debt. The gentleman refers to $5 trillion. I'm sure the gentleman knows these statistics:

Under Ronald Reagan, the debt was increased 189 percent; under George Bush, 55 percent—the first George Bush, 55 percent; under this President so far, a little over 40 percent.

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

Mr. LEVIN. I yield the gentleman 1 minute.

Mr. HOYER. Every Republican President with whom I've served, Madam Speaker, every Republican President has increased the debt as a percentage of GDP higher than either Bill Clinton or Barack Obama. Bill Clinton was the lowest, 37 percent. This President is a little over 40 percent of GDP. It's just like saying the minimum wage now is $7.25, which is so much higher than it was in 1970—which is not the case. Now, as a dollar, a nominal figure, it's higher, and the gentleman knows that very well. He is my friend and I have great respect for him. But this bill is unfortunate. This amendment is—I won't characterize it as harshly as I feel about it.

We have to stop playing games. We have to be serious. We need to come together and adopt a big plan that's balanced, that can pass and will put this country on a fiscally sustainable path; and, in the process, we ought to pay our bills because we incurred them. We incurred them honestly for objectives that this House, this Senate, and the President of the United States signed for.

□ 1040

Mr. CAMP. I reserve the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Michigan (Mr. LEVIN) has 1½ minutes remaining.

Mr. LEVIN. I yield that minute and a half to the vice chair of our caucus, the gentleman from New York (Mr. CROWLEY), a member of our committee.

Mr. CROWLEY. I have reservations about the constitutionality of this amendment. What I will say is I would gladly give my pay if it meant that these guys don't get paid. I will give my salaries to the defenders of this country, the men and women who are the front line, if their pay was in question. If all the money in the Congress in our pay could do that, I would gladly do that.

But I say we should definitely pay these guys before we pay these guys. That's what your bill does. The overriding bill would have these guys get paid before these guys. Forget about us guys.

This amendment is a farce. It's to divert attention from the fact that you want to pay these guys before you pay these guys. At the end of the day, that's what the overriding bill is about—putting China first, paying China first, putting our troops last, putting the American people last. It's about putting them first and us last.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Michigan (Mr. LEVIN) has 15 seconds remaining.

Mr. LEVIN. I will use it by saying, a default is a default is a default. This bill is a serious mistake, as is the amendment. People can do what they want on the amendment. Vote ''no'' on the basic bill.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. CAMP. Madam Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time.

I just wanted to say I also have great respect for the gentleman from Maryland who spoke a couple of speakers ago, who is the distinguished minority whip. We have worked closely together on other issues as well.

I would just say that this legislation is very similar to legislation that was passed in a bipartisan way in 1996 and signed by then-President Bill Clinton. So, this is not something that is brand-new in terms of an approach for this Congress to take when dealing and struggling with debt and our debt issues.

I think it is also important to remember as we go through this debate that now our debt is larger than our entire economy and that the debt that has been incurred under this administration is larger than the debt of the previous four Presidents. We have a path that is unsustainable that has gotten worse, and this has gone on for far too long.

I think it is important, though, that we make these clarifying points in this amount. Clearly, we've heard a lot about demagoguery about who gets paid first. The vast majority of our debt is held by Americans. Americans and the U.S. military retirees will be paid first under this bill; and their retirement funds, their pensions, their savings, that's very important.

This is about making sure that the debt of the United States—that the United States has incurred, not the ongoing payments, but the debt of the United States—is paid. That takes default off the table. That allows us then to move forward to get the larger bipartisan solutions on this growing and difficult problem with our debt that we need to address.

The amendment makes it clear that Members of Congress' salaries won't be paid, that any debt issued will not pay that. It also makes clear that the Secretary of the Treasury must report weekly on the amount of debt. We need transparency. We often don't get the latest information. We need that, both House and Senate. So, this is a straightforward amendment. It's clarifying.

I urge support for the amendment, I urge support for the underlying bill,

and I yield back the balance of my time.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Madam Speaker, I rise in strong opposition to speak on H.R. 807, which would result in the Congress refusing to pay obligations it has already agreed to. American families do not get to choose which bills to pay and which ones not to pay, and the United States Congress cannot either without putting the Nation into default for the first time in its history.

I oppose this bill because not only will it be bad for America, but devastating for Houston. Just as our nation's economy has begun to show signs of sustained improvement, along comes H.R. 807 to further depress the economy of the parts of Houston which have not been fortunate enough to benefit from the economic recovery. The city of Houston has a half-trillion dollar economy which is threatened if the United States economy begins to falter because of the sequester already in place, and misguided legislation like this bill.

This bill would threaten the full faith and credit of the United States, cost American jobs, hurt businesses of all sizes, and do irreparable damage to the economy. It is important to note that the Dow Jones Industrial Average closed above 15,000 for the first time ever, and jobless claims fell to a five-year low this week.

Why would we want to jeopardize this progress with a bill like H.R. 807, which is a step in the wrong direction.

This legislation would cause the Nation to default on payments for Medicare, veterans, national security, and many other critical priorities. This legislation is unwise, unworkable, and unacceptably risky. Earlier this year, the Congress took a sensible approach to paying the bills it had already incurred by raising the debt limit. By contrast, the proposal in H.R. 807, which chooses which bills to pay, is a deeply irresponsible approach that is simply default by another name.

Americans want a clean debt limit increase, which has been done numerous times but the normal process by which the Treasury Secretary consults with the President and Congress, seems to have hit a major roadblock. This obstructionist governing is based on a practice that seems to put ideology over pragmatism and politics over common-sense legislating.

Madam Speaker, another reason I cannot support H.R. 807 is because it gives preference to making payments to foreign bond holders such as China, Iran, and the Cayman Islands over the payments needed for critical services for our veterans, and those payments required under Chapter 31, United States Code, which insures the savings of Americans.

I would hope that my colleagues on the other side realize that these are trying times for the American people and brinksmanship is not the answer. This body must come up with a sensible solution to the pressing financial problems which plague our economy. We cannot continue to hold our Nation hostage, keeping the benefits of recipients of Social Security, Medicaid, and Medicare who must have sleepless nights because they are worried about the disappearance of their monthly checks.

I support a long-term increase in the debt limit that would increase certainty and economic stability. The bill before us this morning, H.R. 807, is a short-term measure with unnecessary complications, needlessly perpetuating uncertainty in the Nation's fiscal system, and I would note that the Obama Administration is also in opposition to this woeful piece of legislation that allows China to be paid first.

My colleagues want to buy time so that they can figure out how to squeeze the American taxpayer even more by devising bone-crunching cuts and slashes to entitlement programs—all of which is driven by rabid ideology—as opposed to sitting down and working with Democrats to come up with reasonable budget reforms which do not hurt Seniors and the disadvantaged.

Madam Speaker, Social Security is currently the only source of income for nearly two-thirds of older American households receiving benefits, and roughly one-third of those households depend on Social Security for nearly all of their income. Half of those 65 and older have annual incomes below $18,500, and many older Americans have experienced recent and significant losses in retirement savings, pensions, and home values. Today, every dollar of the average Social Security retirement benefit of about $14,800 is absolutely critical to the typical beneficiary.

Contrary to some claims, Social Security is not the cause of our nation's deficit problem. Not only does the program operate independently, but it is prohibited from borrowing. Social Security must pay all benefits from its own trust fund. If there are insufficient funds to pay out full benefits, benefits are automatically reduced to the level supported by the program's own revenues.

I would add that instead of short-term management of self-inflicted fiscal crises, I truly believe we have an opportunity to strengthen the economy by putting the Nation on a sounder fiscal path. Progress has already been made towards that goal. In 2011, the President signed into law $1.4 trillion in spending reductions, not counting additional savings from winding down the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. We need to seize this template and move forward—not backwards, in the direction of H.R. 807.

The fiscal agreement the President signed at the beginning of January increased revenue from high-income households by over $600 billion. Together with interest savings, these two steps will cut the deficit by more than $2.5 trillion over the next decade. We should have done more to address our revenue problem.

The President has made clear that he remains willing to work with both parties in the Congress to budget responsibly and to achieve additional deficit reduction consistent with the principles of balance, shared growth, and shared opportunity. By adding Chained CPI to the discussion it is clear that President Obama is willing to go more than halfway to meet the House Majority; but they have not reciprocated.

The President has also made clear that he will not have another debate with the Congress over whether or not they should pay the bills that they have already racked up through the laws that they passed. The President has made clear that the Congress has only two options—pay their bills, or fail to do so and put the Nation into default. And I am in complete agreement.

According to the Bipartisan Policy Center, spending for Medicare and Medicaid is projected to increase from 21 percent of non-interest federal spending in 2010 to 31 percent by 2020. The numbers are wonkish sounding but in terms of real dollars, the increase is mammoth. That is why we must address the spending issue in earnest but not using the paltry monthly income of Seniors to pay for yachts for millionaires.

National spending on health care has grown about 2 percentage points per year faster than GDP over time. Federal revenues, however, have not kept pace, growing at roughly the same rate as GDP.

As a result, federal deficits will be driven upward by federal health programs unless their rate of growth is tamed. This discrepancy must be dealt with sooner rather than later, but no matter how you couch it, there is no better translation than the word: b-r-o-k-e.

I hasten to add that Community Health Centers provide much needed, high-quality healthcare to over 20 million Americans. These centers are able to serve vulnerable portions of the American population, including racial and ethnic minorities, as well as rural and low-income Americans.

I want to give some pertinent facts about my district and why the uncertainty provided by H.R. 807 is a step in the wrong direction.

The Houston-Sugar Land-Baytown Metropolitan Area consists of 10 counties: Austin, Brazoria, Chambers, Fort Bend, Galveston, Harris, Liberty, Montgomery, San Jacinto and Waller.

The Houston metro area:

It ranks sixth among U.S. metropolitan statistical areas with a population of 5,867,489 as of mid-2009, and it covers more than 10,000 square miles, and has a gross product of $403.8 billion, according to The Perryman Group. This area recorded 2.54 million payroll jobs in November 2010, more than the job counts of 31 U.S. states, including Arizona, Colorado and Alabama.

The Houston economy has experienced a resurgence but let's remember the economic history:

The recession hit Houston in September '08. Our region lost 152,800 jobs through January '10. We began to recoup jobs starting in February that year and by October '11, the region had gained 153,000 jobs, or 101.1 percent of what we lost in the recession.

And though Houston faces some challenges in the near term, the long-term outlook is bright. The challenges are those of managing growth rather than economic stagnation. The long-term outlook for the Houston metro area is positive, and steady growth will be the norm for Houston for the foreseeable future. What Houston cannot afford right now is continued uncertainty from Washington, DC.

Moreover, given the uncertainty of final funding decisions and the possibility that across-the-board spending cuts will drag us back into a recession unless Congress and the President can reach agreement to prevent the currently scheduled ''sequester,'' it is critical that we work towards bipartisan solutions to our nation's financial woes. Given the U.S. economy is showing signs of progress, it is crucial that we continue to fund government programs without interruption.

Lastly, as a Senior Member of the Homeland Security and Judiciary Committees I understand the importance of the U.S. Customs and Border Protection mission to enforce drug, trade and travel laws in efforts to keep our borders safe; and the importance of ensuring

that our nation remains safe from terrorists and others who would do harm to our nation.

In summation, I urge my colleagues to reject this poll-driven exercise in futility and give a clean debt ceiling vote so that the American people can carry-on with the business of achieving prosperity.

Doing a clean debt limit bill is not a new law, new outlay, or some random, esoteric exercise in the fulfillment of the Obama Doctrine. In fact, according to the Congressional Research Service, since March 1962, Congress has enacted 76 separate measures that have altered the limit on federal debt. Typically, the Treasury Secretary consults with the President and Congress, and the limit has been subsequently raised to accommodate our fiscal needs.

And I close with the sacred words from our Constitution. Section 4 of the 14th Amendment states clearly that: ''the validity of the public debt of the United States . . . shall not be questioned.'' And a great nation pays its debts. That is why I oppose H.R. 807.

I urge my colleagues to resoundingly reject H.R. 807.

Ms. CLARKE. Madam Speaker, today we find ourselves debating a bill that could result in the United States of America defaulting on our debts. It seems that the Republican majority of the 113th Congress has decided to continue the practice of governing from one manufactured crisis to another.

H.R. 807, the Pay China First Act, is a part of this majority's campaign of playing politics with our national economy at a time when the number one priority of this Congress should be putting Americans back to work.

Madam Speaker, we raise our nation's debt ceiling to pay the bills that our nation has already accrued. The Republican majority's insistence on using the debt ceiling in their crusade against a short-term deficit crisis that doesn't exist, has already harmed our nation's recovery.

This bill, which the Republican majority knows full well has no chance in the Senate, is nothing more than political posturing at its worst. It is nothing more, Madam Speaker, than an attempt by the Republican majority to wash their hands of the calamitous effects their economic policies are having on the American people who want nothing more than their Congress to stop playing politics and get about the work they were elected to do.

Instead, the Republican majority has continued their crusade of irresponsible spending and tax cuts which disproportionally affect those who need it the most.

The number one priority of the 113th Congress should be putting Americans back to work and supporting policies that promote growth.

Madam Speaker, the people of Brooklyn's 9th Congressional district, whom I have the honor of representing in this body, are tired of the 113th Congress undermining the recovery our nation needs. This bill is not worthy of the American people.

Madam Speaker, I submit an article in today's New York Times that, using analysis from leading public and private-sector economists, lays out the harm that the majority's focus on irresponsible spending cuts is having on our struggling economy.

[From the New York Times, May 8, 2013]

ECONOMISTS SEE DEFICIT EMPHASIS AS IMPEDING RECOVERY

(By Jackie Calmes and Jonathan Weisman)

WASHINGTON—The nation's unemployment rate would probably be nearly a point lower, roughly 6.5 percent, and economic growth almost two points higher this year if Washington had not cut spending and raised taxes as it has since 2011, according to private-sector and government economists.

After two years in which President Obama and Republicans in Congress have fought to a draw over their clashing approaches to job creation and budget deficits, the consensus about the result is clear: Immediate deficit reduction is a drag on full economic recovery.

Hardly a day goes by when either government analysts or the macroeconomists and financial forecasters who advise investors and businesses do not report on the latest signs of economic growth—in housing, consumer spending, business investment. And then they add that things would be better but for the fiscal policy out of Washington. Tax increases and especially spending cuts, these critics say, take money from an economy that still needs some stimulus now, and is getting it only through the expansionary monetary policy of the Federal Reserve.

''Fiscal tightening is hurting,'' Ian Shepherdson, chief economist of Pantheon Macroeconomic Advisors, wrote to clients recently. The investment bank Jefferies wrote of ''ongoing fiscal mismanagement'' in its midyear report on Tuesday, and noted that while the recovery and expansion would be four years old next month, reduced government spending ''has detracted from growth in five of past seven quarters.''

That period roughly coincides with the time that Mr. Obama and Congressional Republicans have shared governance since Republicans took control of the House in 2011, promising an immediate $100 billion in spending cuts. Republicans did not get that much then, but the series of budget compromises with the president since—while not so great as they wanted—will soon reduce annual discretionary spending for domestic and military programs to the lowest level in half a century.

As for revenues, Mr. Obama forced Republicans to acquiesce in January to higher taxes from wealthy Americans. But worse, in the macroeconomists' view, both parties agreed not to extend a two-year-old cut in Americans' payroll taxes for Social Security, reducing their spending money.

In all this time, the president has fought unsuccessfully to combine deficit reduction, including spending cuts and tax increases, with spending increases and targeted tax cuts for job-creation initiatives in areas like infrastructure, manufacturing, research and education. That is a formula closer to what the economists propose. But Republicans have insisted on spending cuts alone and smaller government as the key to economic growth.

The results, Mr. Obama has taken to saying, despite his complicity, are ''self-inflicted wounds.''

''The only way the problem does get fixed is if both parties sit down and they say, 'How are we going to make sure that we're reducing our deficit sensibly?' '' he said last week at a news conference. ''How are we making sure that we're investing in things like rebuilding our airports and our roads and our bridges, and investing in early childhood education, basic research—all the things that are going to help us grow?''

Mr. Obama added, ''I cannot force Republicans to embrace those common-sense solutions.''

Speaker John A. Boehner stood by the Republicans' policies during a session Tuesday with reporters. ''After four years of mediocre job creation, it's obvious that we don't need more tax hikes and more government spending,'' he said. ''We need smarter policies to make America more competitive and expand opportunities for everyone in our country.''

''We're the ones pushing this town to do the right thing when it comes to the economy and jobs,'' Mr. Boehner added.

The Federal Open Market Committee, which sets policy for the central bank, noted signs of improvement in the private sector last week in a statement. ''But fiscal policy is restraining economic growth,'' it added, echoing public comments that Ben S. Bernanke, the Fed chairman, has made for months. In April, the International Monetary Fund said the United States would achieve further growth ''in the face of a very strong, indeed overly strong, fiscal consolidation.''

Thursday will capture as plainly as any day lately the differing approaches of Mr. Obama and Republicans toward the economy and government's role.

Mr. Obama plans to travel to Austin, Tex., to visit technology students, workers and entrepreneurs and promote his ideas to support efforts like theirs—the kind of initiatives that Republicans have blocked.

House Republicans expect to pass a measure that would allow the Treasury to ''prioritize'' debt payments if Congress and Mr. Obama cannot agree this year to increase the nation's debt ceiling so the Treasury can keep borrowing money to pay all creditors. Under the bill, as tax receipts came in, the first priority would be paying creditors—like China, Democratic opponents argue—and second would be Social Security checks. But the measure would likely die in the Democratic-controlled Senate.

The ''prioritization'' proposal first arose in 2011 from among the most conservative House Republicans, those who were driving hardest against the White House on raising the debt ceiling and expressing unconcern about default, but it has now become mainstream in the House ranks.

Economists and financial analysts generally dismiss the idea as unworkable if not dangerous, and count on Democrats to block it. Gregory Daco, a senior principal economist at IHS Global Insight, said the Republicans' proposal was the kind that caused his clients to ignore the fiscal policy out of Washington, and rely instead on the Fed to buttress the recovery.

''Whenever I talk to our customers or clients, they sort of brush off everything that's related to fiscal policy,'' Mr. Daco said. ''The view is, 'Oh, it doesn't matter.' That's what I hear a lot.''

''What we try to convey is that it does matter,'' he said. ''It is important in terms of growth. It's also important in terms of confidence.''

He noted that the economy was much stronger than Europe's largely because the United States initially opted for stimulus measures and allowed deficits to increase when the recession and financial crisis hit five years ago. European governments pursued austerity policies to cut their debts, further stalling economic activity and in turn inflating deficits.

The more recent austerity policies here are helping to bring annual deficits down, as a new report of the Congressional Budget Office shows, after four years of trillion-dollar shortfalls. Yet many analysts would prefer that the measures had been timed for when the economy is strong and unemployment below 7 percent.

''While I agree that the U.S. must get its fiscal house in order,'' Jerry Webman, chief

economist at OppenheimerFunds, wrote, ''I join the likes of the I.M.F. in cautioning that too much austerity, too soon, is likely counterproductive.''

Mr. CONYERS. Madam Speaker, I rise today in opposition to H.R. 807, the Full Faith and Credit Act, which is simply a plan to default on the full faith and credit of the United States.

Under this measure, the Treasury could not borrow above the federal debt limit for any other purpose than to pay selected holders of our debt, many of whom are outside the United States.

While supposedly prioritizing this debt, all other already-incurred debt would still be paid by general revenues on a cash-flow basis. Forcing Treasury to default on many of our fundamental obligations, such as paying our active-duty troops, paying doctors and hospitals that care for our seniors on Medicare, paying veterans' benefits, and before American small businesses are paid.

Raising the debt ceiling to pay bills already incurred should not be negotiable, and certainly should not be held hostage for cuts to programs that serve everyday Americans.

The pursuit of this bill is not in the best interest of Americans. It rebuts economists who say that debt prioritization is an awful, if not impossible policy, especially in light of the fact that the Treasury makes 80 to 100 million payments per month. The Bipartisan Policy Center and the Council of Inspectors General on Financial Oversight, as well as the Treasury itself, all agree on the conclusion that it would be simply impossible for them to pick and choose which bills are paid and which are not.

By virtually ensuring a state of daily defaults on legal obligations of the federal goverment, this misguided proposal is more likely to create chaos in credit markets than ease investors' fears.

We should not forget the lessons of 2011, when we last neared default over disagreements to raise the debt ceiling. Political brinksmanship with the debt ceiling caused uncertainty on Wall Street, the U.S. government's credit rating was downgraded for the first time in history, and we saw increases in borrowing costs to the tune of $1.3 billion according to a report from the Government Accountability Office, which will add up to $19 billion in unnecessary additional debt over the next decade.

The consequences of a default would be much worse and reverberate across our economy, affecting every American through higher interest rates, investors fleeing the U.S. market and broad economic uncertainty.

This legislation has a very clear purpose—forcing the United States government to default on its obligations during forthcoming debt ceiling negotiations.

America is not a delinquent nation, and we cannot risk becoming one. I urge my colleagues to oppose this dangerous bill, H.R. 807, the Full Faith and Credit Act.

Mr. MARCHANT. Madam Speaker, I rise today in support of the Full Faith and Credit Act. As a conservative, ensuring that our nation pays its bills on time is a top priority.

The Full Faith and Credit Act would protect America's credit rating by ensuring that we do not default on our nation's debt. It requires the Treasury to continue to make timely payments on our principal and interest in the event that our nation's debt limit is reached.

Furthermore, what this does is take the politicization of the debt limit debate off of the table. Without a chance for default, we can negotiate in good faith with the President and Congressional Democrats on a plan that addresses our real problem—out of control spending.

I look forward to having this debate, and I urge my colleagues to support this legislation.

Mr. DINGELL. Madam Speaker, I rise in strong opposition to H.R. 807, the Full Faith and Credit Act. Instead of working productively with Democrats, my Republican colleagues seem content to continue dabbling in debt limit chicanery that threatens the economic security of this country.

Let me be clear: H.R. 807 offers no comprehensive solution to the debt limit. It is a legislative blueprint for how the United States should pay its bills after it defaults. More baffling is the fact that the bill prioritizes debt payments to Chinese bondholders over paying our troops, supporting our veterans, and making Medicare payments to seniors.

That Republicans continue to push bills like this indicates they have no real interest in fixing the sequester or putting in place the kinds of policies that will contribute to stable economic growth. This will have a seriously debilitating effect on financial markets at a time when we can ill afford it. In addition, H.R. 807 could lead to another downgrade of our country's credit rating because the bill indicates to markets that it assumes a default will actually occur.

Madam Speaker, this is irresponsible policymaking at its finest. H.R. 807 threatens to undo the full faith and credit of the United States, a promise that has stood for over 200 years and is the foundation of global capital markets. I urge my colleagues to put aside partisan differences and act in the country's best interests by voting this bill down.

Mr. RYAN of Wisconsin. Madam Speaker, the purpose of the Full Faith and Credit Act (H.R. 807) is to protect the full faith and credit of the United States by requiring the Treasury Secretary to issue such debt as may be necessary to prevent a sovereign default. During the consideration of this bill in the Ways and Means Committee, I offered an amendment to clarify the relationship between debt issued under the authority in this bill and the statutory debt limit. This amendment was adopted by voice vote and is part of the bill as ordered reported by the Ways and Means Committee.

This bill provides additional and limited authority to the Secretary of the Treasury to issue new debt obligations on behalf of the United States solely for the purpose of paying the principal and interest on specified debt obligations of the United States once the statutory debt limit has been reached. The intent of this bill is that debt obligations issued under the authority provided by the bill will count against the debt limit with one exception. This exception provides that if counting the full amount of these newly issued obligations against the debt limit would cause the debt limit to be exceeded, then the amount of the newly issued obligation that is in excess of the debt limit shall not count toward the limit.

The following is a hypothetical example to explain the intended operation of this bill. Assume the debt limit has been reached and the payment of principal and interest on an existing debt obligation amounting to $100 requires the Treasury Secretary to issue $101 of new debt obligations using the authority provided in this Act. In this example, $100 of that new obligation would count against the debt limit while $1 would not. Importantly, applying this provision is a continual responsibility. If at some future date the stock of debt subject to the limit were reduced by $1, then the $1 that originally did not count against the debt limit would now count toward the debt limit. Under no circumstance can there be both room to issue new debt obligations without exceeding the statutory debt ceiling and an outstanding stock of debt obligations issued under the authority in this bill that is not subject to the debt limit.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the previous question is ordered on the bill, as amended, and on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. CAMP).

The question is on the amendment by the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. CAMP).

The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

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

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 and clause 9 of rule XX, this 15-minute vote on adoption of the amendment will be followed by 5-minute votes on a motion to recommit, if ordered; passage of H.R. 807, if ordered; and approval of the Journal.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 340, nays 84, not voting 8, as follows:

[Roll No. 140]

YEAS—340

Aderholt	Chabot	Forbes
Alexander	Chaffetz	Fortenberry
Amash	Chu	Foster
Amodei	Cicilline	Foxx
Andrews	Coble	Frankel (FL)
Bachmann	Coffman	Franks (AZ)
Bachus	Cole	Frelinghuysen
Barber	Collins (GA)	Gabbard
Barletta	Collins (NY)	Gallego
Barr	Conaway	Garamendi
Barrow (GA)	Connolly	Garcia
Barton	Cook	Gardner
Benishek	Cooper	Garrett
Bentivolio	Costa	Gerlach
Bera (CA)	Cotton	Gibbs
Bilirakis	Courtney	Gibson
Bishop (GA)	Cramer	Gingrey (GA)
Bishop (NY)	Crawford	Gohmert
Bishop (UT)	Crenshaw	Goodlatte
Black	Crowley	Gosar
Blackburn	Cuellar	Gowdy
Bonamici	Culberson	Granger
Bonner	Daines	Graves (GA)
Boustany	Davis, Rodney	Graves (MO)
Brady (TX)	DeFazio	Green, Al
Braley (IA)	DeLauro	Green, Gene
Bridenstine	DelBene	Griffin (AR)
Brooks (AL)	Denham	Griffith (VA)
Brooks (IN)	Dent	Grimm
Broun (GA)	DeSantis	Guthrie
Brownley (CA)	DesJarlais	Hahn
Buchanan	Diaz-Balart	Hall
Bucshon	Duckworth	Hanabusa
Burgess	Duffy	Hanna
Bustos	Duncan (SC)	Harper
Calvert	Duncan (TN)	Harris
Camp	Ellmers	Hartzler
Campbell	Enyart	Hastings (WA)
Cantor	Eshoo	Heck (NV)
Capito	Esty	Heck (WA)
Capps	Farenthold	Hensarling
Carney	Farr	Herrera Beutler
Carter	Fincher	Higgins
Cartwright	Fitzpatrick	Himes
Cassidy	Fleischmann	Hinojosa
Castro (TX)	Fleming	Holding

Honda
Horsford
Hudson
Huelskamp
Huizenga (MI)
Hultgren
Hunter
Hurt
Israel
Issa
Jackson Lee
Jenkins
Johnson (OH)
Johnson, Sam
Jones
Jordan
Joyce
Keating
Kelly (IL)
Kelly (PA)
Kilmer
Kind
King (IA)
King (NY)
Kingston
Kinzinger (IL)
Kirkpatrick
Kline
Kuster
Labrador
LaMalfa
Lamborn
Lance
Langevin
Lankford
Larson (CT)
Latham
Latta
Lipinski
LoBiondo
Loebsack
Lofgren
Long
Lowenthal
Lowey
Lucas
Luetkemeyer
Lujan Grisham (NM)
Luján, Ben Ray (NM)
Lummis
Lynch
Maffei
Maloney, Sean
Marchant
Marino
Markey
Massie
Matheson
McCarthy (CA)
McCaul
McClintock
McCollum
McHenry
McIntyre
McKeon
McKinley
McMorris Rodgers
McNerney
Meadows
Meehan
Meng
Messer
Mica
Michaud
Miller (FL)
Miller (MI)
Miller, Gary
Mullin
Mulvaney
Murphy (FL)
Murphy (PA)
Napolitano
Negrete McLeod
Neugebauer
Noem
Nolan
Nugent
Nunes
Nunnelee
O'Rourke
Olson
Owens
Palazzo
Pastor (AZ)
Paulsen
Perry
Peters (CA)
Peters (MI)
Peterson
Petri
Pittenger
Pitts
Poe (TX)
Polis
Pompeo
Posey
Price (GA)
Price (NC)
Quigley
Radel
Rahall
Rangel
Reed
Reichert
Renacci
Ribble
Rice (SC)
Rigell
Roby
Roe (TN)
Rogers (AL)
Rogers (KY)
Rogers (MI)
Rohrabacher
Rokita
Rooney
Ros-Lehtinen
Roskam
Ross
Rothfus
Royce
Ruiz
Runyan
Ruppersberger
Ryan (WI)
Salmon
Sanchez, Loretta
Scalise
Schiff
Schneider
Schock
Schrader
Schwartz
Schweikert
Scott, Austin
Sensenbrenner
Sessions
Sewell (AL)
Sherman
Shimkus
Shuster
Simpson
Sinema
Slaughter
Smith (NE)
Smith (NJ)
Smith (TX)
Southerland
Stewart
Stivers
Stockman
Stutzman
Swalwell (CA)
Takano
Terry
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (PA)
Thornberry
Tiberi
Tierney
Tipton
Titus
Tonko
Turner
Upton
Valadao
Van Hollen
Vargas
Veasey
Vela
Wagner
Walberg
Walden
Walorski
Walz
Waxman
Weber (TX)
Webster (FL)
Wenstrup
Westmoreland
Whitfield
Williams
Wilson (SC)
Wittman
Wolf
Womack
Woodall
Yoder
Yoho
Young (AK)
Young (FL)
Young (IN)

NAYS—84

Bass
Beatty
Becerra
Blumenauer
Brady (PA)
Brown (FL)
Butterfield
Capuano
Cárdenas
Carson (IN)
Castor (FL)
Clarke
Clay
Cleaver
Clyburn
Cohen
Conyers
Cummings
Davis, Danny
DeGette
Delaney
Deutch
Dingell
Doyle
Edwards
Ellison
Engel
Fattah
Fudge
Grayson
Grijalva
Gutierrez
Hastings (FL)
Holt
Hoyer
Huffman
Jeffries
Johnson (GA)
Johnson, E. B.
Kaptur
Kennedy
Kildee
Larsen (WA)
Lee (CA)
Levin
Lewis
Maloney, Carolyn
Matsui
McCarthy (NY)
McDermott
McGovern
Meeks
Miller, George
Moore
Moran
Nadler
Neal
Pallone
Pascrell
Payne
Pelosi
Perlmutter
Pocan
Richmond
Roybal-Allard
Rush
Sánchez, Linda T.
Sarbanes
Schakowsky
Scott (VA)
Scott, David
Serrano
Shea-Porter
Sires
Smith (WA)
Thompson (MS)
Velázquez
Visclosky
Wasserman Schultz
Waters
Watt
Welch
Wilson (FL)
Yarmuth

NOT VOTING—8

Davis (CA)
Doggett
Flores
Pearce
Pingree (ME)
Ryan (OH)
Speier
Tsongas

□ 1111

Mr. GUTIERREZ and Mrs. BEATTY changed their vote from ''yea'' to ''nay.''

Mrs. NEGRETE McLEOD, Mr. ISRAEL, Ms. LOFGREN, Mrs. CAPITO, Messrs. VELA, COURTNEY, BEN RAY LUJÁN of New Mexico, POLIS, HINOJOSA, HIGGINS, Ms. BONAMICI, Messrs. HONDA, and TIERNEY changed their vote from ''nay'' to ''yea.''

So the amendment was agreed to.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

Stated for:

Mrs. DAVIS of California. Madam Speaker, on rollcall No. 140, had I been present, I would have voted "yea."

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the engrossment and third reading of the bill.

The bill was ordered to be engrossed and read a third time, and was read the third time.

MOTION TO RECOMMIT

Mr. MAFFEI. Madam Speaker, I have a motion to recommit at the desk.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is the gentleman opposed to the bill?

Mr. MAFFEI. In its current form, I am.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Clerk will report the motion to recommit.

The Clerk read as follows:

Mr. Maffei moves to recommit the bill H.R. 807 to the Committee on Ways and Means with instructions to report the same back to the House forthwith with the following amendment:

Add at the end the following new section:

SEC. 3. PROHIBITION ON DEFAULT THAT PAYS CHINA FIRST INSTEAD OF PROTECTING AMERICA'S SENIORS, VETERANS, AND THOSE HARMED BY NATURAL DISASTERS.

This Act shall not take effect if it would result in the United States Government defaulting on its legal obligations for the first time in its history, as evidenced by the Secretary of the Treasury taking any of the following actions:

(1) Making payments of debt obligations to foreign bond holders, including those in China, Iran, and the Cayman Islands, before making payments of debt obligations required under chapter 31 of title 31, United States Code, for the Deposit Insurance Fund and the National Credit Union Share Insurance Fund, which insure savings for Americans.

(2) Failing to make a payment of a debt obligation to the Social Security and Medicare trust funds or redeem a debt obligation held by those trust funds.

(3) Failing to redeem a debt obligation held by a trust fund providing veterans benefits, including the Veterans Special Life Insurance Fund, the Veterans Reopened Insurance Fund, the Armed Forces Retirement Home Fund, and the Court of Veteran Appeals Retirement Fund.

(4) Failing to redeem a debt obligation held by an intragovernmental fund with the purpose of assisting Americans during a natural disaster, including reserves for the National Flood Insurance Program and other disaster relief funds appropriated to the President.

Mr. CAMP. Madam Speaker, I reserve a point of order against the motion to recommit.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. A point of order is reserved.

The gentleman from New York is recognized for 5 minutes in support of his motion.

Mr. MAFFEI. Madam Speaker, I am offering this amendment today as the final amendment, which will not kill the bill or send it back to committee. If adopted, the bill will immediately proceed to final passage, as amended.

Madam Speaker, the American people want us to work together—Republicans and Democrats—to reduce our debt, pay our bills, and avoid an economic catastrophe, which would result from default. But how can Democrats work with the Republican leaders of this House when their plan for America is to default?

Madam Speaker, Republicans today proved this by bringing forth this legislation, which presumes it will happen and maps out not if but what happens when the United States defaults.

Their plan ensures that foreign creditors such as China, Japan, and OPEC countries Iran and Saudi Arabia would continue to get paid while we halt other payments to groups of Americans who have earned those benefits. This bill prioritizes Chinese lenders ahead of American seniors and veterans and college students. That's why it's called the Pay China First Act.

The House Republican bill would stop pay for 1.4 million Active Duty troops and almost 800,000 activated Reserves and National Guards. It would end benefits for 3.4 million disabled Americans; eliminate education benefits and home purchasing assistance for 1.3 million veterans; put American small businesses that sell goods and services to the government on the hook for major losses; and stop payment to doctors and hospitals who take care of the 50 million Medicare patients around this country.

□ 1120

Madam Speaker, the Republican plan that we debate here today ignores the needs and priorities of the American people; and it does so, Madam Speaker, so that the Republican leadership can sidestep the political problem that, after being fully complicit in running up our Nation's credit card debt, their side doesn't want to pay the bill.

It strains the bounds of cynicism to think that any elected leaders would prioritize a policy of political convenience over the well-being of those injured from fighting for America's freedom; but that is what's happening today.

We need to come together as a Nation to fix our debt, and we need to do it in the right way, not on the backs of our middle class families and seniors, and certainly not by defaulting on the debt we owe our veterans.

Instead of finding ways to pay China first, we should be using this time to find a way to balance our budget and avoid defaulting on any of our obligations.

We should be working together to come up with a plan that addresses the very serious fiscal challenges facing this country. And these are not easy choices, but they are why our constituents sent us here, Democrats and Republicans, to answer the challenges of our time as our forebears did in theirs.

The brinksmanship that Congress has put us in time and time again has created uncertainty in the economy. It prevents economic growth. It stifles job creation.

This Republican plan will plunge our recovering economy back into a recession. It will raise unemployment. It might even freeze credit worldwide. It is a reckless plan to default for the first time in our Nation's history, and economists agree it will be devastating.

What this side is proposing is nothing but a plan to fail.

Madam Speaker, I didn't come here to plan to fail. I came here to focus on jobs and growth and a stronger middle class and promote a commonsense budget that's balanced and fair, that expands our economy and responsibly reduces deficit.

Instead of prioritizing China and foreign sovereign funds, we should be protecting our American troops who are in harm's way as we speak, our veterans; our seniors who rely on Medicare and Social Security; American small businesses; and college students who earned Pell Grants.

That's what this amendment does. It would stop the horrible consequences of default. It is a simple choice: plan to default on our debts or reject this plan and work together to avert catastrophe.

Which one will my Republican colleagues choose today?

Madam Speaker, above your august chair, and even above our great American Flag, the symbol of freedom, are the words: In God We Trust. And through good times and bad, that trust has been rewarded.

Madam Speaker, the American people, our seniors who depend on Medicare, our students who have worked hard to earn a Pell Grant to pay for college, our small businesses who have sold their wares to the Federal Government at a fair price, and our veterans who have sacrificed for our freedom, they have put their trust in us.

For 237 years, this Nation has paid its debts, not just some of them, like the ones to foreign creditors. Our forebears have always kept faith with the American people. They didn't pick and choose. They did their duty, and so must we.

Madam Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. CAMP. Madam Speaker, I withdraw my point of order and seek time in opposition to the motion.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The reservation is withdrawn.

The gentleman from Michigan is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. CAMP. Madam Speaker, you know, this body just spent the last hour listening to the other side saying how we can't default. But the irony of this motion to recommit is it actually mandates default. The irony of this motion is that it mandates default that would send our economy into a tailspin. It would ensure that nobody gets paid.

Vote ''no'' on this motion to recommit.

I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Without objection, the previous question is ordered on the motion to recommit.

There was no objection.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion to recommit.

The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the noes appeared to have it.

RECORDED VOTE

Mr. MAFFEI. Madam Speaker, I demand a recorded vote.

A recorded vote was ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. This is a 5-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—ayes 200, noes 227, not voting 5, as follows:

[Roll No. 141]

AYES—200

Andrews
Barber
Barrow (GA)
Bass
Beatty
Becerra
Bera (CA)
Bishop (GA)
Bishop (NY)
Blumenauer
Bonamici
Brady (PA)
Brown (FL)
Brownley (CA)
Bustos
Butterfield
Capps
Capuano
Cárdenas
Carney
Carson (IN)
Cartwright
Castor (FL)
Castro (TX)
Chu
Cicilline
Clarke
Clay
Cleaver
Clyburn
Cohen
Connolly
Conyers
Cooper
Costa
Courtney
Crowley
Cuellar
Cummings
Davis (CA)
Davis, Danny
DeFazio
DeGette
Delaney
DeLauro
DelBene
Deutch
Dingell
Doyle
Duckworth
Duncan (TN)
Edwards
Ellison
Engel
Enyart
Eshoo
Esty
Farr
Fattah
Foster
Frankel (FL)
Fudge
Gabbard
Gallego
Garamendi
Garcia
Grayson
Green, Al
Green, Gene
Grijalva
Gutierrez
Hahn
Hanabusa
Hastings (FL)
Heck (WA)
Higgins
Himes
Hinojosa
Holt
Honda
Horsford
Hoyer
Huffman
Israel
Jackson Lee
Jeffries
Johnson (GA)
Johnson, E. B.
Jones
Kaptur
Keating
Kennedy
Kildee
Kilmer
Kind
Kirkpatrick
Kuster
Langevin
Larsen (WA)
Larson (CT)
Lee (CA)
Levin
Lewis
Lipinski
Loebsack
Lofgren
Lowenthal
Lowey
Lujan Grisham (NM)
Luján, Ben Ray (NM)
Lynch
Maffei
Maloney, Carolyn
Maloney, Sean
Markey
Matheson
Matsui
McCarthy (NY)
McCollum
McDermott
McGovern
McIntyre
McNerney
Meeks
Meng
Michaud
Miller, George
Moore
Moran
Murphy (FL)
Nadler
Napolitano
Neal
Negrete McLeod
Nolan
O'Rourke
Owens
Pallone
Pascrell
Pastor (AZ)
Payne
Pelosi
Perlmutter
Peters (CA)
Peters (MI)
Peterson
Pingree (ME)
Pocan
Polis
Price (NC)
Quigley
Rahall
Rangel
Richmond
Roybal-Allard
Ruiz
Ruppersberger
Rush
Ryan (OH)
Sánchez, Linda T.
Sanchez, Loretta
Sarbanes
Schakowsky
Schiff
Schneider
Schrader
Schwartz
Scott (VA)
Scott, David
Serrano
Sewell (AL)
Shea-Porter
Sherman
Sinema
Sires
Slaughter
Smith (WA)
Speier
Swalwell (CA)
Takano
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)
Tierney
Titus
Tonko
Tsongas
Van Hollen
Vargas
Veasey
Vela
Velázquez
Visclosky
Walz
Wasserman Schultz
Waters
Watt
Waxman
Welch
Wilson (FL)
Yarmuth

NOES—227

Aderholt
Alexander
Amash
Amodei
Bachmann
Bachus
Barletta
Barr
Barton
Benishek
Bentivolio
Bilirakis
Bishop (UT)
Black
Blackburn
Bonner
Boustany
Brady (TX)
Bridenstine
Brooks (AL)
Brooks (IN)
Broun (GA)
Buchanan
Bucshon
Burgess
Calvert
Camp
Campbell
Cantor
Capito
Carter
Cassidy
Chabot
Chaffetz
Coble
Coffman
Cole
Collins (GA)
Collins (NY)
Conaway
Cook
Cotton
Cramer
Crawford
Crenshaw
Culberson
Daines
Davis, Rodney
Denham
Dent
DeSantis
DesJarlais
Diaz-Balart
Duffy
Duncan (SC)
Ellmers
Farenthold
Fincher
Fitzpatrick
Fleischmann
Fleming
Forbes
Fortenberry
Foxx
Franks (AZ)
Frelinghuysen
Gardner
Garrett
Gerlach
Gibbs
Gibson
Gingrey (GA)
Gohmert
Goodlatte
Gosar
Gowdy
Granger
Graves (GA)
Graves (MO)
Griffin (AR)
Griffith (VA)
Grimm
Guthrie
Hall
Hanna
Harper
Harris
Hartzler
Hastings (WA)
Heck (NV)
Hensarling
Herrera Beutler
Holding
Hudson
Huelskamp
Huizenga (MI)
Hultgren
Hunter
Hurt
Issa
Jenkins
Johnson (OH)
Johnson, Sam
Jordan
Joyce
Kelly (PA)
King (IA)
King (NY)
Kingston
Kinzinger (IL)
Kline
Labrador
LaMalfa
Lamborn
Lance
Lankford
Latham
Latta
LoBiondo
Long
Lucas
Luetkemeyer
Lummis
Marchant
Marino
Massie
McCarthy (CA)
McCaul
McClintock
McHenry
McKeon
McKinley
McMorris Rodgers
Meadows
Meehan
Messer
Mica
Miller (FL)
Miller (MI)
Miller, Gary
Mullin
Mulvaney
Murphy (PA)
Neugebauer
Noem
Nugent
Nunes
Nunnelee
Olson
Palazzo
Paulsen
Perry
Petri
Pittenger
Pitts
Poe (TX)
Pompeo
Posey
Price (GA)
Radel
Reed
Reichert
Renacci
Ribble
Rice (SC)
Rigell
Roby
Roe (TN)
Rogers (AL)
Rogers (KY)
Rogers (MI)
Rohrabacher
Rokita
Rooney
Ros-Lehtinen
Roskam
Ross
Rothfus
Royce
Runyan
Ryan (WI)
Salmon
Scalise
Schock
Schweikert
Scott, Austin
Sensenbrenner
Sessions
Shimkus
Shuster
Simpson
Smith (NE)
Smith (NJ)
Smith (TX)
Southerland
Stewart
Stivers
Stockman
Stutzman
Terry
Thompson (PA)
Thornberry
Tiberi
Tipton
Turner
Upton
Valadao
Wagner
Walberg
Walden
Walorski
Weber (TX)
Webster (FL)
Wenstrup
Westmoreland
Whitfield
Williams
Wilson (SC)
Wittman
Wolf
Womack
Woodall
Yoder
Yoho
Young (AK)
Young (FL)
Young (IN)

NOT VOTING—5

Braley (IA)
Doggett
Flores
Kelly (IL)
Pearce

□ 1132

So the motion to recommit was rejected.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

Stated for:

Mr. BRALEY of Iowa. Madam Speaker, on rollcall No. 141 had I been present, I would have voted "aye."

Ms. KELLY of Illinois. Madam Speaker, on rollcall No. 141 I was unavoidably detained. Had I been present, I would have voted "aye."

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the passage of the bill.

The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

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

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. This is a 5-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 221, nays 207, not voting 4, as follows:

[Roll No. 142]

YEAS—221

Aderholt
Alexander
Amodei
Bachmann
Bachus
Barletta
Barr
Barton
Benishek
Bentivolio
Bilirakis
Bishop (UT)
Black
Blackburn
Bonner
Boustany
Brady (TX)
Bridenstine
Brooks (AL)
Brooks (IN)
Broun (GA)
Buchanan
Bucshon
Burgess
Calvert
Camp
Campbell
Cantor
Capito
Carter
Cassidy
Chabot
Chaffetz
Coble
Coffman
Cole
Collins (GA)
Collins (NY)
Conaway
Cook
Cotton
Cramer
Crawford
Crenshaw
Culberson
Daines
Davis, Rodney
Denham
DeSantis
DesJarlais
Diaz-Balart
Duffy
Duncan (SC)
Duncan (TN)
Ellmers
Farenthold
Fincher
Fitzpatrick
Fleischmann
Fleming
Forbes
Fortenberry
Foxx
Franks (AZ)
Frelinghuysen
Gardner
Garrett
Gerlach
Gibbs
Gingrey (GA)
Gohmert
Goodlatte
Gosar
Gowdy
Granger
Graves (GA)
Graves (MO)
Griffin (AR)
Griffith (VA)
Guthrie
Hall
Hanna
Harper
Harris
Hartzler
Hastings (WA)
Heck (NV)
Hensarling
Herrera Beutler
Holding
Hudson
Huelskamp
Huizenga (MI)
Hultgren
Hunter
Hurt
Issa
Jenkins
Johnson (OH)
Johnson, Sam
Jordan
Joyce
Kelly (PA)
King (IA)
King (NY)
Kingston
Kinzinger (IL)
Kline
Labrador
LaMalfa
Lamborn
Lance
Lankford
Latham
Latta
Long
Lucas
Luetkemeyer
Lummis
Marchant
Marino
McCarthy (CA)
McCaul
McClintock
McHenry
McKeon
McKinley
McMorris Rodgers
Meadows
Meehan
Messer
Mica
Miller (FL)
Miller (MI)
Miller, Gary
Mullin
Mulvaney
Murphy (PA)
Neugebauer
Noem
Nugent
Nunes
Nunnelee
Olson
Palazzo
Paulsen
Perry
Petri
Pittenger
Pitts
Poe (TX)
Pompeo
Posey
Price (GA)
Radel
Reed
Reichert
Renacci
Ribble
Rice (SC)
Rigell
Roby
Roe (TN)
Rogers (AL)
Rogers (KY)
Rogers (MI)
Rohrabacher
Rokita
Rooney
Ros-Lehtinen
Roskam
Ross
Rothfus
Royce
Runyan
Ryan (WI)
Salmon
Scalise
Schock
Schweikert
Scott, Austin
Sensenbrenner
Sessions
Shimkus
Shuster
Simpson
Smith (NE)
Smith (NJ)
Smith (TX)
Southerland
Stewart
Stivers
Stockman
Stutzman
Terry
Thompson (PA)
Thornberry
Tiberi
Tipton
Turner
Upton
Valadao
Wagner
Walberg
Walden
Walorski
Weber (TX)
Webster (FL)
Wenstrup
Westmoreland
Whitfield
Williams
Wilson (SC)
Wittman
Womack
Woodall
Yoder
Yoho
Young (AK)
Young (FL)
Young (IN)

NAYS—207

Amash
Andrews
Barber
Barrow (GA)
Bass
Beatty
Becerra
Bera (CA)
Bishop (GA)
Bishop (NY)
Blumenauer
Bonamici
Brady (PA)
Braley (IA)
Brown (FL)
Brownley (CA)
Bustos
Butterfield
Capps
Capuano
Cárdenas
Carney
Carson (IN)
Cartwright
Castor (FL)
Castro (TX)
Chu
Cicilline
Clarke
Clay
Cleaver
Clyburn
Cohen
Connolly
Conyers
Cooper
Costa
Courtney
Crowley
Cuellar
Cummings
Davis (CA)
Davis, Danny
DeFazio
DeGette
Delaney
DeLauro
DelBene
Dent
Deutch
Dingell
Doyle
Duckworth
Edwards
Ellison
Engel
Enyart
Eshoo
Esty
Farr
Fattah
Foster
Frankel (FL)
Fudge
Gabbard
Gallego
Garamendi
Garcia
Gibson
Grayson
Green, Al
Green, Gene
Grijalva
Grimm
Gutierrez
Hahn
Hanabusa
Hastings (FL)
Heck (WA)
Higgins
Himes
Hinojosa
Holt
Honda
Horsford
Hoyer
Huffman
Israel
Jackson Lee
Jeffries
Johnson (GA)
Johnson, E. B.
Jones
Kaptur
Keating
Kelly (IL)
Kennedy
Kildee
Kilmer
Kind
Kirkpatrick
Kuster
Langevin
Larsen (WA)
Larson (CT)
Lee (CA)
Levin
Lewis
Lipinski
LoBiondo
Loebsack
Lofgren
Lowenthal
Lowey
Lujan Grisham (NM)
Luján, Ben Ray (NM)
Lynch
Maffei
Maloney, Carolyn
Maloney, Sean
Markey
Massie
Matheson
Matsui
McCarthy (NY)
McCollum
McDermott
McGovern
McIntyre
McNerney
Meeks
Meng
Michaud
Miller, George
Moore
Moran
Murphy (FL)
Nadler
Napolitano
Neal
Negrete McLeod
Nolan
O'Rourke
Owens
Pallone
Pascrell
Pastor (AZ)
Payne
Pelosi
Perlmutter
Peters (CA)
Peters (MI)
Pingree (ME)
Pocan
Polis
Price (NC)
Quigley
Rahall
Rangel
Richmond
Roybal-Allard
Ruiz
Ruppersberger
Rush
Ryan (OH)
Sánchez, Linda T.
Sanchez, Loretta
Sarbanes
Schakowsky
Schiff
Schneider
Schrader
Schwartz
Scott (VA)
Scott, David
Serrano
Sewell (AL)
Shea-Porter
Sherman
Sinema
Sires
Slaughter
Smith (WA)
Speier
Swalwell (CA)
Takano
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)
Tierney
Titus
Tonko
Tsongas
Van Hollen
Vargas
Veasey
Vela
Velázquez
Visclosky
Walz
Wasserman Schultz
Waters
Watt
Waxman
Welch
Wilson (FL)
Wolf
Yarmuth

NOT VOTING—4

Doggett
Flores
Pearce
Peterson

□ 1139

So the bill was passed.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The unfinished business is the question on agreeing to the Speaker's approval of the Journal, on which the yeas and nays were ordered.

The question is on the Speaker's approval of the Journal.

This will be a 5-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 264, nays 140, answered ''present'' 1, not voting 27, as follows:

[Roll No. 143]

YEAS—264

Aderholt
Alexander
Amodei
Bachmann
Bachus
Barber
Barletta
Barr
Barrow (GA)
Barton
Becerra
Bentivolio
Bera (CA)
Bilirakis
Bishop (UT)
Black
Blackburn
Blumenauer
Bonamici
Bonner
Boustany
Brady (TX)
Braley (IA)
Bridenstine
Brooks (AL)
Brooks (IN)
Brown (FL)
Brownley (CA)
Buchanan
Bucshon
Bustos
Calvert
Camp
Campbell
Cantor
Capito
Capps
Cárdenas
Carney
Carter
Cartwright
Cassidy
Castro (TX)
Chabot
Cicilline
Clay
Coble
Cole
Collins (NY)
Cook
Cooper
Cramer
Crenshaw
Cuellar
Culberson
Cummings
Daines
Davis (CA)
Davis, Danny
DeGette
Delaney
DeLauro
DelBene
DesJarlais
Deutch
Diaz-Balart
Doyle
Duncan (SC)
Duncan (TN)
Edwards
Ellison
Ellmers
Engel
Enyart
Eshoo
Esty
Farenthold
Farr
Fattah
Fincher
Fleischmann
Fortenberry
Foster
Frankel (FL)
Frelinghuysen
Gabbard
Gallego
Garrett
Gibbs
Goodlatte
Gosar
Gowdy
Granger
Grayson
Grimm
Guthrie
Gutierrez
Hahn
Hall
Hanabusa
Harper
Harris
Hastings (WA)
Heck (WA)
Higgins
Himes
Hinojosa
Holt
Horsford
Huelskamp
Huffman
Hurt
Issa
Johnson (GA)
Johnson, Sam
Kaptur
Keating
Kelly (PA)
Kennedy
Kildee
King (NY)
Kingston
Kline
Kuster
Labrador
LaMalfa
Lamborn
Langevin
Lankford
Larsen (WA)
Latta
Lipinski
Loebsack
Lofgren
Long
Lowey
Lucas
Luetkemeyer
Lujan Grisham (NM)
Luján, Ben Ray (NM)
Lummis
Marchant
Marino
Massie
McCarthy (CA)
McCarthy (NY)
McCaul
McClintock
McCollum
McHenry
McKeon
McKinley
McNerney
Meadows
Meeks
Messer
Mica
Michaud
Miller (FL)
Miller (MI)
Miller, Gary
Moran
Mullin
Mulvaney
Murphy (FL)
Murphy (PA)
Nadler
Napolitano
Neugebauer
Noem
Nugent
Nunes
Nunnelee
O'Rourke
Olson
Payne
Pelosi
Perlmutter
Perry
Peters (CA)
Petri
Pingree (ME)
Pocan
Polis
Pompeo
Posey
Price (NC)
Rangel
Reichert
Ribble
Rice (SC)
Richmond
Roby
Roe (TN)
Rogers (AL)
Rogers (KY)
Rogers (MI)
Rokita
Ros-Lehtinen
Roskam
Ross
Rothfus
Roybal-Allard
Royce
Ruiz
Runyan
Ruppersberger
Ryan (WI)
Scalise
Schiff
Schneider
Schrader
Schwartz
Schweikert
Scott (VA)
Scott, Austin
Scott, David
Sensenbrenner
Serrano
Sessions

Sewell (AL)
Shea-Porter
Sherman
Shuster
Simpson
Sinema
Smith (NE)
Smith (NJ)
Smith (TX)
Smith (WA)
Speier
Stewart
Stutzman
Swalwell (CA)
Takano
Thompson (CA)
Thornberry
Titus
Tonko
Tsongas
Upton
Van Hollen
Vargas
Vela
Wagner
Walden
Walorski
Walz
Wasserman Schultz
Waters
Watt
Weber (TX)
Webster (FL)
Welch
Westmoreland
Williams
Wilson (FL)
Wilson (SC)
Wittman
Wolf
Womack
Yarmuth
Young (FL)
Young (IN)

NAYS—140

Amash
Andrews
Bass
Beatty
Benishek
Bishop (NY)
Brady (PA)
Broun (GA)
Burgess
Carson (IN)
Castor (FL)
Chaffetz
Chu
Clarke
Cleaver
Clyburn
Coffman
Collins (GA)
Conaway
Connolly
Conyers
Costa
Cotton
Courtney
Crawford
Crowley
Davis, Rodney
DeFazio
Denham
Dent
DeSantis
Dingell
Duckworth
Duffy
Fitzpatrick
Fleming
Foxx
Fudge
Garamendi
Garcia
Gardner
Gerlach
Gibson
Gingrey (GA)
Graves (GA)
Graves (MO)
Green, Al
Green, Gene
Griffin (AR)
Griffith (VA)
Hartzler
Hastings (FL)
Heck (NV)
Herrera Beutler
Honda
Hoyer
Hudson
Huizenga (MI)
Hunter
Israel
Jackson Lee
Jeffries
Jenkins
Johnson (OH)
Johnson, E. B.
Jones
Jordan
Joyce
Kelly (IL)
Kilmer
Kind
Kinzinger (IL)
Kirkpatrick
Lance
Latham
Lee (CA)
Levin
Lewis
LoBiondo
Lynch
Maffei
Maloney, Carolyn
Maloney, Sean
Markey
Matheson
Matsui
McDermott
McIntyre
Meehan
Meng
Miller, George
Moore
Neal
Negrete McLeod
Nolan
Palazzo
Pallone
Pastor (AZ)
Paulsen
Peters (MI)
Peterson
Pittenger
Poe (TX)
Price (GA)
Radel
Rahall
Reed
Renacci
Rigell
Rohrabacher
Rooney
Rush
Ryan (OH)
Salmon
Sánchez, Linda T.
Sanchez, Loretta
Sarbanes
Schakowsky
Schock
Sires
Slaughter
Southerland
Stivers
Stockman
Terry
Thompson (MS)
Thompson (PA)
Tiberi
Tipton
Turner
Valadao
Veasey
Velázquez
Visclosky
Walberg
Wenstrup
Woodall
Yoder
Yoho
Young (AK)

ANSWERED ''PRESENT''—1

Owens

NOT VOTING—27

Bishop (GA)
Butterfield
Capuano
Cohen
Doggett
Flores
Forbes
Franks (AZ)
Gohmert
Grijalva
Hanna
Hensarling
Holding
Hultgren
King (IA)
Larson (CT)
Lowenthal
McGovern
McMorris Rodgers
Pascrell
Pearce
Pitts
Quigley
Shimkus
Tierney
Waxman
Whitfield

□ 1147

Mrs. BEATTY changed her vote from ''yea'' to ''nay.''

So the Journal was approved.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

Stated for:

Mr. FLORES. Mr. Speaker, I missed rollcall vote 142 to H.R. 807 taken on May 9, 2013. Had I been present for this vote, I would have voted "aye."

I was not present for this vote due to a speaking engagement at Texas A&M University.

Mr. PEARCE. Mr. Speaker, on rollcall No. 142, I am not recorded because I was absent from the House of Representatives for personal reasons. Had I been present, I would have voted "yea."

MESSAGE FROM THE SENATE

A message from the Senate by Ms. Curtis, one of its clerks, announced that the Senate has agreed to without amendment a concurrent resolution of the House of the following title:

H. Con. Res. 32. Concurrent resolution authorizing the use of the Capitol Grounds for the National Honor Guard and Pipe Band Exhibition.

The message also announced that the Senate has a passed bill of the following title in which the concurrence of the House is requested:

S. 622. An act to amend the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act to reauthorize user fee programs relating to new animal drugs and generic new animal drugs.

□ 1150

LEGISLATIVE PROGRAM

(Mr. HOYER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. BRADY) for the purposes of inquiring of the schedule for the week to come. Mr. BRADY, as I understand, is the designee of the majority leader, and I welcome and appreciate his participation.

Mr. BRADY of Texas. First, I thank the gentleman from Maryland, the Democratic whip, for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, on Monday, the House will meet at 2 p.m. in pro forma session. On Tuesday, the House will meet at noon for morning hour and 2 p.m. for legislative business. Votes will be postponed until 6:30 p.m. On Wednesday and Thursday, the House will meet at 10 a.m. for morning hour and at noon for legislative business. On Friday, the House will meet at 9 a.m. for legislative business. Last votes of the week are expected no later than 3 p.m.

Mr. Speaker, the House will consider a few suspensions on Tuesday and Wednesday, a complete list of which will be announced by the close of business tomorrow.

In addition, Mr. Speaker, I expect the House to consider H.R. 45, a bill sponsored by Representative MICHELE BACHMANN, to fully repeal ObamaCare.

We will also consider H.R. 1062, the SEC Regulatory Accountability Act, authored by Representative SCOTT GARRETT. This bill requires the SEC to conduct cost benefit analysis on any rulemaking to ensure that the benefits outweigh the costs.

Mr. HOYER. I thank the gentleman for that information and, again, I want to thank him. I know that the majority leader could not be here and he's filling in, and I appreciate the fact that he is doing so.

Mr. BRADY, I notice that there is not on the notice for the schedule for next week any reference about a motion to go to conference on the budget. As you know, the Senate has now passed a budget, which it had not done for some years. Your side, in particular, but all of us wanted the Senate to pass a budget. They have now passed a budget. We passed a budget. We would hope on this side of the aisle that we would now go to conference.

I'm wondering whether the gentleman can—in light of the fact that it is regular order that two sides pass, now try to compromise the differences that exist between the two Houses—can the gentleman tell me whether or not there is a plan to go to conference and, if so, what that schedule might be? And I yield to my friend.

Mr. BRADY of Texas. Thank you. As you know, Chairman RYAN and Chairman MURRAY are in discussions about the budget. It is I think encouraging that for the first time in 4 years this is actually occurring, the Senate has finally passed a budget.

But we know both sides take a considerably different view toward our financial budget future. These talks are aimed at sort of narrowing those differences. We certainly don't want to short-circuit those discussions because we're all encouraged.

Mr. HOYER. I appreciate the fact that you're encouraged. Frankly, our side has not heard an encouraging word. In fact, we continue to hear discouraging words, as the song says.

I'm very hopeful we can bridge the gap that exists, which is about $100 billion, as the gentleman knows. The Senate marked $1.058 trillion, which of course was consistent with the Budget Control Act that we agreed upon, we voted on, and passed. The President signed the Budget Control Act, including that figure for the fiscal year '14 budget. The Ryan budget, as you know reflects a $966 billion 302 allocation; that is, general discretionary spending levels.

I'm wondering when you say you're encouraged, do you know whether there's been any progress toward trying to bridge that gap? Obviously, as a former appropriator, many times it's 50/50 you come to the middle, which would be about $1 trillion or a little more than that. I'm wondering whether or not the gentleman knows whether any progress has been made on that? And I yield to my friend.

Mr. BRADY of Texas. Thank you for yielding. As you know, there are significant differences. The Senate budget includes over $1 trillion in new tax hikes on small businesses and families, which would be very damaging for the economy. The Senate Democrat bill adds I think about $8 trillion to the deficit and doesn't take what we think are critical steps to saving Social Security and Medicare over the long haul. That's why these discussions, I think, are so critical.

Again, I'm encouraged that both sides are discussing them, trying to

find a way to narrow them, and we ought to give them time to be able to continue those discussions.

Mr. HOYER. I thank the gentleman.

Just let me observe that on our side we think it would be useful if the American public had the opportunity to, in effect, see the discussions in a conference. I've been here long enough to remember when we had conferences on the Appropriations Committee. They were open to the public. They were reported on. We had discussions about the differences that existed, as one would expect, from people elected from different parts of the country and with different views. But we think it would be very helpful if those discussions were held, because the differences are pretty profound and pretty significant, that it would help the public to have a better understanding of the process.

In addition, as the gentleman knows, of course, there was some discussion about the President's coming down late with his budget. We should have been through the budget process by now so that the Appropriations Committee could proceed with its allocations to its 12 subcommittees.

In that context, I would ask the gentleman, does the gentleman have any idea when the appropriations bills might be marked up and brought to the floor? As you know, under regular order, for the most part, we have brought appropriations bills to the floor starting in mid-May or the last week in May so that we could get through that process in June and July and send those bills to the Senate so that we might have conferences and complete our work by October 1.

And I yield to my friend.

Mr. BRADY of Texas. Thank you for yielding. I agree with you about the importance of moving our appropriations bill.

The majority leader has announced we will begin the process of funding our government in June through an open appropriation, and through those appropriation seasons will work with the Appropriations Committee to determine which bills will come to the floor in June, as we have continued to do for the last number of years.

Mr. HOYER. Well, I appreciate that and I look forward to the consideration of the appropriations bills on the floor.

I want to say that for the most part you have followed open rules, which we did as well in 2007 until we just couldn't get the bills done in a timely fashion. Hopefully, we can do that, because I think that, again, it gives the public the opportunity to see the priorities of not only each Member but both sides moving forward. I think that's appropriate in a democracy. I appreciate the fact that the majority leader intends to bring those bills to the floor starting in June. I'm not sure whether we can finish all 12 in June, but perhaps finish those in July.

We did not bring, as the gentleman knows, the Labor and Health bill to the full committee in the last cycle, much less to the floor. That bill will be tough.

Chairman ROGERS—I know the gentleman is on a committee that he believes is more important. He and I may differ in that perception. He's a member of the Ways and Means Committee, I was a former member of the Appropriations Committee. But, nonetheless, Mr. ROGERS has made the observation, in terms of the dollars allocated in the Ryan budget for discretionary spending, both on the defense side and nondefense side:

> I suspect there will be some who will be shocked. I don't think people yet understand how severe the numbers will be.

Those numbers refer to the $966 billion in discretionary spending, which will require deep cuts in almost every program on the national defense side and on the discretionary side.

So, the sooner we get to that, because I think it's going to be a difficult process, the better. And I appreciate your information with reference to the majority leader's intent to bring them to the floor.

Now, I also did not see on the schedule, Mr. BRADY, anything that deals with the sequester. I do see the Affordable Care Act repeal on the floor next week, which has been, of course, on this floor some 33, 34, 35 times before, to repeal it. We're having another repeal vote coming up. I think honestly you believe, as I believe, that that bill is not going to go anywhere, other than perhaps through the House of Representatives, but, beyond that, it won't go anywhere.

However, the sequester continues to be an ongoing challenge to our country, to our government, and to our people. We dealt with it in a sort of surgical fashion dealing with the FAA, but we have not dealt with any of the other concerns. As the gentleman knows, I have concerns about the fact the sequester may result in 70,000 children not being on Head Start. They are only 3 or 4 years of age once.

□ 1200

The Social Security Administration may have to furlough payments, which will slow down payments of Social Security. There are 4 million fewer Meals on Wheels for seniors. There are 600,000 people who have been dropped off the Women, Infants, and Children program. There are 125,000 fewer HUD rental assistance vouchers for people who are homeless or who are struggling to keep a home. Unemployment insurance has been cut 11 percent for 2 million out-of-work Americans. We now have no safety net for them. The FDA will have 2,100 fewer food safety inspectors—that's down 18 percent—obviously, putting at risk our food safety; and we will furlough an equivalent to 1,000 fewer Federal agents, FBI—we know from the Boston Marathon bombings how critical the FBI was—and border security. One-third of combat air units have been grounded.

I mention all of those simply in the context of those consequences of the sequester. I see it's not on next week, and we have a week after that that we'll be in session. Does the gentleman have any information with reference to whether or not we will deal with trying to ameliorate these adverse consequences of sequester before we leave here for the Memorial Day break?

And I yield to my friend.

Mr. BRADY of Texas. Thank you for yielding. As you may remember, the President proposed this sequester originally in discussions about the budget and has threatened to veto any legislative efforts to turn off that sequester. Perhaps that's why Republicans, Democrats, and the President recently signed legislation that locks in those lower spending levels for the remainder of the budget year, and Congress has provided the administration the flexibility to cut funding from the nonpriority provisions, areas, of the budget so we can prioritize those important areas that you discussed.

As we all remember, what the sequester did was take, in effect, a 500-pound government and insisted that it lose 10 pounds. That's what the sequester does—a minor amount but important because this Nation is running such dangerously high deficits.

So, clearly, there is bipartisan agreement on the spending levels for the budget for the rest of the year. I think that's the regular appropriations process that Chairman ROGERS is bringing forward in which we'll have a chance, Republicans and Democrats, to amend it, to get our ideas to the floor. I think that adds extra importance to that process.

Mr. HOYER. I thank the gentleman for his comments; but I do want to observe that the President of the United States has offered a budget which eliminates the sequester and gets to a budget deficit reduction and fiscal sustainability in an alternative way which we think is much more positive.

I would also remind the gentleman that CHRIS VAN HOLLEN, the ranking member of the Budget Committee, offered an alternative which gets rid of the sequester, which all sides agree is an irrational process in that it cuts the highest priority and lowest priority the same. The sequester, as the gentleman knows, was put in a bill to force action with the specific belief and premise that the sequester was so bad, so irrational, so lacking in common sense, so negative in its impact that it would never be adopted. Sadly, it was adopted.

I want to say also that the gentleman and a lot of his colleagues like to mention that this is the President's suggestion. With all due respect, Jack Lew brought it up with Mr. REID, and everybody has read about that in Mr. Woodward's book. He brought it up, however—and the gentleman probably recalls this—days after sequester, as a policy, was included in the Cut, Cap, and Balance bill for which 229 Republicans voted for as a policy. I want to

tell the gentleman just for his future information, on our side, we are opposed to the sequester. We want to see the sequester changed.

Mr. VAN HOLLEN not only offered a budget, but he offered four amendments. Each time we considered the CR and other legislation, four times he offered an amendment to substitute the same savings so we would get to those budget deficit reductions to which the gentleman spoke, but would not do so in the irrational, across-the-board fashion that sequester requires.

So I want to make it clear, if there was any confusion on your side of the aisle, we are not for the sequester. I voted for the CR to keep the government open, but I voted against the CR, when it left this House, which had sequester in there. I, frankly, thought shutting down the government was even worse than the sequester, but I think the sequester is having a harmful effect, not only on government, but a harmful effect on our economy. I think it's a drip, drip, drip. It wasn't a ''shut the door.'' It wasn't black and white. It wasn't overnight, but it is a drip, drip, drip that is harming our economy.

I understand what the gentleman has told us, but I would hope that we would seriously consider trying to see if we could reach agreement either outside the context of the budget conference or inside the context of the budget conference that would give us an alternative which would be more rational, more positive, and more helpful to our economy.

The next subject is simply the debt ceiling. We just passed a bill on the prioritization. We unanimously opposed that on our side. We think that is not a good policy. Obviously, there is a disagreement on that. May 19 is the date that the debt ceiling extension expires.

Can the gentleman tell me whether there is any proposal to act in the near future other than on debt prioritization, which will have no chance in the Senate and is roundly opposed by many Republican economists, as the gentleman knows, and by the former economic adviser to the Bush administration, who said that it would not work, should not work? Can the gentleman tell me whether there is any alternative plan, before we leave here for the Memorial Day break, to give confidence to the economy and to creditors and to the American people that we will deal responsibly with the debt limit extension?

And I yield to my friend.

Mr. BRADY of Texas. Well, thank you for yielding. I was disappointed in today's action in the sense that I think it is dangerous to flirt with default. America ought to pay its debt, and we ought to reassure investors here at home—our local retirement funds that have bought U.S. Treasury, the Social Security trust fund, itself, that gets paid back interest, as well as other investors—that America will not default. I was disappointed this was made a partisan issue when, in fact, I think flirting with it and getting to the brink has really been damaging to our economy, and I think choosing for default was a mistake by your colleagues.

I am hopeful that the Senate will take it up and that there will be a more bipartisan effort to assure that we are going to actually pay our bills and then focus on the real problem, which is dangerously high deficits, the fact that we're not acting now to save Social Security and Medicare—such critical programs.

In the House, we've begun the discussions to identify what those priorities are to move us back toward a balanced budget without raising taxes on local families and businesses. We've begun the process of identifying good, positive ideas that would restore confidence in America's financial future, and we think it is important this moves along in a very deliberate, timely manner so that we don't end up with an 11th-hour issue.

I think this is a reasonable, appropriate way to deal with a huge, dramatically larger debt borrowing amount than America has ever seen—so many trillions piled up in the last few years and more piling up for the future. We don't think the answer is taking more of what people earn; it is Congress coming together, Republicans and Democrats, and finding a way to get our financial house in order, move back toward a balanced budget and act to save Social Security and Medicare.

Mr. HOYER. I thank the gentleman. Of course, we did have a balanced budget, as you'll remember, for the last 4 years of the Clinton administration. Now, there was a Republican-controlled Congress; but in the next 4 years, there was a Republican-controlled Congress, a Republican-controlled Senate, and a Republican President, and we went deeply into debt.

□ 1210

We escalated the debt during the Bush administration by 87 percent of GDP more than this President has escalated the deficit. In nominal terms, as Mr. CAMP observed before, the dollars are higher. That's true. It's because we are bigger, spending more money, making more money as a country. GDP is up.

During the Reagan administration, we increased the debt as a percentage of the national GDP by 186 percent; 55 percent under George Bush; 37 percent under Mr. Clinton; and some 40-plus percent under this President today.

So I think the gentleman and I agree that we need to get a handle on the debt and the deficit, but we disagree on how this happened. It happened because we didn't pay our bills, and we jettisoned PAYGO in 2003. As a practical matter, we jettisoned it in 2001.

Not paying for things is what creates debt, not buying. If I buy things and I pay for them, I don't have a debt. If I buy things and don't pay for them, I have a debt.

So it's not a question of what I buy, although clearly we need to restrain buying and we need to constrain spending, as I've said, all across the board—the gentleman has heard me—including entitlements, including discretionary defense and nondefense spending. But what we ought to do is manage our finances in a way that does not give pause to the American people or to the economy.

I want to just read for you a quote. Keith Hennessy was George Bush's National Economic Council director who disagrees with your proposition that this prioritization will in any way stabilize—I don't think the gentleman disagrees with me that that bill is not going to pass the Senate. Here's what Keith Hennessy said:

> Payment prioritization doesn't stop payments; it just delays them. Then the aggrieved party sues the government and probably wins, and it turns into a bloody mess.

Tony Fratto, who was the spokesman on economic policy in the Bush administration said this:

> Prioritization is impossible. Is the government really going to be in the position of withholding benefits, salaries, rent, contract payments, et cetera, in order to pay off Treasury bondholders?

We refer to this, of course, as the Pay China First bill. And China ought to be paid. We borrowed money from them; we ought to pay them.

Here's what he concludes of the prioritization bill:

> That would be a political catastrophe.

I suggest it would be an economic catastrophe, as well, to say to our armed services personnel, We're not going to pay you, but we are going to pay China for our debts.

The fact of the matter is the United States is the most creditworthy Nation on Earth. We ought to pay all of our debts and not on a priority status. If we owe you as the United States of America, we're going to pay you. That's our proposition. We should not prioritize paying simply bondholders, but paying smaller contractors we are doing business with who offer us services and products and we don't pay them until after we pay our bondholders. We ought to pay everybody. That's what America is about.

So I would hope that we could revisit this because your debt prioritization is not going to pass. You know it's not going to pass. We need to get to a responsible way of dealing with the debt-limit extension.

Both parties, I will tell my friend, have demagogued on this issue. We demagogued on it when we had a Republican President; you've demagogued on it—not you personally. I cast no aspersions. But both sides have demagogued on it when the President was of the other party. It's a shame. It's not been good for our country.

Ronald Reagan said that Congress continues to run us up. And we ran us up so close last time that for the first time in history, the United States of America was downgraded by one of our

rating agencies. I would hope the gentleman who serves on the Ways and Means Committee and I and others could work together so this doesn't happen again, that we make sure that the American people and that all of our creditors and people around the world know that the United States of America can and will handle its finances in a responsible fashion.

If the gentleman wants to say anything further, I'll yield back to him; if not, I yield back the balance of my time.

ADJOURNMENT FROM THURSDAY, MAY 9, 2013, TO MONDAY, MAY 13, 2013

Mr. BRADY of Texas. I ask unanimous consent that when the House adjourns today, it adjourn to meet at 2 p.m. on Monday next and that the order of the House of January 3, 2013, regarding morning-hour debate not apply on that day.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. VALADAO). Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Texas?

There was no objection.

HONORING DR. SHIRLEY TILGHMAN

(Mr. LANCE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. LANCE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Dr. Shirley Tilghman for her distinguished service as the 19th president of Princeton University.

Dr. Tilghman will step down this spring following 12 years of exceptional leadership. As the first woman to serve as president of Princeton, she is a role model for the campus community and young women and men across the country and throughout the world.

During her tenure, Dr. Tilghman, a molecular biologist, set in motion a number of significant initiatives. Princeton increased its financial aid offerings significantly, raising the percentage of students who receive aid and making Princeton's program one of the most generous in the country.

Dr. Tilghman has also worked diligently to bolster the university's academic offerings, overseeing the creation of the Lewis Center for the Arts, the Center for African American Studies, the Princeton Neuroscience Institute, and the Andlinger Center for Energy and the Environment.

As a proud Princeton alumnus, it is an honor to recognize Dr. Tilghman today. May the university continue to be guided by Woodrow Wilson's 1896 words, true also of President Tilghman's labors: ''Princeton in the Nation's service,'' and now expanded to include in the service of all nations.

Our congratulations to Dr. Shirley Tilghman.

NURSES WEEK AND POLIO ERADICATION

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

Ms. LEE of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in recognition of Nurses Week and to thank the millions of nurses who are on the front lines of our health care system.

Although a doctor is usually considered to be the primary health care provider for a patient, nurses are expert clinicians who provide high-quality and cost-effective care in every community throughout our country.

Around the world, nurses are the first and often the only link to health care for millions living in developing countries and are true warriors against diseases like malaria, HIV/AIDS, and polio.

Thanks to the work of nurses and community health workers, we are close to a polio-free world and could not have come so far without the leadership of the United States, the Gates Foundation, and, of course, partners like the United Nations and Rotary International.

As we thank and salute nurses around the world, we must also recognize the severe shortages of health workers and recommit ourselves to supporting programs and policies that have the greatest impact and farthest reach.

Once again, we must end polio now.

TRIBUTE TO MEGAN BELL

(Mr. SCALISE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. SCALISE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute and give thanks to the very first person that came to work for me when I came to Congress 5 years ago, my legislative director, Megan Bell.

Unfortunately, she is going to be leaving our office as she goes on to bigger and better things. But Megan has been a tremendous and tireless public servant for the people of southeast Louisiana and has provided great leadership to our Nation. She's been a huge help to me on energy issues, on health care issues, on coastal restoration issues, and so many things. When the *Deepwater Horizon* accident and disaster occurred 3 years ago, Megan was right there helping not only to get people back to work, but also to help draft and lead through the legislative process the RESTORE Act, which provided incredible support to the people back home. She also provided great help to constituents.

On a Friday afternoon, when we got a call from a father whose son needed lifesaving treatment, she worked through the whole weekend to get FDA approval for a lifesaving clinical trial.

She's just a great public servant, somebody that I think we can all aspire and look up to. We will miss her here at the Capitol, and I surely will miss her at the office. But she will be going on to bigger and better things, and I wish her all the best.

□ 1220

SAFE CLIMATE CAUCUS

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

Mr. MORAN. Mr. Speaker, the Safe Climate Caucus is composed of 25 Members of the House who have made a commitment to talk every single legislative day on the House floor about the urgent need to address climate change.

Mr. Speaker, on Tuesday, we reached record levels of carbon in the atmosphere. Since 1956, a U.S. observatory has been recording data on the amount of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere; and over the last few decades, carbon dioxide levels have been higher than at any point in the last 800,000 years. So there's more carbon dioxide in the atmosphere today than since the dawn of civilization.

This month, the amount of carbon is close to reaching 400 parts per million, a new record. And as a result, extreme weather events are going to be evermore frequent and more damaging.

We must act before it's too late. Our window to address the threat of climate change is closing. It's time to stop the denials and to start acting proactively.

SERVICEMEMBERS' TELEMEDICINE AND E-HEALTH PORTABILITY ACT IMPLEMENTATION

(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, 2 years ago, I worked with the Congressional Armed Services Committee to include the Servicemembers' Telemedicine and E-Health Portability Act, or STEP Act, as part of the 2012 National Defense Authorization Act.

The law expands telemedicine at the Department of Defense by allowing credentialed care professionals to perform telehealth consultations across State lines, which is great news for our servicemembers, especially those facing mental illness. Instead of waiting weeks for consultation, these men and women can now access care without delay while avoiding the stigma that is oftentimes associated with seeking treatment.

Last year, the DOD issued a waiver to expand telemedicine and begin implementation. In 2012, the Army was able to perform nearly 36,000 teleconsultations.

Despite progress, TRICARE providers were not included in the waiver, limiting thousands of professionals from providing services. Second, the waiver

does not allow servicemembers to use telemedicine from their homes, but what better way to avoid the stigma of seeking treatment than to access care from the privacy of one's home.

For our servicemembers to reap the STEP Act's full intended benefit, the Pentagon must fully implement this law.

HONORING FALLEN SERVICEMEMBERS

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

Mr. O'ROURKE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize five servicemembers who died last Saturday in Afghanistan. First Lieutenant Brandon Landrum; Staff Sergeant Francis Phillips; Specialist Kevin Cardoza; Specialist Brandon Prescott; and Specialist Thomas Murach were killed by an IED while on patrol in Kandahar province. All five had been awarded both a Bronze Star and a Purple Heart, and all five were stationed at Fort Bliss in the district I represent.

Since 2011, Fort Bliss has lost 83 soldiers in the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq. This incredible loss of life has deeply impacted the families, friends, and fellow soldiers of the fallen, as well as the Fort Bliss and El Paso communities.

Each casualty reminds us of the ongoing human toll of the Afghanistan war, now going into its 12th year, and increasingly out of sight for many Americans. The terrible loss of these five soldiers reminds us of our solemn responsibility to our servicemembers, not only to be cautious when sending them into harm's way, but also knowing when it is time to bring them home.

SENATE IMMIGRATION BILL THREATENS NATIONAL SECURITY

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

Mr. SMITH of Texas. Mr. Speaker, the Center for Immigration Studies has analyzed the Senate immigration bill and found that it threatens our national security.

For example, it allows examiners to grant asylum on the spot to arriving claimants without giving them background checks. It prohibits the prosecution of claimants for any criminal passport or visa fraud violation if they have a pending claim for asylum, whether or not it is frivolous. The bill fails to create an entry and exit tracking system at land ports where most foreigners enter. It waives existing grounds of ineligibility for illegal immigrants seeking amnesty, including bars for terrorism risks. So it appears that even the 9/11 terrorists could qualify for legalization under the Senate immigration bill. Incredibly, it even allows the reentry and legalization of those from terrorist-sponsoring countries who have been deported.

How bad does it have to get before there is a popular uprising to oppose this bill?

DECENT PAY AND BENEFITS FOR CONTRACT WORKERS

(Ms. NORTON asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. NORTON. Mr. Speaker, yesterday low-income workers in Federal buildings held an impressive rally and press conference at Union Station. They serve the public and the Federal Government under contracts in Federal buildings nationwide, like the Ronald Reagan Building, often without benefits and a living wage. Despite their hard work, their employers, who are Federal contractors, off-load the cost of benefits they should provide, such as health care, onto the taxpayers. It is a zero-sum game.

These working poor do not earn enough to live on, and taxpayers often pick up the tab with food stamps and health care that employers who pay a decent wage shoulder themselves.

This is why we need administrative action to ensure that retail and commercial vendors who enjoy the prestige of contracts with the Federal Government at sites like the Smithsonian offer decent pay with benefits, putting everybody ahead—yes, the workers, but also the taxpayers and the economy alike.

LEFT BEHIND

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

Mr. POE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, the Benghazi whistleblowers have spoken publicly: the administration failed before, during, and after the terrorist attack in Benghazi.

Head of diplomatic security in Libya, Eric Nordstrom, testified his calls for more security before the attack were dismissed by a negligent State Department.

During the attack, counterterrorism official Mark Thompson said that the rescue team was told to stand down instead of trying to save Americans under attack.

Deputy chief of missions in Libya, Greg Hicks, said in his chilling testimony that when Ambassador Stephens frantically called him, they both knew this was a terrorist attack.

The information was reported to Washington; but back on the ranch, the administration ignored the obvious terror attack and blamed the situation on a video. What a yarn. The Libyan President even told our government that this was a terrorist attack, and he was ignored.

The result: four Americans murdered; an administration missing in action that didn't attempt to rescue Americans; a bungling State Department that misled us; and a Secretary of State testifying, What difference does it make?

The difference it makes, Mr. Speaker, is four Americans were left behind. Shameful.

And that's just the way it is.

TEACHER APPRECIATION WEEK

(Mr. PERLMUTTER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Mr. Speaker, this week is Teacher Appreciation Week. I rise to appreciate teachers, especially my wife, who is a high school math teacher; and my sister, who teaches gifted and talented students and English as a second language.

But mostly, I arise to really appreciate our teachers. I have three daughters. They have all received great educations, and it's thanks to the teachers who spend so much time, who care about our kids. And the investment we are making in our children through our teachers is the best investment America can make. We have to continue to build our education system and make it the best in the world and keep it that way.

Mr. Speaker, I just want to thank all of the teachers out there for the hard work that they do every day on behalf of our country, but especially our kids.

□ 1230

THE APPS ACT

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

Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, today I rise in support of consumer protection and privacy on mobile devices.

Every day, millions of Americans use mobile applications to help us get through the day, but many consumers do not know that their data is being collected. This privacy breach is just not ones and zeros. It's personal information, including our location at any given moment, our photos, messages, and many of the things meant only for our friends and loved ones; yet we lack basic rights to control how and how much of our data is collected on our phones, iPads, and tablets.

Data has become the oil of the 21st century and, like any other resource, there must be commonsense rules of the road for this emerging challenge. Today I'm introducing the APPS Act, a commonsense approach to this urgent challenge. The APPS Act will protect consumers without disrupting functionality or innovation.

Privacy is an issue that should unite us, not drive us apart. I ask that my colleagues come together and support this bill, creating transparency and trust in the mobile marketplace.

OUR EDUCATION SYSTEM NEEDS HELP

(Mr. COHEN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. COHEN. Mr. Speaker, the education system in our country needs help. But instead of helping education through additional funding, the sequester, which I voted against as a bad idea, cuts education services to the children in our country who are most at risk.

$740 million will be cut from Title I education programs that provide financial assistance to improve academic achievement of disadvantaged students. Tennessee would receive $14.5 million less and, in Memphis, almost every single school relies on those funds. Head Start would be stripped of $406 million.

These programs are relied upon by low-income families, families that need more assistance to assure that their children have a safe place to learn while their parents work to pay their bills.

Nationwide, nearly 1.2 million students are affected by Head Start cuts. Tennessee will lose at least $7 million and, in Memphis, it means 31,000 children will lose access to affordable early education.

As a result of this reduction in Federal funding and the needs to reprioritize our allocation of Title I funding, Memphis City Schools will be forced to eliminate approximately 80 of their pre-K classrooms for the next year. Eighty-two classrooms are being closed, affecting 1,640 children, more than a third of the students.

The sequester needs to go.

IMMIGRATION

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2013, the gentleman from Iowa (Mr. KING) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. KING of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, it's my privilege to be recognized to address you here on the floor of the United States of House of Representatives. And I know that there's issue after issue that comes before this Congress; some calculate those issues in the thousands. But I'm also aware that, across America, we talk about the things that we see in the news. The things that are in the news are the large topics that are emerging here in Congress.

We've heard the gentleman from Texas speak about the Benghazi incident and how that is unfolding here, and another gentleman talked about the immigration issue, which is unfolding within the Senate and the Judiciary Committee as recently as today.

I come to the floor, Mr. Speaker, to raise the issue of immigration and seek to, I think, more broadly inform yourself and those that are listening in, Members of the Congress, as well. And it strikes me that we have been through some intense debates here in this Congress on the immigration issue, and primarily that debate that took place starting in 2005, throughout the duration of 2006 and into 2007, when we saw tens of thousands of people come to the Capitol grounds and fill up the west lawn and call for amnesty.

I recall in those days it was President George W. Bush that was promoting this policy. And I remember a discussion with his political director, I believe, the senior political adviser at the time, and he said to me, Well, if we didn't give them amnesty, would it be okay with you?

And I said, Well, first let's define ''amnesty.''

And he said, Well, it wouldn't be amnesty, for example, if we required people to pay a fine, or if we required them to learn English, or if we required them to get a job, or if we required them to pay their back taxes. And that was the language that emerged here in the middle part of the previous decade.

It happens to also be reflective of the 1986 Amnesty Act, which Ronald Reagan signed. It was one of only two times that that great man let me down in 8 years of the Presidency. Once a term's not too bad. Ronald Reagan intended to follow through on the enforcement of the law and the securing of our border.

I was an employer at the time. I remember the new rules that emerged from the 1986 Amnesty Act. President Reagan was honest enough and direct enough with the American people that he called it amnesty, and we understood that that's what it was.

And we understood the purpose for it, and that was to get an agreement so that we could enforce the law and put away the immigration debate for all time by allowing the people that were illegally in the United States a path to citizenship of full residency status and the path to citizenship, and the tradeoff was that would be the last amnesty. The promise that there would never be another one was the 1986 Amnesty Act.

There was something like 800,000 people originally that were to be the beneficiaries of this plan, and it turned out to be not a million—3 million people. There was a substantial amount of document fraud, and there was a larger universe of people than was anticipated.

Does anybody think today, Mr. Speaker, that this universe of people is not larger than that that's anticipated by the Senate version of the comprehensive immigration reform bill?

Of course, honest people, objective people, they're not going to write into the bill that there's only going to be 11 million people that can be beneficiaries of this bill. Any kind of an amendment like that would put a hard cap on, would be a deal breaker in the United States Senate because they know that number's larger. History shows that number is larger. Data shows the number is larger. That's just the lowest number that they can, with a straight face, talk about, and it's in a calculated way to try to minimize the amount because it minimizes the opposition to this idea that has emerged.

And I understand why it's there for Democrats, Mr. Speaker. I recall this debate. And as likely the year was 2006, I saw it live. I saw it on C–SPAN, but it took place right out here on the west lawn when then-Senator Teddy Kennedy went before throngs of people, speaking through an interpreter, speaking Spanish through an interpreter, he said: Some say report to be deported. I say, report to become an American citizen.

When I heard that, Mr. Speaker, I understood why he said that. This was his clarion call to say to all of them out there: We want to give you citizenship; and the deal is, you need to come and vote. Vote for those who advocate for handing citizenship over in exchange for the implied or implicit.

And we know what has happened with the way that people have been divided, divided from Americanism into special interest groups by using the political science of victimology manufactured in the brain of Antonio Gramsci back in the earlier part of the 20th century, a contemporary of Lenin's who studied in Moscow and went to Italy and sat down and was jailed by Mussolini and wrote his prison notebooks. I've read nearly every word that he has published, Mr. Speaker.

Antonio Gramsci was a brilliant man if you can accept the flawed premise that he started with; and the flawed premise was to accept Karl Marx's theory that they needed to defeat Western civilization and defeat the bourgeoisie and empower the proletariats. That was Marx's.

Gramsci was critical of Marx's theory because he said Marx only isolated himself and focused on just economics, and he didn't believe that the Communist movement could succeed against free enterprise and Western civilization because the proletariats, the common people, the working people, needed the bourgeoisie for jobs, so there was an interdependency there.

So he argued instead, if we're going to defeat them, we have to do the long march through the culture. We have to take on all of these principles that interconnect, that hold Western civilization, Western Christendom, as Winston Churchill described it, or Western Judeo-Christendom, as I would describe it, those values that hold us together completely under assault, strategized by Antonio Gramsci, who was the President of the Communist Party in Italy from 1919 until 1926.

And he was brilliant in his perception. He is the father of multiculturalism. He didn't use the word, that I could find, but he's the father of it.

□ 1240

He created the idea that if you could get people to identify themselves as

victims and be in victims groups, then there will be more energy in a group with a common grievance than there would be in a group of just proletariats that needed a job and wanted a better way of life. So if you could get the focus of the grievance group intensified, then you could bundle the grievance groups up into a movement. Throughout all of that, you could break down Western Civilization, and you could empower the socialist state or the Marxist state. That was Gramsci's writings, Gramsci's teachings.

Some of the people in this Congress actually do know about this man. I think I'm the only one that's actually attempted to read all of his works. But I see it emerge here in the immigration debate. It's part of the effort to divide people—Americans, the giant melting pot, the greatest success story of assimilation the world has ever conceived of.

Why do people come to the United States of America? Because they are inspired by the image of the Statue of Liberty. And within that Statue of Liberty are the basic pillars of American exceptionalism in the minds of the people that see it. They're written into the Bill of Rights, most of them.

Can you imagine being in a foreign country where you're suppressed, where you don't have the rule of law, where you don't have right to property and the right to keep the earnings from the sweat of your brow? In a country like that where you can't trust the press and there's not an open press, can you imagine getting that message from Radio Free Europe, for example, and realizing that in the United States of America you can have—if you can come here, come here legally—you can have freedom of speech, freedom of religion, freedom to peaceably assemble and petition the government for redress of grievances. What a wonderful thing to be looking at from someplace in the world where they don't have those kinds of rights.

That's just part of the First Amendment. And then you get to the Second Amendment, the right to keep and bear arms. Why? So that we can defend ourselves from tyranny. That was the one thing that guarantees the balance of the rights.

And looking on down through: the property rights in the Fifth Amendment, the protection against double jeopardy, you get to face a jury of your peers, and then on top of that, these rights that are not specified, the authority of the Federal Government that's not enumerated, devolve to the States or the people respectively.

This means we are an even freer country than we can imagine from reading the Constitution because some States are freer than others. And we compete with each other to offer that level of freedom: economic freedom, social freedom and the freedom to be free from a 16.1-ounce limitation on the size of your Coke, for example. You can move to another State if you don't like that rule—another city—if you don't like that rule that flows out of New York. That's an example of how this great laboratory of America inspired millions of people all over the world.

So we didn't just get a random cross-section of people that came from Scotland or Germany or Italy or name your country around the world, not a random cross-section. We got the people that were inspired. These are the people that saw the Statue of Liberty.

They had enough access to the real truth because we put the message out because maybe they were interactive with Americans that travel, maybe they interacted with American troops that went to liberate some people. We've always left a positive message wherever we have gone as Americans.

An example of that, Mr. Speaker, was one that caught me by surprise, a very pleasant surprise. Several years ago, I went to a hotel in downtown Washington, D.C., to listen to a speech by then-President of the Philippines, Gloria Arroyo. In that speech, as I listened, here is how it unfolded: She said, thank you, America. Thank you for sending the United States Marine Corps to our islands in 1898. Mr. Speaker, I know you must be thinking, what about the Army? She forgot about the Army, but the Army was there, too.

She said, Thank you, also, for sending your priests and pastors to our islands to help restore and establish our faith. Thank you for sending 10,000 American teachers—if I remember right, she called them Thomasites—who taught the students in the Philippines the English language, the free-enterprise system, a sense of honesty and a work ethic, the American way of life and of being proud of being a worker and a producer and contributing to the GDP.

She said that today there are 1.3 million Filipinos that because they have these skills of language, a work ethic and an understanding of free enterprise, they can travel anywhere in the world to get a job, and they send a lot of that money back to the Philippines. She told us where the percentage of their GDP came from. It came from foreign Filipino workers that contribute to the GDP of the Philippines and to the wealth of the Philippines because more than 100 years ago Americans went there, and we transferred American culture and civilization. It had a significant influence on the Philippines. And they are more successful today. That was her speech to us more than 100 years later to say thank you.

So there is an image of what America was and an image of what I pray America still is. That's an image that is under assault by this philosophy of victimology that was created in the minds and in the writings of Antonio Gramsci. Think about how this thing flowed through. Marx wrote his ''Communist Manifesto,'' Gramsci created his multiculturalism and victimology, and he wrote and taught how you would use that to undermine our culture and civilization. And he talked about the long march through the culture: break down marriage, break down religious values, and break down truth. That's only three of about 25 on the list.

They have been doing that systematically. I see it come out of this side of the aisle every single day in this Congress. Most of them don't know they're doing that. They're just caught up and swept up in the movement of their political party.

I hear the President reducing and lowering American values by his comments that take place in the public and in the press. Think about the things that he has chosen sides on. For example, when it was Professor Gates and Officer Crowley, Mr. Speaker, we know that, first of all, no President would engage in an incident like that, but he did. And he drove a wedge down between the issues of race.

When Arizona passed their immigration law, S.B. 1070, the President had to do a profile of the type of person that he alleged might be impacted negatively by that bill when the bill itself specifically said that couldn't happen—down the lines of race and ethnicity again.

Then we've got Tim Tebow who will kneel and pray to God on the football field. Meanwhile, we have a professional athlete that decides that he's going to announce his sexuality, and he gets a personal call from the President of the United States to highlight the sexuality of a professional ballplayer.

These are ways that the culture gets undermined, where it gets divided. The people over on this side take their followership from that kind of leadership; and one notch at a time, one click at a time, American civilization, American culture, Western Civilization, Western Judeo-Christendom are eroded. They're carrying out a plan that has been put in place and thought out and advocated for almost now 90-some years ago. They don't know that they're doing it. They think somehow they're providing freedom.

They always want change. They want to change everything that's in place, but there is no goal. If you would grant a wish list to the left and say if I had the power and the magic wand, and I would say, here's the magic wand, I will give you this: you've got all the rest of 2013 to put together the list of all the things that you want to do to fix society, fix America, all the things that possibly could be done from the United States Congress, from the White House, from the judicial branch of government and throughout all of our States down to the lowest municipal judge in this country, or legislative body, city council, for example, give them their entire wish list, you've got all the rest of the year to put that wish list together, and come the stroke of midnight when the ball drops in Times Square, December 31 at midnight, I'm going to stroke the magic

wand and you can have everything your political heart wishes for. But the deal is that now you've got to clam up forever and live underneath the rules that you spent the rest of this year writing.

Mr. Speaker, we know how that would turn out. They would work day and night because they are hard-working people. They are smart people. They start with a flawed premise, but they are smart beyond that. They would work day and night to produce the longest, most complete, expansive list of all the things that the left would want. And it would be the destruction of Western Civilization in the end. But come midnight, if I gave them the stroke of the magic wand, then they would stay up the rest of the night trying to figure out how to argue that somehow they were cheated, that they really needed something else, that they left something out of the list.

They're never going to live with the values they call for because there is no constant of truth for them. They undermine it. There is no constant of faith or values because it always has to be moving. It's got to be transformative to satisfy the people on the left.

Those of us who come from the other side of the aisle, we believe there are eternal truths, that, for example, a sin 2,000 years ago is a sin today. We believe that there is such a thing as truth, there's such a thing as objective truth, and there's such a thing as sound science.

□ 1250

We should adhere to those things that are black and white and live by them, and we should debate the things that are gray. That's the difference between the right and the left.

I believe that if you would grant that power that I've discussed, Mr. Speaker, to those on our side of the aisle, I could probably write you up a set of rules in the next 24 hours that I'd be willing to live with for the rest of the my life. And I think that society would gradually move itself back into an ordered forum that would allow human nature and the best of human nature to manifest itself in our families, in our faith, in our communities, in our work, and our rule of law. But what I'm watching here is the undermining of the rule of law with the immigration bill.

This bill that is emerging now that's being debated in the Senate—apparently there's one that's still hidden here in the House somewhere by a hidden committee—this is what the bill does, the Gang of Eight's bill: It grants instantaneous amnesty to everyone who's here in America, and it sends an invitation to everyone who has been deported in the past to apply to come back to America. And it makes an implicit promise that if you came into America after the deadline or if you can get into America—sneak into America—any time in the future, you will be legalized in the next wave of amnesty. It's only a matter of time. And we will never deport you as long as you don't commit a felony—or if you can mysteriously figure out which of the three misdemeanors would be so offensive that the Gang of Eight would want to send you back home again. That's the bill.

So what do they do to get people to agree, to embrace this huge amnesty bill that is breathtaking in its scope and beyond the imagination of even the people in the Senate a year ago—it's what they wanted, but they wouldn't say it publicly. They never imagined they could actually talk about this broad and expansive an amnesty bill even a year ago.

And the tradeoff is this: we have to legalize people because they're saying that we have de facto amnesty. No. We have real amnesty, executive branch-created amnesty in America today. The President has refused to enforce immigration laws. He took an oath to take care that the laws be faithfully executed. That's his constitutional responsibility. Whether he agrees with the laws or not, it is his constitutional responsibility to take care that they are faithfully executed.

When he was speaking to a high school here in Washington, D.C., a couple of years ago—the date was March 28, I'm not certain of the year—and they asked him, why don't you, by executive order, pass the DREAM Act that would grant legal status and an in-State tuition discount for those younger people that came into the United States and they're here illegally. His answer was, well, I don't have the authority to do that. Constitutionally, Congress has to pass a law like that. Because, as he explained to them, as a former adjunct constitutional law professor at the University of Chicago—I agreed with the explanation that he gave, which was: Congress passes the laws. It's up to the President to carry out or enforce those laws, and it's up to the courts to rule on what the laws mean. Now, that's a pretty compact synopsis, but I don't disagree with that. I think the President described it right. He said he did not have the power. His power was limited by the Constitution. Congress is empowered to pass immigration laws—that's what Congress has done from the beginning—and the executive branch's job is to enforce it.

Shortly thereafter—that being roughly a year or so later—the President reversed his position and, I believe by his direction, the Department of Homeland Security spit out a memorandum that created four classes of people. These four classes of people were then summarily exempted from the enforcement of immigration law. And seven times in that memorandum they wrote the words ''on an individual basis.'' ''On an individual basis,'' because they know that by—I'll just say by consent and agreement, the executive branch can't prosecute every Federal violation. That's why they have prosecutorial discretion. It's also a matter of case law out there, if you want to accept that term, and I generally don't.

But that directive, I'd grant, the executive branch has to have prosecutorial discretion to determine how best to apply the enforcement and prosecution resources of the executive branch. They can't prosecute every single violation. But prosecutorial discretion only is on an individual basis; it's not on classes of people.

But the President, Janet Napolitano and John Morton created four classes of people and waived the enforcement of the law against those four classes of people. And now, to add insult to injury, these four classes of people that they decided they're not going to enforce the law against, the President created out of thin air a work permit so that they could work in the United States, presumably legally. It's an unconstitutional, lawless work permit that he has created out of thin air, but they are getting those work permits now to work in the United States because the President has crossed the constitutional line, that line between the executive and the legislative branch, article II—and has gone to article I and claimed authority.

Now, when the Founding Fathers constructed this Constitution and they set up these three branches of government—often we're taught they are three equal branches; I would argue that, no, the judicial branch was designed to be the weakest of the three. But that point is not so important here, Mr. Speaker, but it's this: that this Congress passes the laws. The executive branch's job is to enforce the laws. The President has decided he can manufacture laws out of thin air and refused to enforce the laws on classes of people that he's created by memoranda. That, as far as I know, has not happened with another President. There are about five places where he has crossed the line into the legislative branch.

Our Founding Fathers envisioned this: that if you set up—and they did; they set up three branches of government, each with its own constitutional power and authority, each with its own domain. They knew that there were gray areas in between. You can never write something precisely so that it is a very thin bright line. They did as good as could be done with the language that we have—I can applaud them for it, of course. But they envisioned that that grayer line that couldn't quite be bright enough between the legislative and the executive or the legislative and the judicial, that line and that triangle, for example, would always be defended by each side. They never imagined that the judicial branch would be able to claim so much authority over the executive or the legislative. They thought that the legislative branch would push back against the judicial branch of government, for example.

In this Congress, I think it is not well enough informed on its constitutional article I prerogatives. So when the Supreme Court grasps legislative authority out of that that's granted in article I to Congress, seldom do we stand up and claim it back again. And we're so numb to this that when the President of the United States, the executive branch, reaches into article I and claims legislative authority, we can't get our back up in this Congress to put up a fight and tell the President that's an unconstitutional act, you crossed a line, and we're going to pull this thing back and put you back in line and make you keep your oath of office. Now, that's the structure that we have today. And we have some tools that we can use, but we have to have the will.

Mr. Speaker, to bring this around to—I'll call it a sub-conclusion of this discussion—when you look through a constitutional analysis and you look at the maximum authority that could be grabbed by the judicial branch or the executive branch or the legislative branch, what's the restraint on that? Article I is really the strongest branch of government.

The House of Representatives is reactive to the people. It's set up to be an election every 2 years so we can be reactive to the people. An example would be when people lost their good political judgment here in Congress and passed ObamaCare in 2010, we saw a wave election and 87 new freshman Republicans came in. Every single one of them ran on the full repeal of ObamaCare. Every single one of them voted—as did every Republican after that—to repeal ObamaCare. That's just the House reaction.

The Senate didn't transform itself to that extent in the last election. Part of that was also the vision of the Founding Fathers. But they always thought that there would be a tension between the branches of government, that each branch of government would jealously protect its power, and that as that little tug of war went on, those lines would be defined over time and by history by people defending their authority within their respective branch of government. They did not imagine that the United States Congress would capitulate lawmaking to the President of the United States and not draw a bright line and not have a fight. I am troubled by that, Mr. Speaker.

Now we have a President who has manufactured his own immigration law. And now we have people in the United States Senate who are advocating this to this Congress because they declare that we have virtual amnesty in America today. It's not virtual; it's literal. The President created it. And I'm not suggesting that the previous Presidents did a very good job of enforcing the law, but they didn't manufacture immigration law out of thin air. This one did.

□ 1300

He created it. Now, the Senators and Members in this House also are advocating that there is de facto amnesty, and the only thing that we can do is conform the laws to the amnesty that the President has manufactured out of thin air. That's the same thing as conforming this Congress to an order by the Supreme Court.

This Congress is the final answer on this. Whether it's a disagreement with the Supreme Court, whether it's a disagreement with the executive branch, the House and the Senate operating together envisioned by our Founding Fathers would be: we'll sort this out if we have to in the end.

When there's a constitutional clash and a tug of war, that's sorted out by the people expressing their judgment in the ballot box. That's how you eventually resolve serious constitutional crises. So, we have a constitutional serious concern. I'm not to the point where I say it's a crisis at this point.

But, Mr. Speaker, the President has conferred de facto amnesty? No, he's conferred literal, actual factual amnesty. And now we have people that can't think through this constitutionally, so they declare we have to conform with the President's will, wish, or whim. I suggest, no, we have a lot of ways to restrain the President, and I will not go into that today.

I do want to talk about how poor a decision it is to declare that all people in the United States illegally can stay here unless they commit a felony, or those three mysterious misdemeanors that can't be identified at this point, or those that have been deported apply to come back in. If you're not guilty of a felony of some kind, we'll bring you back to America. That's the ''we really didn't mean it'' clause. And the third one is all of those who are here after the deadline and who can get here after the deadline, never fear, because there is no one who has not committed a felony, nor not committed those three serious mysterious misdemeanors, who is going to be subject to removal from the United States under this President or under the Gang of Eight's bill. That's what we're dealing with.

So, the rule of law, which is the core issue here, it is an essential pillar of American exceptionalism, is under assault by people in the Senate and in the House, and the President of the United States, obviously, who has blown a great big hole in it by his own executive actions. The rule of law.

Now, all those people that are sitting around in the countries of the world that are inspired by the Statue of Liberty that want to come here, many of them are subject to an arbitrary ''no rule of law'' where they can be stopped and frisked in the streets and where the police can squeeze some dollars out of you just under the threat that you've got a speeding ticket, whether you were or whether you weren't, not a place to defend yourself. They don't think they get justice in a lot of the courts in the world, they don't get justice in the streets, they don't have freedom of speech, they don't have freedom of religion. And they want to come here because everyone is equal under the law.

Do you remember the statue, Mr. Speaker, of—and it's tricky to say statue here as a Member of Congress. Usually, we say statute. But I'm talking about, actually, a statue of Lady Justice. She's holding the scales of justice and these scales are balanced, they're even. You see the pots hanging from the chains on either side. Generally, when you see her, she's wearing a blindfold, because we have equal justice under the law in the United States.

The image of Lady Justice also attracts good people to come to America because they understand the image of the Statue of Liberty says, freedom, the lamp of liberty shining bright, for all who will come here legally. And Lady Justice blindfolded, equal justice under the law for everybody under the law here in the United States.

To waive the law and to give people a pass and to grant them a path to citizenship for—what is their one virtue that they have? They have access under this thing to all of the welfare systems and benefits that we have in the United States of America today.

Now, I can do this little quiz test, and, if it were fill in the blank, most Members of Congress wouldn't get this right. There are more than 80 different means-tested Federal welfare programs in the United States, more than 80.

One hundred years ago—let's just say at the turn of the previous century—we were not a welfare State. When people came here to America and shuffled across the great hall at Ellis Island where my grandmother did—and I know the exact date that she did that; I believe I've stood in the same spot where she did—when they came here, they had to show that they had a means to support themselves, that they were physically healthy enough to work and able to. They were checked physically to see if they happened to be transmitters of contagious diseases at the time.

Even though they were filtered and checked and sorted before they boarded the ship on the European side of this generally, when they arrived at Ellis Island there still were 2 percent that didn't meet the evaluation, and they were sent back to their home country. Still, after the filter was put in place and they arrived here, 2 percent got put back on the boat and sent back again.

We wanted to have a country then—we were a rational country then—that had an immigration policy that was designed to enhance the economic, social, and cultural well-being of the United States of America. What's wrong with that, Mr. Speaker? Every other country that I know of has a policy like that.

I met with the Canadians yesterday, and I asked them, could I emigrate to Canada, could I meet the standard? They were diplomats, so they didn't exactly say no. But I asked them a whole

series of ways and they absolutely could not say yes, unless I married a Canadian.

Now, I'm not likely to do that. I've been married for 40 years, and I'm real happy with the wife I have. By the way, I love living in the United States and having an opportunity to try to turn this country into an even better place.

But here's the standard that they have. They give you points up there. They want you to be young, they want you to have language skills—that means speak English—they want you to have some capital, some education, and some jobs skills, some earning capacity. Those are the criteria that they use in Canada. These are also similar to the criteria in the United Kingdom and in Australia.

No one has the massive immigration, even as a percentage of their population, that we have here. I've sat on the Immigration Committee for more than 10 years. I've gone to hearing after hearing. I've gone through reams of documents and reports and studies.

Here is some of the under oath testimony from just a few years ago:

Under our legal immigration policy, if you're going to measure the merit of the applicants to legal immigration into the United States and you score it according to the merits of the individual applicant, only between 7 and 11 percent of our legal immigrants are even scored on their ability to contribute to America. All of the rest of them are coming through on something that doesn't have anything to do with their ability to contribute to this society. Seven to 11 percent is all. So 89 to 93 percent of legal immigrants are going to come on something other than merit: family reunification, asylum, visa lottery program, to give you a few. And that's legal, not counting the illegal, which is 40 percent visa overstays and 60 percent illegal border crossings.

What kind of a country would turn its borders over to anybody that could cross them and turn over its legal immigration system to 89 to 93 percent, something other than some way of measuring how they contribute to this country?

So the evaluation is this: that they must conclude—people on that side, people in the Senate, too many people on this side—that every individual has an equal ability to contribute to our society. Well, that's not true.

Robert Rector of The Heritage Foundation gave a presentation of his study yesterday morning for an hour. It was riveting. I have the executive summary of that here, Mr. Speaker, and I have gone through it carefully before his presentation so I was up to speed.

Here's a point that he made—and I've made this point into The CONGRESSIONAL RECORD as recently as this week—that the libertarian approach to this is just let labor decide how it's going to move across borders, that goods and services and capital should all flow the same way, that we should have an open borders policy so that if business needed labor they could attract it from anywhere and put it to work wherever they wanted to, the free flow of labor, just like the free flow of capital or the free flow of materials or finished goods.

Now, Milton Friedman made it very clear that an open borders policy cannot coexist with a welfare State. And that State that we had back at the turn of the previous century that my grandmother arrived here within, we were not a welfare State, we were a meritocracy. The Statue of Liberty meant something then, and it meant that you have an access to God-given liberties, constitutionally defined liberties, and that you had the chance to achieve all you could achieve, succeed all you could succeed, and be able to keep a reasonable share of the fruits of your labor.

□ 1310

By the way, that took place also before we had an income tax, Mr. Speaker—no welfare state, no income tax, a meritocracy, and 2 percent got sent back because they didn't meet the standards of being able to sustain themselves in this society. I would also think there would be a few who made their way through who didn't.

In 1900, there was no welfare state; there was no income tax; and we had an immigration policy that was large, and it was so large and the numbers were so great that even then we needed low-skilled and unskilled labor back before we had, let me say, the technical development that we have in our economy today. We did need those laborers then. We needed people to work on farms. We needed people to build railroads and to construct our roads and our highways.

Today, in the United States of America, the highest unemployment rates that we have are in the lowest skilled jobs. So when you see double-digit unemployment, go find the job that requires the least amount of skill, and I can point to you the highest amount of unemployment.

What kind of a nation in its right mind would want to then increase the numbers of the people who are more likely to be unemployed and further suppress the wages of people in those job categories, those low- and unskilled job categories, when we're living in a welfare state that has to sustain these families that cannot possibly earn their own way in this society?

Culture has changed, the economy has changed, and because it has changed, we should be keeping up with what has taken place and understand that it's different today than it was in 1900.

For the most part, this Congress acts like, well, everybody who came here was a contributor to our economy and our society, so there is no limit to the number of people who should come here. I ask them sometimes: How many people should be coming into the United States legally and illegally altogether? What would your annual limit be? Would you cap that somewhere along the line? What should the population of the United States be in the next decade? in the next generation? in the next half a century? They cannot answer that question. They will not answer that question.

In fact, in a hearing on Ellis Island in that year that I mentioned—I believe that was 2007, April 15 if I'm not mistaken—they had a demographer come testify as an expert witness to explain to us how it works, that because baby boomers are getting older and they will be accessing the retirement benefits of Social Security and Medicare that we needed to import a lot of people into America to pay that Social Security. So that was the argument of the demographer, and it was also the argument of the economist. If I remember right, he was one of the lead economists out of Stanford University.

I asked both of them: What is the optimum demographic by decade or by generation? What should the size of the population be? Is that a perfect column when you stack them each decade of population up? Is it perfect?

The demographer hadn't thought about what was optimum. He just came to tell us what we needed to do, which was to import a lot of people to pay into our Social Security and Medicare because, at some point, it would go the other direction. We know that. It will go bankrupt. The economist, as I remember, from Stanford made the argument also that we can't sustain Social Security and Medicare unless we import a whole lot of people because our birth rate has been going down.

So I asked him the obvious question that, Mr. Speaker, I'm confident you'd be asking yourself right now, and that is: Who is going to pay for the Social Security and Medicare of those people who we would bring in to pay for ours? What's the solution for the next generation?

The answer that I got was essentially that there wasn't an answer for that. That's a problem for the next generation to deal with. This is a generational issue, Mr. Speaker, and it has a lot more to do with what America looks like in the next generation and the next generation than it does about what happens here in the next decade.

Now, it's curious the Senate bill scored as it might be. I've heard the report of Doug Holtz-Eakin that it's going to be an economic boost to our society. You've heard that from the Gang of Eight. It's curious. Why do they kick this out 13 years? Why do those who would be legalized under amnesty in the 13th year then become citizens? It's because they will have access to the welfare state at that period of time. It gets us past the budget window of 10 years so they don't have to account for what it really does. Robert Rector accounts for what it really does. His numbers are appalling, and he has the most refined and careful study that has ever been done on this.

I would take issue with anybody in the Gang of Eight or with anyone who

has advocated there is an economic equation that shows this as a plus and tell you that you have to calculate this for the lifetimes of the people who are affected by it because, if it's a net cost, it's a net cost. I believe I wrote that number down. I know the net number, but the net number is this: they will draw down a little over $9 trillion in benefits; they will pay something like $3 trillion in taxes; and there is a net cost to legalizing here in America of $6.3 trillion over their lifetimes.

These numbers are broken down, and I have looked at the Rector studies in the past. I know this man. He would not leave himself exposed to an illegitimate mathematical calculation or criticism, and I haven't found people who have been able to level one against his numbers, but that's the general number. Here is a statement that is in here that is worthy of putting into the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD, Mr. Speaker. He is speaking of the universe of the 11 million, which I believe more than doubles if this bill becomes law.

He says: ''At every stage of the life cycle—'' and he means that of this universe of 11 million ''—unlawful immigrants, on average, generate fiscal deficits.'' That would be benefits that exceed taxes. ''Unlawful immigrants, on average, are always tax consumers; they never once generate a 'fiscal surplus' that can be used to pay for government benefits elsewhere in society. This situation obviously will get much worse after amnesty.''

That statement stands. It stands clear and it stands strong, and it stands true in every single year of their presence in this country.

So with regard to the argument that this is an economic thing that we must do, I hear Republicans say it's because there's work Americans won't do. Well, I've done a lot of work that some Americans won't do, but I've never found work that I won't do. I've never found work that my sons won't do or work that our construction crews won't do. We are there taking care of some of the things that some have to do, and it's legal people who are doing the work for our company, which I sold to my oldest son several years ago.

I've had them out working in temperatures that were 126 degrees heat index. I've worked out there. I've worked 2 days in a row when it was 60 below windchill, driving sheet piling across a swamp because it was freezing, and we didn't have to mat the dragline. We worked in 186 degrees temperature range and heat index and cold index, windchill index.

We've done all of this work, and it grates on me to hear anybody say there's work Americans won't do. As Americans, we are not too good to do any kind of work that's necessary to do. We might be a little too smart to do some of that kind of work for too little money and too little in benefits; and when we flood the labor supply into the no- and low-skilled jobs, that lowers the wages; it lowers the benefits; and it reduces the numbers of Americans and pushes them out on to our welfare state.

For example, there is a study that I read several years ago that was done in a residential area of Milwaukee. They went in and surveyed a 36-square block residential area, six blocks by six blocks. They went into every home and interviewed them and measured the type of family that was there—the ages, the jobs they did, et cetera. In 36 square blocks, this was a neighborhood of Milwaukee where African Americans had moved up from the gulf in the thirties, at the end of prohibition, to take the jobs in the breweries and in those things that were economically developing in Milwaukee area at the time.

They were good jobs. They moved up there for good jobs. They bought homes in the neighborhoods, and they raised their families there. Three generations later, from, say, the 1930s until the late nineties when I read this report, they had gone from a good work ethic and a mobile family that had moved for a good job and had set up their homes there to where there wasn't a single employed male head of household in the entire 36-block residential area.

□ 1320

And the article that I read lamented that we couldn't bring jobs to them. What kind of a free market society—don't they believe in the free flow of labor and capital? Can't people at least within the United States go to find a job? Now they believe we should move jobs to people rather than let people move to jobs. Why don't people move to jobs? Because we're a welfare state, because we've had 80 different means-tested welfare programs here in this country.

Steve Moore wrote these words years ago when he was with Cato, and I cut it out and laminated it. It isn't an exact quote, but I'll get the theme down, Mr. Speaker. He said:

> If you pay people not to work, they won't work. If you pay women to have babies, they'll have babies. If you pay them more if there's not a man in the house, there won't be a man in the house. He might come back and visit, but he won't be registered as living there.

Whatever you pay people to do, they will do. If you pay them not to work, they're not going to work.

There are 80 different means-tested Federal welfare programs. I can go through some of the list, but there isn't anybody in this Congress—and I would charge that no one in America can give you that list from memory, which I think proves that there's no one that understands how all of these 80 programs interrelate with each other or how people act or react because of those programs. It's just that one bleeding heart decided this was a good idea and got it put into law, and another one manufactured that one.

Now we have a jigsaw puzzle of welfare programs and a welfare state, and we have advocates for the welfare state who also advocate for open borders. Why do they do that? I'll take this back to Teddy Kennedy's statement:

> Some say report to be deported. I say report to become an American citizen.

It's a political equation for many of the people on the left. They understand that they get votes out of this deal. The people that get to vote out of this deal will know who they need to vote for.

I've talked to those who saw their citizenship process accelerated in 1996. A million people got moved into an early naturalization process in that period of time.

I've talked to people that were beneficiaries of the 1986 amnesty act. They all understood where the political leverage was on this. The people in the 1986 amnesty act say, It was a good idea; it was good for me; it was good for my family, and I think we ought to give it to everybody. And the people in 1996 who had their citizenship accelerated, they knew that it was implied who they were to vote for in the reelection in 1996.

We've seen African Americans moved into a monolithic voting block. Part of that is—let's see. I just suggest, Mr. Speaker, that the people on the other side of the aisle understand how to divide people down their lines of race, ethnicity, national origin. It's the grungiest type of victimology: convince people that they're victims, that somehow the man is oppressing them, and the only way you get even with that is income redistribution.

So they push for higher tax rates and more wealth distribution, which discourages the entrepreneur. It discourages the worker. And now it's a public discussion about whether it's smarter to work or smarter to collect welfare, because the welfare dollars go up higher and the reward for moderate skills, let alone the low-skilled and no-skilled jobs, gets lower. And the competition for those jobs gets greater by the people that are in the United States illegally who are living on less than it takes to sustain them, and they are also accessing benefits. That's all in this report, Mr. Speaker.

From my perspective, I'd like to have a network, a support system that keeps people from falling through the cracks. I'd like to have a welfare system, a food stamp program, a way to help people out so that we can bridge them over through the hard times. I'd like to have them do Welfare to Work again.

There was only one of those 80 means-tested welfare programs that was actually Welfare to Work. That was TANF, Temporary Assistance for Needy Families. What happened? The President of the United States waived the work requirement arbitrarily, unconstitutionally, where it is specifically written into the bill that it couldn't be waived. He waived it anyway and decided that we're not going to enforce the work requirement in the one single welfare program of the 80 that actually required work.

A lot of people think that welfare was transformed and people on it are required to move towards work. No, unless the States have a way they're doing that in a more effective way than I'm hearing about. In the Federal Government, there is no longer a work requirement. There is an incentive not to work, and we're watching more and more families become the second and the third and maybe even the fourth generation who have lived on these programs.

Where do they learn their work ethic? Where do their children learn their work ethic? Who's pushing them? Who's showing them the rewards and pride of being industrious and productive and creative and the responsibility that we have to the broader society?

Each one of us has a little cell in a giant spreadsheet. That giant spreadsheet has over 300 million cells in it, people, Americans living here. We have skills that are God-given and gifts. And, yes, we are a product of our genes and our environment, and the product of that together makes us who we are. But we have a responsibility to contribute to the broader society and understand where we fit in that giant spreadsheet, and we have a responsibility to work, earn, save, invest, and leave this world a better place than it was when we came, and hopefully raise our children with those values to be even stronger and even better than the values we were raised with.

This huge hammock that used to be a safety net that we call the ''welfare system'' is eroding that. The contempt for the rule of law that spills out of the debate in the United States Senate and here in the House of Representatives erodes our American way of life. How do we think that we can move America beyond the shining city on the hill to another level of our destiny at an altitude higher and better and clearer and more pure and more industrious and more productive with more freedom and a better example for Western Judeo-Christiandom if we're going to continue to reward people for not contributing to that value in their single cell in that spreadsheet of over 300 million Americans?

We've got a responsibility to use these gifts that we have. Let's go to work. Let's strengthen our values. Let's strengthen our families. Let's protect the rule of law. Let's not tell ourselves that there's a goal here of political expediency, that somehow because a couple of talking heads woke up the morning after the election and concluded that if Mitt Romney had just not said the words ''self-deport'' he would be the President of the United States today and so now we have to pass a comprehensive immigration reform bill in order to send a message to start a conversation so that in the next election or some subsequent election a Republican can win a national election again.

Who comes to that conclusion? There's no data out there that supports that. That's just simply a belief that has been created and it's self-perpetuating, but it cannot sustain itself when you look at exit polls, when you look at public survey polls.

Yes, I know a good number of people that they're talking about. I know people who are here legally and illegally who have got a good work ethic. They're good entrepreneurs. They're good family people. They've got values that are a credit to the United States of America, although they broke the law to get here. They've got values that are a credit to our country. I know some of them, and I see those faces. I can see them in my mind's eye, and I can see it in the children that come to our schools.

There's a school in my district that's 85 percent minority, and 65 percent of them came to school on their first day not speaking English. It's never the kids' fault. It's never their fault. It's our fault. It's the fault of the adults that are supposed to be running this country, protecting and restoring the rule of law. That's the responsibility.

But this is not going to be fixed by the legislature. It's not going to be fixed by the United States Congress. We can't pass a promise to enforce the borders and trade it off for perpetual amnesty and think somehow we've got a deal that's going to make this a better country and now we can restore the rule of law. We cannot. The only way you can restore the rule of law is to enforce the law.

The President has decided that he will refuse to enforce the law, and it makes it clear to me—and it should be clear to everybody in this country that is watching this issue—that this is not a legislative problem. The legislature cannot fix the problem that is of the President of the United States making his refusal to abide by his own oath of office and take care that the laws are faithfully enforced. It is an executive branch problem. We can do some things to rein him in, but it's very difficult with the majority and the Senate being run by HARRY REID.

So, practically speaking, Mr. Speaker, it's up to the American people. The American people have to be well-informed. They will draw good judgments when they're well-informed. The American people need to speak up. I hope the American people don't need to rise up to answer this and say: Our ancestors came here. We came here. We followed the law. We got in line according to the law. We didn't ask for amnesty. We went forward and received our naturalization papers after we had met those qualifications.

I've spoken at a good number of naturalization ceremonies. It's a very rewarding experience to do so.

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The people that came here the right way that followed our laws are the ones that respect our laws today. The people that had disrespect for our laws, if they're rewarded for breaking them, how much respect will they have for any of our other laws? Will they be like the President to pick and choose the law that he likes? I suggest, no. Lady Justice is blind. Not only blind, it doesn't matter what economic status or what cultural status you might have or how much influence you might have in your community, justice is blind before the law.

Also, we need to make sure that all laws are applied to all of us equally, that we don't exempt people from them, reward them for breaking them. In fact, Robert Rector put it this way. He said everyone who would be given amnesty under this—this 11 million that I think is 20 or more million—their only claim to all of these welfare benefits and the benefits of living in American society and civilization, their only claim, is that they broke our laws.

So the definition of ''amnesty,'' Mr. Speaker, is this: to grant someone amnesty is to pardon immigration law breakers and reward them with the objective of their crime. That's what amnesty is.

The proponents of the 844-page bill, the Gang of Eight in the Senate and the secret committee in the House, they understand that. They understand it; that's why they keep denying their bill is amnesty. There's no rational analysis that says otherwise, Mr. Speaker.

And so I urge the American people, through my counsel with you in this speech, to take a good look at the Rector study. The Heritage Foundation released it this past Monday at 11 a.m., and it's titled, ''The Fiscal Cost of Unlawful Immigrants and Amnesty to the U.S. Taxpayer,'' dated May 6, 2013. That good study will inform a lot of Americans.

We're going to have another immigration debate, and I'm going to suggest that the American people in their sound judgment will come down on the side of the rule of law, the Constitution, and what's good for the best long-term interest of America, the best economic, social, and cultural benefit of the United States of America, with passion and with compassion for all people who should live with God-given dignity.

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

LEAVE OF ABSENCE

By unanimous consent, leave of absence was granted to:

Mr. FLORES (at the request of Mr. CANTOR) for today on account of speaking at graduation ceremonies at Texas A&M University.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. KING of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I move that the House do now adjourn.

The motion was agreed to; accordingly (at 1 o'clock and 32 minutes p.m.), under its previous order, the

House adjourned until Monday, May 13, 2013, at 2 p.m.

EXECUTIVE COMMUNICATIONS, ETC.

Under clause 2 of rule XIV, executive communications were taken from the Speaker's table and referred as follows:

1429. A letter from the Paralegal Specialist, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Airworthiness Directives; Eurocopter France Helicopters [Docket No.: FAA-2013-0307; Directorate Identifier 2012-SW-079-AD; Amendment 39-17410; AD 2013-07-06] (RIN: 2120-AA64) received May 2, 2013, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

1430. A letter from the Paralegal Specialist, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Airworthiness Directives; Dassault Aviation Airplanes [Docket No.: FAA-2013-0306; Directorate Identifier 2013-NM-049-AD; Amendment 39-17417; AD 2013-07-13] (RIN: 2120-AA64) received May 2, 2013, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

1431. A letter from the Regulatory Ombudsman, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Self Reporting of Out-of-State Convictions [Docket No.: FMCSA-2012-0172] (RIN: 2126-AB43) received May 2, 2013, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

1432. A letter from the Paralegal Specialist, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Amendment of Restricted Area R-6601; Fort A.P. Hill, VA [Docket No.: FAA-2012-0561; Airspace Docket No. 12-AEA-7] (RIN: 2120-AA66) received May 2, 2013, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

1433. A letter from the Paralegal Specialist, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Amendment of Class D and E Airspace; Portland-Hillsboro, OR [Docket No.: FAA-2012-1142; Airspace Docket No. 12-ANM-25] received May 2, 2013, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

1434. A letter from the Paralegal Specialist, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Modification of Area Navigation (RNAV) Route T-266; AK [Docket No.: FAA-2012-1295; Airspace Docket No. 12-AAL-10] (RIN: 2120-AA66) received May 2, 2013, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

1435. A letter from the Paralegal Specialist, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Amendment of Class E Airspace; St. Helena, CA [Docket FAA No.: FAA-2013-0283; Airspace Docket No. 13-AWP-3] received May 2, 2013, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

1436. A letter from the Paralegal Specialist, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Amendment of Class E Airspace; Astoria, OR [Docket No.: FAA-2012-0853; Airspace Docket No. 12-ANM-23] received May 2, 2013, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

1437. A letter from the Paralegal Specialist, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Amendment of Class E Airspace; Omak, WA [Docket No.: FAA-2012-1247; Airspace Docket No. 12-ANM-27] received May 2, 2013, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

1438. A letter from the Paralegal Specialist, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Modification of Class E Airspace; Lakeview, OR [Docket No.: FAA-2012-1254; Airspace Docket No. 12-ANM-28] received May 2, 2013, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

1439. A letter from the Paralegal Specialist, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Amendment of Class E Airspace; Reno, NV [Docket No.: FAA-2012-1195; Airspace Docket No. 12-AWP-7] received May 2, 2013, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

1440. A letter from the Paralegal Specialist, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Airworthiness Directives; Turbomeca S.A. Turboshaft Engines [Docket No.: FAA-2012-1131; Directorate Identifier 2012-NE-34-AD; Amendment 39-17440; AD 2013-08-22] (RIN: 2120-AA64) received May 2, 2013, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

1441. A letter from the Paralegal Specialist, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Airworthiness Directives; Airbus Airplanes [Docket No.: FAA-2012-0810; Directorate Identifier 2011-NM-195-AD; Amendment 39-17420; AD 2013-08-03] (RIN: 2120-AA64) received May 2, 2013, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

1442. A letter from the Paralegal Specialist, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Airworthiness Directives; Rolls-Royce plc Turbofan Engines [Docket No.: FAA-2012-0004; Directorate Identifier 2012-NE-01-AD; Amendment 39-17390; AD 2013-05-18] (RIN: 2120-AA64) received April 9, 2013, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

1443. A letter from the Paralegal Specialist, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Airworthiness Directives; Airbus Airplanes [Docket No.: FAA-2012-1036; Directorate Identifier 2011-NM-122-AD; Amendment 39-17408; AD 2013-07-04] (RIN: 2120-AA64) received May 2, 2013, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

1444. A letter from the Paralegal Specialist, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Airworthiness Directives; BRP-Powertrain GmbH & Co. KG Rotax Reciprocating Engines [Docket No.: FAA-2013-0263; Directorate Identifier 2013-NE-12-AD; Amendment 39-17416; AD 2013-07-12] (RIN: 2120-AA64) received May 2, 2013, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

1445. A letter from the Paralegal Specialist, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Airworthiness Directives; Diamond Aircraft Industries GmbH Airplanes [Docket No.: FAA-2012-1148; Directorate Identifier 2012-CE-039-AD; Amendment 39-17405; AD 2013-07-01] (RIN: 2120-AA64) received May 2, 2013, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

1446. A letter from the Paralegal Specialist, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Airworthiness Directives; International Aero Engines AG Turbofan Engines [Docket No.: FAA-2012-1217; Directorate Identifier 2012-NE-39-AD; Amendment 39-17414; AD 2013-07-10] (RIN: 2120-AA64) received May 2, 2013, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

1447. A letter from the Paralegal Specialist, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Airworthiness Directives; The Boeing Company Airplanes [Docket No.: FAA-2012-1042; Directorate Identifier 2010-NM-094-AD; Amendment 39-17413; AD 2013-07-09] (RIN: 2120-AA64) received May 2, 2013, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

1448. A letter from the Paralegal Specialist, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Airworthiness Directives; Rolls-Royce plc Turbofan Engines [Docket No.: FAA-2013-0196; Directorate Identifier 2013-NE-03-AD; Amendment 39-17376; AD 2013-05-04] (RIN: 2120-AA64) received May 2, 2013, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

1449. A letter from the Paralegal Specialist, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Airworthiness Directives; The Boeing Company Airplanes [Docket No.: FAA-2011-1094; Directorate Identifier 2011-NM-070-AD; Amendment 39-17412; AD 2013-07-08] (RIN: 2120-AA64) received May 2, 2013, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

1450. A letter from the Paralegal Specialist, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Airworthiness Directives; The Boeing Company Airplanes [Docket No.: FAA-2012-0497; Directorate Identifier 2011-NM-140-AD; Amendment 39-17415; AD 2013-07-11] (RIN: 2120-AA64) received May 2, 2013, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

1451. A letter from the Paralegal Specialist, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Airworthiness Directives; The Boeing Company Airplanes [Docket No.: FAA-2012-0933; Directorate Identifier 2012-NM-107-AD; Amendment 39-17411; AD 2013-07-07] (RIN: 2120-AA64) received May 2, 2013, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

1452. A letter from the Paralegal Specialist, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Airworthiness Directives; Eurocopter France Helicopters [Docket No.: FAA-2012-1297; Directorate Identifier 2012-SW-100-AD; Amendment 39-17285; AD 2012-25-04] (RIN: 2120-AA64) received May 2, 2013, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

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. POMPEO (for himself, Mr. MATHESON, Mr. OLSON, Mr. GARDNER, and Mr. JOHNSON of Ohio):

H.R. 1900. A bill to provide for the timely consideration of all licenses, permits, and approvals required under Federal law with respect to the siting, construction, expansion, or operation of any natural gas pipeline projects; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. SMITH of Texas (for himself and Mr. GOWDY):

H.R. 1901. A bill to amend the Immigration and Nationality Act to provide for extensions of detention of certain aliens ordered removed, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. FITZPATRICK (for himself and Ms. MOORE):

H.R. 1902. A bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to provide for timely access to post-mastectomy items under Medicare; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce, and in addition to the Committee on Ways and Means, 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. MCKINLEY (for himself and Mr. ENYART):

H.R. 1903. A bill to direct that certain coal mine safety grant funds be directed to study the prevention and treatment of Black Lung Disease; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

By Mr. THORNBERRY (for himself, Mr. CONAWAY, Mr. KLINE, Mrs. HARTZLER, Mr. FRANKS of Arizona, Mr. TURNER, Mr. MCKEON, Mr. MILLER of Florida, Mr. RIGELL, Mr. ROGERS of Alabama, Mr. WENSTRUP, Mr. WILSON of South Carolina, Mr. HECK of Nevada, Mr. NUGENT, Mr. BRIDENSTINE, Mr. LAMBORN, Mr. WITTMAN, Mr. SMITH of Washington, Mr. BISHOP of Utah, Mr. LANGEVIN, Mr. SHUSTER, Mr. COFFMAN, Mr. FORBES, Ms. HANABUSA, Mr. LOBIONDO, Mr. HUNTER, Mr. AUSTIN SCOTT of Georgia, Mrs. ROBY, Mrs. NOEM, and Mr. GIBSON):

H.R. 1904. A bill to amend title 10, United States Code, to require the Secretary of Defense to notify the congressional defense committees of certain sensitive military operations, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Armed Services.

By Mr. MCKINLEY (for himself, Mr. RAHALL, Mrs. CAPITO, Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas, and Mr. KELLY of Pennsylvania):

H.R. 1905. A bill to require the Secretary of the Treasury to mint coins in commemoration of the centennial of the establishment of Mother's Day; to the Committee on Financial Services.

By Mr. MCGOVERN (for himself, Mr. CAPUANO, Mr. NADLER, and Mr. WOLF):

H.R. 1906. A bill to amend titles 23 and 49, United States Code, to modify provisions relating to the length and weight limitations for vehicles operating on Federal-aid highways, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

By Ms. SCHAKOWSKY (for herself, Ms. LOFGREN, Ms. NORTON, Ms. SCHWARTZ, Ms. MOORE, Mr. SHERMAN, Ms. LEE of California, Mr. ELLISON, Ms. CHU, and Mr. LYNCH):

H.R. 1907. A bill to amend the Public Health Service Act to establish direct care registered nurse-to-patient staffing ratio requirements in hospitals, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce, and in addition to the Committee on Ways and Means, 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. SALMON (for himself, Mr. LAMALFA, Mr. HUELSKAMP, Mr. JONES, Mr. FRANKS of Arizona, Mr. RADEL, Mr. SCHWEIKERT, Mr. MEADOWS, Mr. YOHO, Mr. GOSAR, and Mr. DUNCAN of South Carolina):

H.R. 1908. A bill to repeal certain provisions of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act relating to the premium tax credits and cost-sharing subsidies; to the Committee on Ways and Means, and in addition to the Committees on Energy and Commerce, and Education and the Workforce, 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. GRAVES of Missouri (for himself, Mr. CHABOT, Mr. LUETKEMEYER, Mr. TIPTON, Mr. MULVANEY, Mrs. HARTZLER, Mr. HANNA, Mr. COLLINS of New York, and Ms. CHU):

H.R. 1909. A bill to amend the Export Enhancement Act of 1988 to make improvements to the trade promotion policies and programs of the United States Government; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

By Mr. CARTWRIGHT (for himself, Mr. TURNER, Mr. BRADY of Pennsylvania, Mr. BRALEY of Iowa, Mr. CONYERS, Mr. COURTNEY, Mr. DOGGETT, Mr. ELLISON, Mr. ENYART, Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas, Mr. HASTINGS of Florida, Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia, Mr. JONES, Mrs. MCCARTHY of New York, Ms. NORTON, Mr. PETERS of Michigan, Mr. RYAN of Ohio, Ms. LINDA T. SÁNCHEZ of California, Ms. SHEA-PORTER, Mr. TIERNEY, Mr. VELA, Mr. YARMUTH, Mr. MICHAUD, Mr. GRAYSON, Mr. JOYCE, Mr. KEATING, Mr. PERLMUTTER, Mr. COHEN, Mr. ANDREWS, Ms. BONAMICI, Ms. KUSTER, Ms. EDWARDS, and Mr. POCAN):

H.R. 1910. A bill to require foreign manufacturers of products imported into the United States to establish registered agents in the United States who are authorized to accept service of process against such manufacturers; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce, and in addition to the Committees on Ways and Means, and 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 Mr. KLINE (for himself and Ms. FOXX):

H.R. 1911. A bill to amend the Higher Education Act of 1965 to establish interest rates for new loans made on or after July 1, 2013; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce, and in addition to the Committee on the Budget, 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. COFFMAN:

H.R. 1912. A bill to amend the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act to provide for participation in the Exchange of the President, Vice President, Members of Congress, political appointees, and Congressional staff; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, and in addition to the Committees on House Administration, and Energy and Commerce, 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. JOHNSON of Georgia (for himself, Ms. JACKSON LEE, Mr. ENGEL, Mr. CONYERS, and Mr. CHABOT):

H.R. 1913. A bill to provide for greater transparency in and user control over the treatment of data collected by mobile applications and to enhance the security of such data; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Ms. HAHN:

H.R. 1914. A bill to ban guns for persons who have been convicted of stalking or who are subject to a court order restraining the person from stalking; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. ENGEL (for himself, Mr. BURGESS, Mr. KING of New York, Ms. MCCOLLUM, and Ms. PINGREE of Maine):

H.R. 1915. A bill to provide grants to better understand and reduce gestational diabetes, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. TIPTON (for himself, Mr. GRAVES of Missouri, Mr. MULVANEY, Mr. CHABOT, Mr. HANNA, Mr. COLLINS of New York, Mr. COFFMAN, Mr. HINOJOSA, and Ms. CHU):

H.R. 1916. A bill to require the collection of up-to-date information on tariff and non-tariff laws, regulations, and practices of foreign countries affecting exports of United States goods and services, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

By Mr. RUSH:

H.R. 1917. A bill to lift the trade embargo on Cuba, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs, and in addition to the Committees on Ways and Means, Energy and Commerce, the Judiciary, Financial Services, Oversight and Government Reform, and 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 Mr. LATHAM (for himself, Mr. KIND, Mr. YOUNG of Alaska, Mr. MARINO, Mr. HINOJOSA, Mr. DENT, Mr. HOLT, Mr. LOEBSACK, Mrs. CAPITO, Mr. BISHOP of Georgia, Mr. CLAY, Mr. BONNER, Ms. LINDA T. SÁNCHEZ of California, Mr. HASTINGS of Florida, Mr. KING of New York, Mr. ROSKAM, Mr. SCHRADER, Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas, Mr. JOHNSON of Ohio, Mr. GARDNER, Mrs. NAPOLITANO, Mr. DAVID SCOTT of Georgia, Mr. ALEXANDER, Mr. GRAVES of Missouri, Mr. LOBIONDO, Mr. GRIFFIN of Arkansas, Ms. MOORE, Mr. POLIS, Mr. SIMPSON, Mr. BISHOP of New York, Ms. DEGETTE, Mr. LONG, Mr. LANCE, and Mr. MASSIE):

H.R. 1918. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to reduce the tax on beer to its pre-1991 level, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. LATTA (for himself, Mr. MATHESON, Mr. UPTON, Mr. DINGELL, Mr. CASSIDY, Mrs. BLACKBURN, Mr. MCKINLEY, Mr. ROGERS of Michigan, Mr. BURGESS, Mr. SHIMKUS, Mr. GUTHRIE, Mr. JOHNSON of Ohio, and Mr. SCHNEIDER):

H.R. 1919. A bill to amend the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act with respect to the pharmaceutical distribution supply chain, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. LEWIS:

H.R. 1920. A bill to amend titles XVIII and XIX of the Social Security Act to provide for a delay in the implementation schedule of the reductions in disproportionate share hospital payments, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Ways and Means, and in addition to the Committee on Energy and Commerce, 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. DEGETTE (for herself and Mr. GIBSON):

H.R. 1921. A bill to repeal the exemption for hydraulic fracturing in the Safe Drinking Water Act, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. GOSAR (for himself and Mr. SENSENBRENNER):

H.R. 1922. A bill to limit assistance to Iran, North Korea, Syria, Egypt, and Pakistan, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs, and in addition to the Committee on Rules, 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. AMODEI (for himself, Ms. CHU, Ms. TITUS, Mr. HECK of Nevada, Mr. HORSFORD, Mr. GRIMM, Ms. GABBARD, Mr. SCHOCK, and Mrs. NAPOLITANO):

H.R. 1923. A bill to amend the Immigration and Nationality Act to provide for the eligibility of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region for designation for participation in the visa waiver program for certain visitors to the United States; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mrs. BUSTOS (for herself and Mr. LOEBSACK):

H.R. 1924. A bill to reinstate year-round Federal Pell Grants under the Higher Education Act of 1965; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

By Mr. CARSON of Indiana (for himself, Ms. NORTON, Ms. WILSON of Florida, Mr. RANGEL, Mr. PAYNE, Ms. MOORE, and Ms. BROWN of Florida):

H.R. 1925. A bill to amend the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 1990 to require criminal background checks, inspections, and training of child care providers; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

By Mr. CHABOT (for himself, Mr. GRAVES of Missouri, Ms. CHU, and Mr. TIPTON):

H.R. 1926. A bill to further enhance the promotion of exports of United States goods and services, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

By Mr. COSTA:

H.R. 1927. A bill to provide congressional direction for implementation of the Endangered Species Act as it relates to operation of the Central Valley Project and the California State Water Project and for water relief in the State of California; to the Committee on Natural Resources.

By Ms. DELAURO (for herself, Mr. GRIJALVA, Ms. SCHWARTZ, and Mr. TAKANO):

H.R. 1928. A bill to clarify the calculation of cohort default rates for proprietary institutions of higher education under the Higher Education Act of 1965; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

By Ms. DELBENE:

H.R. 1929. A bill to amend the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 to carry out pilot projects to reduce dependency and increase work effort in the supplemental nutrition assistance program; to the Committee on Agriculture.

By Mr. ENGEL (for himself and Mr. TERRY):

H.R. 1930. A bill to prohibit the manufacture, marketing, sale, or shipment in interstate commerce of products designed to assist in defrauding a drug test; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. FLEISCHMANN (for himself, Ms. NORTON, Mrs. BLACKBURN, Mrs. BROOKS of Indiana, Mr. RODNEY DAVIS of Illinois, Mr. JONES, and Mr. BENISHEK):

H.R. 1931. A bill to amend title 5, United States Code, to enhance the authority under which Federal agencies may pay cash awards to employees for making cost saving disclosures, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

By Mr. FORTENBERRY:

H.R. 1932. A bill to amend the Food Security Act of 1985 to restore integrity to and strengthen payment limitation rules for commodity payments and benefits; to the Committee on Agriculture.

By Ms. FUDGE (for herself, Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas, Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi, Mr. RANGEL, Ms. KAPTUR, Ms. PINGREE of Maine, Mr. CONYERS, and Ms. CHU):

H.R. 1933. A bill to provide assistance and opportunity for the creation and support of sustainable agriculture activities in America's cities and to improve access to nutrition in America's cities; to the Committee on Agriculture, and in addition to the Committee on Education and the Workforce, 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. GRIJALVA (for himself, Mr. BARBER, and Mrs. KIRKPATRICK):

H.R. 1934. A bill to expand the boundary of Saguaro National Park, to study additional land for future adjustments to the boundary of the Park, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Natural Resources.

By Ms. HAHN:

H.R. 1935. A bill for the relief of John Castellano; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Ms. HAHN:

H.R. 1936. A bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to direct the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to establish the Merchant Mariner Equity Compensation Fund to provide benefits to certain individuals who served in the United States merchant marine (including the Army Transport Service and the Naval Transport Service) during World War II; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

By Mr. HUNTER (for himself and Mr. ANDREWS):

H.R. 1937. A bill to amend the Higher Education Act of 1965 to update reporting requirements for institutions of higher education and provide for more accurate and complete data on student retention, graduation, and earnings outcomes at all levels of postsecondary enrollment; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

By Mr. JONES:

H.R. 1938. A bill to amend title 10, United States Code, to ensure that members of the Armed Forces serving on active duty who are diagnosed with post-traumatic stress disorder or traumatic brain injury have access to hyperbaric oxygen therapy, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Armed Services.

By Mr. KILMER (for himself and Mr. POLIS):

H.R. 1939. A bill to amend the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 to establish lifelong learning accounts programs, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce, and in addition to the Committee on Ways and Means, 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. LOEBSACK (for himself, Mr. MICHAUD, Mr. PAYNE, Ms. MCCOLLUM, and Mr. PRICE of North Carolina):

H.R. 1940. A bill to establish an Office of Specialized Instructional Support in the Department of Education and to provide grants to State educational agencies to reduce barriers to learning; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

By Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York (for herself, Ms. MOORE, Mr. LEVIN, Mr. RANGEL, Mr. GRIJALVA, Mr. CICILLINE, Ms. LEE of California, and Mr. CONYERS):

H.R. 1941. A bill to amend the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938 regarding reasonable break time for nursing mothers; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

By Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York:

H.R. 1942. A bill to assure quality and best value with respect to Federal construction projects by prohibiting the practice known as bid shopping; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

By Mr. PETERS of California (for himself and Mr. HUFFMAN):

H.R. 1943. A bill to establish a task force to review policies and measures to promote, and to develop best practices for, reduction of short-lived climate pollutants, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. SENSENBRENNER:

H.R. 1944. A bill to protect private property rights; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi (for himself and Ms. JACKSON LEE):

H.R. 1945. A bill to extend the Terrorism Risk Insurance Program of the Department of the Treasury for 10 years, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Financial Services, and in addition to the Committee on Homeland Security, 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. TIERNEY (for himself, Mr. COURTNEY, and Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California):

H.R. 1946. A bill to amend the Federal Direct Loan Program under the Higher Education Act of 1965 to provide for student loan affordability, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

By Mr. ANDREWS (for himself, Mr. GRIJALVA, Ms. SPEIER, Ms. CHU, Mr. LOWENTHAL, Ms. NORTON, Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ, Ms. WILSON of Florida, Mr. GUTIERREZ, Ms. SCHAKOWSKY, Mr. RICHMOND, Ms. PINGREE of Maine, Mr. MICHAUD, Mr. RUPPERSBERGER, Mr. SARBANES, Ms. EDWARDS, Mr. HOYER, Mr. CUMMINGS, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Ms. TSONGAS, Mr. LEVIN, Mr. DINGELL, Mr. CONYERS, Ms. MCCOLLUM, Mr. ELLISON, Mr. CLAY, Ms. MICHELLE LUJAN GRISHAM of New Mexico, Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York, Ms. KAPTUR, Mr. MORAN, Mr. SMITH of Washington, and Ms. MOORE):

H.J. Res. 43. A joint resolution removing the deadline for the ratification of the equal rights amendment; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. JONES:

H. Res. 210. A resolution expressing the sense of the House of Representatives that a commemorative postage stamp should be issued in remembrance of the victims and in honor of the veterans of the peacekeeping mission in Beirut, Lebanon, from 1982 to 1984; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

By Ms. NORTON:

H. Res. 211. A resolution expressing support for designation of the week of October 7 through October 13, 2013, as ''Naturopathic Medicine Week'' to recognize the value of naturopathic medicine in providing safe, effective, and affordable health care; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

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. POMPEO:

H.R. 1900.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 3

By Mr. SMITH of Texas:

H.R. 1901.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 4 of the United States Constitution

By Mr. FITZPATRICK:

H.R. 1902.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 1 of the United States Constitution.

The Congress shall have power to lay and collect Taxes, Duties, Imposts, and Excises, to pay the Debts and provide for the common Defense and general Welfare of the United States; but all Duties, Imposts and Excises shall be uniform throughout the United States.

By Mr. MCKINLEY:

H.R. 1903.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

According to Article I, Section 8, Clause 3 of the Constitution: The Congress shall have power to enact this legislation to regulate commerce with foreign nations, and among the several states, and with the Indian tribes.

By Mr. THORNBERRY:

H.R. 1904.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

The constitutional authority on which this bill rests is the power of Congress ''to provide for the common Defence'', ''to raise and support Armies'', ''to provide and maintain a Navy'' and ''to make Rules for the Government and Regulation of the land and naval Forces'' as enumerated in Article I, section 8 of the United States Constitution.

By Mr. MCKINLEY:

H.R. 1905.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

According to Article I, Section 8, Clause 3 of the Constitution: The Congress shall have power to enact this legislation to regulate commerce with foreign nations, and among the several states, and with the Indian tribes.

By Mr. MCGOVERN:

H.R. 1906.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 3 and Clause 18

By Ms. SCHAKOWSKY:

H.R. 1907.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8

By Mr. SALMON:

H.R. 1908.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

This bill makes specific changes to existing law in a manner that returns power to the States and to the People, in accordance with Amendment X of the United States Constitution.

By Mr. GRAVES of Missouri:

H.R. 1909.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

This bill is enacted pursuant to the power granted to Congress under Article I, Section 8, Clause 3 of the United States Constitution.

By Mr. CARTWRIGHT:

H.R. 1910.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 3 (relating to the power of Congress to regulate Commerce with foreign Nations, and among the several States, and with the Indian Tribes.)

By Mr. KLINE:

H.R. 1911.

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. COFFMAN:

H.R. 1912.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Sec. 8, Clause 1, of the United States Constitution

This states that ''Congress shall have power to . . . lay and collect taxes, duties, imposts and excises, to pay the debts and provide for the common defense and general welfare of the United States.'' The power to lay and collect taxes is the power to establish taxes to be placed on the American public, to foster the common good. The Supreme Court in deliberating the constitutionality of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act, Public Law No: 111–148; ruled that the individual mandate requiring the purchase of health insurance was a tax. Therefore, establishing criteria for the purchase falls under the jurisdiction of Article 1.

By Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia:

H.R. 1913.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1 Section 8.

By Ms. HAHN:

H.R. 1914.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

This bill is enacted pursuant to the power granted to Congress under Article I, Section 8, Clause 3.

By Mr. ENGEL:

H.R. 1915.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 1;

Article I, Section 8, Clause 1; and

Article I, Section 8, Clause 18.

By Mr. TIPTON:

H.R. 1916.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 3

The Congress shall have Power . . . to regulate Commerce with foreign Nations, and among the several States, and with the Indian Tribes.

By Mr. RUSH:

H.R. 1917.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 3: ''To regulate commerce with foreign nations . . .''

Article I, Section 8, Clause 18: ''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. LATHAM:

H.R. 1918.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, clause 1 of the United States Constitution—''The Congress shall have Power To lay and collect Taxes, Duties, Imposts, and Excises.''

By Mr. LATTA:

H.R. 1919.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Taxation: Article 1, Section 8, Clause 3

The Congress shall have Power to regulate Commerce with foreign Nations, and among the several States, and with the Indian Tribes.

By Mr. LEWIS:

H.R. 1920.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

This bill is enacted pursuant to the power granted to Congress under Article I of the United States Constitution and its subsequent amendments, and further clarified and interpreted by the Supreme Court of the United States.

By Ms. DEGETTE:

H.R. 1921.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8

By Mr. GOSAR:

H.R. 1922.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Clause 3 and 18 of Article, Section 8 of the Constitution of the United States, which read, respectively, ''To regulate Commerce with foreign Nations, and among the several States, and with the Indian Tribes;'' and ''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. AMODEI:

H.R. 1923.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

The constitutional authority of Congress to enact this legislation is provided by Article I, Section 8 of the United States Constitution, specifically clause 1 (relating to providing for the general welfare of the United States).

By Mrs. BUSTOS:

H.R. 1924.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

This bill is enacted pursuant to the power granted to Congress under Article I, Section 8, Clause 18 of the United States Constitution.

By Mr. CARSON of Indiana:

H.R. 1925.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Clause 1 of section 8 of Article I of the Constitution.

By Mr. CHABOT:

H.R. 1926.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

This bill is enacted pursuent to the power granted to Congress under Article I, Section 8, Clause 3 of the United States Constitution.

By Mr. COSTA:

H.R. 1927.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 3 of the United States Constitution.

By Ms. DELAURO:

H.R. 1928.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 3

By Ms. DELBENE:

H.R. 1929.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8 (the necessary and proper clause)

By Mr. ENGEL:

H.R. 1930.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8, clause 3 of the Constitution.

By Mr. FLEISCHMANN:

H.R. 1931.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, clauses 1 & 18.

By Mr. FORTENBERRY:

H.R. 1932.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

The constitutional authority for this bill is pursuant to Article I, Section 8, Clause 18 of the United States Constitution.

By Ms. FUDGE:

H.R. 1933.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Sec. 8, clause 3, the Commerce Clause.

By Mr. GRIJALVA:

H.R. 1934.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article IV, Section 3

By Ms. HAHN:

H.R. 1935.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

This bill is enacted pursuant to the power granted to Congress under Article I, Section 8, Clauses 1 and 18 of the United States Constitution.

By Ms. HAHN:

H.R. 1936.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

This bill is enacted pursuant to the power granted to Congress under Article I, Section 8, Clauses 1 and 18 of the United States Constitution.

By Mr. HUNTER:

H.R. 1937.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

The Constitutional Authority for the Act is derived from Article 1, Section 8, Clauses 1 and 18.

By Mr. JONES:

H.R. 1938.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

The constitutional authority of Congress to enact this legislation is provided by Article 1, Section 8 of the United States Constitution (clause 14), which grants Congress the power to make rules for the government and regulation of the land and naval forces.

By Mr. KILMER:

H.R. 1939.

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. LOEBSACK:

H.R. 1940.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause I of the Constitution which grants Congress the power to provide for the general Welfare of the United States.

By Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York:

H.R. 1941.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Fourteenth Amendment, Section 5, which reads: The Congress shall have power to enforce, by appropriate legislation, the provisions of this article; and Article I, Section 8, Clause 3, which reads: The Congress shall have Power * * * To regulate Commerce with foreign Nations, and among the several States, and with the Indian Tribes.

By Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York:

H.R. 1942.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8, Clause 3, which reads: To regulate Commerce with foreign Nations, and among the several States, and with Indian Tribes.

By Mr. PETERS of California:

H.R. 1943.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8, Clause 3.

By Mr. SENSENBRENNER:

H.R. 1944.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8 Clause 1.

By Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi:

H.R. 1945.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

The U.S. Constitution, including Article I, Section 8.

By Mr. TIERNEY:

H.R. 1946.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8

By Mr. ANDREWS:

H.J. Res. 43.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Its power to propose Amendments to the United States Constitution for ratification by the several states, in accordance with its powers under Article V of the United States Constitution.

ADDITIONAL SPONSORS

Under clause 7 of rule XII, sponsors were added to public bills and resolutions as follows:

H.R. 3: Mr. WEBSTER of Florida and Mr. WILLIAMS.

H.R. 24: Mr. SCHWEIKERT, Mr. MCCLINTOCK, Mr. COTTON, and Mr. OWENS.

H.R. 164: Ms. KUSTER.

H.R. 207: Mr. NUNES.

H.R. 258: Ms. KUSTER.

H.R. 288: Ms. KUSTER.

H.R. 309: Mr. SALMON, Mr. FLEMING, and Mr. YOHO.

H.R. 312: Mr. DEFAZIO, Mr. RANGEL, and Mr. ELLISON.

H.R. 324: Ms. TSONGAS.

H.R. 362: Ms. LEE of California.

H.R. 363: Ms. LEE of California.

H.R. 395: Mr. ELLISON.

H.R. 416: Mr. WESTMORELAND.

H.R. 419: Mr. DENHAM.

H.R. 481: Mr. MCKEON.

H.R. 498: Mr. MCNERNEY, Mr. SWALWELL of California, Ms. BROWNLEY of California, Ms. WILSON of Florida, and Mr. HUFFMAN.

H.R. 506: Ms. JACKSON LEE, Ms. MATSUI, and Mr. TONKO.

H.R. 509: Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia.

H.R. 510: Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia.

H.R. 511: Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia.

H.R. 519: Mr. O'ROURKE.

H.R. 525: Mr. STIVERS.

H.R. 532: Mr. SWALWELL of California and Ms. SCHAKOWSKY.

H.R. 597: Ms. CLARKE.

H.R. 610: Mr. MICHAUD.

H.R. 611: Mr. TONKO and Mr. MICHAUD.

H.R. 615: Mr. GARAMENDI.

H.R. 630: Mr. GIBSON and Ms. BROWN of Florida.

H.R. 640: Mr. WESTMORELAND.

H.R. 644: Mr. LANCE, Mr. NADLER, Mr. ENGEL, Mr. BRADY of Pennsylvania, and Mr. RANGEL.

H.R. 645: Ms. ESHOO.

H.R. 647: Ms. DELBENE and Mr. PETERS of Michigan.

H.R. 654: Mr. STEWARD.

H.R. 669: Ms. KUSTER.

H.R. 671: Ms. BONAMICI.

H.R. 679: Mr. JOHNSON of Ohio, Mr. WELCH, and Ms. ZOE LOFGREN.

H.R. 684: Ms. DELAURO.

H.R. 718: Mr. BOUSTANY and Mr. LAMALFA.

H.R. 755: Mr. DELANEY and Mr. DANNY K. DAVIS of Illinois.

H.R. 764: Mr. RANGEL and Ms. ZOE LOFGREN.

H.R. 765: Mr. MORAN, Ms. NORTON, Mr. SCHIFF, Ms. SCHAKOWSKY, Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California, Mr. TONKO, Mr. HUFFMAN, Mr. PETERS of California, Mr. POCAN, Mr. VEASEY, and Mr. TAKANO.

H.R. 769: Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ, Mr. GRAYSON, Mr. CLAY, Mr. SIRES, Mr. AL GREEN of Texas, Ms. ESTY, Mr. DINGELL, Mr. RUSH, and Mr. HINOJOSA.

H.R. 794: Ms. WILSON of Florida, Mr. BARBER, and Mr. LANGEVIN.

H.R. 800: Mr. GERLACH.

H.R. 831: Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania.

H.R. 858: Mrs. BUSTOS, Ms. SHEA-PORTER, and Mr. COLLINS of New York.

H.R. 863: Ms. HAHN and Mr. LOWENTHAL.

H.R. 889: Mr. GARAMENDI.

H.R. 915: Ms. KUSTER.

H.R. 919: Mr. GARAMENDI.

H.R. 938: Mr. MAFFEI, Mr. RIBBLE, Mr. BUCSHON, Mr. COHEN, Mr. CHABOT, Mr. MESSER, Mr. HASTINGS of Washington, Mr. GRIFFIN of Arkansas, Mr. LOEBSACK, Mr. CASSIDY, Mr. JORDAN, Mr. YODER, Mr. ROGERS of Alabama, Mr. NADLER, Mr. GRIFFITH of Virginia, Mr. KIND, Mr. PRICE of Georgia, Mr. MEEKS, Mrs. WALORSKI, Mr. POLIS, Mr. CUELLAR, and Mr. MULLIN.

H.R. 942: Mr. BARROW of Georgia, Ms. ESHOO, Mr. YOUNG of Florida, Mr. RUPPERSBERGER, Mr. SESSIONS, Mr. RANGEL, Mr. HASTINGS of Florida, Mr. LOEBSACK, and Ms. PINGREE of Maine.

H.R. 975: Mr. BARBER, Mr. PETERSON, Mrs. KIRKPATRICK, Ms. SHEA-PORTER, Mr. Neal, Mr. DEFAZIO, Mr. CARTWRIGHT, and Mr. JOHNSON of Ohio.

H.R. 984: Mr. RODNEY DAVIS of Illinois.

H.R. 1000: Mr. SERRANO, Mr. BISHOP of Georgia, Ms. SLAUGHTER, Mr. GRIJALVA, Ms. HAHN, Ms. SCHAKOWSKY, and Mr. FATTAH.

H.R. 1009: Ms. WILSON of Florida.

H.R. 1020: Mr. ROGERS of Alabama, Mr. HUIZENGA of Michigan, Mr. MARCHANT, Mr. BUTTERFIELD, and Mr. PAULSEN.

H.R. 1026: Mr. FORTENBERRY.

H.R. 1027: Mr. GARAMENDI.

H.R. 1078: Mr. COLLINS of Georgia.

H.R. 1106: Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia.

H.R. 1129: Mr. FRANKS of Arizona.

H.R. 1130: Mr. DELANEY.

H.R. 1141: Mr. SCHNEIDER.

H.R. 1146: Mr. TIBERI and Mr. CONNOLLY.

H.R. 1150: Mr. WELCH, Ms. SPEIER, Mr. HASTINGS of Florida, Ms. SHEA-PORTER, Ms. BORDALLO, Mr. FARR, Mr. TIERNEY, Mr. PAYNE, Ms. CHU, Ms. ESHOO, Ms. HAHN, and Mr. CARTWRIGHT.

H.R. 1154: Mr. GRAYSON.

H.R. 1155: Mr. MCGOVERN and Mr. KLINE.

H.R. 1180: Ms. BROWN of Florida, Mrs. BUSTOS, Ms. NORTON, Mrs. LOWEY, Mr. LOEBSACK, Ms. GABBARD, Mr. RYAN of Ohio, Ms. WILSON of Florida, Mr. POLIS, and Mr. GIBSON.

H.R. 1186: Mrs. DAVIS of California and Mr. MCGOVERN.

H.R. 1187: Mr. CROWLEY and Mr. PRICE of North Carolina.

H.R. 1229: Mr. TAKANO.

H.R. 1247: Mr. WELCH and Ms. DELBENE.

H.R. 1250: Mr. RUIZ and Mr. GIBSON.

H.R. 1271: Mr. HOLT, Mr. ENYART, and Mr. GARAMENDI.

H.R. 1282: Mr. TAKANO.

H.R. 1289: Mr. PETERS of California, Mr. RYAN of Ohio, Mr. HASTINGS of Florida, Mr. HONDA, and Mr. OWENS.

H.R. 1332: Mr. GARAMENDI.

H.R. 1389: Mrs. MCCARTHY of New York, Mr. TONKO, Ms. ESHOO, Ms. MCCOLLUM, and Mr. LOWENTHAL.

H.R. 1414: Ms. ESTY, Mr. BERA of California, and Mr. DOGGETT.

H.R. 1440: Mr. GARAMENDI.

H.R. 1452: Mr. LIPINSKI and Mr. LOWENTHAL.

H.R. 1464: Mr. YOUNG of Indiana.

H.R. 1518: Mr. CARTWRIGHT, Mrs. BEATTY, Ms. SHEA-PORTER, Mr. TIERNEY, Mr. LIPINSKI, Mr. FARR, Ms. TITUS, Ms. NORTON, Mr. GRIMM, Mrs. NAPOLITANO, and Mr. KLINE.

H.R. 1528: Mr. GIBBS, Ms. SCHAKOWSKY, Mr. FINCHER, and Mr. ENYART.

H.R. 1563: Mr. JONES, Mr. BACHUS, Mr. OLSON, Mr. LIPINSKI, and Mr. HARPER.
H.R. 1565: Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi, Mr. PAYNE, Mr. PALLONE, and Mr. ELLISON.
H.R. 1572: Mr. ROGERS of Alabama.
H.R. 1573: Mr. GRIJALVA.
H.R. 1593: Mr. COSTA, Mr. NADLER, Mr. NEAL, Mr. O'ROURKE, Mrs. KIRKPATRICK, Mr. MORAN, Ms. FUDGE, Ms. LOFGREN, Mr. SARBANES, Ms. VELÁZQUEZ, Ms. SHEA-PORTER, Mr. VARGAS, Mr. GRAYSON, and Mr. LIPINSKI.
H.R. 1595: Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California.
H.R. 1627: Mr. CAPUANO and Mr. ELLISON.
H.R. 1632: Mr. GIBBS.
H.R. 1635: Ms. LEE of California.
H.R. 1648: Mr. TAKANO.
H.R. 1652: Mr. VELA.
H.R. 1661: Mrs. CAPPS.
H.R. 1690: Mr. VELA, Ms. NORTON, Mr. CHABOT, Ms. HAHN, Mr. PIERLUISI, and Ms. MENG.
H.R. 1692: Mr. HOLT and Mr. COHEN.
H.R. 1699: Mr. SCHIFF.
H.R. 1706: Mr. CICILLINE, Mr. TAKANO, Ms. MATSUI, and Ms. LEE of California.
H.R. 1724: RODNEY DAVIS of Illinois and Mr. COFFMAN.
H.R. 1727: Mr. SABLAN.
H.R. 1729: Mrs. MCCARTHY of New York, Mrs. MILLER of Michigan, and Ms. SCHWARTZ.
H.R. 1755: Mr. BERA of California and Mr. VELA.
H.R. 1759: Ms. BROWNLEY of California and Ms. LEE of California.
H.R. 1761: Mr. POCAN, Mr. BUTTERFIELD, Mr. HASTINGS of Florida, Mr. GUTHRIE, Mr. DAVID SCOTT of Georgia, and Mr. KING of New York.
H.R. 1772: Mr. HECK of Nevada.
H.R. 1779: Mr. LUETKEMEYER.
H.R. 1781: Mr. KEATING and Mr. CRAMER.
H.R. 1805: Mr. O'ROURKE, Ms. BROWNLEY of California, Mrs. NEGRETE MCLEOD, Mr. NOLAN, Mr. TAKANO, Mr. CARTWRIGHT, Ms. GABBARD, Mrs. BUSTOS, and Mrs. MCCARTHY of New York.
H.R. 1807: Mr. PETERS of California.
H.R. 1814: Mr. BARTON, Mr. CAPUANO, Mr. CARTER, Mr. CONAWAY, Mr. LAMALFA, Mr. LANKFORD, Mr. MULLIN, Mr. NEAL, and Ms. WILSON of Florida.
H.R. 1823: Mr. THOMPSON of California.
H.R. 1824: Ms. HANABUSA, Mr. MCGOVERN, Ms. BROWNLEY of California, Mrs. MCCARTHY of New York, and Ms. ZOE LOFGREN.
H.R. 1825: Mr. WESTMORELAND.
H.R. 1826: Mr. GOHMERT.
H.R. 1828: Mr. BRADY of Pennsylvania.
H.R. 1829: Mr. ROKITA, Mr. ROGERS of Kentucky, and Mr. NUNNELEE.
H.R. 1830: Ms. LINDA T. SÁNCHEZ of California, Mr. PRICE of North Carolina, Mr. WAXMAN, Ms. SLAUGHTER, Mr. GARAMENDI, Mr. PASCRELL, Mr. RUIZ, and Mr. TAKANO.
H.R. 1833: Mr. TAKANO
H.R. 1837: Mr. MARKEY, Mr. LEVIN, Mr. CARTWRIGHT, Mr. HUFFMAN, Mr. PASCRELL, Mr. SIRES, and Mr. MCGOVERN.
H.R. 1848: Mr. HANNA, Mr. YOUNG of Alaska, and Mr. WESTMORELAND.
H.R. 1857: Mrs. CAPPS.
H.R. 1864: Mr. RYAN of Ohio, Ms. KUSTER, Mr. KENNEDY, Mrs. NOEM, Mr. RIGELL, Mrs. BLACKBURN, Mr. YOHO, Mrs. CAPITO, Ms. GABBARD, Mr. RODNEY DAVIS of Illinois, Mr. DAINES, and Mrs. BROOKS of Indiana.
H.R. 1870: Mr. ROKITA.
H.R. 1874: Mr. NUGENT and Mr. PAULSEN.
H.R. 1896: Mr. DANNY K. DAVIS of Illinois.
H. Con. Res. 10: Mr. ELLISON.
H. Res. 90: Mr. HECK of Washington, Ms. BROWNLEY of California, Mr. GUTIERREZ, Ms. VELÁZQUEZ, Mr. CROWLEY, Mr. KILDEE, Mr. BERA of California, Ms. SINEMA, and Mr. MICHAUD.
H. Res. 94: Mr. CICILLINE.
H. Res. 102: Mr. GRIJALVA and Mr. MORAN.
H. Res. 112: Mr. BISHOP of New York and Mrs. CAPPS.
H. Res. 147: Mr. KILMER.
H. Res. 179: Ms. JACKSON LEE.
H. Res. 182: Mr. BISHOP of New York.
H. Res. 187: Mr. COSTA.
H. Res. 190: Mr. ENYART, Mr. WESTMORELAND, Mr. JONES, Mr. TONKO, and Mr. PETERS of Michigan.
H. Res. 197: Mr. ELLISON.
H. Res. 200: Mr. REED, Mr. LOWENTHAL, Mr. WOLF, Mr. RANGEL, Mr. COOK, Mr. MESSER, Mr. LARSEN of Washington, Mr. HONDA, Ms. SCHWARTZ and Mr. CRAMER.

DISCHARGE PETITIONS—ADDITIONS OR DELETIONS

The following Members added their names to the following discharge petition:

Petition 1 by Ms. DELAURO on H.R. 377: DANIEL LIPINSKI AND EDWARD J. MARKEY.

United States of America

Congressional Record

PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES OF THE 113th CONGRESS, FIRST SESSION

Vol. 159 WASHINGTON, THURSDAY, MAY 9, 2013 No. 65

Senate

The Senate met at 9:30 a.m. and was called to order by the Honorable WILLIAM M. COWAN, a Senator from the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

PRAYER

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Today's opening prayer will be offered by Rev. Miniard Culpepper, pastor of Pleasant Hill Baptist Church in Dorchester, MA.

The guest Chaplain offered the following prayer:

Let us pray.

Our God and our Lord, our help from ages past and our help for the years to come, we thank You, Lord, for this day, for this is a day that You have made. Let us be glad and delight in it.

We thank You, Lord, for watching over our Senators all night long and waking them up clothed in their right mind. We pray, Lord, that You would bless them this day. Let them be the voice for all that is good and just. Let them be the voice of all that is peaceful and prosperous, loving and lifting.

Bless the Senators, Lord, as they deliberate, that they would be mindful of the homeless and the hungry, the rich and the poor, the helpful, the hopeful, and the hopeless.

Lord, we realize and acknowledge that You are a God of our weary years, that You are a God of our silent tears. Lord, You are the one who brought us thus far on the way. Lord, Thou are this God who has by thy might led us into the light. Lord, we pray, God, that You would keep us forever in the path, we pray.

These and all other prayers we ask in Your Name. Amen and amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Honorable WILLIAM M. COWAN 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.

APPOINTMENT OF ACTING PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will please read a communication to the Senate from the President pro tempore (Mr. LEAHY).

The bill clerk read the following letter:

U.S. SENATE,
PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE,
Washington, DC, May 9, 2013.

To the Senate:

Under the provisions of rule I, paragraph 3, of the Standing Rules of the Senate, I hereby appoint the Honorable WILLIAM M. COWAN, a Senator from the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, to perform the duties of the Chair.

PATRICK J. LEAHY,
President pro tempore.

Mr. COWAN thereupon assumed the chair as Acting President pro tempore.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The majority leader is recognized.

Mr. REID. I yield to the Senator from Massachusetts, Ms. WARREN.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Massachusetts.

WELCOMING THE GUEST CHAPLAIN

Ms. WARREN. Thank you, Mr. President.

Mr. President, a warm thank-you to the Reverend Miniard Culpepper. His words of faith and community are greatly appreciated here today.

For a long time now, Reverend Culpepper has been praying over me. Last winter, before I was sworn into office, Reverend Culpepper held a special Sunday prayer service for me in his church, Pleasant Hill Baptist, in Dorchester. That December evening the pews were packed with local preachers and churchgoers representing a dozen or so churches in the area.

At the conclusion of the service, the ministers circled around me, wrapped their arms together and prayed to God to give me the strength to work for the poor and powerless among us.

I feel blessed to have received their prayers, and I have tried my best to keep them in my heart in my work here. But I am just one of many who appreciates the hard work Reverend Culpepper and Pleasant Hill Baptist have put into strengthening and protecting their community.

You see, Reverend Culpepper and his congregation understand that their community extends well beyond the walls of their church. When Jahmol Norfleet, a former gang leader from Roxbury, left prison and showed a desire to turn his life around as a peacemaker between rival gangs, it was Reverend Culpepper who reached out to him. Pleasant Hill Baptist welcomed him into their family. After Jahmol was tragically shot to death outside of his grandmother's home, Reverend Culpepper worked hard to implement antiviolence program methods that were based on his conversations with Jahmol.

When in January of this year 13-year-old Gabriel Clarke suffered grievous gunshot wounds just blocks from Pleasant Hill Baptist Church, Reverend Culpepper and his congregation resolved to start their annual neighborhood patrols just a little earlier. After all, as Reverend Culpepper remarked, this is not somebody's problem down the street or on the other side of town, this is my problem.

Pleasant Hill Baptist Church was founded more than 70 years ago by Reverend Culpepper's grandfather, Rev. Samuel H. Bullock. Reverend Bullock was deeply involved in his community working to educate children and to reduce juvenile delinquency. Reverend Culpepper and the congregation at Pleasant Hill Baptist Church have carried on that legacy of community involvement with spirit and determination.

● This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.

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We thank Reverend Culpepper for his blessing. We thank him for gracing us with the same spirit that drives him and the Pleasant Hill Baptist Church family back home. We thank him and his church for reminding us that the problems that affect our neighborhoods, our cities, our Commonwealth, and our country aren't someone else's problems, they are all of our problems.

I am honored to have Reverend Culpepper here today.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The majority leader.

SCHEDULE

Mr. REID. Following leader remarks the Senate will be in morning business for 1 hour, with the majority controlling the first half and the Republicans controlling the final half.

Following morning business the Senate will resume consideration of S. 601, the Water Resources Development Act.

We will continue to work through amendments to the bill today. We may also consider two district court judges sometime today, the Dick nomination from Louisiana and the Roman nomination from New York. Senators will be notified when those votes are scheduled.

OBSTRUCTION AND DELAY

Mr. REID. Mr. President, by now the minority's tactics, the Republican tactics of obstruction and delay are well known, but they are also well worn. Those methods were once again on display yesterday when Republicans delayed for the second time in 2 weeks a Senate HELP Committee vote on the nomination of Tom Perez to lead the Department of Labor.

The able and considerate chairman TOM HARKIN had already postponed the vote 2 weeks at the request of one of the Republicans. They requested more time to review documents related to Tom Perez's nomination. It was terribly disappointing that, after they were granted additional time as a matter of courtesy, an anonymous Republican would employ an arcane procedural tactic to prevent the committee from even meeting, and, of course, voting on that nomination.

Republicans had 7 weeks, 49 days to consider this nomination. He was nominated on March 21. Since his confirmation hearing in April, he has responded in writing to more than 200 questions.

He is an extremely qualified candidate for this job. The President was smart in nominating him. He is what the American dream is all about. He is the son of immigrants. He paid his way through college by working as a garbage collector and at a warehouse. He went on to become the first lawyer in his family.

Mr. Perez was appointed by Governor O'Malley of Maryland to be the secretary of the Department Labor, where he helped implement the country's first statewide living wage law. In his current role as the head of the Civil Rights Division of the U.S. Department of Justice, Mr. Perez helped settle cases on behalf of families targeted by unfair mortgage lending.

As anyone can see, he is an extremely qualified nominee. His knowledge and experience will make him an outstanding Secretary.

Unfortunately, impressive qualifications and exceptional character are no longer enough to satisfy Senate Republicans. Instead of a fair and constructive confirmation process, Republicans have chosen to play partisan political games with dozens—scores—of President Obama's appointees.

They have also slow-walked the nomination of dedicated public servant Gina McCarthy to lead the EPA, the Environmental Protection Agency. This morning, just a few minutes ago, Republican members of the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee sent a letter to Chairman BOXER indicating they will boycott committee markup of Ms. McCarthy's nomination.

This type of blanket partisan obstruction used to be unheard of. Now it has become the pattern Republicans have adopted. They will use any procedural roadblock or stalling tactic to deny President Obama qualified nominees.

My Republican colleagues can try every trick in the book—and they have and they probably will—but I assure you he will have his day in the Senate. I assure everyone Ms. McCarthy will have her day in the Senate, and I will do all I can to ensure these highly qualified are confirmed, as the President has requested.

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Republican leader is recognized.

UNEMPLOYMENT

Mr. MCCONNELL. Today the President plans to travel to Austin, TX. I understand his trip includes a visit to a technical high school and a chat with workers. The idea, I presume, is to show folks that the White House has once again pivoted to jobs. If you are someone who is all about the visual, then, of course, putting on a pair of goggles or showing up at a factory is a great way to at least look as though you are doing something about the situation.

Whether that means you are actually getting the job done is a different story. Unfortunately, robust job creation has been talked about a lot in this administration, even as millions remain out of work or stuck in part-time jobs.

Take a look at last month's jobs report. It was touted by the White House as proof of an economy on the mend, and surely we on this side hope that will soon be the case. We are not there yet. We only have to drill down below the top line to find a lot to be concerned about. For instance, the unemployment rate technically edged down to 7.5 percent, but it actually moved up to 8 percent in my home State of Kentucky. While the Federal rate is still pretty high, even those numbers don't tell the full story. Because so many Americans have stopped looking for work altogether, we now have the lowest labor force participation rate since Jimmy Carter.

Our actual Federal unemployment rate is nearly 11 percent. That is quite a ways off from the 5 percent or so the administration boldly predicted we would have by now if only Congress would pass the stimulus.

Consider this. If all we did was match the average of recoveries since World War II, we would have about 4 million more private sector jobs than we do today. That is how much worse this recovery is than other recoveries since the war.

Unfortunately, that is the Obama economy. I hope the President is traveling to Austin today because he is finally serious about turning that around, about changing course and implementing policies that might actually work to get the economy moving again. Given that he will be in Texas, he might want to think about developing more jobs in the energy sector. It is a huge industry—huge—not just in Texas but all across our country. His administration has the power, if it chooses, to spur more job-creating energy resource exploration and development.

There is a lot more Texas is doing right too. That is why it has been touted as a national leader in job creation. One study showed Texas, with less than 10 percent of the population, accounted for almost one-third of private sector jobs created in high-paying sectors in recent years. If the President is interested in duplicating that success at the Federal level, he might take note of the fact that policymakers in Austin have taken a very different approach from Washington when it comes to how they tax and spend.

Basically, they do less of it with no income tax, for instance, and a low ratio of spending per capita. They don't ram through laws such as ObamaCare.

I hear the President plans to hold another event tomorrow where he will claim that ObamaCare is helping women. Let me tell a story of how ObamaCare is affecting one woman, and I am sure there are many more just like her.

The Wall Street Journal recently profiled a businesswoman named Elizabeth. She is in the clothing business, and she had been hoping to hire more employees. But thanks to ObamaCare, Elizabeth is now being forced to turn to independent contractors because if she brings on just a few more people and exceeds 50 employees, the government could punish her business.

There are many other small businesswomen who will see their dreams crushed under the weight of ObamaCare's nearly 20,000 pages of regulations. There are many women in their twenties and thirties who will be unable to afford the law's massive premium increases. There are many mothers who will not be able to get by if their employers cut their hours due to ObamaCare or if they lose their jobs because of it.

Here is something else to consider. This morning, Speaker BOEHNER and I informed the President we will not be recommending individuals to serve on the Independent Payment Advisory Board. The IPAB, as some call it, is a commission set up by ObamaCare that is charged with reducing Medicare payments to health care providers and determining what services should be available to seniors. Of course, we know that will lead to access problems, waiting lists, and denied care for seniors—what most people would call rationing. It threatens to disproportionately affect women too.

According to the Department of Labor, women make approximately 80 percent of health care decisions for their families and are more likely to be the caregivers when a family member falls ill. That family member could be a child, could be a spouse, or, more often these days, a parent who relies on Medicare. We want to know Medicare will be there to take care of them, and we want to know those decisions will be made between patients, their families, and their physicians, not an unaccountable board of bureaucrats such as the IPAB—one that even has the power to overrule payment decisions made by Congress and signed into law by the President. That is how powerful IPAB is.

So the President should rethink the purpose of this event. I hope he will use it instead as a platform to prepare women for the actual consequences many of them will soon face under ObamaCare.

More broadly, the President needs to get out in front of this train wreck before Americans—men and women alike—are completely blindsided by it. Polling suggests that almost half of Americans are unsure how ObamaCare will affect their families. So he really needs to get out there and prepare them for what is coming.

If the President is truly concerned about jobs, then it is time for him to admit ObamaCare was a mistake and work with Congress to repeal it because we need reforms that lower the cost of care. What we don't need is a 2,700-page law and a resulting tower of redtape that will continue to kill jobs and hurt our economy.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

MORNING BUSINESS

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the Senate will be in a period of morning business for 1 hour, with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each and with the time equally divided and controlled between the two leaders or their designees, with the majority controlling the first half.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. COATS. I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

HEALTH CARE

Mr. COATS. Mr. President, back home in Indiana last week, I heard from many Hoosiers who are concerned about the impact of ObamaCare. I went back to listen to the people, and almost invariably, no matter what subject was on the table, the impact of ObamaCare was what was brought up first and discussed the most.

I particularly focused on those businesses which are in a position to expand and hire but are simply not doing so, and the question is, Why? The answer was that they are deeply concerned about the implementation of the so-called Affordable Care Act, basically saying that it is an unaffordable care act.

They also said they were confused about what it means and what it doesn't mean. These regulations are continuing to come out, but many of them are delayed, so there is a huge cloud of uncertainty over their future. As a consequence, Hoosier employers have to make decisions about hiring or not hiring, about expanding or not expanding, about buying new equipment or not buying new equipment, about building new factories or not building new factories.

In Indiana, we have positioned ourselves to be a very business-friendly State. In fact, a major survey came out a couple of days ago that said Indiana is among the top five States in the Nation in terms of being business-friendly. As a result, we have a lot of inquiries from businesses in other States, and essentially what they are saying is that they would like to come to our State.

We have a lot of people in our State who are operating businesses and would like to hire more employees, but they are frozen because of this health care bill, and all of the regulations, penalties, taxes, and uncertainty that surround what is going to play out is leaving them in limbo. We are treading water. We can't make decisions. The word of the year is ''uncertainty''—uncertainty about what Washington is going to do, uncertainty about the impact of what Washington has already decided to do. The No. 1 topic that beats all the rest is the impact of the Affordable Care Act—the ObamaCare act—which is now starting to impact various businesses across the State.

These concerns have been expressed both by business owners and by employees working in a wide range of occupations. Their concern has been confirmed by data released by the Labor Department last week. The recent report revealed retailers appear to be cutting working hours at a rate unheard of over the last 30 years.

We saw some positive news come out of the jobs report last week. Unemployment is coming down slightly. Of course, it doesn't begin to address the issue or consider those who have literally dropped out of the workplace or have literally given up trying to find a job because they simply aren't there. But now we face another problem. More and more Americans are being pushed into part-time work, which isn't enough to provide for a family. Last month, nearly 280,000 Americans involuntarily entered part-time employment. Weekly take-home pay continues to decline and, of course, the number of hours employees are working continues to shrink.

Why is this change occurring? Investor's Business Daily reported that ''all evidence points to the coming launch of ObamaCare as the reason for this decline in the average retail workweek.''

Beginning next year, as we know, job creators will face fines of $2,000 and, in some instances, up to $3,000 for every full-time worker who receives subsidized coverage in the exchanges created by ObamaCare if qualifying coverage isn't available in the employee's workplace, or if that employer is no longer able to afford the cost of government-mandated health plans. These are small businesses. We are not talking about Fortune 500 companies. We are not talking about those firms that can hire a back room full of lawyers and accountants to figure out how this health care plan is going to impact them and what it is going to cost. We are talking about the service industry, we are talking about the retail shops—those that employ anywhere from 30 to 40 to 60 to 70 to 90 or whatever. A lot of them are trying to stay under the 50 level—the exclusion for small businesses—50 and under. So a lot of them are stuck at 45, 48, and they are not going to hire to go above that and they are looking for ways to move employees to part-time employment so they are not burdened with these fines.

Many Hoosier employers have told me they would like to expand and hire more full-time workers, but they simply cannot afford to do so given the fines, taxes, and regulations that will hit when the ObamaCare act is implemented starting in 2014.

The U.S. Chamber of Commerce has said 71 percent of small businesses say

this health care plan makes it harder to hire more employees. I heard from a small business owner in Indiana who runs an employment management service. He told me small businesses such as his have decided to use a combination of cuts to keep many of their employees under 30 hours a week to avoid penalties, while pushing full-time workers well over 45 hours a week. Well, that is fine for the full-time workers who are getting some overtime pay, but it is denying job opportunities for new hires because employers are put in this position by the mandates of the health care act. It is not just limited to the private sector. I recently heard from a State representative in Indiana who is concerned about how this law is going to affect school districts in his area. He says some schools are being forced to move nonteacher personnel to part-time status, affecting food service providers, teacher's aides, bus drivers, substitute teachers, maintenance personnel, as well as nonteacher coaches. People from all walks of life have a dark cloud of uncertainty over their future plans to run a business, to hire employees, and to do what is necessary to expand their business, and that is so desperately needed, given we are now entering the fifth year of underemployment in this country. So that incentive to employ part-time workers means fewer hours, lower wages, less economic growth, less production, and it means middle-class Americans will continue to pay the price of Washington's ineptness.

One of our colleagues here said it best about the implementation of the health care law: ''I just see a huge train wreck coming down.'' I think it is becoming clear that we all see a huge train wreck coming down. If both sides of the aisle here understand this is a train wreck, then let's do something about it now before it hits. Let's stop the train from crashing before its full impact on the economy takes effect.

Americans want health care reform that is an improvement but not a burden. We need to replace ObamaCare with commonsense health care reforms that will lower costs without penalizing American workers and job creators. If we don't act—if we don't stop this train wreck from happening—we will continue to see a struggling economy with anemic growth and the American people will continue to pay the high price.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Arizona.

ORDER OF PROCEDURE

Mr. MCCAIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that myself, Senator LEVIN, Senator MENENDEZ, and Senator GRAHAM be permitted to participate in a colloquy for up to 40 minutes.

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

Mr. MCCAIN. If it is agreeable to Senator LEVIN, I say to my friend from South Carolina, we could each make a brief opening statement, maybe a 6-, 7-minute opening statement, and then maybe have a colloquy amongst us. Is that agreeable to the Senator from Michigan?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Michigan.

Mr. LEVIN. It is agreeable to me. My statement will probably be about 7 or 8 minutes. I don't know how long Senator MENENDEZ—because he is the fourth Senator who will participate—how long his statement will be, but if 40 minutes is what the Senator from Arizona sought, I think that ought to be enough.

Mr. MCCAIN. I thank my colleagues. I wish to thank my dear friend from South Carolina whose efforts on another issue in Benghazi have brought the attention of the American people to a tragic situation that happened there. We need to place responsibility for it, and if it had not been for his tenacity and effort on this issue, I do not believe it would have been brought to the attention of the American people yesterday. So I wish to thank him for his usual and unusual continuation of efforts on behalf of the families who were killed.

SYRIA

Mr. MCCAIN. Mr. President, today I and my colleagues are here to speak about Syria. The strategic and humanitarian costs of this conflict continue to be devastating, not just for the people of Syria but for vital American interests. As today's Washington Post editorial makes clear, nearly all of the terrible consequences that those opposed to intervention predicted would happen if we intervened in Syria have happened because we have not.

There is mounting evidence that chemical weapons have been used by the Asad regime. As many of our colleagues have noted—including Senator FEINSTEIN, the chairman of the Intelligence Committee—President Obama's redline on Syria has been crossed. But instead of acting, the Obama administration has called for additional evidence to be collected by U.N. investigators who have not yet set foot in Syria and probably never will. In the absence of more robust action, I fear it will not be long before Asad takes this delay as an invitation to use chemical weapons again on an even larger scale.

Moreover, as I have said before, by drawing a redline on chemical weapons, the President actually gave the Asad regime a green light to use every other weapon in his arsenal with impunity. More than 70,000 Syrians have been killed indiscriminately with snipers, artillery, helicopter gunships, fighter jets, and even ballistic missiles. Indeed, according to a recent Human Rights Watch report, more than 4,300 civilians have been killed by Syria's airstrikes alone since July 2012.

At the same time, Iran and its proxy Hezbollah are building a network of militias inside Syria and the al-Qaida-aligned al-Nusra Front has gained unprecedented strength on the ground. According to estimates published in the media, some believe there were no more than a few hundred al-Nusra fighters in Syria last year, but today it is widely believed there could be thousands of extremist fighters inside Syria. They are gaining strength by the day because they are the best, most experienced fighters. They are well-funded and are providing humanitarian assistance in the parts of Syria where people need it most.

At the same time, this conflict is having increasingly devastating consequences to the security and stability of our allies and partners in Israel, Jordan, Turkey, Iraq, and Lebanon. The U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees has characterized the situation in Syria as an ''existential threat'' for Lebanon, where the government estimates that 1 million Syrians have entered the country—1 million Syrians have entered the country of Lebanon—which has a population of just over 4 million. Similarly, over the past 2 years, more than 500,000 Syrians have flooded into Jordan, a country of only 6 million people. Consider for a moment that in proportional terms this would be equivalent to 26 million refugees, or the entire population of Texas, suddenly crossing our own borders.

In short, Syria is becoming a failed state in the heart of the Middle East overrun by thousands of al-Qaida-affiliated fighters, with possibly tons of chemical weapons, and poised to ignite a wider sectarian conflict that could profoundly destabilize the region.

Yesterday brought news that the administration plans to organize, together with Russia, an international peace conference later this month to seek a negotiated settlement to the war in Syria. All of us—all of us—are in favor of such a political resolution to this conflict. No one wants to see this conflict turn into a fight to the death and total victory for one side or the other. We all want to work toward a political settlement that forms a new governing structure in Syria reflective of the democratic aspirations of the Syrian people.

But let's be realistic. One of the lessons of the past 2 years is that such a negotiated settlement will not be possible in Syria until the balance of power shifts more decisively against Asad and those around him. Until Asad, as well as his Iranian, Hezbollah, and Russian backers no longer believe they are winning, what incentive do they have to come to the table and make a deal? This is what two well-meaning United Nations senior envoys have already learned.

Yes, Syrian opposition forces are gaining strength and territory on the ground. But Asad still has air power—a decisive factor in that climate, in that terrain—ballistic missiles, chemical weapons, and a host of other advanced weaponry, and he is using all of

it. Furthermore, today's news reports that Russia has agreed to sell an advanced air defense system to the Asad regime should lead us once again to ask ourselves whether the path to peace in Syria runs through Moscow.

I know Americans are war-weary and eager to focus on our domestic and economic problems and not foreign affairs. I also know the situation in Syria is complex and there are no ideal options. But the basic choice we face is not complicated: Do the costs of inaction outweigh the costs of action? I believe they do.

No one should think the United States has to act alone, put boots on the ground, or destroy every Syrian air defense system to make a difference for the better in Syria. We have more limited options at our disposal, including limited military options, that can make a positive impact on this crisis.

We could, for example, organize an overt and large-scale operation to train and arm well-vetted Syrian opposition forces—a course of action that was recommended last year by President Obama's entire national security team. I am encouraged that Senator MENENDEZ, the chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee, has introduced legislation this week on this very issue and that he is speaking out about the need for more robust action in Syria, including addressing Asad's air power.

As several key leaders in our own military have pointed out in testimony to the Senate Armed Services Committee over the past several months—from Gen. James Mattis to ADM James Stavridis—we have the capacity—we have the capacity—to significantly weaken both the Asad regime's air power and its increasing use of ballistic missiles, which pose significant risks as delivery vehicles for chemical weapons.

To address this threat, we could use our precision strike capabilities to target Asad's aircraft and Scud missile launchers on the ground without our pilots having to fly into the teeth of Syria's air defenses. Similar weapons could be used to selectively destroy artillery pieces and make Asad's forces think twice about remaining at their posts. We could use the Patriot missile batteries outside of Syria to help protect safe zones inside Syria from Asad's aerial bombing and missile attacks.

Would any of these options immediately end the conflict? Probably not. But they could save innocent lives in Syria. They could give the moderate opposition a better chance to succeed in marginalizing radical actors and eventually provide security and responsible governance in Syria after Asad falls. However, the longer we wait, the worse the situation gets and the tougher it will be to confront, as we will inevitably be forced to do sooner or later.

I am encouraged that a consensus is emerging and many of our colleagues—Democrats and Republicans alike—share this view. I note the leadership of Senator LEVIN, the chairman of our Armed Services Committee, whom I joined in writing a letter to President Obama urging him to take more active steps in Syria. I also note the important voice Senator BOB CASEY has lent to this debate and ask unanimous consent that his op-ed printed last week in the Huffington Post, ''Time to Act in Syria''—which calls for consideration of more options, including cruise missile strikes to neutralize the Syrian Air Force—be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

[From the Huffington Post, May 9, 2013]

TIME TO ACT IN SYRIA

(By Bob Casey)

Last week, I joined a bipartisan group of senators to ask the President whether the Assad regime has used chemical weapons. The administration's response suggests mounting evidence of chemical weapons underscores the imperative that the United States stand with the people of Syria during this critical period.

The fall of Assad is not only good for Syria, but will deal a significant blow to Iran and Hezbollah. Degrading the destructive power of Iran and Hezbollah is in the national security interests of the United States—Bashar al-Assad is a key link between them.

In March, Senator Rubio and I offered legislation that could offer a path forward. Since that time, several senators have cosponsored the measure including Senators Kirk, Coons, Klobuchar, Levin, Cardin, Boxer and Shaheen. This legislation would provide support to the armed and political opposition, increase humanitarian aid to Syrians inside the country and to refugees in neighboring states. This bill also lays the groundwork to address the immense humanitarian and political challenges in the post-Assad era.

A political transition to a government that reflects the will of the Syrian people is in the core interests of the United States in the region. I have made the case consistently that the U.S. should lead efforts to support the moderate Syrian armed and political opposition. I have also said that the U.S. should consider measures that would hamper the ability of the Syrian Air Force to conduct aerial attacks on civilians, including cruise missile strikes on Syrian Air Force planes as they sit on the tarmac [Foreign Policy 2/27/13]. In addition, the U.S., working with Turkey and NATO, should use Patriot missile batteries to provide cover for Syrians living in the northern part of the country who are subjected to SCUD missile attacks.

Any U.S. action should not result in U.S. boots on the ground.

It is time to act in the interests of our security in the region. Decisive action by the U.S. and our allies could help to tip the balance so that Syria can begin a transition process. Absent constructive engagement by the U.S., I am very concerned that the killing in Syria will continue and extremists will play an increasingly influential role in determining that country's future, resulting in very negative implications for the region.

Mr. MCCAIN. Let me conclude with one final thought. For America, our interests are our values and our values are our interests. The moral dimension cannot be lost from our foreign policy. If ever a case should remind us of this, it is Syria.

Leon Wieseltier captured this point powerfully in the New Republic this week:

Seventy thousand people have died in the Syrian war, most of them at the hands of their ruler. Since this number has appeared in the papers for many months, the actual number must be much higher. The slaughter is unceasing. But the debate about American intervention is increasingly conducted in ''realist'' terms: the threat to American interests posed by jihadism in Syria, the intrigues of Iran and Hezbollah, the rattling of Israel, the ruination of Jordan and Lebanon and Iraq. They are all good reasons for the president of the United States to act like the president of the United States. But wouldn't the prevention of ethnic cleansing and genocidal war be reason enough? Is the death of scores and even hundreds of thousands, and the displacement of millions, less significant for American policy, and less quickening? The moral dimension must be restored to our deliberations, the moral sting, or else Obama, for all his talk about conscience, will have presided over a terrible mutilation of American discourse: the severance of conscience from action.

Nearly two decades ago, I worked with Democratic and Republican colleagues in Congress to support President Clinton as he led America to do the right thing in stopping mass atrocities in Bosnia. The question for another President today, and for all Americans, is whether we will again answer the desperate pleas for rescue that are made uniquely to us, as the United States of America.

I, first, would ask both of my colleagues one question, if it would be all right. There is news today that the Secretary of State wants to convene a conference, including the Russians, in order to try to bring about a resolution at the same time we read reports that the Russians are selling Syria the most advanced weapons. I guess I would ask my colleague from South Carolina and then Senator LEVIN because I know he has a statement.

Mr. GRAHAM. That would be a big contradiction.

I will just yield to Senator LEVIN to answer the question and make his opening statement.

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. President, I thank, first of all, the Senator from Arizona for the leadership he has taken on the question of Syria. In answer to the question, to the best of my ability, at least, it would not be the first time Russia has taken an inconsistent position. What I am hoping is that the additional military pressure on Asad, which we are all calling for this morning, would help put pressure on Russia to understand, if that military pressure is forthcoming, that they should participate in the political solution. I do not know that we can stop them, as much as we would all wish to, from taking the inconsistent position that they have, but I believe—and I think the Senator from Arizona would probably agree, but he can speak for himself, obviously—that if President Obama does as we are urging him to do, which is find a way to put additional military pressure on Asad, that would be an important sign to Russia that: OK, join in a solution. You participated enough in the problem already. Join in the solution.

They are inconsistent. But I think our goal of trying to get more military pressure on Asad is very consistent with the idea that maybe there will be a political solution, but if there is, it will be promoted by military pressure on Asad and his understanding of that fact.

The worsening situation in Syria and the snowballing plight of millions in the region requires a response.

Since nonviolent demonstrations demanding democratic change began in Syria in March of 2011, Bashar Asad and his clique of supporters have unleashed a massacre that has claimed the lives of at least 70,000 Syrians, displaced more than 4 million people across a region that already suffers from a massive refugee population, sparked a civil war with a multitude of divergent ethnic groups and religious sects, and placed the security of Syria's chemical weapons stockpile—which is one of the world's largest—at risk of falling into the hands of terrorist groups.

Despite the impact of this horrific campaign, Asad's commitment to continuing the fight appears unwavering. One must look no further than the increasingly indiscriminate tactics with which he conducts his campaign. In recent months, in addition to Asad's possible use of chemical weapons, he has increased his reliance on airstrikes, Scud missiles, rockets, mortar shells, and artillery to terrorize and to kill civilians.

Asad's ability to conduct this campaign is enabled by two actors—Iran and Russia. Iran's financial, personnel, and materiel support have been critical to ensuring Asad's military remains operable and that the impact of defections is mitigated with reinforcements. Russia's support to Syria's more advanced military weaponry, most notably air defense systems, is critical to Asad's continued ability to project power into areas of the country he no longer controls.

To add further complexity to the situation, al-Nusra Front, an al-Qaida offshoot, continues to spread its influence in some areas of Syria. Its presence is of concern and countering its spread needs to be a priority. It is also critical that we ensure that countries in the region that are seeking to force an end to the Asad regime are not enabling and enhancing the capabilities of violent extremists who will ultimately turn their weapons on moderate Syrians and on religious minorities in Syria, such as the Syrian Christians.

The combination of these circumstances in Syria demonstrates that the status quo is unacceptable and that time is not on our side. Many officials in Washington share this sentiment but in the same breath remind us that the situation in Syria is complex, volatile, and asymmetric; Syria's Government institutions are crumbling, which could create a dangerous vacuum; any action by the United States or the West, even if it is with our Arab partners, risks significant escalation; and that any security vacuum could be filled by Islamist extremists.

I have supported, and I will continue to support, the President's contributions to provide humanitarian relief to the Syrian people throughout the region, as well as the additional assistance he has pledged to Jordan to help with the devastating impact of this conflict on that country.

But it is essential that the United States, working with our allies in the region, step up the military pressure on the Asad regime—of course, doing so in a carefully thought out and regionally supported way.

Certainly, there are significant challenges to any plan of action in Syria. But we not only have to figure out the consequences of any action, we also have to figure out the consequences of not taking additional actions. In my view, the facts on the ground make the consequences of inaction too great, and it is time for the United States and our allies to use ways to alter the course of events in Syria by increasing the military pressure on Asad until he can see that his current course is not sustainable.

Taking steps to add military pressure on Asad will also provide backing to Secretary Kerry's efforts to bring the Russians into the dialog politically, which is aimed at leading to Asad's departure. I commend Secretary Kerry for his efforts to bring Russia into that dialog.

At the same time, of course, we condemn Russia's support for the Asad regime. I happen to feel very strongly that even though we are condemning, and should condemn, Russia's support for the Asad regime, it is still in our interest that Russia participate in putting pressure on Asad politically to depart, if Secretary Kerry can possibly do so.

I have joined Senator MCCAIN recently in writing to President Obama, urging the President to consider supporting a number of efforts, including the creation by Turkey of a safe zone inside Syria along its border, the deployment of our Patriot batteries closer to that border in order to protect populations in that safe zone and to neutralize any Syrian planes that threaten it and also to provide weapons to vetted elements of the opposition in Syria. These actions—raising the military pressure on Asad—will send the critical message to Asad that he is going to go one way or the other.

The Armed Services Committee, which I chair, recently held an open hearing on the situation in Syria and the Defense Department's efforts to plan for a full range of possible options to respond to the contingencies in Syria. Our committee is set to receive a classified briefing on Syria next week. I intend to raise these issues with our witnesses at that briefing. I know Senator MCCAIN and Senator GRAHAM and others are also going to forcefully raise these issues with those witnesses at that briefing and to urge them to carry the message back to the administration that it is time to up the military pressure on Asad.

I thank Senator MCCAIN and others who are participating in this discussion.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New Jersey.

Mr. MENENDEZ. Mr. President, I wish to join with my distinguished colleagues in our collective call for a greater engagement. I start off, as I always do in many years in Congress between the House and the Senate, with two questions: What is in the national interests of the United States? What is in the national security interests of the United States? The answer to those two questions is, in essence, how I determine my views, my advocacy, my votes, and the policies I want to pursue.

There are vital U.S. interests engaged in Syria. First, of course, there is a humanitarian crisis, probably the most significant humanitarian crisis at this moment—70,000 dead and climbing, 4 million displaced. That is, of course, an urgent call. Beyond that we have large chemical weapon stockpiles that potentially can fall into the wrong hands. Some have, by a whole host of public reports, already been used against the Syrian people. Unless you believe that somehow the rebels have in their possession chemical weapons, then this largely has to be from Asad. He has used them. I think once you use them, you are willing to use them even in greater quantities. That is a real concern.

The Syrian State could collapse. That would leave a safe heaven for terrorists, constituting a new threat to the region. You already have al-Qaida affiliated al-Nusra, you have Hezbollah, you have the Iranian Guard. You have the opportunity for a safe heaven for terrorists constituting a new threat to the region with broader implications for our own security.

The refugee crisis and sectarian violence spread instability throughout the region. The King of Jordan was here 2 weeks ago and sat with our committee. He made it very clear, his population has already increased by 20 percent. At the rate it is going, the population of Jordan could double. That is not sustainable for the kingdom. This is one of the countries that has been one of our most significant and faithful allies, and a constructive ally in the region. We cannot afford for that ally to ultimately find itself in a position in which it could very well collapse. We look at all of that.

Finally, there could be no more strategic setback to Iran—which this body has spoken collectively and in a bipartisan united fashion to stop its march toward nuclear weapons—than to have the Asad regime collapse. That would be a tremendous setback to Iran and would cause a disruption in the terror pipeline between Iran and Hezbollah in Lebanon.

These are just some of the vital national security interests of the United States in changing the tide. Under the present set of circumstances, Asad believes he is winning. For so long, as he believes he is winning, he will continue the course he is on. There has to be a change in the tipping point.

After 2 years I believe there are those in the opposition—rebels we can and have thoroughly vetted—we can assist in trying to change that tipping point. If you have a monopoly on air power and on artillery, then the reality is you will not see a change on the ground.

So the legislation I have introduced and am working with colleagues on begins to move us in a different direction. It is to seek to arm thoroughly vetted elements of the Syrian opposition so we can change the tipping point. It is to, of course, continue to provide humanitarian assistance and at the same time work for the assistance of a transition fund to help those rebels that are already controlling parts of the civilian population to help them administrate there and prepare for the future.

The key point is unless we change the dynamics on the ground, we will not have a change in the regime. So long as the regime can continue to bomb its citizens indiscriminately—and if the reports, as we have seen from various countries, including our own, suggest that Asad has used chemical weapons against his own citizens—that is only an invitation to allow him to continue to do it unless we act.

I am willing to consider other options. I know my colleague, Senator MCCAIN, very distinguished in this field, has suggested others. I am willing to consider those as well. But I think, finally, we strengthen the hand of the administration and Secretary Kerry. We all want to see a politically, diplomatically achieved solution. But in the absence of changing the calculus not only of Asad but of his supporters who have propped him up, unless they believe he will fall, I am not sure we have changed the calculus for the political opportunity to take place and the diplomacy to be effective.

I think these efforts strengthen the hand of the administration, create a parallel track that if diplomacy fails, we will have an opportunity to pursue our vital national interests and security interests, end the humanitarian tragedy, and create the type of stability we want to see in the region. I appreciate my colleague bringing us together on the floor of the Senate. I look forward to continuing to work with him.

I yield the floor.

Mr. MCCAIN. I thank the distinguished chairman. May I say, it has been a great pleasure for me to have the opportunity to serve on the Foreign Relations Committee, of which Senator MENENDEZ is the chairman. I think his stewardship of that committee has been outstanding. I appreciate the very articulate argument the chairman just presented, including the strategic dimension of this whole issue which sometimes in our—particularly, when you focus so much on the humanitarian side, the strategic interest of the fall of Bashar Al-Asad is something which I think adds another dimension. I thank the Senator and chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from South Carolina.

Mr. GRAHAM. Mr. President, I would just like to echo what Senator MCCAIN said about Senator MENENDEZ. I would like to, for the record, note that the tide of war in Syria changed today because of what is happening on the floor of the Senate. That may be hard for people to understand, but I really do not think so.

How do you change the tide of battle? You make it certain to the world that Asad will go, and you provide hope to those who are fighting him that they will prevail. I would suggest that a bipartisan consensus is forming in the Senate that now is the time to do more, not less, when it comes to Syria, including arming the rebels—the right rebels, the right opposition, with the right weapons, which will eventually change the tide of battle.

So to those who have been following this debate about Syria, to those who have been in the fight trying to topple this regime, I cannot stress to you how important today is in your cause. When you get Senator LEVIN and Senator MENENDEZ, two institutional, important figures because of their chairmanships, but beyond that, important because of who they are and what they bring to every debate around national security, combined with Senator MCCAIN and others, you have turned the tide in Washington.

As to Senator MCCAIN, he has been talking in the most eloquent terms for at least a couple of years about stopping this war in Syria, ending the Asad regime and replacing it with something better. He has been right, as he usually is. But now is not the time to look backward, it is to look forward.

I think an effort by the Senate and the House to acknowledge that the tide of war needs to change and we should be bolder in our support for the opposition is going to increase the likelihood of a peaceful solution through diplomacy.

The Russians have to know, after today, if they know anything about American politics, the game has changed when it comes to Asad, and this is a monumental sea change in terms of the war in Syria by having four Senators who care about such matters of foreign policy to speak out and say we will support arming the rebels and being more involved militarily.

To the opposition, this is a great day for you. To Asad, this seals your fate.

Now, what do we do and how do we do it? It will not all end tomorrow because of this colloquy today, but we are well on the way to ending this war. Here is the choice: The current regime, which is evil to the core, and the imperfect opposition, which has been infected by radical Islam—you can fix the second one; you cannot fix the first. It is that simple to me.

The sooner the war ends the better, not only for saving people in Syria from further slaughter, but preventing what I think would be an erosion of our national security interests in four areas. If this war goes 6 more months, a failed state will emerge in Syria. It will be so fractured you cannot put it back together.

The 6,000 al-Qaida associated fighters will grow in number, and there will be a safe haven in Syria like there was in Afghanistan. That is not good for us. Unlike Afghanistan, there is enough chemical weapons in Syria to kill thousands if not millions of Americans and people who are our allies. I worry greatly not only that chemical weapons have been used in Syria on the opposition by the regime, but those same chemical weapons will be used in the future by radical Islamists against us.

The next bomb that goes off in America may have more than nails and glass in it. The only reason millions of Americans or thousands of Americans, hundreds of thousands have not been killed by radical Islamists is they cannot get the weapons to kill that many of us. They would if they could.

I have never seen a better opportunity for radical Islamists to get ahold of weapons of mass destruction than I see in Syria today. Every day that goes by their opportunity to acquire some of these weapons grows dramatically. If you ask me what I worry the most about with Syria and why we should get involved, it is for that very reason. If these weapons get compromised, they are going to fall into the hands of the people who will use them against us, and to believe otherwise would be incredibly naive.

Jordan. Probably the most stabilizing figure in the Mideast in these dangerous times is the King of Jordan. His country is being overrun by refugees. If this war goes on 6 more months, that is probably the end of his kingdom because it will create economic chaos and political instability. He will be a victim of the civil war in Syria, and it will have monumental consequences for our national security.

As we talk about Syria and chemical weapons falling into radical Islamists' hands, we are dealing with a radical regime in Iran that is marching toward building a nuclear weapon. If you think the ayatollahs in Iran are trying to build a nuclear powerplant at the bottom of a mountain, you are wrong. They are trying to build a nuclear weapon to ensure their survivability. God only knows what they would do with nuclear technology. But if you believe what they say, they would wipe Israel off the map, and we would be next. I tend to believe what they say.

If you allow Syria to continue to deteriorate and have a hands-off policy

toward Asad, then I think you are sending the worst possible signal to Iran. As Senator LEVIN said, really the only ally Iran has today is Asad in Syria. How can we convince the Iranians we are serious about their nuclear problem when we do not seem to be very serious about Asad using chemical weapons against his own people? What a terrible signal to send at one of the most important times.

I would end with this thought: This bipartisan consensus that is emerging today is going to pay great dividends. It is going to be helpful to the President. We can end this war sooner rather than later. But no matter what happens, there is going to be a second war in Syria, unfortunately.

That second war is going to be between radical Islamists who want to turn Syria into some kind of al-Qaida-inspired state, and the overwhelming majority of Syrians who want to live a better life and be our friends, not our enemies.

This war will occur after the fall of Asad. But it will end the right way. The sooner we get the first war over, the shorter the second war will be. I think we can bring this war to a close without boots on the ground. The sooner we act the better.

One last thought. To the opposition, you would be helping your cause if you would let the world know that you do not want Asad's chemical weapons; that the new Syria will not be a state that wants weapons of mass destruction; that you would agree these weapons should be controlled by the international community and destroyed; that you would agree to an international force coming on the ground with your blessing the day after Asad falls to secure these weapons and destroy them for all time. I think you would be helping your cause.

So I say to Senator MCCAIN, I really appreciate his leadership for a couple of years. But persistence does matter in politics and all things that are important. I think the Senator's persistence is paying off.

I say to Senator MENENDEZ and Senator LEVIN, what they have done today joining up in a bipartisan fashion is going to pay great dividends for our own national security interests. The way forward is pretty clear.

I say to President Obama, we want to be your ally. We want to be your supporter. We want you to get more involved, not less. We realize it is hard. We realize there are risks no matter what we do. But as Senator MCCAIN said before, the risk of doing nothing by continuing on the current track is far greater than getting involved in ending the war sooner.

Mr. MCCAIN. Can I just ask one question of my colleague? I understand recently he made a trip to the Middle East. There is nothing like seeing the terrible consequences of war. I understand the Senator visited a refugee camp.

Maybe for the benefit of our colleagues the Senator could take a minute to describe the horrible conditions people who have now been made refugees have been subjected to and their failure to understand why we won't be able to be of more assistance to them.

Mr. GRAHAM. I thank the Senator for his question. It was one of the most compelling trips I have ever made to the Middle East. We went to Turkey, Jordan, and we went to a refugee camp in Jordan. Some 40,000 Syrian children are now in Jordanian schools. The burden on Jordan is immense, but when you talk to the people in the camps, what they have gone through and what their loved ones have gone through is heartbreaking.

From a national point of view, once you visit the camps, you understand what is at stake. They tell you about radical Islamists moving in. They want no part of them but at the end of the day they are having more influence because we are not in the fight. You can do this without boots on the ground.

The most chilling thing they tell us, which Senator MCCAIN, has been echoing for a long time, is their children are watching the United States. Like it or not, we have the reputation in the world that we can do almost anything.

Well, we can't do almost anything, but we are seen as a force for good. The people in Syria are beside themselves wondering where is America. America, to them, is an idea. They want to be like us because it means freedom, and it means economic opportunity. It means having a say about your children's future. They are dumbfounded that we are not more involved, given the stakes that exist in Syria. They tell us without any hesitation that the young people of Syria will remember this moment. They will hold this against us. I think I know what the Senator is telling us.

Here is the good news: There is still time to act. It doesn't have to end that way. The conditions in Syria are horrible. The refugee camps were beyond imagination. The U.N. is doing a great job, but they are running out of money. Jordan is about to fall if we don't stop this war.

From a human point of view, we have got to get this war over and America needs to be seen as part of the solution, not part of the problem. From a national security point of view, Syria is going to become a nightmare for the whole world, including the United States.

Mr. MCCAIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to have printed in the RECORD a Washington Post editorial entitled ''Repercussions Of Inaction,'' a Wall Street Journal article, ''U.S. Is Warned Russia Plans Syria Arms Sale,'' and, finally, a piece by Leon Wieseltier that is in the Washington Diarist.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

[From the Washington Post, May 9, 2013]

THE REPERCUSSIONS OF INACTION

(Editorial)

There are grave risks in continuing the current U.S. policy toward Syria.

Opponents of U.S. intervention in Syria are adept at citing the risks of a more aggressive U.S. effort to bring down the regime of Bashar al-Assad. Weapons given to rebel fighters might end up in the hands of extremists, the skeptics say. U.S. air attacks or the creation of a no-fly zone would be challenged by formidable air defenses. U.S. intervention might increase the risk that the regime would resort to chemical weapons.

Above all, say the anti-interventionists, direct or even indirect U.S. engagement in the fighting would make Syria an American problem, saddling a war-weary country with another difficult, expensive and possibly unworkable nation-building mission.

These are serious objections, though we believe that some of the risks, such as the spread of weapons to jihadists, can be mitigated, while others, such as the strength of Syrian air defenses, have been exaggerated. Our greater concern is about the side of the discussion critics of intervention usually leave out—which is the risks that are incurred by failing to intervene.

What will unfold in Syria if the Obama administration persists with its policy of providing humanitarian and other non-lethal aid while standing back from the fighting? The most likely scenario is that Syria fractures along sectarian lines. An al-Qaeda affiliate, Jabhat al-Nusra, is already consolidating control over a swath of northeastern Syria; remnants of the regime, backed by Shiite fighters from Lebanon's Hezbollah movement, could take over a strip of the western coastline.

Such a splintering would almost certainly spread the sectarian warfare to Iraq and Lebanon, as it has to some extent already. That could cause the collapse of the Iraqi political system that was the legacy of the U.S. mission there. Chemical weapons stocks now controlled by the Assad regime would be up for grabs, probably forcing further interventions by Israel in order to prevent their acquisition by Hezbollah or al-Qaeda. Jordan, the most fragile U.S. ally in the Middle East, could collapse under the weight of Syrian refugees. Turkey and Saudi Arabia, which have been imploring the Obama administration to take steps to end the war, could conclude that the United States is no longer a reliable ally.

Of course, some of these consequences may come about whatever the United States does. But the best way of preventing them is to quickly tip the military balance against the Assad regime—something that would probably require an air campaign as well as arms for the moderate opposition. If the regime's fighting strength is decisively broken it might still be possible to force out the Assads and negotiate a political transition, as Secretary of State John F. Kerry aspires to do. For now, with the regime convinced it is winning, there is no such chance—and with each passing month Syria's breakup comes closer to reality.

In short, there are substantial risks for the United States if it intervenes in Syria but also grave dangers in its present policy. On Tuesday President Obama said his job was to ''constantly measure'' what actions were in the best U.S. interest. It's not an easy calculus, to be sure. But for two years, as Mr. Obama has heeded the warnings about U.S. engagement, the situation in Syria has grown more dangerous to U.S. interests. There are no good options, as everyone likes to say. But it's becoming increasingly clear

that the greatest risk to the United States lies in failing to take decisive action to end the Assad regime.

[From the Wall Street Journal, May 9, 2013]

U.S. IS WARNED RUSSIA PLANS SYRIA ARMS SALE

(By Jay Solomon, Adam Entous and Julian E. Barnes)

WASHINGTON.—Israel has warned the U.S. that a Russian deal is imminent to sell advanced ground-to-air missile systems to Syria, weapons that would significantly boost the regime's ability to stave off intervention in its civil war.

U.S. officials said on Wednesday that they are analyzing the information Israel provided about the suspected sale of S–300 missile batteries to Syria, but wouldn't comment on whether they believed such a transfer was near.

Russian officials didn't immediately return requests to comment. The Russian Embassy in Washington has said its policy is not to comment on arms sales or transfers between Russia and other countries.

The government of President Bashar al-Assad has been seeking to purchase S–300 missile batteries—which can intercept both manned aircraft and guided missiles—from Moscow going back to the George W. Bush administration, U.S. officials said. Western nations have lobbied President Vladimir Putin's government not to go ahead with the sale. If Syria were to acquire and deploy the systems, it would make any international intervention in Syria far more complicated, according to U.S. and Middle East-based officials.

According to the information the Israelis provided in recent days, Syria has been making payments on a 2010 agreement with Moscow to buy four batteries for $900 million. They cite financial transactions from the Syrian government, including one made this year through Russia's foreign-development bank, known as the VEB.

The package includes six launchers and 144 operational missiles, each with a range of 125 miles, according to the information the Israelis provided. The first shipment could come over the next three months, according to the Israelis' information, and be concluded by the end of the year. Russia is also expected to send two instruction teams to train Syria's military in operating the missile system, the Israelis say.

Russia has been Mr. Assad's most important international backer, outside of Iran, since the conflict in Syria started in March 2011, and supplies Syria with arms, funding and fuel. Russia maintains a naval port in Syria, its only outlet to the Mediterranean. Moscow also has publicly voiced worries that a collapsed Syria could fuel Islamist activities in its restive Caucasus regions.

Secretary of State John Kerry met with Mr. Putin on Tuesday in Moscow. The leaders said they would stage an international conference this month aimed at ending the civil war. U.S. officials couldn't say whether Messrs. Kerry and Putin or their teams discussed the arms sale.

British Prime Minister David Cameron is scheduled to visit Mr. Putin in Russia on Friday. The White House on Wednesday said Mr. Cameron would visit Washington on Monday to discuss issues including Syria's civil war and counterterrorism, plus trade and economic issues, with President Barack Obama.

The Obama administration has argued that Mr. Assad has to leave office as part of a political transition in Damascus. The Kremlin has maintained that he retains a large base of support and should be included in negotiations over a future Syrian government.

Should Mr. Putin's government go ahead with the sale, it would mark a significant escalation in the battle between Moscow and Washington over Syria. U.S. officials said they believe Russian technicians are already helping maintain the existing Syrian air-defense units.

The first air-defense deals between Russia and Syria date back decades. Russia in recent years has stepped up shipments to modernize Syria's targeting systems and make the air defenses mobile, and therefore much more difficult for Israel—and the U.S.—to overcome.

According to a U.S. intelligence assessment, Russia began shipping SA–22 Pantsir-S1 units to Syria in 2008. The system, a combination of surface-to-air missiles and 30mm antiaircraft guns, has a digital targeting system and is mounted on a combat vehicle, making it easy to move. Syria has 36 of the vehicles, according to the assessment.

In 2009, the Russians started upgrading Syria's outdated analog SA–3 surface-to-air missile systems, turning them into the SA–26 Pechora–2M system, which is mobile and digital, equipped with missiles with an operational range of 17 miles, according to the assessment.

The U.S. is particularly worried about another modernized system Moscow provides—the SA–5. With an operational range of 175 miles, SA–5 missiles could take out U.S. planes flying from Cyprus, a key North Atlantic Treaty Organization base that was used during Libya operations and would likely be vital in any Syrian operation.

The U.S. has stealth aircraft and ship-based, precision-guided missiles that could take out key air-defense sites. Gen. Martin Dempsey, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, has privately told the White House that shutting down the system could require weeks of bombing, putting U.S. fighter pilots in peril and diverting military resources from other priorities.

According to an analysis by the U.S. military's Joint Staff, Syrian air defenses are nearly five times more sophisticated than what existed in Libya before the NATO launched its air campaign there in 2011. Syrian air defenses are about 10 times more sophisticated than the system the U.S. and its allies faced in Serbia.

[From the Washington Diarist, May 7, 2013]

STUNG!

(By Leon Wieseltier)

A reporter who visited the White House last week brought back the news that the criticism of President Obama's immobility about the Syrian disaster has ''begun to sting.'' Good. Something got through. The president's sophistries about his ''red line'' helped, of course: he spoke his way into a predicament that he cannot speak his way out of, thereby damaging the article of faith about the magical powers of his speech. The press is full of reports that our policy may be changing, that we may finally supply weapons to rebels we can ideologically support, that we have identified such rebels under the leadership of General Salim Idris, and so on. ''We are on an upward trajectory,'' a White House official told another reporter about these second thoughts, which only a short while ago it would have considered a downward trajectory. Obama, somewhat embarrassed by the implication that for two years he may have been in error about one of the most consequential crises of his presidency, is having the White House rehearse its old admonition about caution (its chin-stroking Kissingerian term for a doctrinaire timidity), but still something may be stirring. The Syrian use of sarin and the Israeli airstrikes (which were miraculously unimpeded by the mythical power of Assad's air defenses) seem to have concentrated the West Wing mind. Is Obama being stung into action? I do not really believe it—his interventionism runs deep, philosophically and temperamentally; but in any event it is not too early to record a few lessons that can be extracted from this fiasco.

The bitterness of belatedness. There is nothing we know about Assad now that we did not know a year ago and longer. Not even his use of chemical weapons changes our understanding of him. His strategy in this crisis has always been to transform a democratic rebellion into a sectarian war, and his method for doing so has been to commit crimes against humanity. In the two years of American quiescence the Syrian situation has become only more dire, so that those who now plead that there are no perfect options are right. But there are imperfect options, which is often all that the Hobbesian life of nations anyway allows: we can still create pro-Western elements in the struggle for Syria after Assad, and deny Al Qaeda a government in Damascus, and stem the tide of the refugees that is shaking the entire region. But the road to a democratic Syria is now much longer and more twisted than it had to be. I say this not only in recrimination, but also because Obama's failure to act swiftly in the Syrian crisis reiterates one of the regular mistakes of American presidents after the cold war, which is to refuse to treat an emergency like an emergency. In many problems of statecraft, patience is a virtue and judiciousness the beginning of wisdom; but not in all. There are gross outrages against justice, such as the butchery of civilians, that must be acted against without delay or they have not been properly understood. Confronted by this degree of urgency, the difference between success and failure is time. Why do we have to keep rediscovering this? Must the learning curve of presidents always cost many thousands of lives? Has anyone at the White House read Samantha Power's book?

The cult of the exit strategy. A ''senior American official who is involved in Syria policy'' plaintively said this to Dexter Filkins of The New Yorker: ''People on the Hill ask me, 'Why can't we do a no-fly zone? Why can't we do military strikes?' Of course we can do these things. The issue is, where will it stop?'' The answer is, we don't know. But is the gift of prophecy really a requirement for historical action? Must we know the ending at the beginning? If so, then nobody would start a business, or a book, or a medical treatment, or a love affair, let alone an invasion of Normandy Beach. We can have certainty about our objectives but not about our circumstances. The most serious action is often improvisatory, though its purposes should always be clear. The prestige of ''the exit strategy'' in our culture is another American attempt to deny the contingency of experience and assert mastery over what cannot be mastered—in this instance, it is American control-freakishness applied to the use of American force. But we often engage with what we cannot master. No outcomes are assured, except perhaps when we do nothing. We do not need to control the realm in which we need to take action; we need only to have strong and defensible reasons and strong and defensible means, and to keep our wits, our analytical abilities, about us. After all, there are many ways, good and bad, to end a military commitment, as Obama himself has shown. All this talk of exiting is designed only to inhibit us from entering. Like its cousin ''the slippery slope,'' ''the exit strategy'' is demagoguery masquerading as prudence.

The eclipse of humanitarianism. Seventy thousand people have died in the Syrian war,

most of them at the hands of their ruler. Since this number has appeared in the papers for many months, the actual number must be much higher. The slaughter is unceasing. But the debate about American intervention is increasingly conducted in ''realist'' terms: the threat to American interests posed by jihadism in Syria, the intrigues of Iran and Hezbollah, the rattling of Israel, the ruination of Jordan and Lebanon and Iraq. Those are all good reasons for the president of the United States to act like the president of the United States. But wouldn't the prevention of ethnic cleansing and genocidal war be reason enough? Is the death of scores and even hundreds of thousands, and the displacement of millions, less significant for American policy, and less quickening? The moral dimension must be restored to our deliberations, the moral sting, or else Obama, for all his talk about conscience, will have presided over a terrible mutilation of American discourse: the severance of conscience from action.

Mr. MCCAIN. I thank my colleagues. I yield.

CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Morning business is closed.

WATER RESOURCES DEVELOPMENT ACT OF 2013

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will resume consideration of S. 601, which the clerk will report.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 601) to provide for the conservation and development of water and related resources, to authorize the Secretary of the Army to construct various projects for improvements to rivers and harbors of the United States, and for other purposes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from California.

Mrs. BOXER. Mr. President, for the interest of all Senators, I wanted to thank everyone for cooperating with us. We have handled a number of amendments, one quite controversial and nongermane, but we dealt with it. It is not on this bill, I am happy to say. We are trying to keep this bill a water infrastructure bill. There may be a few exceptions, but, for the most part, that is what we want because it will increase the chances of passage all the way through to get it to the President's desk.

The bill we are dealing with, the Water Resources Development Act, was last authorized in 2007. It is high time we did a follow-on bill. What we are talking about here is flood protection, projects we need all over the country to protect our people from the ravages of floods.

We need to make sure our ports are operational. I know my friend in the chair certainly deals with all these matters in his great and beautiful State of Hawaii. We need to make sure our ports are deep enough, they have enough funding to stay modernized, and can move that cargo in and out with ease. We have environmental restoration. We have to take care of all of our water infrastructure.

I know Senator MERKLEY is here to say something about the bill, which I am very pleased about, so I am going to be very brief. I will talk for about 2 more minutes and say we have a great committee, the Environment and Public Works Committee, when it comes to infrastructure. We see eye to eye. We work together. Yes, we have our differences, but we can breach those differences.

This bill is a product of working together. It is a product of collaboration—not only in the committee where we work together, but even here when it got to the Senate. We have worked, Senator VITTER and I, with individual Members to meet all of their needs. There are no earmarks in this bill. Whatever we do is setting policy.

It is an exciting bill. It includes reforms I think are important. Most of all, I think the people at home are going to like it because it puts them in the driver's seat and protects them from delays and other problems as they move forward with projects their people need.

We have some terrific supporters of this legislation—I will close these early remarks—with organizations such as AFL–CIO, the Chamber of Commerce, the American Society of Civil Engineers, we have the Association of Equipment Manufacturers. We have many. I will show you the next chart and name a couple: The Transportation Construction Coalition, the United Brotherhood of Carpenters, storm management agency, surveyors, engineers. I think what you see here is mainstream America is behind this bill.

The bad news is our infrastructure has been rated at a D-plus. You can't be the greatest Nation in the world and have an infrastructure that is rated D-plus.

While we have major problems on other fronts in our committee—and I have to admit today was not a good day for me, the committee, or the American people, when the Republicans boycotted the markup of Gina McCarthy to be the head of the Environmental Protection Agency after she answered more than 1,000 questions. She is the most qualified ever to be nominated, having served, how about this, four Republican Governors.

What more do they want? The fact is 70 percent of the American people want clean air, want clean water, want safety reform. Gina McCarthy deserves a vote, not a boycott. They say they don't like her answers. Well, I am not surprised. She is not Mitt Romney's nominee for the EPA, she is not Rick Perry's nominee for the EPA, she is Barack Obama's nominee for the EPA. It is her position, as it is the President's, that we should enforce the Clean Water Act, the Safe Drinking Water Act, and so on.

When your Republican Presidents put up nominees for the EPA I didn't agree with, I didn't filibuster them. I said, okay, I will vote no; let them go. It is a sad day for me on the environment side of our committee.

On the public works side of my committee, it is a good day, because we are making progress. We have now about a half dozen amendments that have been cleared on both sides. We are trying to make them pending. We cleared them. We are asking all Senators, please get your amendments in because this can't go on forever. We need to pass this bill, as 550,000 jobs are supported by this legislation. Hundreds and hundreds of businesses are looking forward to our doing this. That is why we have this amazing array of support.

With that, I would say to Senator MERKLEY, the floor is his.

I yield the floor at this time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Oregon.

Mr. MERKLEY. Mr. President, I rise today to talk about one particular aspect of this bill, which is WIFIA. Before I explain what WIFIA is, I want to thank the Chair for managing this bill in a very bipartisan discussion of the committee. It has come to the floor with full committee examination, thorough debate, and amendment process. Here we are having a very thorough, visible, accountable process for considering this bill on the floor of the Senate. That is a very good example of the Senate working well. Thank you, Madam Chair.

Mrs. BOXER. I thank the Senator.

Mr. MERKLEY. The heart of the WIFIA program is about jobs. It is about infrastructure. Five years after the greatest economic crisis in 80 years, we still face a serious jobs crisis. Too many are out of work and too many are unemployed. A good, living-wage job is the most important pillar of the American dream. There is no public program that can compare to the importance of a living-wage job for the stability and success of a family. We have to do more to create those jobs, a lot more. Wouldn't it be great if we could both create jobs and fill a desperate national need at the same time?

Well, that is exactly what WIFIA—which is short for Water Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act—does. Low-cost loans for water infrastructure projects create good jobs now while protecting our communities from devastating costs or public health crises in the future. WIFIA does all of this while making taxpayers money over time.

The need for water infrastructure is great. Across Oregon and across America, our infrastructure is aging. That aging infrastructure needs to be replaced. Our communities are growing. The demand for water infrastructure increases, whether it is water treatment on the front end or water treatment on the back end—sending water out to our homes and businesses and then treating it after it comes back. Much of our infrastructure is approaching the end of its lifespan and needs to be replaced.

We should recognize that America is behind much of the world in terms of investing in infrastructure. That is not only not good for our future economy, it is certainly not good for creating jobs. China is investing 10 percent of its gross domestic product in infrastructure. Europe is investing 5 percent. Here in America, which had a phenomenal infrastructure buildup after World War II, we are investing only 2 percent. That is barely enough to repair the aging infrastructure that previous generations so thoughtfully funded, let alone prepare the infrastructure to meet the expanding needs of the Nation.

Infrastructure can be thought of as the bread and butter of success of our Nation. Building and maintaining infrastructure is one of the most effective ways also to create jobs in the short term. Having infrastructure in place is absolutely critical to strong, private sector economic growth over the long term.

It is time to take water infrastructure seriously as a public policy challenge. For too long, we have been putting water infrastructure on the back burner. We are not investing enough in water infrastructure to keep clean, affordable water accessible to all Americans. In fact, we are not even coming close. There is a gap, a significant gap, a growing gap in the area of water infrastructure needs versus actual funding. If we do nothing and stay on the same course, that gap will be $90 billion per year by 2040. That is a disaster for our communities. That gap would leave municipalities with a terrible decision—allow the infrastructure to continue to degrade, which is obviously not a good idea, or have to raise utility rates astronomically to pay for long-neglected improvements.

Already, we are seeing this kind of lose-lose proposition play out in my State in Oregon. Some communities have to set aside their plans because they can't afford them: to expand their infrastructure, to improve their infrastructure, to replace their infrastructure that is aging. Other communities are proceeding to upgrade their infrastructure but at costs that are doubling or even quadrupling the cost of water to the citizens.

We need a new way to finance critical water projects. That is why the Water Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act, or WIFIA, that is contained in this bill, fills a key missing link in our system. Currently Federal funding for water infrastructure and sewage through the Environmental Protection Agency Clean Water and Safe Drinking Water State Revolving Funds Program is helpful, but many projects do not qualify, and we need to expand the amount of funding available.

Into that gap comes WIFIA, modeled after the very successful Transportation Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act, or TIFIA, so we have a proven finance model for infrastructure in transportation. Let's take that proven model and apply it to the challenge of our communities on water.

I hold a meeting with our local officials—our city officials and our county officials—before each of my townhalls, and I hold a townhall in every county every year. There is hardly a meeting with multiple officials that goes by that there aren't two or three or four critical water project needs discussed. And that was the motivation for having this WIFIA Program before us today.

I applaud my colleague from Oklahoma Senator INHOFE, who has come forward and said: Let's not only make this work, but let's lower the minimum threshold for projects so we make sure we can get smaller communities, more rural communities involved. That was previously addressed in the bill by saying that smaller communities could aggregate their projects and submit their application, but this was a very helpful addition to the conversation, and I appreciate that type of bipartisan problem-solving which is evidenced in this bill as it is and as in the amendment proposed by my colleague from Oklahoma and passed yesterday.

The reason that funding in this pilot project—and we are talking about $50 million a year for 5 years—is effective is because it has a huge leverage it can fund because it is guaranteeing loans that rarely go bad. The historical default on water and sewer bonds is less than 1 percent. In fact, it is less than one-tenth of 1 percent. So that $50 million to cover defaults can be extraordinarily leveraging. The communities get the funds they need to complete their projects at the lowest interest rates possible, and the American public can sleep soundly at night knowing that the treasury funds being invested are being invested in a manner that is both prudent and productive.

This source of financing will allow communities to take on three types of projects necessary for safe and reliable water systems: repairing the aging infrastructure, upgrading the old systems to modern standards, and expanding the projects to meet growth needs.

Another advantage of this structure of financing is that under WIFIA, projects would be selected by a competitive process rather than by State-by-State allocations, so we get funds to the greatest need across this Nation. We have communities all across Oregon, in every corner of our State, that are facing these infrastructure challenges. I know from talking with my colleagues that the same is true in States across our Nation. And communities that are in good shape now in 5 or 10 years may see the challenge of meeting new standards or meeting the growth in their communities.

I would like to talk about another key aspect of our recovery; that is, manufacturing. If we don't make things in America, we will not have a middle class in America. Our manufacturing sector lost 5 million jobs over the last 14 to 15 years. It is starting to make a comeback, but we should do more to help create good manufacturing jobs.

One very simple thing we can do is support ''Buy American'' provisions in legislation such as this. We recognize the principle. We are using taxpayer dollars to complete a public infrastructure project in America, so it only makes sense for American businesses and workers to do as much of the work as possible. For that reason I will be filing an amendment to this bill to expand the ''Buy American'' provisions for our water infrastructure. These two are very much connected. Yes, we need to be building infrastructure, but we need to make sure those tax dollars build our American economy when the work is being done.

In closing, let's pass this bill, which has a tremendous amount of good in it, and one of those very good points is this water infrastructure act—WIFIA—which does support good jobs and good infrastructure across America.

I also wish to mention the great work my science associate Mirvat Abdelhaq has done on this bill. We are fortunate as Senators to have folks come to work for us for a year or so, bringing their tremendous expertise in trying to develop a very important piece of legislation. She has been very involved, and I thank her, and I thank the program for making this kind of expertise available to our offices.

Mr. President, I yield the floor, and I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

Ms. LANDRIEU. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to call up as pending amendment No. 802.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Ms. LANDRIEU. If there is objection, I can talk about the amendment now. I will talk about the amendment now and then attempt to call up the amendment later in the day. I thank the Chair.

Mr. President, the amendment I am trying to get pending for the WRDA bill would delay the increase in flood insurance rates for people in this country who are going to be suffering in unbelievable ways. And I am not just speaking of homeowners or business owners but communities across America. This isn't a Louisiana issue. It is not a Louisiana-Texas issue. It is a national issue, as this chart will show.

These are all the States in the country that have flood insurance policies. Starting with Florida, which has the most, there are over 2 million flood insurance policies in the State of Florida. Texas is second with 645,000. Louisiana has 486,000 policies. California, the fourth State, has 256,000. New Jersey has 240,000. South Carolina has

205,000. New York has 178,000. North Carolina has 138,000. Virginia has over 100,000. Georgia has close to 100,000. Mississippi has 75,000.

Time and time again, I have been on this floor, warning about affordability problems in the National Flood Insurance Program and offering proposals to address this. Despite my advice and objections, last summer Congress made a mistake and passed the Biggert-Waters bill which contained huge rate flood insurance rate increases for many homeowners and businesses.

Our families and entrepreneurs across the Nation are beginning to see the disastrous consequences of that vote now. Some already see their premiums rising by 25 percent a year and many more will see these changes over the next 2 years. These rates must be stopped until an affordability study can be conducted and Congress can react to those results.

FEMA has never done an affordability study—it cannot even quantify how strong an impact these exorbitant rates will have on our citizens. In the bill last summer, Congress required FEMA to conduct an affordability study. Don't you think we should wait for that and know if these rate increases are affordable before we start such rapid increases? Congress can't possibly have asked FEMA to conduct this study and not want to use those results to make an informed decision on how best to structure rate changes.

I can tell you that the 480,000 policy holders in Louisiana are already telling me the rates are not affordable. Families and businesses in Louisiana are already paying exorbitant rates for flood insurance and some could see those rates go up dramatically under these proposals. Eliminating grandfathered rates, as the—Biggert-Waters bill did, means their property values will plummet.

If people cannot afford flood insurance policies, they will drop out of the program. When future disasters hit, they will be entirely dependent on federal aid to help them rebuild.

I agree that the National Flood Insurance Program needs to be self-sustaining, but not on the backs of Louisiana families and businesses and not on the backs of all 5.5 million policies holders in the National Flood Insurance Program. This is not the right way.

Flood insurance is not just about business and commerce; it is about culture; it is about a way of life; it is about preserving coastal communities; it is about being resilient in storms. We must make the flood insurance program resilient without endangering the financial future of our coastal residents.

This is a very serious issue, and I thank the chair, Senator BOXER, who has worked so hard on the underlying WRDA bill, which is so important. I also thank those Members who came to the floor last night. I understand Senator MENENDEZ gave a very fiery and passionate speech about the problem he faces in New Jersey. I thank Senators SCHUMER, GILLIBRAND, and LAUTENBERG for cosponsoring this important amendment.

We want to work with the chairman and the ranking member to pass a WRDA bill. There is no State that benefits more from the WRDA bill than Louisiana, and I am extremely grateful for her leadership not just on this bill but on the RESTORE Act, which she helped shepherd through, which has helped the gulf coast in immeasurable ways, and her support of the FAIR Act on revenue-sharing, which will help the gulf coast get the revenues we need—just as interior States have—to build our own levees and not have to be such a drain on the Federal Treasury.

We can and are willing to do our own work. But the flood insurance bill, known as Biggert-Waters, never passed the Senate, and I wish to call that fact to Senators' attention. The bill was never brought to the Senate floor. The flood insurance bill that is called Biggert-Waters came out of the Banking Committee with a bipartisan vote—a similar bill. That was a House bill, and so a similar bill came out of the Senate, but it never came to the Senate floor for a vote. None of us ever got to debate it on the floor.

If you are not on the Banking Committee, wake up because this bill is going to affect your State, and if you are not on the Banking Committee, please listen to what I am about to say.

The bill never came to the Senate floor although some of us protested that at the time. There are statements in the RECORD that show the protests any number of us made at the time. The bill then sort of went dark. The next time it appeared, it was tucked into the Transportation bill, which had the RESTORE Act in it and the Biggert-Waters flood insurance, which might have passed the House of Representatives—I am not sure. Maybe it just came out of the House committee. I am trying to get clarification on whether this bill ever was passed by either body, and I will get that clarification in a few minutes. But it most certainly never came to the Senate floor, so no one here, except members of the Banking Committee—which Senator VITTER is a member of, and so he knows this issue very well—voted on this.

So while it is not a surprise to me, it may be a surprise to others to find out that flood insurance rates based on the reform bill that was tucked into the Transportation bill and into the RESTORE Act bill are now going to raise rates by 25, 50, or 100 percent on home owners. And when the grandfather clause expires—which was put in the bill to grandfather many property owners—my constituents tell me their properties will become worthless.

One can understand that a property worth even $1 million or $½ million or $250,000 has a flood insurance premium attached to it of a reasonable amount of money—$500, $600, $700. And that is still a lot of money, but people who live along the coast understand that we have to pay a little higher flood insurance rates and we have to build smarter and better, which we are doing as fast as we possibly can with the monies we have. There is not a coastal community in America that is not fully awake after Katrina, Rita, Gustav, Ike, and Sandy. Trust me, from the east coast, to North Carolina, to the entire gulf coast region, we are awake. We are understanding what is happening, and we are trying as hard as we can to make our communities as resilient as possible.

We are not completely to blame for the increased frequency of the storms or the rising sea levels. We all have a share of that, and it is happening, and we are on the frontline. Our communities have been devastated. Our people are literally drowning. We lost 1,800 people in Katrina—2,400 between Louisiana and Mississippi—from drowning and literally dying through these storms. We lost several hundred people in Sandy. So we understand what is happening, and we are doing everything we can.

This flood insurance bill that never passed this Senate—and I am not sure it passed the House, but it did come out of both committees, different versions of it—is now known as Biggert-Waters. I understand Mrs. Biggert is no longer a Member of Congress, but Congresswoman WATERS is here. So the bill was pushed as a way of getting the Flood Insurance Program on a financially sound footing. I understand that.

We most certainly don't expect all the people of America to subsidize coastal communities, some of which may be second homes, et cetera. But in my communities, we are not talking about second homes; we are not talking about vacation properties, in large measure. We are talking about primary homes of fishermen, of dock workers, of people who work on the river, of boat captains, of industries such as the oil and gas industry, the roughnecks, the engineers who have to work, by the nature of their work, near the coast, which is where the trade and commerce of this Nation comes from.

If we could operate our trade and commerce only on railroads and highways, maybe we could all go live in Oklahoma or in Nevada. But, Mr. President, you are from Hawaii. You understand we have coastal communities all the way from Oregon to California to Texas to Louisiana to Mississippi; and, yes, there are some lovely vacation spots along the coasts. But there are also communities like those I represent, such as in Terrebonne Parish and Lafourche Parish and Jefferson Parish, where people wake up before the Sun and do not come home until it is dark. They are working at coastal businesses that are very important to the entire economic strength of this Nation.

This bill, Biggert-Waters, puts the entire burden of supporting coastal communities on the people who live on the coast, while some people who have a lot of money and can afford a mountaintop view go on the top of the mountains in other States. I am not picking on Colorado and Utah, but those come to mind—multimillion-dollar homes with beautiful views that look out across lots of land. Maybe they are not mindful of the work that is done on our coasts.

This is an issue that is important for the whole Nation. To have this bill pass—and I knew it when it happened. MARK PRYOR, I understand, put something in the RECORD at the time, but now we are on the water resources bill, a very important bill for coastal communities. It is an opportunity for us to fix this bill or to get a reprieve for a short period of time until we can find a better approach for thousands of properties along the coast—whether it is in Texas or California or Florida or New York or New Jersey that was battered badly by Sandy—rather than to put additional stress on these communities.

While I do not have the specific answer as to how to fix it in the long term, my amendment would simply hold off these rate increases for a year. It does not repeal the bill. It will just hold off these rate increases for a year, giving these Members in Congress time and an opportunity to fix what is terribly broken and to try to find a better, more affordable way to do so.

There are 480,000 policy holders in Louisiana who are already complaining about the flood insurance rates as they are today. When I go home now—and I go home often, very frequently—this is all people are talking about. There are other important issues that are going on, but I do not blame them, and I certainly understand it as a homeowner in Louisiana. Our delegation understands this. People are saying they are getting notices from their company that their insurance is going to go up hundreds if not thousands of dollars. What happens with respect to the grandfather clause, which is about to happen in October of 2014?

This flood insurance issue is a very important issue for the people in Louisiana, as I said, in Texas, in Mississippi, and in Florida, and that is what my amendment will address. My amendment is not pending, but I filed an amendment. We are waiting for a CBO score. We most certainly want to offset this if we can find the revenue it will take to offset this temporary reprieve.

I ask both the Republican and Democratic leaders to work with me and work with the other Senators who are interested in finding a solution to send a signal to these coastal areas that Congress understands the pressures of flood insurance in our low-lying areas—that would be in Maryland or Virginia or New York or New Jersey—that we hear them. We understand what is about to happen, and we would like a chance to try to adjust it, to fix it, et cetera, et cetera.

I am going to be working with the leadership. I know there are other Members who have amendments important to the WRDA bill. It is not my intention to stop this WRDA bill. It is a bill I certainly support. Louisiana can be greatly benefited. I thank Senator VITTER for his strong work as the ranking member of the EPW Committee on WRDA. We have some very important authorizations.

Let me also say something about this WRDA bill in relation to actual dollars. I sit on the Appropriations Committee for energy and water. I appreciate serving on that committee. Our job is to actually find money and direct funding to build some of these water resource projects.

Just yesterday, Senator FEINSTEIN held a hearing—she chairs our committee; Senator LAMAR ALEXANDER is our ranking member—on the budget for the Corps of Engineers. I see my good friend BEN CARDIN here and others who are very interested in projects on the WRDA bill, but they will be shocked to know when we asked—I asked—Jo-Ellen Darcy, the leader of the Corps of Engineers, the civilian leader of the corps, what was the number of backlogged projects, new construction projects that were backlogged and how much money was in the bill to build them this year, the first number was $1.6 billion. That is how much is in the appropriations bill roughly to build new water projects in the country, $1.6 billion. It sounds like a lot of money until you hear the second answer.

Then I asked her how many projects are in the queue for funding, ready to go, meritorious projects, urgently needed new construction. She said $60 billion worth. We have $1.6 billion in the budget to spend, and we have $60 billion worth of projects. We follow these numbers pretty closely because many of those projects are in Louisiana. So while it is important to get the WRDA bill passed, which is authorizing not only new projects, but it is also putting in some very important corps reforms to expedite the way some of these projects are built, the real problem and the real dilemma is closing the gap between what we have authorized and what we can actually afford to build.

Again, there is only $1.6 billion in the corps budget for new construction, and pending, even without this WRDA bill, is $60 billion worth in backlogged, authorized, important programs in all of our districts. With this WRDA bill there are an additional $23 billion in authorizations. So, yes, I support new authorizations. Yes, I support the WRDA bill. Yes, I most certainly support the reforms to the Corps of Engineers that are embedded in the language of this WRDA bill, but I cannot allow this to move forward, at least without raising a red flag and asking for some reprieve on the flood insurance issue.

I want to be flexible. I want to be open. I want to be a team player. This is not the time for my way or the highway. I have tried as much as I can to avoid that kind of politics because it is very difficult for all of us to move forward together. I have so much respect for Senator BOXER and a good bit of respect for Senator VITTER who is the ranking member. But this is the only way I know right now to raise this issue and to say we cannot, in Louisiana, with 480,000 flood insurance policies, manage to build our communities, to recover. We are doing beautifully. We would like to go faster, but you have not heard a lot of complaints coming from us. Our people are working hard, rolling up our sleeves. Our communities are coming back. We are using the insurance money. We are using the community development block grant money to build as smart and quickly as we can.

We have created the Water Institute. Every single one of our parishes has gone through what we call charrettes and community meetings to see how we can elevate our homes and build them more resiliently.

This is a huge and very tough burden to lay on the shoulders of the people in our coastal communities, not just in Louisiana but in Terrebonne and Lafourche, in Cameron, Calcasieu, Saint Mary Parish, and the river parishes, Saint John, Saint James, Saint Charles and Jefferson Parish. It is hurting north Louisiana as well.

We have flood insurance policies all the way up in our State. We would have flood insurance. Why would we have flooding? Because we have the Mississippi River. We are happy to have the Mississippi River, but the Mississippi River does not belong only to us. May I remind everyone that the Mississippi River, the Missouri River, the Ohio River are the spine, the backbone of our commerce for the whole Nation? Why should the people of Louisiana, who drain the entire continent—the mouth of the river runs right through New Orleans—why is it the people who live in south Louisiana have to pick up 100 percent of that risk? That is the way this bill is structured, to put on us the burden, 100 percent, instead of spreading it to everyone, to the whole country, in a reasonable and responsible way.

The way this bill is structured is to say we have to be self-sustaining in our flood insurance policies. We are sorry, but the people who live at the mouth of the Mississippi River, which provides commerce and wealth and creates huge amounts of wealth and jobs for all of us, have to take the water and pay for it ourselves. That is not going to work for us. It is not working for us. That is why I am standing on this floor. I want to work this out.

I am open to a number of suggestions. I hope the Senators who have lots of flood insurance issues, such as the Senators in Missouri and Illinois and the Senators in other States, will

give us some suggestions about how to move forward.

If this bill had passed the Senate and it was the will of the Senate and I had been on the losing side of that, I would not be standing here today. This bill never came before the Senate. It never came before the Senate. It was tucked into a bill that we had no chance to amend—none. You cannot amend a bill coming out of conference. There was no chance to amend this, no chance to fix it, which is why I hope my colleagues will understand and be patient with me. This is not about losing an issue last year and coming back and crying about it. This is about we never got a chance to even talk about this on the Senate floor.

This is a water bill. It has everything to do with the subject matter. It is not ''not germane'' to the subject matter of this bill. I would like to have a vote on my amendment or a vote in some way to declare that we are acknowledging this problem; that we might not have a solution today, but we most certainly are willing to work on it because this is devastating for coastal communities all over the country.

It is not fair for our working coast—whether it is fisheries or oil and gas or wind or manufacturing—for our coastal communities, our commerce and trade, to pick up the entire burden of this Flood Insurance Program. Let's try to be reasonable. I am going to be as patient as I can. I understand how important this bill is to everyone. I am most mindful of how important it is to my State. We have been trying to get a WRDA bill out here on the floor for several years, and we finally have one.

I am going to leave my amendment as it is. It is not pending. It has been filed. I am going to ask for this vote to be worked out, and until then I will object to any other amendments coming up for a vote until we get some way forward.

Again, I want to be flexible, I want to be open, and I would like eventually to see the WRDA bill passed.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. BALDWIN). The Senator from Maryland.

Mr. CARDIN. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent to speak as in morning business.

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

Mrs. BOXER. Reserving the right to object for just a moment, and I, of course, will not object, I just want to make it clear that at noon the two leaders are coming to do a back-and-forth. So up until the time they arrive—I just wanted to let my friend know. Then after the leaders, Senator VITTER should be recognized to speak about the issue Senator LANDRIEU just raised, to be followed by me, if that is OK, if I can do that in the UC? It would be Senator CARDIN, the two leaders, Senator VITTER, and myself.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Maryland.

(The remarks of Mr. CARDIN pertaining to the introduction of S.J. Res. 15 are located in today's RECORD under ''Statements on Introduced Bills and Joint Resolutions.'')

Mr. CARDIN. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that I be allowed to continue to speak as in morning business.

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

(The remarks of Mr. CARDIN are printed in today's RECORD under ''Morning Business.'')

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader is recognized.

THE BUDGET

Mr. REID. Madam President, it has been 47 days since the Senate passed its sensible progrowth budget. As my friend the minority leader has said many times, after the Senate passed a budget, the next logical step would be to go to conference and try to find common ground. This is what Senator MCCONNELL said earlier this year:

> We ought not to ignore the law any longer. And I think it's a good step in the direction of getting back to regular order, which we ought to follow.

After years of calling for regular order, Republicans ought to be eager to go to conference. Senator MCCONNELL and the Republican caucus pulled a 180—a flip-flop. They were for regular order before they were against regular order.

For weeks Republicans have refused to go to conference, and they have refused to explain why. The only excuse Republicans offered came not from the minority leader but from the junior Senator from Texas. Senator CRUZ objected to the budget conference on the grounds that Democrats must concede basically everything before Republicans will negotiate anything.

As one news reporter put it, the Republicans' offer is: ''First surrender, then we will fight.'' Republicans know as well as Democrats that is not any way to negotiate. Unilateral disarmament in the legislative process is not the same thing as compromise.

Democrats—along with the media and the American people—are left to wonder and guess the real reason the Republicans are so determined to avoid a budget conference. Are Republicans afraid to defend or debate their extreme budget in full public view? Probably. It cannot be easy to defend a budget that will end Medicare as we know it. It cannot be easy to stand strong for a plan that asks the middle class to foot the bill for more tax breaks for the rich—a politically unsustainable position already rejected by the voters. It cannot be easy to stick up for the arbitrary meat-ax cuts of the sequester, which guts the safety net protecting the elderly, the poor, the middle class, veterans, and sometimes the helpless.

Is it possible that Republicans are simply hoping to delay compromise long enough to create another manufactured crisis as the Nation once again approaches a default on its bills? Americans are tired of the type of knockdown, drag-out debt ceiling battles that caused our credit downgrade and cost our economy billions of dollars last year. Middle-class families have been through enough economic turmoil. It is unbelievable that Republicans would once again hold the full faith and credit of our government hostage.

I hope my Republican colleagues will come to their senses. The way to put our Nation on sound fiscal footing is to set aside this obstruction and set sensible policy through regular order in the legislative process, not to extort concessions through dangerous hostage taking.

Passing the budget in each Chamber was a first good step toward restoring regular order. The next move is to go to conference and set our minds on reaching a reasonable compromise that reverses the painful cuts of sequestration.

Right now the Republicans are the only thing standing between the Congress and compromise. I am optimistic that they will not continue to put American families through more financial pain for their own short-term political gain.

I yield to my friend from Washington for a unanimous consent request.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Washington.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUEST—H. CON. RES. 25

Mrs. MURRAY. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the consideration of Calendar No. 33, H. Con. Res. 25; that the amendment, which is at the desk, the text of S. Con. Res. 8, the budget resolution passed by the Senate, be inserted in lieu thereof; that H. Con. Res. 25, as amended, be agreed to, the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table; that the Senate insist on its amendment, request a conference with the House on the disagreeing votes of the two Houses, and the Chair be authorized to appoint conferees of the Senate, all with no intervening action or debate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Mr. MCCONNELL. Reserving the right to object, I ask consent that the Senator modify her request so it not be in order for the Senate to consider a conference report that includes tax increases or reconciliation instructions to increase taxes or raise the debt limit.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection to the modified request?

Mrs. MURRAY. Madam President, reserving the right to object, what the Senator is asking is that we go back to what we had votes on throughout the entire budget debate way into the morning hours on the issues of reconciliation, on the issues of revenue that were all debated and voted on—some passed, some were defeated. We are not going to take those up again. We are going to go to conference with

the budget that was passed by the majority in the Senate and by the majority in the House, and those views will be represented in conference. We cannot get to that debate and that discussion without moving to conference, so I object to his unanimous consent and ask for consent on my request again.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard to the modified request.

Is there objection to the original request?

Mr. MCCONNELL. I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

The Senator from Washington.

Mrs. MURRAY. Madam President, this is so challenging. It has now been 47 days since we passed our budget. Senate Democrats have now requested unanimous consent to move to conference—the next step—five times. We want to take the next step in this process. We want to move forward under regular order and continue this debate in an open and public way, but every time we try to take it to the next step, Senate Republicans stand and they say: No. I think this comes as a surprise to the American people. I think they are disappointed. I know I am. I think a lot of people, myself included, expected that after calling for regular order so consistently for so long, Republicans would be eager now to take the next step in the process. Some Republicans say they want to negotiate a framework behind closed doors before they agree on going to conference, but that is what a budget is. It is a framework that lays out our values and our priorities and helps us plan for our country's future. Why can't we discuss that framework in a formal, public conference, which is what we call regular order?

I am sure Republicans are not excited about the prospect of defending their extreme budget all over again in a public conference committee. We all know Americans are not interested in more tax breaks for the wealthiest, they are not interested in Medicare vouchers, but Republicans wrote that budget, they voted for it, they passed it, and they ought to be happy to defend it. I know Senate Democrats are happy to stand and talk about ours.

The American people now deserve to see those two visions. They need to see our visions side by side, contrasted with each other, and they need to see who is willing to compromise and who is not.

We have heard the House Republican leadership doesn't want the Senate to appoint conferees because they don't want to go to conference because they might have to take a lot of difficult votes in the House. I am sure my colleagues remember the vote-arama we had before we passed our budget. We considered over 100 amendments. We were here until 5 in the morning, the entire time voting on amendments, until every Senator who wanted to be heard to offer an amendment did and we had a very thorough and open debate and we voted a lot. So I don't think the American people are going to be very sympathetic to the argument that the Republicans don't want to go to conference because they are afraid the House has to take a few votes.

This is deeply disappointing to me. The Republicans are now running away from regular order. In fact, they are running right toward another crisis, and they are willing to take our American families and our economy along for the ride.

It should be noted the House Republicans have announced a new conference, but it is not a conference on a budget deal; it is a conference of their Republican Members to decide what they are going to demand in exchange for taking our economy over the debt ceiling. It is absurd, and it is not going to happen. We know because we went through this same thing the last time we approached the debt limit. Just a few months ago, Republicans realized how dangerous it would be to play games with the debt limit and how politically damaging it would be to play politics with potential economic calamity for our country, and they finally dropped their demands. The so-called Boehner rule died, and no amount of wishing by the tea party is going to bring that back.

The Republican strategy now of holding our economy hostage and trying to push us to another crisis is absolutely the wrong approach, and holding our budget conference hostage so they can get to that point is not going to be considered well by the American people.

Getting a deal is not going to be easy. Any one of us knows that. It is going to take compromise. But this constant lurching from crisis to crisis that the House is demanding and is strategizing around is not what the American public wants or deserves.

I am here to say Democrats are ready to take the next step. We need a negotiating party on the other side. They can bring all of their bills to conference and we can talk about it. We can come to a compromise. Compromise is not a dirty word. Oftentimes we don't hear it a lot around here. But I believe many of our colleagues on both sides of the aisle, frankly, want to return to regular order. They want to move away from these constant crises. I know that is what the American public wants. They want to see we can govern.

I urge those who are coming here time and time again, blocking us from getting to a point to debate our two different budgets and from getting to a compromise, to allow us to get the work of the American people done and allow us to go to conference.

I thank the Chair. I yield the floor.

Mr. REID. Madam President, before my friend leaves the floor, I want the record spread with this. The admiration the Democratic caucus has for the Senator from Washington is significant. She is an elected leader. She was the person chosen to be the chair of the supercommittee to come up with a plan to solve the Nation's crisis we have economically, and she did yeoman's work. It was all done until a letter was received from virtually every Republican Senator saying, fine, great deal that Chairman MURRAY has done, but we are not going to agree to any revenue. To work through the contentious problems we have had on the floor and come up with a budget is remarkable, and it is a budget we are very proud of.

I would say to my friend, I think we are making some progress because just within the past hour the Speaker has said this: ''We can't cut our way to prosperity.'' That is a significant step forward. The Speaker of the House of Representatives, for the first time in some time, has spoken reality, the truth, the facts. I quote directly: ''We can't cut our way to prosperity.'' That is right.

That is why we have to get to regular order. We have to do what this body has been doing for 200 years or more: go to conference when there is a difference between what the House wants and what the Senate wants. That is all the chairman of the Budget Committee Senator MURRAY is asking—that we get together with our Republican colleagues and work out our differences.

I think our budget—and we were led by Chairman MURRAY—is a very good budget. Is it perfect? Of course not. We would be willing to sit down and talk to our Republican colleagues in conference the way we have done for centuries and try to work out our differences. For them just to stonewall us and say, as the junior Senator from Texas said, fine, we will go to conference, but you have to agree to what we want before we go, what in the world is that all about?

I admire Senator MURRAY, as does the entire Democratic caucus, and I am confident the people of Washington are very proud of this stalwart Senator who has done so much for this country. I want to make sure the Republicans understand she will be the chair. She is going to represent us. I am not going to be negotiating this. Senator MCCONNELL is not going to be negotiating this. It is going to be done by the senior Senator from the State of Washington, and she is willing to deal with whomever the Republicans decide she should deal with.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from California.

Mrs. BOXER. I wonder if the Senator from Washington would enter into a colloquy with me at this time, through the Chair.

I wish to join with Senator REID in thanking Senator MURRAY for her amazing leadership. I was on the Budget Committee for several years, and I know that as a result of the Senator from Washington becoming chairman and, of course, being the most senior member next to Kent Conrad for so long, she knows this budget inside and out. It is filled with complexities—the mandatories, the discretionaries, the

defense and nondefense—all the things she knows in her head. She knows how to get us to balance not only in terms of the numbers she will move toward balance in her budget but also in terms of our priorities.

I wish to make sure my people at home understand this. What the Senator from Washington is telling us is that for several years now—2 or 3—the Republicans have been chastising the Democrats for not passing a budget in the Senate; am I right on that?

Mrs. MURRAY. That is correct.

Mrs. BOXER. The reason we didn't do it is we had another law that actually set our caps; am I right on that? So we didn't go through the budget.

Mrs. MURRAY. The Senator is correct.

Mrs. BOXER. All right. So the Senator from Washington decided, with Senator REID and the leadership team, to bring a budget to the floor. Then—I will never forget it—we stayed here until 5 o'clock in the morning handling over 100 amendments; is that right?

Mrs. MURRAY. The Senator is correct.

Mrs. BOXER. We passed a budget; the Senate passed its version of a budget. The regular order, as I understand it, having asked the Historian to go back and look, is that we then take the House budget and the Senate budget and we go to conference and the conferees resolve the differences. All my friend is asking—and she has asked it or someone has asked it in her stead five times—we are asking our Republican colleagues to allow our leader to name the conferees—of course Senator MCCONNELL will name his—and walk into that conference committee to finish the budget. The budget is unfinished; am I right? We have two versions. We need one version. What the Senator from Washington is telling us, in no uncertain terms, is that the Republicans are stopping this country from having a budget; am I stating it correctly?

Mrs. MURRAY. The Senator is stating it correctly.

Mrs. BOXER. Let me say to my friend, I hope she plans to be here as often as she can, and those of us who can help her will be here to continue to ask for conferees so we can get to the next stage.

When Senator MCCONNELL said he would amend the request of the Senator from Washington, was he not prejudging what would happen in the conference? He said no reconciliation, and he said something else. I don't remember the other condition.

Mrs. MURRAY. And no revenue.

Mrs. BOXER. And no revenue. That is akin to the Senator from Washington saying, I will go to conference except I don't want to see any more cuts in afterschool programs or senior citizen programs or veterans programs. In other words, we don't take our priorities as individual Senators into the conference. It is a team approach where we will have to compromise.

So isn't Senator MCCONNELL, by laying out his conditions, completely sidestepping regular order?

Mrs. MURRAY. The Senator would be correct, and I would add one other thought. What he is now asking us to do is to go back and vote on votes we already took when we went through the budget process and amendments did not pass. So he is saying, my amendments didn't pass, but I am not going to let a conference happen unless I get my way.

We have a majority. We have a minority. We went through hundreds of amendments. Some of them passed and some of them did not. It is the process we go through.

Then we take what we passed—the House, by the way, passed a very different budget—we go to conference and resolve the differences. That is what a conference is. But if every Senator came out here and said on every bill we ever did we are not going to go to conference unless I get the amendment I lost on the floor, we would never do anything in this country. That is not how a democracy works.

Mrs. BOXER. I thank my friend. I got into this a little bit with Senator CRUZ the other day. He doesn't want to go to conference because he is afraid we could pass the Buffett rule. We could come out of there with the Buffett rule, which says the billionaire executive should have to pay the same effective tax rate as a secretary. God forbid. He is afraid of that. So I just say, they are afraid of the process. What are they afraid of? They control the House. We control the Senate. Obviously, in conference we are going to have to meet somewhere in the middle.

It seems to me they have a fear of democracy, and it seems to me—and I don't like to use this word but I will; it rhymes with democracy and it is called hypocrisy. They said they want to do a budget and now they are stopping the budget.

I thank my friend. I want to make sure America understands this. They ran around the country running against our candidates saying our candidates wouldn't do a budget and now they will not allow us to do a budget. It seems to me ridiculous. I am so happy our leader and the Senator from Washington are here to bring this issue the attention it deserves.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT AGREEMENT—EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. REID. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that at 1:30 today, the Senate proceed to executive session to consider Calendar Nos. 39 and 41 under the previous order.

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

Mr. REID. With this consent, there will be up to two rollcall votes at about 2 p.m. today—there may be only one but up to two—on the nominations of Shelly Deckert Dick to be a district judge for the Middle District of Louisiana and Nelson Stephen Roman to be a district judge for the Southern District of New York.

I note the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

Mr. CASEY. Madam President, I rise today to speak about the bill we are considering, but also to speak, in particular, about one aspect of the bill. We know the legislation as the so-called WRDA bill, the Water Resources Development Act, and I want to express strong support for the legislation.

This bill is, in fact, bipartisan, which is something we need more of around here. It provides for, among other things, flood protection, safe drinking water, wastewater infrastructure, and protects the flow of commerce along our Nation's rivers and waterways.

I am grateful for Chairman BOXER's efforts, Ranking Member VITTER, and all the Members and staff of the Environment and Public Works Committee for their dedication to writing a bill that addresses the challenges facing our country's water systems.

I want to speak in particular about inland waterways.

Our Nation has—for many years now, many generations—a system of locks and dams that play a vital role in creating and sustaining jobs and supporting economic growth throughout the country.

I know in my home State of Pennsylvania, even though I had been a State official for a number of years, I did not have a full appreciation of what this meant until about July of—I guess it was the first week of July 2007, when I was able to tour and actually see these major barges up close out in southwestern Pennsylvania and to be able to see the movement of coal or other commodities or energy resources across our waterways and what that meant to the economy of southwestern Pennsylvania but, indeed, the economy of our Commonwealth and our country.

So when we hear the phrase ''locks and dams'' in Pennsylvania, especially in southwestern Pennsylvania, we do not think of some far off concept; we think of commerce and the movement of commerce and the jobs and the economic growth that comes from that.

Unfortunately, this system, this inland waterways system, is facing major challenges—challenges that threaten in ways that some of us could not imagine even a few years ago.

The inland waterways system offers the most cost-competitive way to transport our commodities. It moves some 20 percent of the coal that is used to power our Nation's electricity, much of it from Pennsylvania; also 22 percent of our petroleum products; and more

than 60 percent of export grain, which is moved because of this system.

The shippers who produce or manufacture these commodities are in danger of losing their competitive edge unless we focus on proper funding for the lock-and-dam infrastructure.

Unfortunately, the locks and dams of our Nation have far outlived their design life. There has not been sufficient investment to make headway in replacing these locks and dams. But I am hopeful provisions I and others have worked on in the Water Resources Development Act, which we are considering now, will address the challenges facing this system.

Provisions from my bill—which, by the way, goes by the acronym RIVER; the RIVER Act—that are included in the bill we are considering will institute a number of project management reforms that will make sure future lock-and-dam projects are built in the most cost-effective way possible.

We cannot ask for a greater commitment to the system or a greater investment without making sure we are also providing reforms.

These reforms include risk-based cost estimates and an external peer review process for Army Corps projects across the Nation. This will help ensure that locks and dams in the projects that are undertaken are constructed in the way that is most efficient. We also want to make sure we have cost estimates that are realistic and, of course, avoid cost overruns.

One of the provisions of the bill will also adjust the current cost-sharing system by increasing the threshold for the industry to contribute to major rehabilitation projects to $20 million. This will allow for more funding for lock-and-dam projects, which is badly needed right now.

These provisions in the overall water resources bill are common sense. They also happen to be fiscally responsible proposals that will significantly improve our Nation's inland waterways system and help to ensure our Nation's waterways can continue to be an effective method to ship commodities.

Well, how do we pay for that? Well, a rather interesting development for Washington, which I am about to describe for you: I am grateful so many of the provisions in my bill have been included, but we also need to have an important conversation about how to finance this system and to keep the inland trust fund sustainable in the long term.

I filed an amendment, amendment No. 854, that will raise the barge user fee from 20 cents per gallon to 29 cents per gallon. This fee has not been raised since 1986 and, as a result, is not keeping up with inflation and project costs.

We have great bipartisan support for this amendment. Senator ALEXANDER is leading this effort with me, and the amendment is cosponsored by the following Senators: Mr. BLUNT, Mrs. MCCASKILL, Mr. DURBIN, Ms. STABENOW, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Ms. LANDRIEU, Mr. FRANKEN, and Mr. HARKIN—indicating the wide reach of the inland waterways system and its impact on so many industries in so many States across the country.

The current rate—the barge user fee of 20 cents per gallon—right now is not raising sufficient funding to keep up with operations and maintenance needs along the reach of the system. If we do not make this investment now, it could have dire consequences to multibillion-dollar industries that rely on the use of locks and dams to move their goods. Just consider coal being one of those examples.

All 300 users of the inland waterways system support this increase. Let me say that again because this does not happen very much in Washington: All 300 users of the inland waterways system support this barge user fee increase from 20 cents per gallon to 29 cents per gallon.

Here we have an example of an industry that is forward looking in asking Congress to allow them to pay more in order to make critical investments in their own infrastructure.

In addition to the support of industry, the user fee increase is backed by a diverse array of organizations across the country, including the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, the National Farmers Union, the National Association of Manufacturers, the American Farm Bureau, the AFL–CIO, and over 250 national and local organizations, including barge operators, agriculture, energy and civics and conservation groups.

In southwestern Pennsylvania alone over 200,000 jobs rely on the proper functioning of locks and dams on the lower Monongahela River. For those who do not know, it is a river on the western end of our State that flows into the city of Pittsburgh—one of the three rivers we describe as part of our landscape in Pittsburgh.

If one of these locks were to fail, it would endanger all 200,000 jobs and have a negative impact of over $1 billion just in that region, not to mention the adverse impact beyond the region. Raising the user fee now will help prevent a catastrophe in the near future.

I understand there are objections to addressing important concerns about including a funding fix for locks and dams in this bill due to the so-called blue-slip concerns that involve the House of Representatives.

I will work to look for other vehicles so we do not continue to kick this can down the road, and I will talk to Members of the House to include this fix in their version.

If we cannot raise revenue on an industry that is asking to pay more so they can invest in their infrastructure, I am afraid the future of our waterways system is in great jeopardy.

Many of my colleagues in the Senate on both sides of the aisle recognize the importance of providing a way to pay for investments we need in our locks-and-dams system, and I urge the House to follow suit. I have no doubt they want to do the same.

We cannot squander critical foundations that have made America what it is. Reinvesting in our Nation's waterways will allow us to seize economic opportunities to remain competitive in the world and protect and create jobs for generations to come.

I will note one citation of history, from a major volume in Pennsylvania history. This goes back to the 1800s when we developed a canal system to move commodities and commerce across our waterways. I will read one sentence from page 180 of a book entitled ''Pennsylvania: A History of the Commonwealth.'' Here is what they said all those years ago in the 1800s, talking about coal:

> Through those routes, anthracite coal left Pennsylvania for England, Russia, Central Europe and Asia.

But the reason that coal was able to get to those places is because we had a system in place to move it.

What we do not want to have today in our time is a system that breaks down because we are not willing to make the investment. As I said before, this investment is supported by all of those organizations but especially the 300 users who are willing to invest more so that tomorrow will be bright and we can move commerce across the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and across our country.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Arizona.

Mr. MCCAIN. Madam President, before the Senator from Pennsylvania leaves the floor, I would like to thank him for his forthright and courageous statement on the situation in Syria. I thank him for his involvement and his commitment to the freedom of the people of Syria.

(The remarks of Mr. MCCAIN pertaining to the introduction of S. 912 are printed in today's RECORD under ''Statements on Introduced Bills and Joint Resolutions.'')

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New York.

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, I rise today to speak in favor of amendment No. 802 to the WRDA bill offered by my friend, great legislator, chairman of the Subcommittee on Homeland Security, Senator MARY LANDRIEU. I am proud to cosponsor this amendment.

The amendment would delay flood insurance premium increases until FEMA has completed a study on the impacts on the affordability of planned premium increases. Nobody in this body knows better than Senator LANDRIEU the challenges faced by communities in the wake of natural disasters, and she has been beyond generous in sharing her time and expertise and lending her vocal support to the States, such as mine, so greatly impacted by Superstorm Sandy.

Last year Congress passed a flood insurance reauthorization and reform

bill, the Biggert-Waters Act. We passed the Biggert-Waters Act because if the program expired, flood insurance would become unavailable or unaffordable for people who needed it.

Congress also needed to reform the program going forward because it is billions of dollars in debt and needs to be put on a better financial footing.

In my home State, one of the counties received a very poor and unfair map, which was undone in the bill.

In the aftermath of Superstorm Sandy, many middle-class families in New York are struggling to get back on their feet. Many lost everything. They have had to drain their savings to rebuild. They have been out of their homes for months. The kids get on a schoolbus and have to go 20, 30 miles to school.

Imagine losing everything in your home as so many have. It is an awful feeling, not just the chair you were comfortable sitting in, all of your appliances and all of that, but that picture of great-grandma and great-grandpa which was priceless is gone. It is a horrible thing.

Adding another layer of difficulty to this situation, the flood insurance reforms enacted by Congress last summer result, in many cases, in huge insurance premiums. Our families in New York are caught in limbo.

Families in Breezy Point, the Rockaways, Broad Channel, Staten Island, Brooklyn, on the south shore of Long Island, from Long Beach all the way out to Mastic and Shirley, are still trying to make decisions, are repairing their homes and investing tens of thousands of dollars to do so. Many of these homes are very middle-class homes. These are not rich people. They have worked hard. Some of them are teachers, policemen, firemen, construction workers or small business owners. Many of them are being told their insurance rates could be $10,000 a year or more. What kind of insurance is flood insurance if it is $10,000 a year? It puts homeowners in the worst possible position. They either have to come up with an additional $10,000—worse in Sandy because they have already paid money to redo their homes, but even for a normal homeowner $10,000 a year and you don't get a mortgage. Ten thousand dollars a year, this is absurd.

I don't know what is wrong with the flood insurance program, but any program that has to charge an average homeowner on Long Island, Brooklyn, Queens or Staten Island $10,000 ought to be reexamined by this Congress. It is confounding. People are upset and they should be.

Recognizing the burden these changes could put on families, FEMA was required to conduct a study on the affordability of flood insurance, the effects of increased premiums on low-income homeowners and middle-income homeowners, and ways to increase affordability. The study was originally supposed to be completed within 270 days. That was 9 months after the bill was passed.

That deadline has come and gone. FEMA hasn't even begun to collect the necessary data. We know FEMA has been busy responding to Sandy and other natural disasters.

At the same time it is unfair to hit homeowners with massive new flood insurance premiums without any plan of how to address the needs for those who can't afford these skyrocketing, out-of-control, and out-of-reach premiums. The amendment is a recognition of that fundamental fairness.

Large parts of New York City are having their flood maps revised. As a result, New Yorkers, many, could face the prospect of crushing increases in premiums. Right now, far too many Sandy victims are still in the process of rebuilding their homes. They simply cannot afford a whopping increase in flood insurance premiums.

Common sense and a sense of fairness dictate that we should delay any unnecessary increases until we know exactly how hard they hit our communities and until we can come up with a solution that makes flood insurance reasonable and affordable—particularly if it is mandated, as it often is—in effect or by law.

That is what the amendment does. I urge my colleagues to vote in favor of the amendment.

I also wish to mention an amendment offered by my good friend from across the Hudson River, Senator MENENDEZ of New Jersey, a State also suffering from Superstorm Sandy, that seems to address many of the same concerns.

His amendment would delay flood insurance premium increases until FEMA's Hazard Mitigation Grant Program funds have been expended. This commonsense amendment would give homeowners a chance to use the Hazard Mitigation Grant Program for its intended purpose, to rebuild stronger and safer, resulting in lower flood risks.

This amendment simply says: Let's wait until people have taken this opportunity to reduce their future flood risks before we increase their flood premiums. It makes abundant sense. I hope my colleagues would pass both Senator LANDRIEU's and Senator MENENDEZ's fine amendments.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. HEINRICH). The Senator from Maine.

Ms. COLLINS. I ask unanimous consent that I be permitted to speak as in morning business for up to 10 minutes.

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

HEALTH CARE

Ms. COLLINS. Mr. President, all over America concern has been growing that the implementation of ObamaCare will cause serious damage to our economy and to our health care system. Lost wages, soaring insurance rates, more bureaucracy, and less access to care are just some of the adverse consequences we are beginning to see. There are as many reasons for concern as there are flaws in this ill-advised law.

Today, I wish to focus on just one of these flaws; that is, the Affordable Care Act's definition of a full-time employee. I also will comment on legislation I have introduced to fix this one flaw.

My preference, of course, would be for us to repeal ObamaCare and start all over, taking some good features of the law, such as the feature that allows young people to stay on their parents' health care policy until age 26, some of the provisions having to do with preventive care, and some of the provisions having to do with preexisting conditions.

We should have crafted a bill that focused on lowering health care costs because it is the high cost of health care that is the reason we have millions of Americans who are uninsured. Here we are with a deeply flawed law that is having very serious adverse consequences for the people of our country.

Let me talk further about the issue of the definition of a full-time employee. Under ObamaCare, an employee working just 30 hours a week is defined as full time. That is a definition that is completely out of step with standard employment practices in the United States today.

According to a survey published by the Bureau of Labor Statistics, the average American works 8.8 hours per day, which equates to 44 hours per week. The ObamaCare definition is nearly one-third lower than actual practice; likewise, the ObamaCare definition of full-time employee is one-quarter lower than the 40 hours per week used by the GAO in its study of the budget and staffing required by the IRS to implement this new law.

In that report the GAO described a full-time equivalent employee as the measure of staff hours equal to those of an employee who works the equivalent of 40 hours per week for 52 weeks.

We also know, generally speaking, that employers are required to pay overtime to workers after 40 hours a week. That is another indication that 40 hours a week is the standard definition of a full-time employee. Yet, inconceivably, ObamaCare defines a full-time worker as one who works only 30 hours a week.

The effect of using such a low hourly threshold is to artificially drive up the number of full-time workers for purposes of calculating the Draconian penalties to which employers can be exposed by ObamaCare. These penalties begin at $40,000 for businesses with 50 employees, plus $2,000 for each additional full-time equivalent employee.

Needless to say, these penalties will discourage businesses from growing or adding jobs, particularly for employers who are close to that 50-job trigger. In addition, these penalties create a powerful incentive for employers to cut the hours their employees are allowed to work so they are no longer considered full-time for the purposes of this law.

This is not some hypothetical concern. I have heard from employers in

Maine who feel they are going to be forced to stay under the 50-employee threshold, and they are even considering, very reluctantly, cutting the number of hours per week their employees are working. Similar accounts have appeared in the media. For example, last week the Los Angeles Times reported that the city of Long Beach, CA, is limiting most of its 1,600 part-time workers to just 27 hours a week to make sure they do not work over the 30-hour threshold. This is a municipality that is cutting the hours and thus the wages of its workers simply because of the requirements of ObamaCare.

According to this news story, the parent company for the Red Lobster and Olive Garden restaurant chains is limiting the hours of some of their employees for the same reason.

I would ask unanimous consent that the Los Angeles Times article entitled ''Part-timers to lose pay amid health act's new math'' be printed in the RECORD immediately following my remarks.

Bringing it closer to home, one Maine business I know has 47 employees. It is doing pretty well and would like to create more jobs and hire more employees, but it simply will not because of the onerous penalties it would incur once it gets to 50 employees. If more businesses follow suit, millions of American workers could find their hours and their earnings cut back, with jobs lost to them at a time when our country is still struggling with an unacceptably high rate of unemployment.

A study just published by the Labor Center at the University of California, Berkeley, underscores the danger. That study, which examined the hours worked in businesses with 100 or more employees, found that 6.4 million workers in these firms worked between 30 and 36 hours per week and another 3.6 million workers have variable work schedules that make them vulnerable to having their hours cut as a direct result of ObamaCare.

The study identified 2.3 million workers as being at the greatest risk. Not surprisingly, these are workers who are employed in the retail trade, nursing homes, restaurants, and hotels. These are some of the most vulnerable workers.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to have printed in the RECORD the study I just referred to immediately following my remarks.

Let me cite an actual example from my State of Maine.

Peter Daigle, who runs Lafayette Hotels, the largest hotel chain in the State of Maine, has told me that many of his 800 employees work between 30 and 40 hours a week, and that, from a financial standpoint, it would make sense for his company to limit their hours to ensure they do not go over the 30-hour threshold. This is an artificial limit that is driven solely by ObamaCare. As Peter puts it:

> It concerns us that employers are being put in a position that they would have to cut associates' hours just to meet a Federal regulation.

Believe me, the owners of the Lafayette chain of hotels are civic-minded, good employers, who care deeply about the well-being of their employees.

During the consideration of the budget resolution, the Senate adopted my amendment calling for legislation setting a more sensible definition of ''full-time'' employee for purposes of ObamaCare penalties. Last month, I introduced a bill to protect Americans who may otherwise find their hours are curtailed and their earnings cut as a result of the unrealistic definition of a full-time employee that is included in ObamaCare. Under my bill, a full-time employee would be an individual who works a 40-hour workweek. That only makes sense. This is a sensible, commonsense definition in keeping with actual practice.

I urge my colleagues to support my legislation, S. 701. It will not solve all of the problems—the many problems—of ObamaCare, but it will help to ensure millions of American workers do not have their hours reduced because of an artificially low, unrealistic definition in the law that is completely inconsistent with actual practice in this country.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

[From the UC Berkeley Labor Center]

WHICH WORKERS ARE MOST AT RISK OF REDUCED WORK HOURS UNDER THE AFFORDABLE CARE ACT?

The Affordable Care Act (ACA) requires employers to provide coverage or pay a penalty based on the number of employees working 30 or more hours per week. This data brief looks at which industries have a high percentage of employees working fewer than or slightly above 30 hours, placing them at risk for reduced hours by an employer wishing to avoid penalties. We also look at the distribution of hours worked by type of health coverage. While the penalty only applies to firms with more than 50 full-time equivalent employees, due to data limitations we show all results for workers in firms with more than 100 total employees. Thus, the tables may slightly understate the number of potentially affected workers.

Table 1 below shows the distribution of hours worked by industry in the United States. From this we see that 6.4 million U.S. workers, 8.9 percent of the workers in firms of 100 or more, work 30 to 36 hours a week. An additional 3.6 million workers report that their ''work hours vary'' and may also be vulnerable to a reduction in work hours. The industries with the highest percentage of employees working slightly over 30 hours are Restaurants, Nursing Homes, Accommodation, Healthcare, Retail Trade, Education and Building Services. The right most columns show the number of workers who are most vulnerable to work reduction, namely, those working 30 to 36 hours, with incomes below 400% of the Federal Poverty Level and not covered by their own employer. The industries with the highest concentration of such workers are Restaurants, Accommodation, Building Services, Nursing Homes and Retail Trade. Retail and Restaurants account for 47 percent of the most vulnerable group. While Healthcare has a higher than average share of employees working between 30 and 36 hours, most in that hours category are in higher income families and/or receive health coverage through their employer.

TABLE 1—HOURS WORKED BY INDUSTRY, WORKERS IN FIRMS OF 100 OR MORE EMPLOYEES, U.S.

	Number of workers (thousands)					Percent of workers				
	Hours vary	Below 30 hrs	30 to 36 hrs	37 + hrs	Most vulnerable to work reduction*	Hours vary (percent)	Below 30 hrs (percent)	30 to 36 hrs (percent)	37 + hrs (percent)	Most vulnerable to work reduction* (percent)
Agriculture, Forestry, Mining	53	15	19	661	10	6.0	5.0	3.4	85.5	1.5
Construction	103	41	63	1,801	20	6.8	2.3	4.8	86.0	1.0
Manufacturing	361	157	276	8,227	88	2.9	2.4	4.2	90.5	1.0
Utilities, Transp, Communication	353	298	242	4,478	77	8.3	5.0	4.9	81.8	1.4
Wholesale	81	51	46	1,652	19	3.4	3.7	7.7	85.2	1.0
Retail Trade	572	1,589	1,217	5,319	570	3.8	13.0	10.6	72.5	6.5
Financial	170	215	213	4,850	59	3.5	5.1	4.4	86.9	1.1
Education	438	1,495	1,040	7,331	237	4.3	14.5	10.1	71.1	2.3
Accommodation	55	72	119	574	68	6.7	8.8	14.5	70.0	8.3
Other Services	723	1,092	966	13,912	324	4.3	6.5	5.8	83.3	1.9
Restaurants	314	815	719	1,328	515	11.3	23.8	20.7	44.2	16.2
Bldg. Services	11	48	38	232	25	6.4	14.9	9.9	68.8	7.6
Healthcare	359	872	1,280	6,094	194	5.5	12.0	13.7	68.7	2.3
Nursing Homes	53	118	194	723	82	5.0	9.6	18.8	66.6	7.6
Total	3,647	6,876	6,431	57,182	2,288	5.3	9.2	8.9	76.6	3.1

Source: Current Population Survey month of March for 2010–2012; ages 19–64, hours worked at main job
*Those in the industry working 30–36 hours, below 400% FPL and do not have insurance through their own employer.

Table 2 shows the distribution of worker health coverage by the number of hours worked. While 68.8 percent have insurance through their employer, this only holds for 23.5 percent of employees working fewer than 30 hours a week. For this part-time group, 33.5 percent have insurance through a family member, 10.7 percent have public coverage, 10.3 percent purchase coverage through the

individual market and 21.9 percent are uninsured. Slightly more than 50 percent of those working between 30 and 36 hours do not have coverage through their own employer, though only slightly more than one quarter are uninsured or purchase coverage in the individual market. These workers are the most likely to receive subsidized coverage through the Exchanges.

TABLE 2—HOURS WORKED BY HEALTH COVERAGE, WORKERS IN FIRMS OF 100 OR MORE EMPLOYEES, U.S.

	Hours vary (percent)	Below 30 hrs (percent)	30 to 36 hrs (percent)	37+ hrs (percent)	Total (percent)
Coverage type:					
Employer-sponsored insurance thru employer	52.1	23.5	49.4	77.5	68.8
Employer-sponsored insurance thru family member	17.1	33.5	17.4	9.8	13.0
Public	6.5	10.7	7.4	2.3	3.7
Individual Market/Other	5.3	10.3	4.8	2.0	3.2
Uninsured	19.1	21.9	20.9	8.5	11.3
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Source: Current Population Survey month of March for 2010–2012; ages 19–64, hours worked at main job.

The 2.3 million workers identified as at greatest risk for work hour reduction represent 1.8 percent of the United States workforce. This is consistent with the research on the impact of Hawaii's health care law on work hours. Hawaii requires firms to provide health insurance to employees working 20 hours a week or more, so the cost to employers for full-time workers are much greater in Hawaii than under the ACA, while the hour threshold is lower. Buchmueller, DiNardo and Valetta (2011) found a 1.4 percentage point increase in the share of employees working less than 20 hours a week as a result of the law. In Massachusetts, where the employer penalty is smaller than in the ACA ($295 per year), there was no evidence of a disproportionate shift towards part-time work compared to the rest of the nation.

[From the Los Angeles Times, May 2, 2013]

PART-TIMERS TO LOSE PAY AMID HEALTH ACT'S NEW MATH

(By Chad Terhune)

Some workers are having their hours cut so employers won't have to cover them under Obamacare. But many will benefit from the healthcare law's premium subsidies and Medicaid expansion.

Many part-timers are facing a double whammy from President Obama's Affordable Care Act. The law requires large employers offering health insurance to include part-time employees working 30 hours a week or more. But rather than provide healthcare to more workers, a growing number of employers are cutting back employee hours instead.

The result: Not only will these workers earn less money, but they'll also miss out on health insurance at work.

Consider the city of Long Beach. It is limiting most of its 1,600 part-time employees to fewer than 27 hours a week, on average. City officials say that without cutting payroll hours, new health benefits would cost up to $2 million more next year, and that extra expense would trigger layoffs and cutbacks in city services.

Part-timer Tara Sievers, 43, understands why, but she still thinks it's wrong.

''I understand there are costs to healthcare reform, but it is surely not the intent of the law for employees to lose hours,'' said the outreach coordinator at the El Dorado Nature Center in Long Beach. ''It's ridiculous the city is skirting the law.''

Across the nation, hundreds of thousands of other hourly workers may also see smaller paychecks in the coming year because of this response to the federal healthcare law. The law exempts businesses with fewer than 50 full-time workers from this requirement to provide benefits.

But big restaurant chains, retailers and movie theaters are starting to trim employee hours. Even colleges are reducing courses for part-time professors to keep their hours down and avoid paying for their health premiums.

Overall, an estimated 2.3 million workers nationwide, including 240,000 in California, are at risk of losing hours as employers adjust to the new math of workplace benefits, according to research by UC Berkeley. All this comes at a time when part-timers are being hired in greater numbers as U.S. employers look to keep payrolls lean.

One consolation for part-timers is that many of them stand to benefit the most from the healthcare law's federal premium subsidies or an expansion of Medicaid, both starting in January.

The law will require most Americans to buy health insurance or pay a penalty. Yet many lower-income people will qualify for government insurance or be eligible for discounted premiums on private policies.

QUIZ: TEST YOUR HEALTHCARE KNOWLEDGE

''For people losing a few hours each week, that's lost income and it has a real impact,'' said Ken Jacobs, chairman of the UC Berkeley Center for Labor Research and Education. ''But many low-wage, part-time workers will also have some affordable options under the federal law.''

Employers say these cutbacks are necessary given the high cost of providing benefits. The average annual premium for employee-only coverage was $6,540 in California last year. Family coverage topped $16,000 a year. Those premiums have shot up 170% in the past decade, more than five times the rate of inflation in the state.

Bill Dombrowski, chief executive of the California Retailers Assn., said employers are reducing hours because ''it's the only way to survive economically.''

The full effect of these changes in the workplace isn't known yet because many employers are still considering what to do. Many companies waited to see whether the landmark legislation would survive a Supreme Court challenge and the outcome of last fall's presidential election.

Now many employers are scrambling to understand the latest federal rules on implementation and are analyzing what makes the most sense for their workforce and for running their business.

There has been widespread speculation that many businesses would drop health coverage entirely in favor of paying a federal penalty of $2,000 per worker. Benefit consultants and insurance brokers say many companies examined that scenario. But they say most rejected it because of the disruption it would cause for employees and the potential for putting an employer at a competitive disadvantage in luring talented workers.

Instead, pruning the hours of part-timers has attracted far more interest.

''That will be a widespread strategy,'' said Dede Kennedy-Simington, vice president at Polenzani Benefits in Pasadena. ''Employers will be making sure their payroll system can flag when part-time workers are getting close to the cap they set.''

Long Beach officials said they studied the various budget options and opted for a plan that should affect only a small portion of its workforce. The city estimates about 200 part-time workers will be among the most affected by a reduction in hours, representing about 13% of its overall part-time staff. The city calculated that the federal penalty for dropping coverage completely for its 4,100 full-time employees would have been about $8 million.

''We're in the same boat as many employers,'' said Tom Modica, the city's director of government affairs. ''We need to maintain the programs and service levels we have now.''

Sievers, the outreach coordinator, has worked on and off for the city since 1994. She agreed that the city has experienced tough fiscal times as many municipalities have since the recession. But the city expects a budget surplus of $3.6 million for the coming year.

''Many part-timers are already struggling to get by in these jobs,'' Sievers said.

Virginia's Republican governor, Bob McDonnell, announced this year that all part-time state employees should work 29 hours or less to avert the 30-hour threshold. Darden Restaurants Inc., which owns the Olive Garden and Red Lobster chains, began shifting to more part-time workers last fall in a much-publicized test to keep a lid on healthcare costs. Then Darden dropped the plan after being roundly criticized.

Some California lawmakers worry that the federal penalties for not providing health coverage aren't enough of a deterrent. They have proposed additional state fines to prevent major retailers, restaurant chains and other employers from restricting hours and dumping more of their workers onto public programs such as Medi-Cal. Opponents say the proposal is unnecessary and could deter companies from adding workers.

Some supporters of the Affordable Care Act say they welcome a gradual shift away from employer-sponsored coverage if new government-run exchanges give consumers a choice of competitively priced health plans. Some low- and middle-income workers who qualify for federal subsidies may end up paying less by buying their own policy next year compared with their contribution toward employer coverage.

''If the exchanges work,'' said Nelson Lichtenstein, a professor of history at UC Santa Barbara and a labor expert, ''then I'd be in favor of more people getting covered that way rather than through employers.''

Ms. COLLINS. Mr. President, I yield the floor and I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Ms. LANDRIEU. I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

EXECUTIVE SESSION

NOMINATION OF SHELLY DECKERT DICK TO BE UNITED STATES DISTRICT JUDGE FOR THE MIDDLE DISTRICT OF LOUISIANA

NOMINATION OF NELSON STEPHEN ROMAN TO BE UNITED STATES DISTRICT JUDGE FOR THE SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF NEW YORK

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will proceed to executive session to consider the following nominations, which the clerk will report.

The assistant legislative clerk read the nominations of Shelly Deckert Dick, of Louisiana, to be United States District Judge for the Middle District of Louisiana, and Nelson Stephen Roman, of New York, to be United States District Judge for the Southern District of New York.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, there will now be 30 minutes of debate equally divided in the usual form.

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, over the last month, Senate Republicans have failed to refute the facts of what they have done to President Obama's judicial nominations. The Senate's work on judicial nominations should not be about partisan point-scoring; it should be about ensuring the American people have access to justice. I rejected that partisan tit-for-tat approach while moving to confirm 100 of President Bush's judicial nominees in just 17 months in 2001 and 2002.

The question for the Senate is, Are we doing enough to ensure that hard working Americans have access to justice so that they can have their rights protected? At a time when 10 percent of the Federal bench remains vacant, I do not think that we are. The standard we set during the Bush administration for quickly moving to confirm noncontroversial nominees is not being met.

Senate Republicans who take such pride in the number of nominees being confirmed this year ignore how many were needlessly delayed from confirmation last year and what they have done during the last 4 years. That is why after the 14 confirmations this year, we remain more than 20 confirmations behind the pace we set for President Bush's circuit and district nominees, and vacancies remain nearly twice as high as they were at this point during President Bush's second term. For all their self-congratulatory statements, they cannot refute the following: We are not even keeping up with attrition. Vacancies have increased, not decreased, since the start of this year. President Obama's judicial nominees have faced unprecedented delays and obstruction by Senate Republicans. We have yet to finish the work that could and should have been completed last year. There are still a dozen judicial nominees with bipartisan support being denied confirmation.

A recent report by the nonpartisan Congressional Research Service compares the whole of President Obama's first term to the whole of President Bush's first term, and the contrast could not be more clear. The median Senate floor wait time for President Obama's district nominees was five times longer than for President Bush's. President Obama's circuit nominees faced even longer delays, and their median wait time was 7.3 times longer than for President Bush's circuit nominees. The comparison is even worse if we look just at nominees who were reported and confirmed unanimously. President Bush's unanimously confirmed circuit nominees had a median wait time of just 14 days. Compare that to the 130.5 days for President Obama's unanimous nominees. That is more than nine times longer. Even the nonpartisan CRS calls this a ''notable change.'' There is no good reason for such unprecedented delays, but those are the facts.

The confirmations in the last few months does not change the reality of what has happened over the last 4 years. If a baseball player goes 0-for-9, and then gets a hit, we do not say he is an all-star because he is batting 1.000 in his last at bat. We recognize that he is just 1-for-10 and not a very good hitter.

So while I welcome the confirmations this year, I note both that 10 of the 14 could and should have been confirmed last year and that there are another dozen nominees pending before the Senate, including four who also could have been confirmed last year. We can and must do more for Americans who look to our courts for justice. They deserve better than long delays and empty courtrooms. With 10 percent of our Federal bench vacant and a backlog of nominees on the Senate Executive Calendar, it is clear that the Senate is not working up to its full capacity on nominations.

It is true that some vacancies do not have nominees. I wish Republican home State Senators would work with President Obama to fill these vacancies. Nor do those vacancies excuse their unwillingness to complete action on the consensus judicial nominees who are ready to be confirmed but whose confirmations are being delayed. Mark Barnett, Claire Kelly, Shelly Dick, William Orrick, Nelson Román, Sheri Chappell, Michael McShane, Nitza Quinones Alejandro, Luis Restrepo, Jeffrey Schmehl, Kenneth Gonzales, and Gregory Phillips are awaiting confirmation and Sri Srinivasan, Ray Chen, and Jennifer Dorsey can be reported to the Senate today, without further delay. So long as there is a backlog of nominees before the Senate, the fault for failing to confirm these nominees lies solely with Senate Republicans.

The Judicial Conference recently released their judgeship recommendations. Based upon the caseloads of our Federal courts, the conference recommended the creation of 91 new judgeships. That is in addition to the 86 judgeships that are currently vacant. This means that the effective vacancy rate on the Federal bench is over 18 percent. A vacancy rate this high is harmful to the individuals and businesses that depend on our courts for speedy justice. The damage is even more acute in the busiest district courts, such as those in border States that have heavy immigration-related caseloads. In a Washington Post article about the CRS report, Jonathan Bernstein wrote: ''Ordinary people who just want to get their legal matters taken care of promptly have suffered because of all the vacancies on federal courts.'' I ask unanimous consent to have the article entitled ''New report confirms GOP obstructionism is unprecedented'' printed in the RECORD at the conclusion of my statement.

Unneccessarily prolonged vacancies are not the only way that partisanship in Washington is hurting our courts. Sequestration continues to affect our justice system. The chief judge of the Fourth Circuit, William B. Traxler, Jr., has written: ''The impact of sequestration on the Judiciary is particularly harsh because the courts have no control over their workload. They must respond to all cases that are filed . . . .'' He went on to say:

> [A] significant problem arises when budget cuts impact our responsibilities under the Constitution. This happens when we cannot afford to fulfill the Sixth Amendment right to representation for indigents charged with crimes. The predictable result is that criminal prosecutions will slow and our legal system will not operate as efficiently. This will cost us all in many different ways.

I share Chief Judge Traxler's concern, and I ask unanimous consent to have his statement printed in the RECORD at the conclusion of my remarks.

Our Federal judiciary provides justice to 310 million Americans and gives full effect to the laws that we pass here in the Senate. We have a constitutional responsibility to those 310 million Americans to make sure that they can count on our Federal courts to provide justice. Federal courts should not be held hostage to partisan obstruction, and we need to keep our courts fully funded so that they can continue to meet the promise of timely justice that is embedded in our Constitution.

Shelly Dick is nominated to fill a vacancy on the U.S. District Court for the Middle District of Louisiana. Since 1994, she has been in private practice at the Law Offices of Shelly D. Dick, LLC, in Baton Rouge and was previously an associate with the law firm of Gary Field Landry and Dornier. Additionally, since 2008, she has served as an ad hoc hearing officer for the Louisiana Workforce Commission. Shelly Dick has the bipartisan support of her home State Senators, Ms. LANDRIEU and Mr. VITTER, and was reported unanimously by the Judiciary Committee over 2

months ago. She is one of the pending nominees who could have been expedited and confirmed last year. When confirmed, Shelly Dick will be the first woman to serve on the U.S. District Court for the Middle District of Louisiana.

Nelson Román is nominated to fill a judicial emergency vacancy on the U.S. District Court for the Southern District of New York. He currently serves as an associate justice for the New York State Supreme Court, Appellate Division, First Department. He previously served as a justice of the New York State Supreme Court, Civil Term, Bronx County, as a judge for the New York City Civil Court, Bronx County, and as a judge of the housing part of the New York City Civil Court, Bronx County. Prior to becoming a judge, he was an assistant district attorney in Kings County, NY, as well as a special narcotics assistant district attorney in New York City. From 1995 to 1998, Justice Román served as a law clerk to the Honorable Jose A. Padilla, Jr. of the New York County Civil Court. He has the support of his home State Senators, Mr. SCHUMER and Mrs. GILLIBRAND, and was reported unanimously by the Judiciary Committee over 2 months ago.

Senate Republicans have a long way to go to match the record of cooperation on consensus nominees that Senate Democrats established during the Bush administration, but I hope that the confirmations so far this year indicate that they are finally reconsidering their wholesale obstruction of President Obama's nominees. After today's votes, 10 more judicial nominees remain pending, and all were reported with bipartisan support. All Senate Democrats are ready to vote on each of them to allow them to get to work for the American people. We can make real progress if Senate Republicans are willing to join us.

I ask unanimous consent that the article and statement to which I referred be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

[From the Washington Post, May 3, 2013]

NEW REPORT CONFIRMS GOP OBSTRUCTIONISM IS UNPRECEDENTED

(By Jonathan Bernstein)

The nonpartisan Congressional Research Service has released an important new report that details Barack Obama's record on nominating judges during his first term. It's no surprise: Republican obstruction against his selections was unprecedented. For example:

''President Obama is the only one of the five most recent Presidents for whom, during his first term, both the average and median waiting time from nomination to confirmation for circuit and district court nominees was greater than half a calendar year (i.e., more than 182 days).''

A quick look at the report's summary confirms that Obama's nominees have been treated more roughly than those of Presidents Reagan, Bush, Clinton, and the other Bush.

That's only half the story. George H.W. Bush had to deal with an opposition party Senate for his entire first term, and Bill Clinton and George W. Bush had that during about half of their first terms. It's at least plausibly legitimate for opposite party Senators, when they have the majority, to argue that they should have a larger role in filling judicial vacancies, and to act accordingly. At the very least, if they simply oppose some of those nominees, they will defeat them in ''up or down'' votes.

But Obama, like Ronald Reagan, had a same-party Senate majority during his first term. He should have had among the best results over any recent president, all things being equal.

What changed when Obama took office, however, was the extension of the filibuster to cover every single nominee. Republicans didn't always vote against cloture (or even demand cloture votes), but they did demand 60 votes for every nominee. That's brand new. It's true that Democrats filibustered selected judicial nominations during the George W. Bush presidency, but only at the circuit court level, and not every single one.

That meant that despite solid Democratic majorities and solid support from those Democrats, Obama's judicial approval statistics are basically the worse of any of the recent presidents. He doesn't show up last on every measure—for example, George H.W. Bush had a lower percentage of district court nominees confirmed—but he's fourth or fifth out of five of these presidents on almost every way that CRS slices the numbers, and it adds up to by far the most obstruction faced by any recent president.

And remember: the losers here aren't just the president and liberals who want to see his judges on the bench. Ordinary people who just want to get their legal matters taken care of promptly have suffered because of all the vacancies on federal courts.

It's really a disgrace. Especially those picks that were delayed for months, only to wind up getting confirmed by unanimous votes. Especially the foot-dragging on district court nominees. Just a disgrace.

STATEMENT OF CHIEF JUDGE WILLIAM B. TRAXLER, JR., CHAIRMAN OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF THE JUDICIAL CONFERENCE OF THE UNITED STATES, APRIL 19, 2013

1. The Executive Committee of the Judicial Conference is responsible for developing a spending plan for the federal Judiciary's annual Congressional appropriation. This process involves significant input from Conference committees, and under the best of circumstances, is a difficult and complex task.

The current fiscal year presents unparalleled challenges. Budget sequestration has reduced the Judiciary's overall funding by nearly $350 million from the level provided in Fiscal Year 2012. The impact of sequestration on the Judiciary is particularly harsh because the courts have no control over their workload. They must respond to all cases that are filed, whether they are by individuals, businesses, or the government.

In February 2013, the Executive Committee implemented a series of emergency measures that were intended to mitigate the impact of sequestration to the best extent possible. Nevertheless, significant shortfalls remain.

Funds have been reduced for probation and pretrial staffing, which means less deterrence, detection, and supervision of released felons from prison. Related funding for drug testing, drug treatment and mental health treatment were cut by 20 percent. Money for security systems and equipment has been cut 25 percent and court security officer hours have been reduced. Cuts in court staffing and hours threaten to impact public access and slow case processing. National information technology upgrades to improve infrastructure and financial management have been delayed. Sequestration is impacting federal court operations and programs throughout the country, including a $51 million shortfall in the FY 2013 funds in the Defender Services account.

The Judiciary is committed to doing its part to reduce the fiscal deficit our country faces. However, a significant problem arises when budget cuts impact our responsibilities under the Constitution. This happens when we cannot afford to fulfill the Sixth Amendment right to representation for indigents charged with crimes. The predictable result is that criminal prosecutions will slow and our legal system will not operate as efficiently. This will cost us all in many different ways.

With regard to the Defender account shortfall, at its April 16, 2013, meeting the Executive Committee examined all aspects of this account, scrubbed expenses where possible, and approved a final spending plan. After lengthy discussion, the Committee determined to allocate the available funds in a manner that, without further impacting payments to private attorneys, will at least limit the number of days that any defender organization staff must be furloughed. The result is that some federal defender offices will still be forced to furlough their employees up to 15 days. The Committee also approved deferral of payments to private panel attorneys for the last 15 business days of the fiscal year.

The defender program has no flexibility to absorb cuts of this magnitude without impacting payments to private counsel appointed under the Criminal Justice Act and Federal Defender Organizations, which pay for government lawyers to provide counsel to eligible defendants. Federal defender offices already have fired and furloughed staff, as well as drastically cut essential services. Criminal prosecutions have been delayed because defender organizations do not have the staff necessary to continue their representation of the defendant or the funds to pay for experts or other cases costs.

The Executive Committee's allocation of funds is not a solution to the $51 million shortfall. It represents a conscientious effort to mitigate the adverse impact on both personnel and services. It also means that millions of dollars in expenses in this account will be shifted to FY 2014, even though they were not part of the Judicial Branch budget submission to Congress. This level of funding is unsustainable without relief from Congress.

The Judiciary will soon ask the Office of Management and Budget to transmit an FY 2013 emergency supplemental funding request to Congress to help ameliorate the impact of the sequestration cuts to defender services, probation and pretrial services, court staffing, and court security.

In his 2012 Year-End Report on the Federal Judiciary, the Chief Justice said:

''A significant and prolonged shortfall in judicial funding would inevitably result in the delay or denial of justice for the people the courts serve.''

I share this grave concern.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Louisiana.

Ms. LANDRIEU. Mr. President, I rise today to present to this Chamber the nomination of Shelly Deckert Dick as a nominee for article III judge on the U.S. Middle District Court of Louisiana. I was pleased to recommend Ms. Dick to President Obama, and I am happy that he sent her name to the Senate and that the committee has

unanimously recommended her for confirmation.

She is equipped with decades of Federal court litigation experience. She brings with her a thorough understanding of the Federal court system, having practiced for years before the court. From all indications from her peers and colleagues, she is fair and evenhanded. I think her temperament is appropriate for the bench.

She is a current resident of Baton Rouge but was born in El Paso, TX. She earned her bachelor's degree in business administration from the University of Texas at Austin and graduated on the dean's list with honors.

She brings with her years of experience, not just in the private sector. She has worked as a lawyer before the Federal bench. She has also been extremely active in community affairs.

She graduated from Louisiana State University law school, where she was a member of the Law Review. Demonstrating her commitment to public service early in her legal career, she served as a law clerk to a woman who went on—and was actually mentored by the first woman of our Supreme Court—Kitty Kimble, who went on, of course, to become chief justice of the Louisiana Supreme Court.

Following law school, at an early age, she became an associate attorney at the firm of Gary, Field, Landry & Bradford before going on to become a full partner in one of our strongest and best law firms in Baton Rouge, LA.

She has extensive experience, as I said, in Federal court representing both plaintiffs and defendants as well as government and nongovernment clients. She has a well-rounded legal career and is very active in the community, in her church, and has done missionary work for many years throughout the world. She is also very active in the American Bar Association, the Louisiana State Bar Association, the Louisiana Association of Defense Counsel, and the Baton Rouge bar. She was admitted to practice in the district courts of the Western, Middle, and Eastern Districts, the Fifth U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals, and the U.S. Supreme Court. She has written numerous articles for legal publications and presented at legal seminars on a wide range of topics.

I have known Ms. Dick for a few years. She is a friend now. She was not a close friend when my search committee went out and looked for the most qualified individuals to step up and serve on our bench. She and her credentials were brought to my attention by many members of the community, and I am very happy to nominate Ms. Dick.

Ms. Dick will be the first woman to serve in the Middle District of Louisiana. I think it is high time, after a couple of hundred years, that we have women now qualified and stepping up to assume these leadership positions. I have been very proud to help bring diversity and excellence to our bench both at the prosecutor level and as judges in the courts in Louisiana.

As I said, Shelly has also volunteered for international missions overseas, particularly in Cambodia, South Africa, and Kenya. She has worked with her church and other nonprofit organizations.

I think she is perfectly suited to be a judge with all the prerequisite experience and legal degrees and academic degrees required. Most importantly, she is enthusiastic and excited about serving.

I am sorry it has taken us so long to get her to this point where the Senate will hopefully confirm her—if not acclamation—by a strong and overwhelming vote. I know of no opposition to her nomination.

These days it seems that these nominations seem to be going a lot slower than they should. I thank her and her family for their patience as they have waited and waited for this day to come. Hopefully she will be able to put on that robe and get to that bench in the Middle District and do a fine job for us both in Louisiana and around the country.

I yield the floor.

The junior Senator from Louisiana may want to add a word.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from you Louisiana.

Mr. VITTER. Mr. President, I rise for two reasons. First of all, I look forward to supporting the confirmation of Shelly Dick to become a judge in the Middle District of Louisiana, and I look forward to that vote in 5 minutes. As I have said before, I believe she will serve well.

Secondly, I also wanted to come to the floor to add my support to the Landrieu flood insurance amendment. I am a cosponsor, and we are working very hard on clearing a path for an important, substantive version of that amendment.

Senator LANDRIEU and I have talked, and we have talked to others, including Senator BOXER and many other supporters. We are working very hard not to get into the weeds but to take care of some technical issues, some budget points of order, and some other issues so we can clear the path for a strong, substantive version of this amendment.

This is a big deal. It is a big deal for the country. It is a big deal for any coastal area and certainly a big deal for South Louisiana. We need to ensure that as the new Flood Insurance Program is administered, it is done in a fair and reasonable way and that we don't price anybody who has been following the rules out of their home because their flood insurance rates increased so astronomically. That is the fear, but that has not played out. The new rates are not out, but that is the legitimate fear. Senator LANDRIEU and I are working with our entire delegation to make sure we avoid that.

Right after this vote, I am going to travel to northern Virginia to meet with a Louisiana group at the FEMA offices to talk about this very issue. I am convinced FEMA has some authority under law already to mitigate these issues in many ways but including by making sure they get their LAMP process right and take into account all flood barriers and protections in a given area as new areas are mapped. I am going directly from this judge vote to that important meeting, and we will all be following up in important ways to make sure we get it right, make sure FEMA gets it right, hopefully including a good, workable amendment that can be passed on this bill. We are all working toward that goal.

I thank my colleague from Louisiana for that joint effort.

I yield back to the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. HEITKAMP). The Senator from Louisiana.

Ms. LANDRIEU. Madam President, I wish to follow up on the comments made by my colleague from Louisiana, Senator VITTER. I am pleased he will accompany many of our elected officials to the FEMA office this afternoon. I had a chance to meet with the FEMA officials yesterday. At my request, they came to the Capitol to meet with me.

We are both very hopeful that there are some things within the new mandates and new authorizations that FEMA can do to mitigate against the projected 25-percent increases annually for some of our policyholders—not the majority but for some of them. I am anticipating that some of these issues are not going to be addressed administratively and that it is going to take a change of law.

Again, the reason I am pushing this issue and pushing this bill is because this new law that we are talking about, expressing frustration about, and questioning never came to this floor for a vote. I am still not clear at this point whether this bill was ever voted on by the full House.

This bill, the flood insurance reform bill of last year, was tucked into a larger bill, the national transportation bill, at the last minute. The national transportation bill was widely supported. It funds billions of dollars' worth of projects for everyone's district. It is a very popular bill.

This relatively small but significant flood insurance bill was tucked into a conference report, which is really not that usual, particularly if the bill itself had not passed one body. There are lots of times when things are put into a conference committee that have not passed the Senate, but it passed the House, or it passed the House but not the Senate, and there is an indication of broad support. We have to move legislation, and sometimes we have to use an expedited means.

I am still waiting to get clear from the staff whether this bill ever got a vote in the House of Representatives. I know it didn't get a vote here, and it would probably, in its current form, not pass because the delegations from

Louisiana, Texas, Mississippi, California, and any numbers, would have insisted on some amendments and some procedures to help our people who are going to be affected by these very significant increases in flood insurance, to give them more time to meet their obligations.

I know we are on a judgeship so I am going to yield the floor, but I am hoping we can continue to work on this issue.

I thank Senator VITTER for his support, as well as Senator BOXER, as we are continuing to work on the language of this amendment.

I yield back all time on the nominations.

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

Under the previous order, the question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the nomination of Shelly Deckert Dick, of Louisiana, to be United States District Judge for the Middle District of Louisiana?

The nomination was confirmed.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the nomination of Nelson Stephen Roman, of New York, to be United States District Judge for the Southern District of New York?

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

There is a sufficient second.

The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk called the roll.

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. LAUTENBERG) is necessarily absent.

Mr. CORNYN. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from Wyoming (Mr. BARRASSO) and the Senator from Alaska (Ms. MURKOWSKI).

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

The result was announced—yeas 97, nays 0, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 118 Ex.]

YEAS—97

Alexander	Donnelly	Landrieu
Ayotte	Durbin	Leahy
Baldwin	Enzi	Lee
Baucus	Feinstein	Levin
Begich	Fischer	Manchin
Bennet	Flake	McCain
Blumenthal	Franken	McCaskill
Blunt	Gillibrand	McConnell
Boozman	Graham	Menendez
Boxer	Grassley	Merkley
Brown	Hagan	Mikulski
Burr	Harkin	Moran
Cantwell	Hatch	Murphy
Cardin	Heinrich	Murray
Carper	Heitkamp	Nelson
Casey	Heller	Paul
Chambliss	Hirono	Portman
Coats	Hoeven	Pryor
Coburn	Inhofe	Reed
Cochran	Isakson	Reid
Collins	Johanns	Risch
Coons	Johnson (SD)	Roberts
Corker	Johnson (WI)	Rockefeller
Cornyn	Kaine	Rubio
Cowan	King	Sanders
Crapo	Kirk	Schatz
Cruz	Klobuchar	Schumer
Scott	Thune	Warren
Sessions	Toomey	Whitehouse
Shaheen	Udall (CO)	Wicker
Shelby	Udall (NM)	Wyden
Stabenow	Vitter	
Tester	Warner	

NOT VOTING—3

Barrasso	Lautenberg	Murkowski

The nomination was confirmed.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the motions to reconsider are considered made and laid upon the table. The President will be immediately notified of the Senate's action.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senate will resume legislative session.

WATER RESOURCES DEVELOPMENT ACT OF 2013—Continued

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New York.

Mrs. GILLIBRAND. Madam President, I rise to urge my colleagues to support a bipartisan amendment I worked on with Senator WICKER to make our communities more resilient in an era of extreme weather that we live in. No corner of America is being spared: blazing wildfires in the West, massive tornadoes in the South, crippling droughts in the Midwest, routine hurricanes battering the gulf coast and the northeast coast.

We cannot accept the status quo. I think we must do more, because as we have seen in New York, the storm of the century has literally become the storm of the year. In 2011, we saw widespread and devastating damage from Hurricane Irene and Tropical Storm Lee. One year later, Superstorm Sandy hit us harder than we could have ever imagined.

The Federal Government must step in. It must step up to do the hard work, to lead the way in preparing for and protecting against these extreme weather events. This does not mean just building a higher flood wall or moving public infrastructure out of the flood zone; it means taking a smarter, longer term regional approach to disaster planning.

Along with saving lives, this makes smart economic sense. For every $1 we spend to reduce disaster risk, we save $4 in recovery costs. Our bipartisan amendment can help achieve this goal. It is called Strengthening the Resiliency of Our Nation on the Ground—the STRONG Act—to give the Federal Government a real plan to strengthen our resiliency.

First, the bill would investigate effective resiliency policies, identify the gaps, and identify the conflicting policies. Knowing what resources we have, what works, what does not, we can write and implement a national resiliency strategy to support the local efforts.

This would include a one-stop shop to gather and share data to develop smarter resiliency policies, incorporating existing databases and ongoing efforts across a range of sectors, from weather and climate to transportation and energy. It also eliminates redundancies, ensuring all levels of government are coordinating effectively and efficiently, sharing their expertise, their data, and information.

This national resource will work hand in glove with local efforts, providing the most recent scientific information and best practices to help our communities plan for and survive the worst. As we learn the lessons of Superstorm Sandy and other natural disasters, we need to ensure that our communities are thinking broadly about resiliency across all sectors of society. The STRONG Act is the foundation to build smarter and stronger cities, States and a nation. Only with communities built for the 21st century can we withstand the extreme weather of our time.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Missouri.

Mr. BLUNT. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent to speak as in morning business.

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

OBAMACARE

Mr. BLUNT. Madam President, I wish to talk a bit about the health care bill. Every time I am home, I hear more and more concerns from more and more families and more and more individuals and more and more employers. In 2009, the President repeatedly said that if you like your health care plan, you can keep it. Notice nobody is saying that anymore.

Maybe that is not what the measure should be because that is certainly not going to happen. I think the question is, are you going to have health care and can you afford it. During the Presidential campaign, the President said he liked the term ''ObamaCare.'' So I feel a little more free to use that than I did previously. I do not mean it to be disparaging in any way. I just happen to think it is a plan that will not work.

In the 3 years since the Affordable Care Act became law, it has become increasingly clear that this plan will only deliver more broken promises and bad news. Opponents have long warned this overhaul is bad for the economy. There are now over 20,000 pages of new regulations. In talking to the people I work for, they say they were concerned when people did not read the 2,000-page bill. Since the election, there have been 20,000 pages of regulations. There will be at least 159 new bureaucracies, boards, and programs.

A number of recent reports have reinforced everybody's concerns, noting that the health care bill will burden Americans with $1 trillion of new taxes over 10 years and penalties. It will stifle job creation.

Investors Business Daily noted that retailers are cutting worker hours at a rate not seen in more than three decades, a sudden shift, according to them,

that can only be explained by the onset of ObamaCare's employer mandates—only explained by the onset of ObamaCare's employer mandates. In the April job figures, 288,000 people moved from full-time work to part-time work.

Almost all of us in the Senate, as we talk to people in the States we represent, have talked to somebody who is figuring out how they can replace full-time employees—when they leave or maybe earlier than they wanted to leave—with part-time employees. The Congressional Budget Office warned that the President's health care plan will slash approximately 800,000 jobs, increase government spending by $1.2 trillion, and force 7 million Americans to lose their employer-sponsored coverage.

On that last one, I think that is optimistic. I think it will be more than 7 million people who 2 years from now do not have health insurance, who had some kind of health insurance 2 years ago or even up until today. I think setting the standard that they have to meet that, and if they cannot meet that standard, just pay the penalty and do not provide anything is going to put people in a position they are going to find themselves very troubled to be in.

A leading health care advocacy group recently noted that millions of people will be priced out of the health insurance market under ObamaCare thanks to a glitch in the law that hurts people with modest incomes who cannot afford family coverage offered by their employers. Of course, the only thing the employer gets any credit for offering in the new world we are about to move into is individual coverage.

In fact, if someone has a family member who is covered in their family policy, the person they work for appears to get no credit for that coverage. An independent study by the Society of Actuaries—these are people who try to calculate benefits and life expectancy and all of that—estimates that insurance companies will have to pay out an average of 32 percent more for medical claims on individual health policies by 2017.

Why would that be? Remember, these are health policies that there is a small penalty for not having but the insurance company has to issue to you whenever you decide you want it.

I have talked to more than one hospital group that said we will just put the insurance forms in the ambulance.

Under the law, as I have read the law, you can fill out the insurance form on the way to the hospital in the ambulance, and the insurance company still has to give the so-called guaranteed issue no matter what your health is.

For Missourians, this study shows that medical claims costs could increase by almost 60 percent—the exact amount is 58.8 percent—per person. This actuarial study in my State says insurance claims costs could increase by 58.8 percent, making my State's projected cost increase the eighth highest in the country.

At a time when millions of Americans are still searching for jobs, the last thing we should be doing is discouraging job growth, but every single person here has heard somebody that they work for in the State they represent say: We are not going to grow above 50 people or we are not going to hire full-time employees.

Next year job creators will be forced to start complying with the law or pay a penalty. This will lead employers to reduce hours for full-time employees to avoid paying those penalties or providing health care—either one.

State governments, such as the State of Virginia right across the river from where we are working in the Nation's Capital, said that after July 1 none of their part-time employees will be allowed to work—that is the beginning of their spending year—that after July 1 none of their part-time employees will be able to work more than 29 hours. Why would the entire State of Virginia be saying that? Because the Federal Government says 30 hours is the time when you have to provide a benefit.

Once we start saying something as a government that you have to do something, suddenly it seems to be OK to meet the exceptions. Companies that for five decades after World War II have done everything they could to provide benefits for health care at whatever level they thought they could because they thought it was either the competitive thing to do or the right thing to do or both, those same companies are now saying: Well, the exception in the law says I don't really have an obligation to provide you health care, and so I am not going to.

As we see people move toward the part-time workforce, I believe we are going to see people having more than one job, but none of those jobs will have benefits. The person who served your breakfast or sells you your coffee in the morning may be the same person you see at a meal later that same day at another place because they are working two jobs, not one, and neither of those has benefits.

For those employers who decide it is cost-effective to pay the penalty rather than comply with the law, those people who worked for them obviously will see their plans change or lose their plans altogether. Maybe that is why my friends across the aisle are beginning to say the things they have said about this.

Everybody has heard the Senator BAUCUS comment that warned that implementing this bill will be a ''huge train wreck coming down.''

Senator WYDEN said:

> There is reason to be very concerned about what's going to happen with young people. If their premiums shoot up, I can tell you, that is going to wash up on the Senate in a hurry.

The New York Times reported that Senator Ben Cardin told White House officials that he was concerned about big rate increases being sought by insurers in his State, one of the first States to report what the new rates would be.

Senator JEANNE SHAHEEN noted that she is ''hearing from a lot of small businesses in New Hampshire that do not know how to comply with the law.''

Senator JAY ROCKEFELLER said that he is of the belief that the health care act ''is probably the most complex piece of legislation ever passed by the United States Congress.'' He noted, ''It worries me, because it is so complicated. And if it isn't done right the first time, it'll just simply get worse.''

The Secretary of HHS said, ''There may be a higher cost associated with getting into that market.''

As I said, even the top health care official in the country, the Secretary of Health and Human Services, Kathleen Sebelius, said that there might be a higher cost associated with getting into this market where folks will be moving into a really fully insured product for the first time—or not. What she did say was that this insurance may cost more than what your employer used to think they could afford to provide to you, and now maybe they are not providing anything at all. Maybe they are providing something that meets new standards—not what the person paying the bill thought they could afford but what was the only option available.

This isn't like, if you can do some of this, fine, you will just pay part of the penalty. It is not like that at all. In fact, what this really is, if you don't meet the standards that the Federal Government has decided should be the standards for employees of yours whom they have never seen, whom you pay $100 a day if you try to offer insurance that doesn't meet the insurance, per employee—that is, $36,500 a year is the penalty if you don't offer the insurance exactly as the government says it has to be offered at a minimum. If you decide not to offer any insurance at all, it is $2,000 a year.

So now we have gotten to the point where the government is so right that it is a $36,500 penalty if you don't offer exactly the insurance they say you have to offer and it is a $2,000 penalty if you don't offer any insurance at all. What kind of parallel universe is this that this has taken us into that we have that kind of ridiculous situation develop?

Last week President Obama said there may be ''glitches and bumps'' in the rollout of his massive government overhaul. The Chicago Tribune, one of his hometown newspapers, after he said that, said in an editorial: Give us the choice of ''train wreck'' or ''glitches and bumps,'' we are betting on train wreck.

This is his hometown paper that is saying that. This is certainly not what the President and congressional leaders promised us when this became the law.

We can all agree that we must fix our health care system. I think the path we are on is the wrong path to take. There are a number of things we could do: medical liability reform, more vigorous competition, buying across State lines, more individual ownership of policies set up, high-risk pools that work. The

choice should never have been ''you can do this or we can do nothing at all.'' There were things in the great health care system we had that could have been improved and still had the benefits of that great system. It appears that none of these are being allowed to happen until we see for sure that the new system either will work or won't work.

I recently voted for the amendment to defund the program. Let's go back to the drawing board and see what we can do to get started again. I think this is a flawed concept. I think we have to replace this concept with commonsense reforms that put patients and doctors in control of health care, not new bureaucracies in Washington.

I thank the Chair.

Mrs. BOXER. Madam President, I would like to lay out what we are going to do, and it will take me about 6 minutes maximum.

The good news for the Senate—I am glad you don't object to good news because it is not always good news. What we have seen on this WRDA bill is that we have handled a number of amendments both through the managers' package that we substituted for the original text and in individual amendments. What we have seen is that the Boxer-Vitter substitute strengthened participation of environmental agencies in project delivery. We have addressed challenges in every part of the country. We reached agreement with appropriators on future harbor maintenance trust fund expenditures. We authorized additional regional programs. We accelerate investment in the Inland Waterways Trust Fund.

Here on the floor, we adapted amendments to set up an oceans trust fund and a new program to address Asian carp. We have made sure that agencies are treated fairly in the WIFIA Program. We require performance measures for levee safety grants. These are good amendments offered by both sides of the aisle.

We are about to, as soon as we do this little technical change to an amendment number—and it looks as though it has been done—we are about to adopt Senator BLUNT's very important amendment that has so much support on both sides of the aisle for resilient construction, meaning we are going to make sure that as we enter a phase of extreme weather situations, we use the best materials on these projects. That is the Blunt amendment.

Then we go to the Sessions amendment, which is land transfer to help his local communities—uncontroversial.

There is a Coburn amendment to deauthorize projects that have been inactive for a very long time. This saves us money.

Also, there is a Warner amendment that makes technical corrections for Four Mile Run.

We will set aside the Inhofe amendment and that number, amendment No. 797, that would be pending.

I ask unanimous consent that in addition to the Blunt amendment No. 800 in the previous order, the following amendments be the next amendments in order to the bill: Sessions No. 811, as modified with the changes that are at the desk, Coburn No. 823, Warner No. 873, and Inhofe No. 797; further, that no second-degree amendments be in order to any of these amendments or the Blunt amendment prior to the votes in relation to the amendments.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection? Without objection, it is so ordered.

AMENDMENTS NOS. 800, 811, AS MODIFIED, 823, AND 873, EN BLOC

Mrs. BOXER. I ask unanimous consent that the following amendments, which have been cleared by both sides, be considered and agreed to en bloc: Blunt amendment No. 800; Sessions amendment No. 811, as modified; Coburn amendment No. 823; and Warner amendment No. 873.

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

The amendments were agreed to, as follows:

AMENDMENT NO. 800

(Purpose: To provide for the consideration of resilient construction techniques in certain studies relating to extreme weather events)

Redesignate sections 11001, 11002, and 11003 as sections 11002, 11003, and 11004, respectively.

At the beginning of title XI, insert the following:

SEC. 11001. DEFINITION OF RESILIENT CONSTRUCTION TECHNIQUE.

In this title, the term ''resilient construction technique'' means a construction method that—

(1) allows a property—

(A) to resist hazards brought on by a major disaster; and

(B) to continue to provide the primary functions of the property after a major disaster;

(2) reduces the magnitude or duration of a disruptive event to a property; and

(3) has the absorptive capacity, adaptive capacity, and recoverability to withstand a potentially disruptive event.

In section 11002(b) (as redesignated), strike paragraph (2) and insert the following:

(2) an analysis of—

(A) historical extreme weather events;

(B) the ability of existing infrastructure to mitigate risks associated with extreme weather events; and

(C) the reduction in long-term costs and vulnerability to infrastructure through the use of resilient construction techniques.

In section 11003(b)(5) (as redesignated), strike the ''and'' at the end.

In section 11003(b) (as redesignated) redesignate paragraph (6) as paragraph (7).

In section 1003(b) (as redesignated), insert after paragraph (5) the following:

(6) any recommendations on the use of resilient construction techniques to reduce future vulnerability from flood, storm, and drought conditions; and

AMENDMENT NO. 811, AS MODIFIED

(Purpose: To require the Tennessee Valley Authority to grant certain use restrictions)

At the end of title V, add the following:

SEC. 5011. RELEASE OF USE RESTRICTIONS.

Notwithstanding any other provision of law, the Tennessee Valley Authority shall, without monetary consideration, grant releases from real estate restrictions established pursuant to section 4(k)(b) of the Tennessee Valley Authority Act of 1933 (16 U.S.C. 831c(k)(b)) with respect to tracts of land identified in section 4(k)(b) of that Act, provided that such releases shall be granted in a manner consistent with applicable TVA policies.

AMENDMENT NO. 823

(Purpose: To ensure environmental infrastructure activities are not exempt from review by the Infrastructure Deauthorization Commission)

Section 2049(b) is amended by adding at the end the following:

(6) APPLICATION.—For purposes of this subsection, water resources projects shall include environmental infrastructure assistance projects and programs of the Corps of Engineers.

AMENDMENT NO. 873

(Purpose: To include a provision relating to Four Mile Run, city of Alexandria and Arlington County, Virginia)

On page 216, between lines 3 and 4, insert the following:

SEC. 3019. FOUR MILE RUN, CITY OF ALEXANDRIA AND ARLINGTON COUNTY, VIRGINIA.

Section 84(a)(1) of the Water Resources Development Act of 1974 (Public Law 93–251; 88 Stat. 35) is amended by striking ''twenty-seven thousand cubic feet per second'' and inserting ''18,000 cubic feet per second''.

Mrs. BOXER. I move to reconsider and lay those motions on the table.

The motions to lay on the table were agreed to.

Mrs. BOXER. I wish to thank everybody. We have made great progress on this bill. We will still be working very hard tomorrow, Saturday, Sunday, and Monday. We urge you, if you have amendments, we are just saying let them be relevant and not controversial. We can't solve every problem in America on this water bill, but we are trying our best to get a really good bill through the Senate.

I understand from the House that they intend to look at our bill, work off our bill, and make their changes. Then we will go to conference and hopefully have a very good result.

It is 3 o'clock on a Thursday, and we have disposed of numerous amendments. We are still looking at more. We are trying to resolve all of those. One way or the other, it is our plan to finish this bill next week. It is very rare to have a bill that is so bipartisan, that will, in fact, support over 500,000 jobs, and that has the support of business, labor, and all kinds of community groups. With that, I thank my colleagues for working with us.

I have talked to the majority leader. There will be no further votes today. Next week we will finish this bill. I thank you very much.

I thank my friend from Missouri. It has been a pleasure working with him and staff on his excellent amendment with Senator NELSON. We are very pleased we were able to clear this.

I also thank Senator LANDRIEU and Senator DURBIN. They had some issues, but they stepped back and let us move forward with these amendments.

People are working together, and they are working very hard, and I am very pleased about where we are. I thank my colleague from Missouri.

I yield the floor.

Mr. BLUNT. I thank the chairwoman for her work.

As this bill progresses, I will remind my friends on the floor that one of the major bills we passed last year was the highway bill in the last Congress that she and Senator INHOFE worked on. Now she and Senator VITTER are bringing another important bill to the floor that is significant.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Kansas.

Mr. MORAN. I ask unanimous consent to address the Senate as in morning business for up to 10 minutes.

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

THE ECONOMY

Mr. MORAN. Madam President, I recently had a great conversation with an individual, August Busch, III, the longtime president and CEO of Anheuser-Busch. We talked about the state of the economy. We talked about the desire to get jobs created and the country back on solid fiscal footing.

That conversation reminded me of the opportunities we have here in the Senate and the Congress to work together to see that we enact policies here in the Nation's Capital that would make a real difference in the everyday lives of Americans by creating jobs, by making certain our business climate is beneficial to large and small businesses. In that climate, they then would have the opportunity to add additional employment opportunities for all Americans.

In this overly partisan climate of Washington, DC, it is easy to lose sight of the fact that we should all be working toward that same goal of getting our economy back on track.

I think the No. 1 issue standing in the way of robust economic growth is the uncertainty that continues to be there—as described, in part, by my colleague from Missouri in regard to the Affordable Care Act—with Americans in general and people making family as well as business and investment decisions about where we are headed with our national debt and our deficit spending.

As elected officials, Americans expect us to confront our Nation's fiscal challenges and not push them off into the future. But last year's budget shortfall—just to remind us of the facts—reached $1.1 trillion, the fourth straight year of trillion-dollar deficits. This out-of-control too much spending we have in our government has increased our national debt to a record $16 trillion, which is more than the entire U.S. economy produced in goods and services in 2012.

The fact is our current fiscal state is the responsibility of many Congresses and several Presidents from both political parties. It is not always the opportunity we sometimes take to point fingers, but it is that over a long period of time we have allowed ourselves to live way beyond our means, and it has gone on far too long.

When I was elected to the Senate, just about 3 years ago, I was invited to the White House to have a conversation with my colleagues and President Obama. The conversation was all about deficit spending, the national debt, and the upcoming vote to raise the debt ceiling. Unfortunately, since that time, it has been pretty much business as usual in Washington, DC, and almost no progress has been made. It is time for us to get beyond the conversations and the rhetoric that too often is pretty empty around here and get down to the business of making real changes in the way we conduct our business.

First and foremost, we must reduce the government drag on the private sector. Startups in small businesses—the real job creators in this country—are being held down under the weight of a 74,000-page convoluted Tax Code and $1.75 trillion worth of redtape.

Every single job creator I meet, whether it is at a townhall meeting back home in Kansas or here in Washington, DC, tells me their story and asks for our help. What they tell me is we have to reduce the massive regulatory burden. The overwhelming cost of compliance prevents many small business owners and entrepreneurs from hiring new employees, expanding their facilities, and growing the economy.

Second, in addition to the regulatory environment, we have to say no to spending and yes to projob measures. This will help reduce the uncertainty in the marketplace, encourage business investment, help us become more competitive in the global economy and, most important, create jobs.

The President's solution is to raise revenues to balance the budget. But the President's tax increase proposals would only cover the deficit for just a few weeks. I would be pleased to be convinced that if we increase taxes, the money would be used to pay down the debt. I don't think I am overly cynical, but my view of history, my review of the facts suggests that every time there is more revenue—more money sent to Washington, DC—more money is spent. History shows money raised in Washington, DC, only results in more spending in Washington, DC.

The revenues we need to balance our books are not from increasing taxes but revenues that come from a strong and growing economy. We are not immune from the laws of economics that face every nation. The Congressional Budget Office estimates that government spending on health care entitlements, Social Security, and interest on the national debt will consume 100 percent of the total revenues by 2025. What that means is that money the government spends on national defense, transportation, veterans, health care, and other government programs will have to be borrowed money. That drives us further and further into debt.

So regulations, getting the deficit under control and on the right path toward a more balanced budget, and then, third, we must take serious action to address the $48 trillion in unfunded obligations found in Social Security and Medicare.

These programs represent promises that were made to Americans and, in my view, are promises that must be kept. Because of my family's circumstance—my parents—I pretty much know what life is like for people who utilize Social Security and Medicare and the benefits they provide for their lives at that stage in life we all aspire to reach. When Social Security was signed into law by President Franklin Roosevelt, the average life expectancy was 64 years of age and the earliest retirement age to collect the benefits was 65. Today, Americans live 14 years longer, retire 3 years earlier, and spend two decades in retirement.

So we have gone from a time in which Social Security was envisioned to be used for a short period of one's remaining life expectancy to a Social Security System that now is a source of income and support for people through a couple decades of retirement. That means we have to change the way we support Social Security in order to fit today's demographics: more people retiring, more people living longer with insufficient revenues to meet those programmed needs.

When this year's kindergarten class enters college, spending on Social Security and Medicare, plus Medicaid and interest on the debt will devour all tax revenues. Congress can and should begin today—and should have started a long time ago—to address these questions concerning the sustainability of these very important programs.

Lastly, to get our country's fiscal house back in order, Congress should consider adopting many of the bipartisan recommendations put forth by the President's own deficit reduction commission. The cochairs of the Commission have warned—this is the Simpson-Bowles Commission—if we fail to take swift action and serious action, the United States faces ''the most predictable economic crisis in history.''

In other words, we know it is coming. One would expect that people who know something bad is on its way—an economic crisis is coming—would take evasive action to avoid the consequences. Yet the President and Senate leadership have ignored the recommendations contained in the Simpson-Bowles report and generally continue to spend borrowed money without regard for those consequences—without regard for what we know is coming.

I don't want Americans to experience the day when our creditors decide we are no longer creditworthy and we have to suffer the same consequences as those countries that ignored their financial crisis. One needs to look no further than places in Europe—Greece, Italy, Spain—to see what high levels of national debt will do to a country's economy. Out-of-control spending is slowing America's economic growth

and threatening the prosperity of future generations that will have to pay for our irresponsibility.

Thousands and thousands of young Americans will be graduating this month. Typically, I would guess many of my colleagues will be giving graduation addresses and encouraging our graduates to go forth and pursue a great life. We ought to also be telling ourselves that for our college graduates to go forth and pursue that wonderful life, we need to make changes in the way we do business and get our country's economic condition and fiscal state to a place where the American dream can be expected to be pursued and, in many cases, achieved.

I am fearful that while my parents' generation handed off a country where the expectations were high—we all felt we could live the American dream—my generation is failing to do the same for the generation that follows ours. We must not fail to take action now and leave it for another Congress, another year, another session, another election. If we fail to take the action we need to take today because we believe it is too difficult; that we can't afford the political consequences of making what some people describe as very difficult decisions, we clearly will reduce the opportunity of the next generation to experience the country we know and love, and we will diminish the chances they can pursue and achieve the American dream.

I had someone in my office recently who travels the globe, and he indicated to me that every place he goes, people around the world know what the phrase ''the American dream'' means, and they all want to pursue the American dream. But the reminder was that more and more the American dream is pursued outside of America because of the inability of this Congress, the failure of past Congresses and Presidents to come together and do the things that are responsible for today but, more important, responsible for the well-being of Americans in the future.

Not one of us was elected to ignore problems. People tell us, each one of us, all the time of some circumstance or condition that is a challenge to them. I have no doubt that each one of us in the Senate tries to figure out how we can help. The American people are experiencing a problem. Our country faces a challenge, and we ought to respond in the same way we respond individually to our own constituents when we say: How can we help? What can we do? We know the answer to those questions. We just need to have the will, the courage, and the desire to work together to address the issues and make certain America is a place we are proud to pass on to the next generation and that no American, because of our inability to act, is unable to pursue that beautiful American dream.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. WARREN). The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

Mr. NELSON. Madam President, may I be recognized.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator is recognized.

Mr. NELSON. Madam President, I rise to speak in support of the Water Resources Development Act. I congratulate Senator BOXER and Senator VITTER for showing how two Senators of opposite parties can work together, which is something that is sorely needed around here. I thank them for clearing the amendment Senator BLUNT and I offered on resilient construction, to study the need to improve our infrastructure in order to withstand extreme weather conditions and events such as hurricanes.

The last time we passed a water bill was back in 2007. The gridlock the American people are seeing so much of now is part of what has delayed us passing a new water bill—and the controversy over earmarks. But all of this inaction since 2007 puts our ports, beaches, and environmental restoration projects such as the Everglades restoration in jeopardy.

This water bill is going to authorize new flood protection, navigation, and specific restoration projects which are so important to our State of Florida, such as Everglades restoration. Also this bill is going to authorize important updates to our Nation's ports. Our ports obviously are a main part of the economic engine of this country. All of these projects are now in this bill and will be able to proceed.

This Senate water bill means good news for Florida's beaches, waterways, ports, and the Everglades. Rather than talk about the specific projects, I want to say Congress made a promise 13 years ago to restore the Everglades and this bill puts us on the path to finally fulfilling that promise and restoring as much of that extraordinary ecosystem known as the Everglades as it could be in the way Mother Nature designed it.

I also want to talk about another part of this bill that is extremely important to the State of Florida. People think California has the biggest coastline. Not so; Florida's coastline is much larger. Actually, Alaska's coastline is the longest, but when it comes to a coastline with beaches, almost all of Florida's coastline is beaches. So beach renourishment is exceptionally important to us. It is important to our economy, with all of our tourism that comes to Florida. It is important to our environment. Beach restoration saves lives, mitigates property damage, and it keeps the recovery costs down.

Beach renourishment is one of the reasons I support the bill. I come from a State that has more beaches than any other State, so naturally our beaches are of critical importance to us. It is important not only from an environmental standpoint but also from an economic and tourism standpoint.

There is something known as the lateral drift, which is from north to south. It takes sand off the beach and pushes it south. When we have a cut in the beach—such as an inlet—that goes into a port, it all the more aggravates beach erosion. When the storm comes, watch out, because the beach can completely disappear.

So I strongly oppose any efforts to cut the funding of beach renourishment. This is about protecting our communities from natural disasters. These investments save lives, mitigate property damage, and keep recovery costs down.

For every $1 that is spent on shoreline protection, we see a return of $4. In Florida, we have several coastal communities anxiously waiting for the reauthorization of beach renourishment programs because they are so vulnerable to erosion caused by hurricanes and the rise of the sea level. This is pretty simple for us. We have to protect coastal communities from flooding and storms by adding sand to the beach.

I will continue to try to prevent any kind of cut that we seek. As a matter of fact, we are going to see a Coburn amendment that is going to try to take money out of the beach renourishment. I will urge my colleagues to vote no on that Coburn amendment.

SUSPICIOUS ARRESTS

Before I conclude, I wish to talk about a very disturbing circumstance which occurred about a week ago in the Turks and Caicos.

There was an arrest and jailing of two older American tourists on ammunition charges at the Turks and Caicos Islands Airport. These two Americans were arrested on back-to-back days.

The first person arrested was a 60-year-old businesswoman from Texas, and that was on April 25. The second person arrested was an 80-year-old retired neurosurgeon from Florida, and that was the next day. Both were on vacation in the Turks and Caicos and arrested at the airport. The reason they spent days in jail is because after their luggage was checked—and supposedly examined by the authorities—they found a single bullet in the luggage.

Does that sound suspicious? I found it to be even more suspicious when I heard that both of the American tourists—who were on vacation—have said adamantly that they had no ammunition and, therefore, had no way of putting a bullet in their luggage.

It sounded even more suspicious when I was told that after they were arrested and hauled off to jail, they had to pay $4,000 cash for bail in order to get out of jail and to return home.

The Senator from Texas, Mr. CRUZ, and I sent a letter to the Charge d'Affaires of the U.S. Embassy in the Bahamas—which includes the Turks and Caicos—to ask them to investigate this

matter. We want to know if there have been similar cases this year to make American tourists a target under a similar kind of scheme. We are asking him to examine this so he knows we are very concerned on behalf of our constituents.

In essence, we want to know whether this was a shakedown operation or legitimate. The fact that this happened on two successive days with a single bullet found in the luggage of American tourists gets to be awfully suspicious.

I ask unanimous consent that our letter be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

MAY 9, 2013.

JOHN DINKELMAN, *Chargé d'Affaires, American Embassy Nassau, The Bahamas.*

DEAR MR. DINKELMAN: We are very concerned over the recent arrests of two older U.S. tourists at Providenciales International Airport in the Turks and Caicos Islands, both on charges of carrying ammunition a single bullet.

These two Americans are our constituents. One of them is 80-year-old Horace Norrell of Sarasota, Florida, a retired neurosurgeon who was forced to spend three nights in jail, and then pay $4,000 cash bail to return home.

The other is a Texas businesswoman, Cathy Sulledge Davis, who also had to post $4,000 cash bail.

We understand appropriate local officials have begun an investigation stemming from these arrests.

While we do not seek to interfere in the judicial matter, we ask that you convey to the proper authorities that the investigation needs to be expeditious, thorough, transparent and independent.

We also want to know whether any other Americans have been arrested there on similar charges since January.

Your immediate attention to this matter is greatly appreciated, as is keeping our offices fully apprised of any developments as they occur.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUEST—EXECUTIVE SESSION

Mr. REID. Madam President, this is important. I have a unanimous consent request that we have been working on for a long time.

I ask unanimous consent that at a time to be determined by me, in consultation with Senator MCCONNELL, the Senate proceed to executive session to consider Calendar No. 92; that there be 1 hour of debate equally divided in the usual form; that upon the use or yielding back of that time, the Senate proceed to vote without intervening action or debate on the nomination; that the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate; that no further motions be in order to the nomination; that any statements related to the nomination be printed in the RECORD; that President Obama be immediately notified of the Senate's action and the Senate then resume legislative session.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Mr. UDALL of New Mexico. Madam President, I am reserving my right to object.

I say to the leader, through the Chair, I am on the floor, as is Senator NELSON, to speak to the WRDA bill and to offer two amendments. I ask that I be allowed to do that before we move to executive session so the amendments can be offered.

Mr. REID. Madam President, through the Chair to my friend from New Mexico, I am not managing the bill. However, it is my understanding that there have been objections raised to offering more amendments.

We could get the chair back here or somebody to manage this bill, but that is where we are.

Mr. UDALL of New Mexico. Madam President, I totally respect the leader and the discussion he has had with the chairman. I have tried today to contact the chairman. I have called her. I wanted to talk to her about this issue, and I want to get these amendments in.

I know Leader REID has been encouraging us throughout this debate to wrap this up and try to get amendments in. So I am here to offer my amendments, and I would like to do that.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection to the UC? Without objection, it is so ordered.

The Senator from New Mexico.

Mr. UDALL of New Mexico. Madam President, as you may have noticed a minute or so ago, I had a discussion with the leader, and he was moving to executive session. I have been down here—along with Senator NELSON and other Senators—to try to move the WRDA bill forward. Leader REID said that was the business of the day. We are trying to move this forward, and we are trying to get our amendments in. I hope we can do that and do it in an efficient order.

I am going to speak to both of my amendments. Senator BENNET is here, and I know he has a statement he wants to make on immigration. I ask that the Presiding Officer give me notice when I am in the 5-minute range so I can wrap up and get everything in at that point.

My message is simple on the NEPA and WRDA process. Despite what we hear, environmental reviews protect people, taxpayers, and the environment.

On average, it takes the corps just 2 to 3 years to complete a feasibility study once funding is available. Studies of complex and highly controversial projects may take longer, but these are exactly the projects that require more indepth review.

The administration has warned that the streamlining provisions in S. 601 ''may actually slow project development and do not adequately protect communities, taxpayers, or the environment.''

The real causes of project delays are, No. 1, limited funding; No. 2, poor project planning that does not focus on national priorities or identifying the least possible damaging solution to a water resource problem.

Project studies take the longest when the project developers insist on pushing outdated, damaging, and extremely costly projects instead of adopting low-impact modern solutions that could quickly gain broad-based support.

I have two amendments that go to the heart of making sure we have a good WRDA bill. The first is Udall amendment No. 581. Streamlining is an empty promise if the backlog is not addressed. The corps currently has an estimated backlog of more than 1,000 authorized activities, costing an estimated $60 billion to construct. WRDA 2013 will add to this backlog. It authorizes more than 20 new projects and increases costs by $3.4 billion over the next 5 years.

The plate is full. Cutting corners on environmental reviews will not change that. It will just hurt communities. The plate has been full for over 25 years. Project authorizations far exceed the money to pay for them.

According to the Congressional Research Service, between 1986 and 2010 Congress authorized new corps projects at a rate that significantly exceeded appropriations. In 2010 dollars, the annual rate of authorizations was roughly $3.0 billion and the rate of appropriations for new construction was roughly $1.8 billion.

Completing project studies is not the problem. A newly authorized project will still have to wait. It has to compete for funding with 1,000 other projects already on the books.

This amendment would go directly to that process and solve it.

Udall amendment No. 853 talks about the value of a pilot project. The current environmental review process has been used successfully for decades resulting in better and less damaging projects. It saves taxpayers hundreds of millions of dollars.

There is no evidence that the process proposed in S. 601 would actually speed up project planning, there is no evidence that the process will speed up project construction, and there is absolutely no evidence that the process would produce better projects. It is quite the opposite.

The evidence shows that the streamlining provision will lead to more damaging and more costly projects and will hurt communities, taxpayers, and the environment. The corps does not want Congress to enact these changes. The resource agencies don't want these changes, the environmental community does not want these changes, the legal community does not want these changes, and the public does not want these changes.

Once again, I wish the floor managers were here on this bill. I am here, as Leader REID has requested us to be, to put in amendments. As soon as we get back, I want to bring up these amendments, make them pending, and continue with this procession. I am very discouraged that we can't move forward as our leader has said. This is a bill that is on the floor. The managers need to be here to manage this process. I am here to meet with the leaders and try to move this along.

Thank you.

I will yield to the Senator from Colorado, Mr. BENNET, but I want to say one thing. He has done such great work on immigration. He has been a marvelous Senator ever since he has been here. This Gang of 8 has contributed something that is very important to this country. So I hope everybody listens very carefully to his words because he is giving us very wise advise as to how to proceed.

I yield for the Senator from Colorado, Mr. BENNET.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Colorado.

Mr. BENNET. I ask unanimous consent to speak as in morning business.

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

Mr. BENNET. I wish to thank, through the Chair, the Senator from New Mexico for his kind remarks and for keeping it brief today. I know it is an issue of great importance to him and to his State.

This morning the Senate Judiciary Committee began working on the Border Security Economic Opportunity and Modernization Act, otherwise known as a bill to fix our broken immigration system. As we are here today, they are continuing to work on that bill and I think will work into the night.

Working with this group of 8—I call it a group of 8, not a gang, because Senator MCCAIN doesn't like the term ''Gang of 8,'' so in deference to him I call it the group of 8—has been one of the most rewarding experiences during my time in the Senate. My Senate colleagues in this group include Senators SCHUMER, MCCAIN, DURBIN, GRAHAM, MENENDEZ, RUBIO, and FLAKE. I come to the floor today first to thank them for their leadership and courage to move past the talking points on this issue and to produce this bipartisan product the committee is now considering today.

This is a bill that has been applauded by editorial boards from the Wall Street Journal to the New York Times—two editorial pages that seldom agree on anything. In Colorado, editorial boards from across the State, including the Denver Post, the Colorado Springs Gazette, and Durango Herald, have all praised this bill. It has the support of a wide-ranging and extremely diverse coalition from the left and the right, from business and from labor, rural and urban all across the United States.

All of this is to say the pieces are in place today to actually get something done in this town, in Washington, DC, and in Congress. That is not a small feat for a place where stalemate has become standard operating procedure. I would say we have a golden opportunity to rise above politics as usual, to do something big and something real—something that lasts and endures. We have the chance to pass commonsense, bipartisan legislation that will strengthen our economy and our families, better protect our borders and our communities, and offer a tough but fair path to citizenship for those currently here without any legal status at all. In this way we have the chance to act together to do something great for our Nation and for its future.

It is a cliche—uttered many times in this Chamber, including by me—that America is a Nation of immigrants, and, of course, that is true. But we are so used to saying and hearing that phrase we rarely take the time to act or to think: What does that even mean? There is literally no other country in the world, on this planet, for which immigration is so central to its history and to its identity as the United States of America. All of us in this Chamber—and, more importantly, every family back home we are privileged to represent—can tell us when and how their family came to this country. Did they come in a boat in the 17th century? Did they come by plane in the 20th century? Did they come by foot or by bus, with papers or without? Every one of us has a story.

My family has one of its own that won't surprise my colleagues to know I find pretty interesting. It is also utterly ordinary for this country. When I was in the second grade, my class was given an assignment. We were asked to research whose family had been in America the shortest time and the longest time. So we interviewed our parents and grandparents, we traced our genealogies, and we came up with our answer as a class. The answer was me. My family was the answer to both of these questions—the longest time and the shortest time.

My father's family came over on one of those 17th century boats. For nearly 400 years, the Bennets, in nearly one form or another, have lived in this country. Then there is my mother. She was born in Poland in 1928, while Nazi tanks were massing on the border. She and her parents endured that war in and around Warsaw. They and an aunt were the only members of their family to survive. Everybody else in their family perished at the hands of the Nazis.

They lived in Poland for a couple of years after that, but then by way of Stockholm and Mexico City, my mother and her grandparents arrived in New York City in 1950. She was 12 years old in 1950. As is the case with so many children of immigrants, she was the only one in the family who could speak any English at all. But the three of them were alive, they were free, and they had made it to America.

My mother and grandparents were able to rebuild their lives and succeed here because America welcomed them. It greeted them not with prejudice but with opportunity. They worked hard—extremely hard—to be worthy of that great gift. It was a gift my grandmother, Halina Klejman, who loved this country as deeply as anyone I have ever known, taught me and my brother and my sister never to take for granted.

So my family's history happens to run through both Plymouth and Poland, but it is not so different from the ones millions of Americans tell. Stories such as the town of San Luis, CO. San Luis is Colorado's oldest town, founded in 1851. The town was established by Latino settlers from New Mexico who migrated under a land grant issued by the Mexican Governor in Santa Fe. These immigrants were the pioneers of the Colorado settlement 25 years—25 years—before Colorado officially became a State.

The narratives of how we come here matter because they tell us who we are and where we have been. But they matter just as much for where we are going as a Nation. The future of this country will be determined not just by those of us who are in this Chamber or in this city, or even in this country today. It is going to be written by people who have yet to step foot in the United States of America. Because over our history, it is the refugees fleeing persecution—the parents seeking opportunity for their children—who make America the America we love. They are the ones who keep us fresh and free-thinking and free. They are all of us. They are every single one of us—a nation of immigrants.

Unfortunately, today's immigration policies do not reflect the history or the values that shaped it. Neither do they reflect our 21st century economic needs. Instead, our system is a hodgepodge of outdated, impractical, and convoluted laws. It is a mess of unintended consequences that hurts our businesses and families and keeps America at a competitive disadvantage in an ever-shrinking world.

There is an old Visa slogan—I mean capital V, Visa slogan—that says something like ''Life Takes Visa.'' Well, in the United States, work takes a visa—and our visa system is working against us today. It is stifling growth and making us less competitive. Travel around my home State of Colorado, as I do, and people will see what that looks like. People will meet vegetable growers in Brighton and peach farmers such as Bruce Talbott from Palisade who fear they will not have enough labor to harvest their crops season after season. They are part of Colorado's $40 billion agricultural industry—the lifeblood of our State and so vital to our Nation—yet they have no confidence—and for good reason—that a legal, reliable, and competent workforce will be available for their farms and ranches.

Fifty-seven million tourists visited Colorado in 2011. I don't know whether the Presiding Officer was among them, but we would love to have her back. If people were to talk to our ski resort operators and restaurant owners, they will hear loudly and clearly that we need a program for low-skill workers to come into this country and fill jobs Americans don't want. In cities such as Denver and Boulder a person will find high-skilled immigrants with graduate degrees in science and engineering—the kind who are 3 times more likely to file patents and 30 percent more likely to create new businesses.

In fact, more than 40 percent of the 2010 Fortune 500 companies were founded by immigrants and their children. Forty percent of the largest companies in the United States of America, which once were small companies and grew to become large companies, were created by immigrants. These companies employ more than 3.6 million people in this country and generate more than $4.2 trillion in revenue every single year.

You will also see thousands of foreign students with these highly technical advanced degrees who are being turned away. You will hear them say they have no choice but to go back to India, go back to China, and use whatever they have learned at American universities to compete down the line with American workers.

Students such as Wolfgang Pauli, a German psychology and neurocience Ph.D. student who had attended the University of Colorado-Boulder—Wolfgang was studying under a temporary visa sponsored by his adviser at the University of Colorado, but because of the inflexible nature of our visa system, his adviser wasn't able to keep him for an advanced research project despite his advanced skills and unique experience. The position went unfilled. It is a loss for the project, for innovation, and for Wolfgang.

I have been to India. I have been to Hyderabad. I have seen people sitting in front of computer screens in a room with a clock on the wall that said underneath it ''East Hartford, CT.'' I said to the guy who ran the show there: Why does that clock say East Hartford, CT, on it? He said: Because they are redesigning the engines for Pratt & Whitney in East Hartford. Two shifts a day, by the way, 24 hours a day. They are up when people in East Hartford, CT, are up. I asked: Where were the people sitting at those computers educated? He said: Half were educated in my country, in India, and half were educated in your country. What we know is if they were given the opportunity to stay here and contribute, to build their business, to apply their intellect here, many of them would, but today we are sending them away. This is crazy.

It doesn't end there. Go into our schools all across America, as I did when I was superintendent of the Denver public schools, and you will see kids, meet kids—great kids, hard-working students—enter their junior and senior years, their peers making college visits and considering careers, and you will see what it looks like when those students fully realize, in the starkest and most heart-breaking terms imaginable, what it means to live in a country without legal status; what it means to live in a place they got to through no fault of their own, without legal status.

Many of these young people—inspiring young people such as Octavio Morgan, who graduated third in his class from Bruce Randolph High School in 2011—managed to carve out a future against all odds. But I don't know how we as a Nation can continue to look them in the eye and preach opportunity and social mobility without dealing with their legal status.

You will hear about dangerous border crossings. You will hear about separated families and disrupted dreams. Yes, if we are being honest, you will also hear about jobs that went to new neighbors, and gang violence, and overcrowded schools. You will see, as we study this, and hear and feel a system that hardly qualifies as one. But that is the system we are living in unless we do something about it.

For years, even though Congress has done nothing, immigration has become a poster child for the kind of dysfunctional politics the American people have rejected, but we keep on practicing it. We keep on practicing this dysfunctional set of policies. That is the way it has been in Congress. I hope it is now changing. But thankfully, for a lot of us who are here, that is not what we see back home—not even close.

(Mr. COONS assumed the chair.)

A few years ago, a small group of us in Colorado began working on a set of principles to begin a more pragmatic and productive immigration discussion. Utah launched a similar effort in 2010, so I would like to recognize the leadership of our friends to the west for paving the way.

I was very pleased to take part in my State's effort, along with former Senator Hank Brown—no stranger to some of the people in this Chamber. Senator Brown, a Republican, is one of Colorado's greatest statesmen, with a long record of working across the aisle to get things done.

Over the course of 18 months, we traveled over 6,300 miles in Colorado—which is, by the way, not a hardship; a lot of people fly over oceans to get there to have their vacations, but still, 6,300 miles—and held about 230 meetings in the State. We talked to farmers and business owners, law enforcement officials and educators, faith leaders and Latino leaders, and all are struggling with different broken pieces of our immigration system. But we found far more agreement on what immigration reform should mean and what it ought to look like than you would ever think was possible if you listened to the politicians here in Washington or the pundits on TV.

Together, we developed a commonsense blueprint called the Colorado Compact. It puts its emphasis on a strong economy and strong national security; it cares for families while keeping our citizens safe. I am glad we developed these principles, and I am glad it was done in such a bipartisan way, in rural parts of the State as well as urban and suburban parts of the State, and that we had such a broad coalition of people, including my former opponent for this very seat, whom we assembled in support of it.

One of the things we all agreed on was that, as promising as efforts like this are—the effort in Colorado, the effort in Utah—this issue needs more than piecemeal reforms. No State's effort can be a substitute for a smart, sensible, national strategy to overhaul our immigration system, and with this new Senate proposal, that is exactly what we have.

The bipartisan Senate bill we have introduced addresses each of the issues we mentioned in the compact, and it does so in a way that is reasonable, that is compassionate and respects the rule of law. It recognizes that we must take concrete steps to further secure our borders.

We are building on steps already taken. Since 2004, the United States has doubled the border patrol. We have tripled the number of intelligence analysts working at the border. We are seizing a higher volume of contraband weapons, currency, and drugs, and net migration from Mexico is at its lowest level in decades.

Our bill would make substantial further investments at the border, including new fencing and technologies—motion sensors, virtual monitoring systems, inexpensive surveillance, and other innovative approaches—that enable us to secure the border more cheaply, more effectively, and with a smaller footprint.

However, there is still more we can do. With 40 percent of illegal immigration due to visa overstays, we need to ensure a better system for tracking people who come to our shores, who enter and exit our borders, which is why our bill provides for a stronger and more comprehensive entry/exit system.

This is a very interesting point that a lot of people do not know. Forty percent of the 11 million people who are here who are undocumented entered the country lawfully on a visa. We have a system to check them on the way in, but we do not have a system today to check whether they ever left. This is one of the ways, by the way, that the bill will prevent our finding ourselves back where we are today to begin with.

We need to secure opportunity, also, for those who are already in this country. Our bill provides a fair but tough pathway for many of the Nation's 11 million undocumented immigrants, especially young people whose parents brought them here as children, just like my mother was, in search of a better life. Those here without status

today would be required to undergo a background check, pay a $2,000 fine, pay all of their back taxes. They would have to go to the back of the line, which is what both parties have said for years, behind those who have gone through the proper process to immigrate. That is only fair and it is only right.

This is not just a humane thing to do, but it is sound economic policy. Conservative economist Doug Holtz-Eakin estimates that immigration reform will generate $2.7 trillion in deficit reduction and help grow the economy. Some estimates have said this bill would grow the economy by more than a percentage point of GDP. It is $1 trillion or so over a 10-year period. A path to citizenship would lead to higher wages in this country, more consumption of goods, and increased revenue.

Our bill proposes a more coordinated effort across Federal, State, and local governments, in partnership with private organizations, to help new immigrants and refugees integrate into their communities. Our immigration title, which was influenced by cities such as Littleton and Greeley, CO, would help provide immigrants with greater access to English language classes and civics education and help us cultivate stronger citizens with a greater appreciation for our Nation and her history.

With a broken immigration system hurting our businesses and workers as well, we propose an efficient, sensible, and flexible visa system that would be more aligned with our changing 21st-century economy.

As I mentioned earlier, roughly 40 percent of Fortune 500 companies were founded by immigrants. We want an immigration system that harnesses the world's innovation and talent here in the United States of America.

There is no place where this is truer than the State of Colorado, where 1 in 10 entrepreneurs is an immigrant. Colorado has a high-tech sector that includes more than 10,000 companies and 150,000 workers who produce almost $3 billion worth of exports each year—$3 billion worth of exports each year—as well as a new patent office opening soon.

We want the next Facebook or iPhone or clean energy technology and breakthrough medical device to be built in our State or at least in America. That is why we create a new INVEST visa for foreign entrepreneurs who want to start new businesses here in the United States. A new category of visas proposed in our bill provides this investment opportunity. Immigrant entrepreneurs who have launched successful startups could stay or come and continue to create jobs and fuel our economy if they can show they have been backed financially.

We make it easier for foreign students who graduate with advanced degrees in STEM fields to get a green card—I know this has been of great interest to the Presiding Officer—and increase the number of H–1B visas. This will help us attract and retain highly skilled and educated talent to fill labor shortages in some of our fastest growing industries, including bioscience and computer engineering.

Our bill also creates a new—this is a lot to take in, I know, Mr. President, and I hope people will have the chance to study this. This is why I am so glad we took the time we did to negotiate this bill with the eight of us, but now it is going through the committee on which the Presiding Officer serves, the Judiciary Committee, to have hearings, to have a markup, to have everybody have their chance to offer—I think when I last heard, there were more than 300 amendments to the bill—to offer those amendments and then to get it to the floor where we can debate it. There is going to be time to do all this work, and this requires time to understand it.

Our bill creates a new W visa, a program for lesser skilled workers to come into the country. This, in addition to several other reforms that are made throughout our bill, will ensure that we can continue to fill our labor needs in sectors such as hospitality and our vibrant ski industry, which hosts 56.5 million visitors every year.

There was complete agreement among Democrats and Republicans who were meeting in this group that our visa system must protect American workers and prevent exploitation, such as requiring efforts, first, to recruit American workers. It also must be paired with a reliable, cost-effective employment verification system that prevents identity fraud, protects our civil liberties, and is critical to stopping future illegal immigration.

That is one of the key objectives of this legislation. We do not want to end up right where we are today, with 11 million undocumented people, and we have put the systems in place—including, very importantly, this employment verification system—to deal with that. We have had broad bipartisan support on this part for many years in this Congress, and it is now part of our legislation.

This all has to come with a determination to crack down on employers who knowingly hire illegal workers. Simply put, if we want to reduce illegal immigration, we need to make legal immigration a much more straightforward process in this country. That is one of the reasons I was glad to take part in the agriculture negotiations around this bill under the leadership of Senator FEINSTEIN and with Senator RUBIO and Senator HATCH. This bill alone is going to stabilize our agricultural workforce for years to come and is critical to protecting and growing our agricultural economy, which has a $40 billion economic impact in Colorado.

This bill provides a faster path to citizenship for agricultural workers to be able to do the important work of producing our Nation's food and fiber and, increasingly, our energy. It also creates a new streamlined program for agricultural guest workers that is more usable for employers while maintaining critical worker protections.

It is the first time we have had an ag jobs title of this bill that is endorsed by both the farm workers and the Farm Bureau. I thank them for taking part in these negotiations and for the willingness of both sides to give a little up for the greater good. Their example is one we should embrace as we go forward on this bill.

As I said earlier, I feel the same way about the bipartisan colleagues who worked on this bill. In crafting this bill, we all had to give a little—just a little—to get a lot. Each of us had to come to the table with our diverse perspective, representing different constituencies. We each would have written certain pieces differently were we left to our own devices, but this type of compromise needs to happen if you are crafting a bipartisan and complex bill to fix the immigration system in a country of 300 million people.

Every single member of the group was committed to working together to accomplish that goal. In particular, I wish to again thank Senators SCHUMER and MCCAIN especially for driving this process forward. As the committee begins its important work, I would like to acknowledge the work and leadership of Chairman LEAHY to see it through.

In the spirit of our partnership, I think it is important to remind ourselves, on an issue where emotions can run so high and so hot, that all of us are trying to do right by the American people, as each one of us sees it.

Every proposed path to citizenship is not amnesty, and this proposed path to citizenship is not amnesty. And every opponent of these reforms is not anti-immigrant. We need to do more to secure our borders, but we do not need to treat people trapped in a failed system as criminals.

These changes will be difficult. It is understandable that people worry about what this is going to mean for their jobs, their schools, their businesses. But if we just apply a very basic test—is it smart and it is right—then I am confident we can find common ground and move forward.

I would like to close with one last reflection on my own grandparents' experience. On my first birthday, which was November 28, 1965, my grandparents gave me a birthday card and sent me a gift. In that card, they wrote:

> The ancient Greeks gave the world the high ideals of democracy in search of which your dear Mother and we came—

They wrote this in English, by the way. Remember, when they came to this country, they spoke none.

> The ancient Greeks gave the world the high ideals of democracy in search of which your dear Mother and we came to the hospitable shores of beautiful America in 1950. We have been happy here ever since, beyond

our greatest dreams and expectations, with Democracy, Freedom and Love and humanity's greatest treasures.

They continued:

We hope that when you grow up, you will [have a chance to help] to develop in other parts of the world a greater understanding of these American values.

Democracy and freedom and love, in my grandparents' view: humanity's greatest treasures, and they called them American values.

This is a lesson my wife Susan and I are now trying to teach our three little girls. Opportunity is indeed a precious gift this country will give each generation, asking only that they in turn not squander that inheritance but increase it and pass it along to the next. That is our responsibility as we consider this piece of legislation, and for that matter any other.

If history is any guide, someone waiting in line for a visa at this moment or someone waiting to enter what my grandparents called ''beautiful America'' will go on to become a brilliant artist or a talented surgeon or a pathbreaking businessperson. Someone whose father picked grapes will grow up to found the next Apple. Someone operating a ski lift at Vail is going to be the parent or grandparent of a President or, God help us, of a Senator. That person will stand in our shoes a generation from now, and they will know whether we had the courage to do what was smart and what was right and what was hard.

Now is not the time to pat each other on the back. We have a long way to go, as the Presiding Officer knows. But what we do have is some momentum—I think a lot of momentum—and a balanced reasonable piece of legislation. There are going to be some difficult discussions and challenges ahead. There is no doubt about that. But what I know is if we use the efforts and insights of the Colorado Compact as a guide, we will arrive at that shared, sensible middle ground. We will pass legislation that is worthy of the great hope of my grandparents and the future generations in this country.

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

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

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

POSTAL REFORM

Mr. SANDERS. Mr. President, I rise today to say a few words about an issue I think does not get enough discussion in the Senate but is of great concern to the American people in general; that is, the need for Congress to pass comprehensive Postal Service reform as soon as possible.

The Postal Service is of enormous importance to tens of millions of people, people in rural States like Maine or Vermont, to businesses all over this country, not to mention the hundreds of thousands of employees who serve us so well in the Postal Service.

About 2 years ago, the Postmaster General of the United States came up with a plan for the Postal Service that would have—let me just tell you and the American people what it would have done. It would have eliminated about 220,000 Postal Service jobs, including the jobs of many American veterans. It would have closed about 15,000 post offices throughout the country, many of them in rural areas like the State of Vermont. It would have eliminated half of the mail processing plants in this country. It would have substantially slowed down the delivery of mail by eliminating overnight delivery for first class mail. It would have ended Saturday mail delivery.

Many of us in the Senate and in the House thought that plan was a disaster for our country, for our economy, and for American workers. We all organized and fought back against that plan. The goal was to convince the Postmaster General to substantially revise the ideas that he had brought forth.

Instead of closing down 15,000 post offices, the Postal Service, in fact, came up with a plan to reduce the hours of service at about 13,000 post offices throughout the country, and many in the State of Vermont. Was I happy with that? No, to be frank with you. Was it better to see a reduction of 2 hours or 4 hours than seeing the entire rural post office shut down? It was.

Instead of closing down half of the mail processing plants in this country, the Postal Service decided they would keep about 100 of the mail sorting centers that were originally on the chopping block open. In other words, they did shut down some but not nearly as many as they had intended to shut down.

Instead of ending overnight delivery standards, the Postal Service has adopted a plan to keep overnight delivery going, although not as strong as it previously was. Although it took an act of Congress through the appropriations process, the Postal Service, for the time being at least, has decided to obey the law of the land and not eliminate Saturday mail delivery.

Last year, the Senate passed a comprehensive postal reform bill. That did not go as far as I would have liked, but it was certainly a substantial improvement over what the Postmaster General had proposed. We won that vote with 62 or 63 votes. There was bipartisan support for it.

Unfortunately, the House of Representatives failed to even schedule a vote on the floor of the House for any postal reform bill. As a result nothing was signed into law last Congress, forcing us to start this process all over again.

What I fear the most is that all of the work the Senate did last Congress—and the committee of jurisdiction worked hard on it. Some of us put together an ad hoc committee of 15, 16 Members of the Senate who worked hard on that issue. But I fear very much that all of that work to save the Postal Service will go for naught if Congress does not get its act together and pass a comprehensive postal reform bill as soon as possible.

In my view the time has come to send a very loud and clear message to the leadership of the House, the leadership of the Senate, the Postmaster General of the United States, and the President of the United States; that is, in the midst of this terrible recession which has significantly impacted the middle class and working families of our country, it is imperative that we do not destroy thousands and thousands of decent-paying, middle-class jobs, including the jobs of many veterans. That is what happens when you make the kinds of cuts the Postmaster General has been talking about. In the midst of this terrible recession, it is important that we do not harm small businesses that depend upon the Postal Service to sell their products.

Just yesterday I met with some businesses in the State of Vermont for whom it is enormously important that they know there is a strong Postal Service that can provide rapid delivery of the packages they produce. It is terribly important that as we talk about postal reform, we understand many senior citizens depend upon the post office for their prescription drugs.

It is also important, again, for the economy, that we not slow down the delivery of mail, that we do not close half of the mail processing plants in this country.

Here is the important point: There is no question that the Postal Service has financial problems. Nobody disagrees with that. I think many people do not understand the basic causes of the Postal Service's financial problems; that is, the Postal Service today is in terrible financial shape because of a congressional mandate signed into law by President Bush in December 2006, forcing the Postal Service to prefund 75 years of future retiree health benefits over a 10-year period.

Let me repeat that. The Postal Service, as a result of a decision in 2006, is forced to prefund 75 years—75 years—of future retiree health benefits over a 10-year period. Clearly, no other government agency at the Federal level, State level, or local level comes anywhere close to that kind of onerous burden. In fact, to the best of my knowledge, no private sector corporation in this country is burdened with a mandate anywhere near that extreme.

This prefunding mandate is responsible for about 80 percent of the Postal Service's financial losses since 2007. Let me repeat that. You are going to read often, and we read often, the Postal Service is facing severe financial problems. Let me repeat: This prefunding mandate is responsible for about 80 percent of the Postal Service's financial losses since 2007.

Before this prefunding mandate was signed into law, the Postal Service was making a profit. In fact, from 2003 to 2006, the Postal Service made a combined profit of more than $9 billion. That is a significant profit.

I should also note that despite what we read in the media, the Postal Service actually made a profit of $100 million during the last quarter sorting, processing, and delivering the mail. If we are serious about dealing with the financial problems facing the Postal Service, the first thing we have to do is end this prefunding mandate once and for all and allow the Postal Service to use the $48 billion sitting in that future retiree health fund to keep the Postal Service healthy and thriving for years to come.

When we talk about the financial problems facing the Postal Service, we have to understand that to a very significant degree some 80 percent of the problem was caused by the Congress as a result of a decision made in 2006. It is clear to me, and I think to all Americans, that we live in the year 2013. The world is changing. We are becoming more and more a digital economy, but it is also clear to me that the Postal Service does not survive by cutting back on its services to the American people and to the business community.

In order to save and strengthen the Postal Service, I have introduced the Postal Service Protection Act, S. 316. I am very proud to say that bill now has 23 cosponsors.

Let me thank all of the Senators who are cosponsoring this bill: Senators BAUCUS, BLUMENTHAL, BROWN, CASEY, COWAN, FRANKEN, GILLIBRAND, HARKIN, HEINRICH, LAUTENBERG, LEAHY, LEVIN, MANCHIN, MENENDEZ, MERKLEY, SCHATZ, STABENOW, TESTER, TOM UDALL, WARREN, and WYDEN.

Mr. President, I would ask that Senator CARDIN be added as a cosponsor to S. 316.

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

Mr. SANDERS. I am delighted that we are making progress on real postal reform not only in the Senate but in the House as well. I thank Congressman PETER DEFAZIO from Oregon for his leadership efforts in cosponsoring the exact same bill in the House as we have in the Senate, and that now has 139 cosponsors.

We have 24 cosponsors now in the Senate, and in the House that bill has 139 cosponsors, which tells me the American people and their representatives in Washington understand how terribly important it is that we pass serious postal reform.

Let me very briefly talk about what is in that legislation, what the legislation, if passed, would accomplish. That bill would reestablish strong overnight delivery standards to ensure the timely delivery of mail. When people put a letter or a package in a mailbox or go to the post office, they want to know that letter or package is going to be delivered in a timely manner, and we do that.

In order to make sure we do have timely mail delivery, this legislation would prevent the closure of hundreds of mail processing plants throughout this country and save the jobs of tens of thousands of workers. This legislation would end, once and for all, as I just mentioned, the disastrous prefunding mandate that is the major problem facing the Postal Service.

This legislation would allow the Postal Service to recoup over $50 billion it has overpaid into the Civil Service Retirement System. This legislation would prevent the Postal Service from ending Saturday mail delivery. Further, and significantly, our bill would give the Postal Service the tools it needs to compete in the 21st century.

I understand, we all understand, the world has changed. It is not simply a question of finances, it is a question of giving the Postal Service the ability to compete in today's market and to allow it to sell innovative new products, new services, and, as a result, raise more revenue. We need a new vision for the Postal Service. This legislation would provide that vision.

Many Americans don't notice, but right now Federal law is tying the hands of the Postal Service in terms of the products and services it can provide. We say to the Postal Service that we are upset they are not making enough revenue, and yet we tie their hands and prevent them from going forth in producing new products and services to raise the revenue that would help their bottom line.

This legislation unties the hands of the Postal Service and would develop a process to allow the Postal Service to explore offering the best products and services that would raise the most revenue.

Let me just give an example of some of the absurdities under which the Postal Service is now operating.

If you were to go into a post office in Maine with a document and say to the clerk who is waiting on you: Listen, I need you to notarize this letter, the clerk would tell you: Sorry, it is against the law for me to notarize that letter. Now, that is pretty absurd.

If you were to walk into a post office, as I am sure everyday people do, and say: Listen, I need you to give me 10 copies of this document because I have to send it out to 10 different people, they would say: Sorry, it is against the law of the United States of America for me to make 10 copies, 3 copies, or 1 copy of your document.

Furthermore, it is against the law for post offices to sell fishing or hunting licenses. Well, in my State, we are a rural State. People might, in certain parts of the State or other parts of America, like to be able to walk into a post office and say: Hey, how do I get a fishing license? How do I pick up a hunting license?

It is against the law right now. If somebody has a check that needs to be cashed, it is very difficult to cash that check in a post office.

What you see, by the way, all over America are payday lenders who are charging outrageous rates to low-income people to cash a check, a service I suspect the Postal Service could do to make some money and also save people a whole lot of money by not having to pay these outrageous rates.

If you were to pick up a case of beer or a case of wine and you wanted to send it to a relative in California, it is against the law for the Postal Service to deliver wine or beer. Currently, it is against the law for the United States Postal Service to engage in e-commerce activities.

We say to the Postal Service: We want you to go out and we want you to be competitive. By the way, you can't do this and you can't do that. On top of that, we are going to cause a massive financial problem for you demanding that you prefund 75 years of retiree health care in a 10-year period. Good luck. Well, that has a lot to do with why the Postal Service is facing the serious financial problems it is today.

We have to give the Postal Service a lot more flexibility, and we have to give them the opportunity and the ability to develop a very different business model than it currently has. In my view, we need to give the Postal Service the authority to do what other countries throughout the world are doing to respond to the shift toward electronic mail and away from hard copy mail. Fewer and fewer people are using first class mail. We understand that. They are using e-mail. That is the reality and we have to respond to that.

Let me give a few of them, really just a few, of what other postal services around the world are doing.

In Sweden, the post office will physically deliver e-mail correspondence to people who are not online or don't have access to a computer. Could that work here? I don't know. It is an interesting idea.

In Switzerland, people can have their physical mail received, scanned, and delivered into their e-mail boxes by the postal service.

In Germany, the post office will allow customers to communicate through secure service.

I think people are increasingly and legitimately concerned about who is going to get into their e-mail. In Germany they provide secure services. Could that work here in the United States? I don't know. Is it worth exploring, worth looking into? I think it is.

The point is that the Postal Service must be given the opportunity to innovate and implement an expanded business strategy for a changing world. We can't keep doing the same old-same old in a world that is changing.

For over 230 years, and enshrined in our Constitution, the Postal Service has played an enormously important role for the people of our country and, in fact, for our entire economy. A strong Postal Service, a Postal Service

that delivers mail and packages in a timely manner, is extremely important for our economy.

That mission remains as important as it has ever been. Let's stand together and fight to save the Postal Service, not destroy it. Let's stand together in the midst of this recession to fight and save hundreds of thousands of jobs.

I again want to thank the 23 cosponsors on my legislation. I look forward to having more, but let's go forward together to save the Postal Service.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceed to call the roll.

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

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, this afternoon we have been trying to move forward on the WRDA bill—the Water Resources Development Act—and significant progress has been made. One of the issues we are trying to work out is an issue dealing with Senator LANDRIEU. She has been, more than anyone else in the Senate, concerned about what happens when places flood, and she has every reason to feel this way because of what happens in Louisiana with flooding. She is concerned about flood insurance.

I have worked with Senator BOXER, Senator BOXER's staff, I have worked with the Republicans, and it appears to me this is something that has made great progress today. The staff is going to work on this over the weekend. We will be here on Monday. I will file cloture in a few minutes, but if, in fact, cloture doesn't need to be voted on, we can always move forward without doing that. We can vitiate the cloture vote.

So I hope the good work done by Senator LANDRIEU, her staff, and other staff members here—and Senator LANDRIEU has been here, as she is now. I don't mean this in a negative sense, but she is like a bulldog. Whenever she gets hold of something, it is hard to get her to loosen that jaw. She has been here all afternoon working on this, so I hope something can be worked out during the next 48 hours on this matter.

CLOTURE MOTION

I have a cloture motion at the desk.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The cloture motion having been presented under rule XXII, the Chair directs the clerk to read the motion.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, hereby move to bring to a close debate on S. 601, a bill to provide for the conservation and development of water and related resources, to authorize the Secretary of the Army to construct various projects for improvements to rivers and harbors of the United States, and for other purposes.

Harry Reid, Barbara Boxer, Tom Udall, Richard Blumenthal, Max Baucus, Bill Nelson, Jeanne Shaheen, Tom Harkin, Al Franken, Kirsten E. Gillibrand, Brian Schatz, Thomas R. Carper, Jeff Merkley, Jon Tester, Patty Murray, Sherrod Brown, Robert P. Casey, Jr., Ron Wyden.

Mr. REID. I ask unanimous consent that the mandatory quorum required under rule XXII be waived and that the vote on the motion to invoke cloture on S. 601 occur at 12 noon on Tuesday, May 14.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Is there objection? Without objection, it is so ordered.

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. REID. I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to a period of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

REMEMBERING FALLEN FIREFIGHTER GENE M. KIRCHNER

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. President, I rise today with sadness in my heart to pay tribute to a very special individual, Gene M. Kirchner, a Baltimore County volunteer firefighter who died in the line of duty. Gene was just 25 and a volunteer firefighter for the Reisterstown Volunteer Fire Department. He rushed to the second floor of a house fire on April 24 in a vain attempt to save the resident. Gene was found unconscious and was rushed to Maryland's Shock Trauma Center, but succumbed to his injuries on May 2.

Gene joined the company's ranks when he was just 14 and served as a junior firefighter for 2 years before becoming a volunteer firefighter. He came from a family of firefighters. His twin brother Will is also a firefighter and so is his sister Shelly Brezicki. Craig Hewitt, assistant chief of the fire company, said that Gene ''was selfless, well-liked, funny; got along with everybody. He liked helping people.''

Gene was laid to rest this past Sunday and the entire Baltimore community is mourning the death of this kind, gentle young man who laid down his life in an attempt to save another's life. His brother and sister firefighters came from as far away as New York and North Carolina to pay special tribute to this young man who understood the risks he faced, but dedicated himself to helping ensure the safety of others. Gene was posthumously awarded the Fire Department's Medal of Honor because he embodied what we, as a Nation, come to look for in our first responders—courage, selflessness, and dedication to duty.

I know my U.S. Senate colleagues will want to join me in thanking Gene's family for giving our community such a special young man and in sending condolences to his family, friends, and fellow firefighters on the tragic loss of such a hero.

TRIBUTE TO MAYOR JOHN A. SPRING

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I want to take a moment today to thank a friend and a remarkable public servant. John Spring ended his second term as mayor of Quincy, IL, earlier this week.

Mayor Spring led Quincy through some of its most difficult times in recent memory. Under his leadership, Quincy weathered record floods and the Great Recession. Not only did Quincy survive these crises, the city actually came out stronger than before.

Any elected official would be proud of that record. It is even more impressive in Mayor Spring's case because he was a political rookie. He had never won public office before the people of Quincy elected him mayor in 2005. His only previous public service experience was a stint as the appointed chairman of Quincy's Police and Fire Commission.

For many of us, it takes a few tries before we actually win a race. But John is a natural. He won his first election.

Quincy, IL, is a river town. It sits right on the banks of the Mississippi River. At one point this past winter the river was so low that barge traffic was in danger of being halted.

During Mayor Spring's final weeks in office, however, heavy rains swelled the river to flood stage. When flooding threatened the city's water and wastewater treatment facilities, Mayor Spring and his team immediately put into place emergency procedures they had honed during previous floods. With leadership, hard work and a lot of sandbags, Quincy weathered the storm.

In 2008, during an earlier flood, then-Senator Barack Obama and I visited Quincy to lend support. We were inspired to see how the entire city came together to protect their homes and their neighbors' homes and businesses.

In 2010, Mayor Spring was able to welcome President Obama back to Quincy and show him how Quincy had weathered not only rainstorms, but the economic storm caused by the Great Recession.

Mr. President, the unemployment rate today in Quincy and Adams County is 6.6 percent. That rate is among the lowest in the State of Illinois, and that is no accident. Under Mayor John Spring's leadership, Quincy has continued to be the economic engine of the Tri-State area.

John Spring led the effort to lay a solid foundation for economic growth. He balanced the city's budget every year and didn't raise taxes—not even once. In fact, Quincy reduced its property tax rate in 7 out of Mayor Spring's 8 years in office.

He made tough, smart decisions that enabled Quincy to maintain adequate

funding for basic services such as police, fire, and streets. He downsized city government, reducing the workforce by more than 12 percent, implemented an early retirement program that is estimated will save the City more than $5 million, and built up the City's reserve funds.

He worked aggressively to retain and attract businesses and good jobs, and he made transportation a top priority. Amtrak expanded service between Quincy and Chicago after Mayor Spring and others advocated for more downstate Illinois passenger rail. Cape Air, a partner of American Airlines/American Eagle, expanded its Quincy-St. Louis service, recently crossing the 10,000-passenger mark. Mayor Spring also worked with Cape Air CEO Dan Wolf and regional economic development leaders to open a maintenance facility at the airport, creating a number of good-paying local jobs.

John Spring had big shoes to fill in 2005. His predecessor, Mayor Chuck Scholz, served as Quincy's mayor for 12 years and left a record of success. John Spring built on that record. Chuck Scholz helped bring Quincy into the 21st century, and John Spring positioned Quincy even more firmly to compete and win in this century's global economy.

I mentioned that Mayor Spring was a political rookie. He spent most of his career—nearly 30 years—as a teacher, counselor and coach at Quincy Notre Dame High School. In his final post at the school, as director of the Quincy Notre Dame Foundation, he was instrumental in the survival of this Catholic high school which is so important to Quincy.

Mayor Spring has been active in many other community organizations and efforts, from the Salvation Army to the Abraham Lincoln Bicentennial and exchanges with Quincy's Sister City, Herford, Germany.

In January 2010, John Spring called a press conference at which he announced with his typical honesty and humility that he had prostate cancer. He recalled that when he ran for mayor he had pledged that serving the city of Quincy was his highest priority and he said that nothing, not even cancer, would keep him from serving the city he loved. He began a 9-week course of radiation treatments—about 15 minutes every weekday morning—and reported to City Hall for work after every session

I am happy to report that John's health is good and that he more than lived up to his pledge of putting the people of Quincy first.

Quincy's nickname is Gem City. In John Spring, they have had a gem of a mayor. I will miss working with Mayor Spring, but I know that he has earned a break from public service. I wish John and his wife Karen and their children and grandchildren all the best. And I would simply say to them: Thank you for lending the city of Quincy your husband, father, and grandfather. He has made Quincy's future much brighter. His energy, dedication, and effective leadership will be missed at City Hall and by all of us who worked with him.

KOREA'S REGIONAL PEACE AND SECURITY

Mr. CARDIN. I thank Republic of Korea, ROK, President Park Geun-hye for her thought-provoking and heartfelt address on May 8 to a joint meeting of Congress. President Park is a testament to her nation's resilience. Like her country, she has courageously weathered difficulties and emerged as a strong leader on the global stage—her nation's first woman President.

Her momentous visit to the United States came at an opportune time to underscore the solidarity and cooperation between our two countries. Our deep ties with the Korean people stretch back to Korea's Chosun Dynasty, when we established diplomatic relations in 1882. One hundred and thirty-one years later, we are expanding our relationship in new ways.

This year we celebrate 60 years of the U.S.-ROK alliance, established in 1953 by our Mutual Defense Treaty. In Korean culture, which greatly respects its elders, the 60th birthday of a person's life, called a ''hwan-gap,'' holds great significance. It acknowledges the wisdom and maturity that a person attains by the peak of a productive life.

And so, too, has the U.S.–Korea relationship proven fruitful and productive. Our relationship is more than a military alliance; it is a comprehensive partnership. Our people-to-people ties are strong; per capita, South Korea sends more students to the United States to study than any other industrialized country. We cooperate on counterterrorism efforts and on development assistance. One year ago, we demonstrated our commitment to strengthen our economies with the signing of our free trade agreement.

South Koreans have created an economic ''Miracle on the Han River'' out of a country once leveled by war. The country has risen from being an aid recipient to becoming a world economic power, which now lends a hand to help other nations flourish.

The Republic of Korea had a GDP per capita of $79 in 1960; today its GDP per capita is over $30,000. It is one of the fastest growing developed countries in the world. And we are proud to have played a role in helping our friend climb from poverty to prosperity, in contrast to its northern neighbor, whose people continue to suffer greatly from poverty.

So there is much to celebrate during this 60th year of our alliance. And President Park has attested to the strength of the enduring global alliance between the Republic of Korea and the United States. This is an historic anniversary, not only of our friendship, but of the end of the Korean war.

Since the end of the war, the Republic of Korea has practiced restraint and mature diplomacy in the face of tremendous threats, continued bellicose rhetoric, and provocative actions from North Korea. This is in no small part due to the strength of the U.S.-ROK alliance and our close cooperation.

As President Park has demonstrated in her determined but flexible approach, we need to preserve stability on the Korean peninsula and in the region by acting decisively together to address both North Korea's provocations and the dire humanitarian situation there.

North Korea continues to threaten U.S. interests and the security of our friends and allies. As chairman of the Foreign Relations Subcommittee on East Asian and Pacific Affairs, I have been closely watching the alarming developments following North Korea's February 12 nuclear test, including its declaration that it nullified the 1953 armistice, and its decision to shut down the Kaesong industrial complex, and its repeated threats to strike the United States and our allies. And I am deeply concerned about American citizen Kenneth Bae, who last week was sentenced to 15 years of hard labor in a North Korea gulag for ''hostile acts'' against the country and Kim Jong-Un's regime.

We must do more to reach an international solution on bringing North Korea back into the denuclearization process. It is essential to ensure the continued safety of Americans and our allies in the Asia-Pacific region and to prevent a nuclear arms race in the strategically critical Korean peninsula.

And we must not forget the humanitarian crisis that is besieging the North Korean people, as they are often imprisoned, starved, and deprived of civil liberties and freedoms at the hands of a ruthless authoritarian state.

So what more can we do? This March, the Senate Foreign Relations Committee held a hearing on North Korea which underscored the importance of working with the United Nations Security Council to strengthen sanctions on North Korea. The United States has intensified coordination on addressing the North Korean threat with Japan and developed a new counter-provocation plan with the Republic of Korea. In April, I chaired a Subcommittee on East Asian and Pacific Affairs hearing during which we discussed ways to work with China to help change North Korea's dangerous path.

I was pleased to see Secretary Kerry, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs, General Dempsey, and Deputy Secretary Burns travel to China to seek China's help to rein in North Korea. And I welcomed the recent visit of the Chinese chairman of the six-party talks, Wu Dawei, to Washington.

It was encouraging to see China strongly support UN Security Council Resolution 2094. This resolution imposes tough new financial sanctions which will block North Korea from

moving money to pay for its nuclear and ballistic missile programs and makes arms smuggling and proliferation more difficult. The sanctions will only be successful if all countries rigorously implement and enforce them.

The international community, including the U.S., must sustain sanctions and continue systematic pressure. We hope that China will be sincere in implementing these sanctions and reduce its economic support of North Korea.

New sanctions alone, however, cannot halt the pattern of North Korean provocations and broken promises. The United States will not reward bad behavior. We must use all of the diplomatic, military, financial, and multilateral tools at our disposal in a newly coordinated effort to move beyond the current stalemate.

Along with Senators MENENDEZ, CORKER, and others, I have cosponsored the North Korea Nonproliferation and Accountability Act of 2013, which would direct the Department of State to undertake a comprehensive review of our North Korea policy to look for creative ways to re-engage. If North Korea shows a serious intent to denuclearize, halt its proliferation activities and improve human rights, we should be open to bilateral talks, as Secretary Kerry stated on his April trip to the region. We must continue to prepare for the worst while hoping for the best. We stand by Japan, South Korea, and other allies in providing extended nuclear deterrence under our ''nuclear umbrella.'' And the international community stands with us in condemning North Korean aggression and belligerent actions.

At the same time, we should separate humanitarian concerns from politics. New ROK President Park Geun-hye has launched a policy of de-linking humanitarian aid to North Korea from diplomatic developments. Previously, the U.S. has done the same, funding food aid to North Korea from 2008 to 2009. We should consider reinstating such food aid to North Korea based on demonstrated need and our ability to verify that the food will reach the intended recipients. Congress and the administration must track the delivery of aid to make sure it reaches the people who so desperately need it.

American development workers now provide humanitarian assistance in North Korea without U.S. Government assistance, giving North Koreans an opportunity to encounter the goodwill of the American people. In June 2012, a United Nations evaluation team confirmed that over 60 percent of the population continues to suffer from chronic food insecurity. Hungry people can focus only on survival and have no additional energy to direct toward bettering their lives or changing the environment or regime around them. So we must extend our hand to the North Korean people by supporting the NGO community's basic humanitarian efforts to provide lifesaving services such as supplemental school feeding, increased agricultural production, clean water, and medical assistance programs.

The humanitarian crisis is further compounded by gross human rights violations. People are trying to cross the border in search of food and then being imprisoned in forced labor camps when they are caught leaving the country. Reports indicate that approximately 138,000 people were being held in detention centers in 2011, where they are beaten, tortured, and starved. These human rights violations merit international condemnation and accountability. I urge UN High Commissioner for Human Rights Pillay and Special Rapporteur Darusman to establish a mechanism of inquiry through the UN Human Rights Council to document these egregious human rights violations expeditiously.

I have great concerns about North Korea's political trajectory, but I believe that a broader humanitarian engagement holds a long-term promise of enhancing regional peace and security. President Park Geun-hye has taken a similar approach. I applaud her tremendous courage and welcome her visit on this historic occasion.

MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS MONTH

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. President, May is Mental Health Awareness Month. The Mental Health America organization began this campaign in 1949 in an effort to raise awareness of mental health conditions and mental wellness. Even after more than 60 years, however, we are still fighting against the stigma of mental illness and for greater access to mental health services for all Americans.

I would like to call particular attention to mental health issues affecting our Active-Duty service men and women, our veterans, and the impact of these issues on thousands of military families.

The protracted military operations in Afghanistan and Iraq have made mental health disorders some of the ''signature'' wounds our military members experience upon returning from these conflicts. A comprehensive study by RAND found that approximately 18.5 percent of those returning from deployment reported symptoms consistent with a diagnosis of post-traumatic stress disorder, PTSD, or depression. And up to 30 percent of troops returning home from combat develop serious mental health problems within 3 to 4 months. Unfortunately, due to the stigma associated with seeking help and the fear of risking their careers, our service men and women often do not seek the care they desperately need and are entitled to receive.

In fact, according to a recent Department of Defense, DoD, report, mental health disorders are the leading cause of disability among U.S. military members. Recent studies illustrate that out of the 1.4 million Active-Duty servicemembers, mental health disorders are the leading cause of hospitalization among men and the second leading cause for women, only after pregnancy-related conditions.

The five most common mental disorders our military members face are post-traumatic stress disorder, PTSD, major depression, bipolar disorder, alcohol dependence, and substance dependence. These disorders are likely to be chronic in nature or long-lasting in duration.

Since mental health issues often aren't immediately addressed on Active Duty, we see even higher numbers of mental illness diagnoses among our veterans. According to the Department of Veteran Affairs, VA, the number of veterans receiving specialized mental health treatment from the VA has risen each year, from 927,052 in fiscal year 2006 to more than 1.3 million in fiscal year 2012.

One major reason for this increase is the VA's proactive screening of all veterans to identify those who may have symptoms of depression, PTSD, or problem use of alcohol or drugs. As we anticipate a growing number of incoming veterans with this need for care, increasing availability of qualified mental health professionals is absolutely imperative.

I commend VA Secretary Shinseki's recent decision to hire an additional 1,600 mental health staff at the VA. We know our veterans need these services and we must do everything we can to provide them with the care they need.

The invisible wounds of war are not new—they were called ''shell shock'' or ''combat fatigue'' after World War I and World War II, or ''post-Vietnam syndrome'' after Vietnam. But there are unique features stemming from our prolonged engagement in Iraq and Afghanistan.

First, our troops have experienced more frequent deployments of longer duration while having shorter ''dwell time,'' creating a more stressful environment.

Second, we have the highest rate of survivability in history for serious injuries such as amputations, severe burns, and spinal cord damage, leading to greater need for mental health care.

Third, the prevalence of traumatic brain injury, TBI, from improvised explosive devices, IEDs, and other blasts have increased the number of combat veterans with mild to severe diagnoses, which are linked to other psychological comorbidities.

It took the DoD and the VA too long, unfortunately, to realize that their medical care system must provide the same level of expertise, resources, and dedication to address the psychological wounds of war as they do for physical ones.

Although the DoD and the VA have made progress in the past 5 years, there is still a great gap between the mental health needs of our military members and their access to quality care.

This is an epidemic that needs to be resolved. Recent reports indicate that nearly 22 veterans commit suicide every day. In 2012, more than 349 Active-Duty service men and women across the four branches took their own lives. That is an average of 1 every 25 hours, the highest suicide rate ever in the DoD.

It is not just about resources. In fact, having an adequate number of mental health professionals is just one component of ensuring access to care.

Former Secretary of Defense Leon Panetta testified in a hearing the Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Defense held last year that he was unsatisfied with the Pentagon's current approach to combating military suicides and admitted that the DoD needs to review its procedures for handling mental health cases. Secretary Panetta said that there are still huge gaps in the way a mental health diagnosis is determined. Furthermore, Secretary Panetta acknowledged that the greatest obstacle to service men and women receiving necessary mental health treatment is the stigma that continues to be associated with seeking help for psychological injuries.

Throughout Maryland, I hear from service men and women who believe that seeking mental health services will hurt their military careers. We must overcome these real and perceived barriers to care by changing the policies that govern how we provide mental health care to our military members. Those who are hurting in silence will seek treatment only when they can truly speak freely and off the record. As more and more of these individuals go untreated, we will continue to see a rise in suicides and other tragic incidents among our military members and veterans.

Even as we wind down our combat operations in Afghanistan over the next year, I fear that we will continue to see an increasing number of our military members and veterans needing mental health care in the near future.

Yet the DoD now is facing looming furloughs and unnecessary funding cuts, which could force the DoD to lose many of the highly valued mental health and behavioral professionals who were hired to help treat soaring rates of PTSD. Recently, Dr. Jonathan Woodson, the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Health Affairs, stated his concerns over the DoD's long-term capability to provide mental health care to the force, to counter the effects of PTSD. More than one-half of the mental health specialists serving the military are civilians, and they have options to seek employment elsewhere. I worry about sustaining this valuable workforce under constant threat from sequesters.

Mr. President, we need to ensure that we have the personnel, resources, and policies in place to guarantee access to quality mental health care for our men and women in uniform, our veterans, and their families. Active-Duty service men and women especially need access to such care without fear of being stigmatized of suffering career-damaging consequences. Providing such care isn't just a good idea to maintain the well-being and readiness of our troops; it is our solemn moral obligation to those who have sacrificed so much for our great Nation. It is important for us to remember that—especially during Mental Health Awareness Month and as we approach Memorial Day.

REMEMBERING CHIEF MASTER SERGEANT ARDEN HASSENGER

Mr. MERKLEY. Mr. President, I rise today to remember an Oregon hero. CMSgt Arden Hassenger was a 29-year-old from Lebanon, OR, when he and five other airmen set out on Christmas Eve 1965 on a reconnaissance trip over the Ho Chi Minh Trail. Tragically, they never returned. What was even more tragic for Hassenger's friends and family, though, was that the plane could not be found. His wife and children lived in uncertainty for decades, not knowing whether Arden had been killed that day or whether he was alive in Laos.

Finally, the crash site was located, and in 2010 and 2011, remains of the missing men were at last recovered. Last year, they were buried with full honors in Arlington National Cemetery. This Sunday, Arden's ultimate sacrifice for our Nation will be honored once again at the Vietnam Memorial. The cross next to his name, which signified his status as missing in action, will be changed to a diamond, representing that he has returned home to rest after these many years. I hope that this final act of remembrance will help to bring closure to his family and all who loved him.

We honor Chief Master Sergeant Hassenger, and we thank him and his family for the tremendous sacrifice and service they have given to our Nation.

REMEMBERING LIEUTENANT COLONEL ROBERT M. BROWN

Mr. KAINE. Mr. President, I rise today to honor a fallen airman who died in military service to this country. U.S. Air Force Lt. Col. Robert M. Brown, of Portsmouth, VA, was lost on Nov. 7, 1972 in his F–111 near Quang Binh Province, North Vietnam. The remains of Lieutenant Colonel Brown were located in North Vietnam and returned June 7, 1995. He was finally identified on December 14, 2011 and accounted for on February 25, 2012.

Robert Brown graduated from the US Naval Academy in the top 30 percent of his class and was given his choice of branch of service. He chose the US Air Force and trained as a pilot while adding to his bachelor of military science degree with an electrical engineering degree from the University of Michigan. Before his first deployment he was assigned to NASA and worked on the Mercury and Gemini Space programs. During his first tour of duty in Southeast Asia in 1966, Major Brown compiled an impressive record of 299 combat missions while flying the F100 Super Sabre. Upon returning to the United States, he went to work in Research and Development for America's Anti-Ballistic Missile Systems program as a project scientist. In 1972 he returned to Vietnam for his second tour as a highly decorated fighter pilot to fly the most advanced combat aircraft of its time—the F111A Aardvark.

On November 7, 1972, the F111A crew, call sign ''Whaler 57'' departed Takhli Airbase, Thailand on a single aircraft strike mission. Its target was the Luat Son Highway ferry and ford nestled in a populated and forested area where the highway crossed over the river approximately 24 miles south of the major port city of Dong Hoi. After reporting that its mission was proceeding normally, radio contact was lost after 0400 and by 0500 a 2 week long search and rescue effort was commenced.

Efforts to recover ''Whaler 57'' were unsuccessful, but the remains of Lieutenant Colonel Brown have finally been found and identified. Lieutenant Colonel Brown is survived by his sister Gail and his children Beverly, Margie, and Bruce. Today, I ask all Members of the Senate to join me as we honor the life and legacy Lt. Col. Robert M. Brown, and the other Americans in our Armed Forces who have made the ultimate sacrifice for their country. There are no words fitting enough to fully express our thanks.

WINSTON-SALEM, NORTH CAROLINA

Mr. BURR. Mr. President, today I wish to pay tribute to Winston-Salem, NC, which I proudly call home. This year marks the 100th anniversary of the consolidation of the towns Winston and Salem. Before their consolidation, each town had a long and prosperous history. Salem was established in 1766 by members the Moravian Church. Today, Old Salem Museum and Garden still shows life as it was 200 years ago. It features the iconic 12-foot tall coffee pot first erected by Julius E. Mickey to attract customers to his tin shop in 1858 and the Moravian Easter Sunrise Service in God's Acres cemetery has been a yearly tradition since its inception in 1773. The town steadily increased in influence and commerce activity and was incorporated by the North Carolina General Assembly in 1857.

In 1849, Salem sold the land to its north to Forsyth County to serve as the county seat. The land was named Winston, in honor of local Revolutionary War hero, Joseph Winston. Ten years later the town was incorporated. In the 1870s the town was connected to the North Carolina Railroad. This gave way to many factories; Reynolds and Hanes being the largest. Their healthy competition helped Winston grow remarkably over the next three decades.

The two towns worked closely together on many issues, and began to have a unified identity. Winston and Salem's citizens then voted to consolidate the two towns into the city of Winston-Salem. This officially took effect May 9, 1913, and Oscar B. Eaton was elected the first mayor of the newly formed city. After consolidation, Winston-Salem was one of North Carolina's foremost cities throughout the 1920s due to vastly successful R J. Reynolds Tobacco Co., Wachovia Bank and Trust Co., Hanes Knitting, Hanes Dye and Finishing, and Piedmont Airlines.

The Winston-Salem Arts Council was founded in 1949, and was the first of its kind in the Nation. It has led to the rich arts culture that Winston-Salem enjoys today. The University of North Carolina School of the Arts was established as the first of its kind State-supported arts college in the United States. Through the years the university has equipped thousands of men and women developing the arts in the program to incorporate dance, design and production, drama, film making, and music. Today, Winston-Salem is known as ''The City of the Arts and Innovation.''

As the economy changed in the 1900s, the leaders of the city successfully worked to make Winston-Salem prosperous in the new age by establishing the Piedmont Triad Research Park, which recently became the Wake Forest Innovation Quarter. This equipped the city with technological and medical jobs that has grown to be the leading of industry in Winston-Salem today.

Winston-Salem has received many accolades for its friendly business environment, low cost of living, lively downtown district, and many other aspects. In Winston-Salem, May 9–12 has been set aside to celebrate the 100th anniversary of their consolidation. So I join my fellow Winston-Salem citizens and leaders in celebration of this historic anniversary.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

RECOGNIZING STEPTOE & JOHNSON

• Mr. MANCHIN. Mr. President, today I wish to highlight a West Virginia business on its 100th year in the Mountain State—Steptoe & Johnson, a renowned and nationally respected energy law firm.

From yesterday's humble beginnings, Steptoe & Johnson now has more than 270 attorneys and a staff of 570 people, including more than 220 real estate professionals, working in 14 offices in 6 states—my home State of West Virginia, Kentucky, Pennsylvania, Texas, Ohio and Colorado.

Over the past century of American history—through war and peace, through recessions and abundance, through tragedy and triumph—Steptoe & Johnson has persevered and prospered.

I wonder if Philip P. Steptoe and Colonel Louis A. Johnson looked 100 years into the future when they hung out their shingle and established their law firm in Clarksburg, WV, in 1913. I wonder if they ever dreamed Steptoe & Johnson would grow so large or be so influential.

They probably did, because they began their practice in Clarksburg, a perfectly centralized location with a diverse economy. That decision alone helped introduce their company to various service-related industries and public utilities.

Over the next century, Steptoe & Johnson would grow and expand numerous times, opening six offices across West Virginia, including Bridgeport, Charleston, Huntington, Martinsburg, Morgantown, and Wheeling. That solid foundation helped propel them into five other States.

Steptoe & Johnson's success story is similar to that of many of our Nation's great entrepreneurs: two men with one vision began this American-made story of service and perseverance. Today, more than 800 individuals join together on a daily basis to carry out the company's vision and mission, by offering strong representation and quality service to its clientele.

But for Steptoe & Johnson, there is no end in mind—only the future.•

REMEMBERING EVAN DUBE

• Mrs. SHAHEEN. Mr. President, Senator AYOTTE and I wish to commemorate the life of Evan Dube, a young man from Plaistow, NH, whose life was tragically cut short on May 19, 2012. Evan's spirit touched the lives of many in his community, and his legacy as a kind and loving friend will not be forgotten.

Ms. AYOTTE. Mr. President, Evan, a graduate of Timberlane Regional High School in Plaistow, NH, was a beloved member of both the school's community and the greater Plaistow community. Evan was involved in the school's theatre program, competed on the Model United Nations team, and was a member of the National Honor Society. Upon graduating from Timberlane, Evan began his freshman year at Bates College in Lewiston, ME, where he was studying classical and medieval studies. At the time of his passing, Evan was participating in an archaeological research project in Scotland.

Mrs. SHAHEEN. While Evan earned great success in his academic pursuits, his most profound impact was on the lives of those with whom he interacted. Evan's thoughtful compassion touched the lives of hundreds of acquaintances, friends, and family members. This was evidenced in part by a ceremony held to honor Evan's life at the Timberlane Regional High School Performing Arts Center where nearly 900 individuals honored his memory and celebrated the life that he lived with extraordinary attention to the thoughts and feelings of those around him.

Ms. AYOTTE. In the wake of Evan's passing, students and faculty of Timberlane Regional High School gave great thought to the true meaning of compassion. To honor Evan's life and the many lessons he shared, members of the community have worked to incorporate Evan's values of compassion and kindness into their daily lives. We would all be well served by emulating such behavior.

Mrs. SHAHEEN. We express our true sorrow at the loss of such an admirable, accomplished, and compassionate young man. We would also like to recognize and offer our sympathies to Evan's family, including his mother Eileen, his father John, and his twin brother Conor. We are confident that Evan's friends and family have great pride when they remember the impact that his short life had on so many individuals.

Ms. AYOTTE. We recognize Evan Dube for his well-lived life that was full of compassion, kindness and care. Those who knew Evan are fortunate to have had the opportunity to grow with and learn from him, and are certainly better off by having had their lives touched by such an inspirational person.•

TRIBUTE TO FATHER JONATHAN

• Mrs. SHAHEEN. Mr. President, today I wish to honor a remarkable leader, Father Jonathan DeFelice, who will retire as the President of Saint Anselm College in Manchester, NH, this June.

Father Jonathan, as he is known to his beloved students and college community, has devoted his adult personal and professional life to Saint Anselm College. He lives and works at Saint Anselm in community with his fellow monks of the Order of Saint Benedict, who founded the college in 1889. Under his leadership, Saint Anselm College has become a nationally ranked liberal arts college and model for other institutions of higher education on ways to expand civic engagement and community service among all members of the campus community.

Originally a native of Bristol, RI, Father Jonathan attended Portsmouth Abbey School for high school and completed his undergraduate career at Saint Anselm in 1969. He joined the Order of Saint Benedict in 1973, and 1 later was ordained a Roman Catholic priest. Shortly thereafter, Father Jonathan returned to Saint Anselm, where he served in the administration, holding a variety of positions, including dean of freshman students, assistant to the academic dean and dean of students. The capstone of his years of work for his alma mater was his appointment as its president 24 years ago.

Father Jonathan believes that student development requires pursuing both academics and extracurricular activities. Building on that philosophy, he helped oversee the creation of the New Hampshire Institute of Politics, established at Saint Anselm College to

educate citizens and encourage political and civic participation in the United States and abroad. Since its creation, the Institute has hosted hundreds of State and local leaders and international visitors and helped many new American citizens celebrate at five naturalization ceremonies. Every 4 years, Saint Anselm College becomes a main setting for national politics when it hosts numerous activities surrounding the presidential primaries.

Father Jonathan has also made service a priority for his students. Today, the college's student-led Meelia Center for Student Engagement manages more than 40 partnerships with New Hampshire non-profits, such as the Big Brother/Big Sister program. Father Jonathan built on that work by founding the State version of Campus Compact, a national initiative that works in cooperation with private sector partners to incorporate community service into college curriculum. Campus Compact New Hampshire is made up of 23 college and university member institutions in the state.

Father Jonathan has given back to the State by serving as chair of both the New Hampshire Colleges and University Council and the New Hampshire Higher Education Commission. He was a founding member of New Hampshire's Forum on Higher Education and, most recently, was appointed by Governor John Lynch to serve as director of the New England Board of Higher Education.

Throughout his tenure, Father Jonathan's commitment to higher learning has been a valuable asset to New Hampshire. With community service and civic engagement as cornerstones of his presidency, Father Jonathan has created a lasting and significant connection between the State of New Hampshire and the Saint Anselm College community.

I thank Father Jonathan for his service and his commitment to improving higher education in New Hampshire.●

TRIBUTE TO CAMERON LYLE

● Mrs. SHAHEEN. Mr. President, today I wish to honor the tremendous selflessness and compassion demonstrated by Cameron Lyle of Plaistow, NH. Cameron is completing his senior year at the University of New Hampshire, UNH, and is a 4-year member of the school's track and field team. He elected to forgo his final two meets in order to donate bone marrow to a complete stranger who is battling acute lymphoblastic leukemia.

Cameron Lyle is a graduate of Timberlane Regional High School and a standout thrower on UNH's track and field squad. He is a member of the National Marrow Donor Program's Be The Match Registry, which he joined as a sophomore along with many of his fellow UNH athletes by completing the mouth swabbing process that is the initial step in registering to serve as a potential bone marrow donor. Nearly 2 years later, Cameron received a call informing him that he was identified as a potential match for a 28-year-old man diagnosed with blood cancer. After additional testing, it was confirmed that despite incredibly small odds, Cameron's marrow was a match. Without hesitation, Cameron decided that he would give up participating in the final track and field meets of his senior year to potentially save another man's life.

The story of Cameron and the anonymous recipient of his bone marrow demonstrate the importance of bone marrow registries such as the National Marrow Donor Program's Be The Match Registry. These organizations can provide a critical lifeline for those individuals suffering from immune system, genetic or blood disorders. In addition, bone marrow donor registries serve as a place where patients afflicted with these terrible diseases can turn in hopes of receiving a transplant. While these disorders can be fatal, bone marrow registries give patients the hope of finding a lifesaving donor.

Cameron's decision truly demonstrates the strength of his character, but perhaps most importantly, his selfless act will undoubtedly never be forgotten by the man who received another chance at life. I know that residents of New Hampshire are extremely proud of Cameron and admire him for making such an important choice.

Once again, I would like to recognize and thank Cameron Lyle for making such a powerful and life changing decision for both himself and the recipient of his bone marrow. I commend Cameron's family, friends and the UNH and Plaistow communities for the support they have shown him in the weeks before and since his surgery. His story is truly memorable.●

20TH ANNIVERSARY TRIBUTE TO THE COLORADO STATE VETERANS NURSING HOME

● Mr. UDALL of Colorado. Mr. President, today I wish to celebrate the 20th anniversary of the Colorado State Veterans Home in Walsenburg. For 20 years, this home has provided exceptional care to veterans and their spouses from all over the United States.

Built in 1993, the Colorado State Veterans Home is southern Colorado's newest nursing home for veterans and the only nursing home physically connected to a community hospital. Residents in Walsenburg have access to a Special Care Unit, which provides services for residents with dementia, Alzheimer's, Huntington's and/or Parkinson's diseases, and a family outpatient clinic, all on the health center's grounds. Furthermore, following a major renovation funded by the Department of Veterans Affairs in 2011, the veterans home now boasts expanded kitchen areas, outdoor gardens and recreational space, as well as views of nearby mountains and lakes in every resident's room. These improvements have created modern and bright living accommodations that take full advantage of Colorado's natural beauty and ensure the comfort of our veterans.

With 115 residents, everyday life at the Colorado State Veterans Home is filled with the stories from our Nation's heroes. Rich, a veteran who, with his wife, has resided at Walsenburg for 3 years, was a B–17 commander flying 34 successful sorties over Germany and France during WWII. On his 35th sortie he and his crew went down as the result of enemy fire. His story makes Rich a favorite among visiting airmen, and it is only one among many.

While we will never be able to repay our heroic servicemembers for the sacrifices they have made in the line of duty, it should be our top priority to make their lives back home as pleasant and comfortable as possible. The services, staff, and stunning location of the Colorado State Veterans Home in Walsenburg uphold our commitment to keep that promise to these individuals and their loved ones.

On behalf of a grateful nation, I thank the staff at Spanish Peaks Regional Health Center, the Colorado State Veterans Home, and the Federal employees at the VA for their commitment to serving our Nation's heroes, and I offer them congratulations on the occasion of the Colorado State Veterans Home's 20th anniversary.●

MESSAGES FROM THE PRESIDENT

Messages from the President of the United States were communicated to the Senate by Mr. Pate, one of his secretaries.

EXECUTIVE MESSAGES REFERRED

As in executive session the Presiding Officer laid before the Senate messages from the President of the United States submitting sundry nominations which were referred to the appropriate committees.

(The messages received today are printed at the end of the Senate proceedings.)

MESSAGES FROM THE HOUSE

At 12:29 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 bill, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate:

H.R. 1406. An act to amend the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938 to provide compensatory time for employees in the private sector.

ENROLLED BILL SIGNED

The President pro tempore (Mr. LEAHY) reported that he had signed the following enrolled bill, which was previously signed by the Speaker of the House:

H.R. 1071. An act to specify the size of the precious-metal blanks that will be used in

the production of the National Baseball Hall of Fame commemorative coins.

MEASURES REFERRED

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

H.R. 1406. An act to amend the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938 to provide compensatory time for employees in the private sector; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

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–1416. A communication from the Secretary of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled ''United States Tobacco Product Exports That Do Not Conform to Tobacco Product Standards''; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC–1417. A communication from the Assistant General Counsel for Regulatory Services, Office of Postsecondary Education, Department of Education, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Program Integrity Issues'' (RIN1840–AD02) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 26, 2013; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC–1418. A communication from the Assistant General Counsel for Regulatory Services, Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services, Department of Education, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research (NIDRR)—Disability and Rehabilitation Research Projects and Centers Program—Disability Rehabilitation Research Project'' (CFDA No. 84.133A–8) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 26, 2013; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC–1419. A communication from the Assistant General Counsel for Regulatory Services, Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services, Department of Education, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research (NIDRR)—Disability and Rehabilitation Research Projects and Centers Program—Rehabilitation Engineering Research Centers'' (CFDA No. 84.133E–1) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 26, 2013; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC–1420. A communication from the Deputy Director for Policy, Legislative and Regulatory Department, Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Benefits Payable in Terminated Single-Employer Plans; Allocation of Assets in Single-Employer Plans; Interest Assumptions for Valuing and Paying Benefits'' (29 CFR Parts 4022 and 4044) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 26, 2013; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC–1421. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Citizenship and Immigration Services, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Wage Methodology for the Temporary Non-Agricultural Employment H–2B Program, Part 2'' (RIN1615–AC02) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 24, 2013; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC–1422. A communication from the Assistant General Counsel for Regulatory Services, Office of Postsecondary Education, Department of Education, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Final Priorities; Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs (GEAR UP)—College Savings Account Research Demonstration Project'' (CFDA No. 84.334D) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on May 1, 2013; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC–1423. A communication from the Secretary of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled ''Ensuring a Safe Food Supply''; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC–1424. A communication from the Secretary of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, an annual report relative to the implementation of the Age Discrimination Act of 1975 for fiscal year 2012; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC–1425. A communication from the Administrator, Rural Housing Service, Department of Agriculture, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Community Programs Guaranteed Loans'' (RIN0575–AC92) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on May 6, 2013; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC–1426. A communication from the Congressional Review Coordinator, Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, Department of Agriculture, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Controlled Import Permits'' ((RIN0579–AD53) (Docket No. APHIS–2008–0055)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on May 2, 2013; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC–1427. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Sulfoxaflor; Pesticide Tolerances'' (FRL No. 9371–4) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on May 7, 2013; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC–1428. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Spirotetramat; Pesticide Tolerances'' (FRL No. 9382–8) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on May 7, 2013; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC–1429. A communication from the Chief of the Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Disclosure of Returns and Return Information to Designee of Taxpayer'' ((RIN1545–BJ19) (TD 9618)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on May 6, 2013; to the Committee on Finance.

EC–1430. A communication from the Chief of the Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Updating of Employer Identification Numbers'' ((RIN1545–BK02) (TD 9617)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on May 6, 2013; to the Committee on Finance.

EC–1431. A communication from the Chief of the Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Annual Price Inflation Adjustments for Contribution Limitations Made to a Health Savings Account Pursuant to Section 223 of the Internal Revenue Code'' (Rev. Proc. 2013–25) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on May 6, 2013; to the Committee on Finance.

EC–1432. A communication from the Chief of the Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''IIR–Electric Generation Assets Units of Property'' (Rev. Proc. 2013–24) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on May 6, 2013; to the Committee on Finance.

EC–1433. A communication from the Secretary of the Interior, transmitting, pursuant to law, the 2010–2011 Annual Report for the Department of the Interior's Office of Surface Mining Reclamation and Enforcement; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

EC–1434. A communication from the President of the United States, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report on the continuation of the national emergency that was originally declared in Executive Order 13047 of May 20, 1997, with respect to Burma; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC–1435. 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–2013–0003)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on May 7, 2013; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC–1436. 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–2013–0003)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on May 7, 2013; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC–1437. 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–2013–0003)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on May 7, 2013; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC–1438. A communication from the Attorney, Legal Division, Bureau of Consumer Financial Protection, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Truth in Lending (Regulation Z)'' ((RIN3170–AA28) (Docket No. CFPB–2012–0039)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on May 6, 2013; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC–1439. A communication from the Executive Director of the Office of Minority and Women Inclusion, Office of the Comptroller of the Currency, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Office of Minority and Women Inclusion of the Office of the Comptroller of the Currency fiscal year 2012 Annual Report to Congress; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC–1440. A communication from the Assistant Secretary for Legislative Affairs, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Financial Stability Oversight Council 2013 annual report to Congress; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

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. PAUL:

S. 911. A bill to establish an emergency transportation safety fund, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. McCAIN:

S. 912. A bill to allow multichannel video programming distributors to provide video programming to subscribers on an a la carte basis, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

By Mrs. SHAHEEN (for herself, Ms. COLLINS, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mr. REED, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Mr. COWAN, Mr. COONS, Mr. MURPHY, Mrs. GILLIBRAND, and Mr. SANDERS):

S. 913. A bill to amend the National Oilheat Research Alliance Act of 2000 to reauthorize and improve that Act, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

By Mr. COCHRAN (for himself and Mr. WICKER):

S. 914. A bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to permit direct payment to pharmacies for certain compounded drugs that are prepared by the pharmacies for a specific beneficiary for use through an implanted infusion pump; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. WYDEN (for himself, Mr. RUBIO, and Mr. WARNER):

S. 915. A bill to amend the Higher Education Act of 1965 to update reporting requirements for institutions of higher education and provide for more accurate and complete data on student retention, graduation, and earnings outcomes at all levels of postsecondary enrollment; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. KAINE (for himself, Mr. COCHRAN, and Mr. HEINRICH):

S. 916. A bill to authorize the acquisition and protection of nationally significant battlefields and associated sites of the Revolutionary War and the War of 1812 under the American Battlefield Protection Program; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

By Mr. CARDIN (for himself, Ms. COLLINS, Ms. BALDWIN, Mr. BEGICH, Mr. COCHRAN, Mr. COONS, Mr. COWAN, Mr. MENENDEZ, Mr. MERKLEY, Ms. MIKULSKI, Mr. SANDERS, Mr. SCHUMER, Mr. TESTER, Mr. WICKER, Mr. WYDEN, Mr. CARPER, Mr. PORTMAN, and Mr. KING):

S. 917. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to provide a reduced rate of excise tax on beer produced domestically by certain qualifying producers; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. COONS (for himself and Mr. RUBIO):

S. 918. A bill to award grants in order to establish longitudinal personal college readiness and savings online platforms for low-income students; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Ms. CANTWELL (for herself, Mr. BARRASSO, Mrs. MURRAY, Mr. BAUCUS, Mr. TESTER, Mr. UDALL of New Mexico, Mr. HEINRICH, Mr. SCHATZ, Mr. WYDEN, and Mr. CRAPO):

S. 919. A bill to amend the Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act to provide further self-governance by Indian tribes, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Indian Affairs.

By Mr. FRANKEN (for himself and Ms. KLOBUCHAR):

S. 920. A bill to allow the Fond du Lac Band of Lake Superior Chippewa in the State of Minnesota to lease or transfer certain land; to the Committee on Indian Affairs.

By Mr. SCHUMER (for himself, Ms. MURKOWSKI, Mrs. BOXER, Mrs. McCASKILL, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, Mrs. GILLIBRAND, and Mr. CASEY):

S. 921. A bill to amend chapter 301 of title 49, United States Code, to prohibit the rental of motor vehicles that contain a defect related to motor vehicle safety, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

By Mr. SANDERS:

S. 922. A bill to require the Secretary of Labor to carry out a pilot program on providing wage subsidies to employers who employ certain veterans and members of the Armed Forces and require the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to carry out a pilot program on providing career transition services to young veterans, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

By Mr. UDALL of New Mexico:

S. 923. A bill to modernize the conservation title of the Food Security Act of 1985, protect long term taxpayer investment, increase small and midsize farmer's access to programs, and prioritize modern-day conservation needs through management practices, local engagement, and stewardship; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

By Mr. MENENDEZ (for himself, Mr. LAUTENBERG, and Mr. SCHUMER):

S. 924. A bill to amend the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act to enhance existing programs providing mitigation assistance by encouraging States to adopt and actively enforce State building codes, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

By Mrs. GILLIBRAND (for herself and Mr. SCHUMER):

S. 925. A bill to improve the Lower East Side Tenement National Historic Site, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

By Mr. BEGICH:

S. 926. A bill to amend title 32, United States Code, to include the National Guard Educational Foundation among the youth and charitable organizations eligible for National Guard assistance, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Armed Services.

By Mr. SANDERS:

S. 927. A bill to require the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to carry out a demonstration project to assess the feasibility and advisability of using State and local government agencies and nonprofit organizations to increase awareness of benefits and services for veterans and to improve coordination of outreach activities relating to such benefits and services, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

By Mr. SANDERS:

S. 928. A bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to improve the processing of claims for compensation under laws administered by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

By Mr. CORNYN:

S. 929. A bill to impose sanctions on individuals who are complicit in human rights abuses committed against nationals of Vietnam or their family members, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

By Mr. CARDIN (for himself, Mr. KIRK, Ms. MIKULSKI, Ms. MURKOWSKI, Mr. HARKIN, Mr. SANDERS, Mr. LEVIN, Mr. MENENDEZ, Ms. STABENOW, Mr. HEINRICH, Mrs. BOXER, Mrs. GILLIBRAND, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. LAUTENBERG, Mr. MURPHY, Ms. BALDWIN, Ms. LANDRIEU, Mr. BROWN, Mr. BEGICH, and Ms. HIRONO):

S.J. Res. 15. A joint resolution removing the deadline for the ratification of the equal rights amendment; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

SUBMISSION OF CONCURRENT AND SENATE RESOLUTIONS

The following concurrent resolutions and Senate resolutions were read, and referred (or acted upon), as indicated:

By Ms. MIKULSKI:

S. Res. 135. A resolution designating the week of October 7 through October 13, 2013, as ''Naturopathic Medicine Week'' to recognize the value of naturopathic medicine in providing safe, effective, and affordable health care; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. CARDIN (for himself, Mr. RUBIO, Mr. MENENDEZ, Mr. WICKER, Mr. BEGICH, Ms. HIRONO, Mr. ISAKSON, and Mr. MURPHY):

S. Res. 136. A resolution recognizing the 60th Anniversary of the Korean War Armistice and the Mutual Defense Treaty of 1953, and congratulating Park Geun-Hye on her election to the Presidency of the Republic of Korea; considered and agreed to.

By Mr. NELSON (for himself, Ms. COLLINS, Mr. SANDERS, and Mr. COONS):

S. Res. 137. A resolution designating May 2013 as ''Older Americans Month''; considered and agreed to.

By Ms. LANDRIEU (for herself, Mr. ALEXANDER, Mr. BURR, Mr. CARPER, Mr. KIRK, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. ISAKSON, Mr. RUBIO, Mr. CORNYN, Mr. CRUZ, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, and Mr. McCONNELL):

S. Res. 138. A resolution congratulating the students, parents, teachers, and administrators of charter schools across the United States for their ongoing contributions to education, and supporting the ideals and goals of the 14th annual National Charter Schools Week, to be celebrated the week of May 5 through May 11, 2013; considered and agreed to.

ADDITIONAL COSPONSORS

S. 141

At the request of Mr. BAUCUS, the name of the Senator from Oregon (Mr. WYDEN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 141, a bill to make supplemental agricultural disaster assistance available for fiscal years 2012 and 2013, and for other purposes.

S. 186

At the request of Mr. SHELBY, the names of the Senator from Georgia (Mr. ISAKSON), the Senator from South Dakota (Mr. THUNE), the Senator from Oklahoma (Mr. INHOFE), the Senator from North Dakota (Mr. HOEVEN), the Senator from Idaho (Mr. CRAPO), the Senator from Louisiana (Mr. VITTER), the Senator from West Virginia (Mr. MANCHIN), the Senator from Texas (Mr.

CORNYN), the Senator from South Carolina (Mr. SCOTT), the Senator from South Carolina (Mr. GRAHAM), the Senator from Nebraska (Mr. JOHANNS), the Senator from North Carolina (Mr. BURR), the Senator from Missouri (Mr. BLUNT), the Senator from Mississippi (Mr. COCHRAN), the Senator from Utah (Mr. HATCH), the Senator from New Mexico (Mr. HEINRICH), the Senator from California (Mrs. FEINSTEIN), the Senator from Montana (Mr. TESTER), the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. BLUMENTHAL), the Senator from Kentucky (Mr. MCCONNELL), the Senator from Arkansas (Mr. PRYOR), the Senator from Maine (Mr. KING), the Senator from Nebraska (Mrs. FISCHER), the Senator from Tennessee (Mr. ALEXANDER), the Senator from Indiana (Mr. COATS), the Senator from Arizona (Mr. FLAKE), the Senator from Arkansas (Mr. BOOZMAN), the Senator from Wyoming (Mr. ENZI), the Senator from Iowa (Mr. GRASSLEY), the Senator from Idaho (Mr. RISCH), the Senator from Arizona (Mr. MCCAIN), the Senator from Kansas (Mr. ROBERTS), the Senator from Massachusetts (Ms. WARREN), the Senator from Iowa (Mr. HARKIN), the Senator from Michigan (Ms. STABENOW), the Senator from Kansas (Mr. MORAN), the Senator from Mississippi (Mr. WICKER), the Senator from Nevada (Mr. HELLER), the Senator from Tennessee (Mr. CORKER), the Senator from Rhode Island (Mr. REED), the Senator from Washington (Ms. CANTWELL), the Senator from Delaware (Mr. CARPER), the Senator from New Hampshire (Mrs. SHAHEEN), the Senator from Ohio (Mr. BROWN), the Senator from Illinois (Mr. KIRK), the Senator from Washington (Mrs. MURRAY), the Senator from Alaska (Mr. BEGICH), the Senator from South Dakota (Mr. JOHNSON), the Senator from Missouri (Mrs. MCCASKILL), the Senator from Florida (Mr. NELSON), the Senator from Louisiana (Ms. LANDRIEU), the Senator from Alaska (Ms. MURKOWSKI), the Senator from Maine (Ms. COLLINS), the Senator from California (Mrs. BOXER), the Senator from Virginia (Mr. KAINE), the Senator from North Dakota (Ms. HEITKAMP), the Senator from Hawaii (Mr. SCHATZ), the Senator from Minnesota (Ms. KLOBUCHAR), the Senator from Vermont (Mr. SANDERS), the Senator from Oregon (Mr. WYDEN), the Senator from Rhode Island (Mr. WHITEHOUSE), the Senator from Oregon (Mr. MERKLEY), the Senator from Georgia (Mr. CHAMBLISS), the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. MURPHY) and the Senator from Virginia (Mr. WARNER) were added as cosponsors of S. 186, a bill to award posthumously a Congressional Gold Medal to Addie Mae Collins, Denise McNair, Carole Robertson, and Cynthia Wesley, in recognition of the 50th anniversary of the bombing of the Sixteenth Street Baptist Church, where the 4 little Black girls lost their lives, which served as a catalyst for the Civil Rights Movement.

At the request of Mr. COBURN, his name was added as a cosponsor of S. 186, supra.

S. 309

At the request of Mr. HARKIN, the names of the Senator from New York (Mrs. GILLIBRAND) and the Senator from Ohio (Mr. BROWN) were added as cosponsors of S. 309, a bill to award a Congressional Gold Medal to the World War II members of the Civil Air Patrol.

S. 316

At the request of Mr. SANDERS, the name of the Senator from Maryland (Mr. CARDIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 316, a bill to recalculate and restore retirement annuity obligations of the United States Postal Service, to eliminate the requirement that the United States Postal Service prefund the Postal Service Retiree Health Benefits Fund, to place restrictions on the closure of postal facilities, to create incentives for innovation for the United States Postal Service, to maintain levels of postal service, and for other purposes.

S. 323

At the request of Mr. COCHRAN, the name of the Senator from Mississippi (Mr. WICKER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 323, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to provide for extended months of Medicare coverage of immunosuppressive drugs for kidney transplant patients and other renal dialysis provisions.

S. 330

At the request of Mrs. BOXER, the name of the Senator from Hawaii (Mr. SCHATZ) was added as a cosponsor of S. 330, a bill to amend the Public Health Service Act to establish safeguards and standards of quality for research and transplantation of organs infected with human immunodeficiency virus (HIV).

S. 369

At the request of Mr. RUBIO, the name of the Senator from South Carolina (Mr. SCOTT) was added as a cosponsor of S. 369, a bill to amend title 18, United States Code, to prohibit taking minors across State lines in circumvention of laws requiring the involvement of parents in abortion decisions.

S. 370

At the request of Mr. COCHRAN, the name of the Senator from Maine (Ms. COLLINS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 370, a bill to improve and expand geographic literacy among kindergarten through grade 12 students in the United States by improving professional development programs for kindergarten through grade 12 teachers offered through institutions of higher education.

S. 403

At the request of Mr. CASEY, the name of the Senator from Michigan (Ms. STABENOW) was added as a cosponsor of S. 403, a bill to amend the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 to address and take action to prevent bullying and harassment of students.

S. 407

At the request of Mr. CASEY, the name of the Senator from Kansas (Mr. ROBERTS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 407, a bill to provide funding for construction and major rehabilitation for projects located on inland and intracoastal waterways of the United States, and for other purposes.

S. 422

At the request of Mr. BLUMENTHAL, the name of the Senator from Alaska (Mr. BEGICH) was added as a cosponsor of S. 422, a bill to amend the Department of Veterans Affairs Health Care Programs Enhancement Act of 2001 and title 38, United States Code, to require the provision of chiropractic care and services to veterans at all Department of Veterans Affairs medical centers and to expand access to such care and services, and for other purposes.

S. 448

At the request of Mr. RUBIO, the name of the Senator from North Carolina (Mrs. HAGAN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 448, a bill to allow seniors to file their Federal income tax on a new Form 1040SR.

S. 462

At the request of Mrs. BOXER, the name of the Senator from South Carolina (Mr. SCOTT) was added as a cosponsor of S. 462, a bill to enhance the strategic partnership between the United States and Israel.

S. 526

At the request of Mr. BAUCUS, the name of the Senator from Maryland (Mr. CARDIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 526, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to make permanent the special rule for contributions of qualified conservation contributions, and for other purposes.

S. 538

At the request of Mrs. MCCASKILL, the name of the Senator from New Hampshire (Mrs. SHAHEEN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 538, a bill to amend title 10, United States Code, to modify the authorities and responsibilities of convening authorities in taking actions on the findings and sentences of courts-martial.

S. 557

At the request of Mrs. HAGAN, the name of the Senator from Montana (Mr. TESTER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 557, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to improve access to medication therapy management under part D of the Medicare program.

S. 674

At the request of Mr. HELLER, the name of the Senator from Mississippi (Mr. WICKER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 674, a bill to require prompt responses from the heads of covered Federal agencies when the Secretary of Veterans Affairs requests information necessary to adjudicate claims for benefits under laws administered by the Secretary, and for other purposes.

S. 707

At the request of Mr. REED, the name of the Senator from Wisconsin (Ms. BALDWIN) was added as a cosponsor of

S. 707, a bill to amend the Higher Education Act of 1965 to extend the reduced interest rate for Federal Direct Stafford Loans.

S. 731

At the request of Mr. MANCHIN, the name of the Senator from North Dakota (Ms. HEITKAMP) was added as a cosponsor of S. 731, a bill to require the Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System, the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation, and the Office of the Comptroller of the Currency to conduct an empirical impact study on proposed rules relating to the International Basel III agreement on general risk-based capital requirements, as they apply to community banks.

S. 742

At the request of Mr. CARDIN, the name of the Senator from Maine (Ms. COLLINS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 742, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 and the Small Business Act to expand the availability of employee stock ownership plans in S corporations, and for other purposes.

S. 789

At the request of Mr. BAUCUS, the name of the Senator from West Virginia (Mr. MANCHIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 789, a bill to grant the Congressional Gold Medal, collectively, to the First Special Service Force, in recognition of its superior service during World War II.

S. 813

At the request of Mr. WHITEHOUSE, his name was added as a cosponsor of S. 813, a bill to require that Peace Corps volunteers be subject to the same limitations regarding coverage of abortion services as employees of the Peace Corps with respect to coverage of such services, and for other purposes.

S. 815

At the request of Mr. MERKLEY, the name of the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. MENENDEZ) was added as a cosponsor of S. 815, a bill to prohibit the employment discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation or gender identity.

S. 831

At the request of Mr. COATS, the name of the Senator from Missouri (Mr. BLUNT) was added as a cosponsor of S. 831, a bill to limit the authority of the Secretary of the Interior to issue regulations before December 31, 2017, under the Surface Mining Control and Reclamation Act of 1977.

S. 837

At the request of Mr. HEINRICH, his name was added as a cosponsor of S. 837, a bill to expand and improve opportunities for beginning farmers and ranchers, and for other purposes.

S. 842

At the request of Mr. SCHUMER, the name of the Senator from Hawaii (Mr. SCHATZ) was added as a cosponsor of S. 842, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to provide for an extension of the Medicare-dependent hospital (MDH) program and the increased payments under the Medicare low-volume hospital program.

S. 850

At the request of Mr. ALEXANDER, the names of the Senator from Georgia (Mr. CHAMBLISS) and the Senator from Alabama (Mr. SESSIONS) were added as cosponsors of S. 850, a bill to prohibit the National Labor Relations Board from taking any action that requires a quorum of the members of the Board until such time as Board constituting a quorum shall have been confirmed by the Senate, the Supreme Court issues a decision on the constitutionality of the appointments to the Board made in January 2012, or the adjournment sine die of the first session of the 113th Congress.

S. 865

At the request of Mr. WHITEHOUSE, the names of the Senator from New York (Mr. SCHUMER), the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. LAUTENBERG) and the Senator from New Hampshire (Mrs. SHAHEEN) were added as cosponsors of S. 865, a bill to provide for the establishment of a Commission to Accelerate the End of Breast Cancer.

S. 870

At the request of Mr. UDALL of New Mexico, the name of the Senator from New York (Mrs. GILLIBRAND) was added as a cosponsor of S. 870, a bill to authorize the Secretary of Education to make grants to promote the education of pregnant and parenting students.

S. 871

At the request of Mrs. MURRAY, the names of the Senator from New Hampshire (Mrs. SHAHEEN), the Senator from Montana (Mr. TESTER) and the Senator from Delaware (Mr. COONS) were added as cosponsors of S. 871, a bill to amend title 10, United States Code, to enhance assistance for victims of sexual assault committed by members of the Armed Forces, and for other purposes.

S. 888

At the request of Mr. JOHANNS, the name of the Senator from Nevada (Mr. HELLER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 888, a bill to provide end user exemptions from certain provisions of the Commodity Exchange Act and the Securities Exchange Act of 1934.

S. 890

At the request of Mr. PAUL, the names of the Senator from Utah (Mr. HATCH) and the Senator from Georgia (Mr. CHAMBLISS) were added as cosponsors of S. 890, a bill to clarify the definition of navigable waters, and for other purposes.

S. 892

At the request of Mr. KIRK, the names of the Senator from Kansas (Mr. ROBERTS), the Senator from Texas (Mr. CRUZ) and the Senator from Nevada (Mr. HELLER) were added as cosponsors of S. 892, a bill to amend the Iran Threat Reduction and Syria Human Rights Act of 2012 to impose sanctions with respect to certain transactions in foreign currencies, and for other purposes.

S. CON. RES. 15

At the request of Mr. HARKIN, the name of the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. BLUMENTHAL) was added as a cosponsor of S. Con. Res. 15, a concurrent resolution expressing the sense of Congress that the Chained Consumer Price Index should not be used to calculate cost-of-living adjustments for Social Security or veterans benefits, or to increase the tax burden on low- and middle-income taxpayers.

S. RES. 78

At the request of Ms. STABENOW, the name of the Senator from Rhode Island (Mr. WHITEHOUSE) was added as a cosponsor of S. Res. 78, a resolution supporting the goals and ideals of Professional Social Work Month and World Social Work Day.

S. RES. 133

At the request of Mr. LEE, the names of the Senator from Idaho (Mr. CRAPO), the Senator from Ohio (Mr. PORTMAN), the Senator from Idaho (Mr. RISCH), the Senator from Wyoming (Mr. BARRASSO), the Senator from Kansas (Mr. MORAN) and the Senator from Alabama (Mr. SESSIONS) were added as cosponsors of S. Res. 133, a resolution expressing the sense of the Senate that Congress and the States should investigate and correct abusive, unsanitary, and illegal abortion practices.

AMENDMENT NO. 802

At the request of Ms. LANDRIEU, the name of the Senator from Mississippi (Mr. COCHRAN) was added as a cosponsor of amendment No. 802 intended to be proposed to S. 601, a bill to provide for the conservation and development of water and related resources, to authorize the Secretary of the Army to construct various projects for improvements to rivers and harbors of the United States, and for other purposes.

AMENDMENT NO. 809

At the request of Mr. PAUL, the name of the Senator from West Virginia (Mr. MANCHIN) was added as a cosponsor of amendment No. 809 intended to be proposed to S. 601, a bill to provide for the conservation and development of water and related resources, to authorize the Secretary of the Army to construct various projects for improvements to rivers and harbors of the United States, and for other purposes.

AMENDMENT NO. 837

At the request of Ms. COLLINS, the name of the Senator from New Hampshire (Mrs. SHAHEEN) was added as a cosponsor of amendment No. 837 intended to be proposed to S. 601, a bill to provide for the conservation and development of water and related resources, to authorize the Secretary of the Army to construct various projects for improvements to rivers and harbors of the United States, and for other purposes.

AMENDMENT NO. 839

At the request of Mrs. GILLIBRAND, the name of the Senator from New Mexico (Mr. UDALL) was added as a cosponsor of amendment No. 839 intended to be proposed to S. 601, a bill to provide for the conservation and development of water and related resources, to

authorize the Secretary of the Army to construct various projects for improvements to rivers and harbors of the United States, and for other purposes.

AMENDMENT NO. 848

At the request of Mr. MENENDEZ, the name of the Senator from New York (Mr. SCHUMER) was added as a cosponsor of amendment No. 848 intended to be proposed to S. 601, a bill to provide for the conservation and development of water and related resources, to authorize the Secretary of the Army to construct various projects for improvements to rivers and harbors of the United States, and for other purposes.

AMENDMENT NO. 854

At the request of Mr. CASEY, the names of the Senator from Illinois (Mr. DURBIN) and the Senator from Minnesota (Ms. KLOBUCHAR) were added as cosponsors of amendment No. 854 intended to be proposed to S. 601, a bill to provide for the conservation and development of water and related resources, to authorize the Secretary of the Army to construct various projects for improvements to rivers and harbors of the United States, and for other purposes.

AMENDMENT NO. 856

At the request of Mr. BROWN, the names of the Senator from Ohio (Mr. PORTMAN) and the Senator from California (Mrs. FEINSTEIN) were added as cosponsors of amendment No. 856 intended to be proposed to S. 601, a bill to provide for the conservation and development of water and related resources, to authorize the Secretary of the Army to construct various projects for improvements to rivers and harbors of the United States, and for other purposes.

AMENDMENT NO. 857

At the request of Mr. LEVIN, the names of the Senator from Minnesota (Ms. KLOBUCHAR) and the Senator from Ohio (Mr. BROWN) were added as cosponsors of amendment No. 857 intended to be proposed to S. 601, a bill to provide for the conservation and development of water and related resources, to authorize the Secretary of the Army to construct various projects for improvements to rivers and harbors of the United States, and for other purposes.

STATEMENTS ON INTRODUCED BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

By Mr. MCCAIN:

S. 912. A bill to allow multichannel video programming distributors to provide video programming to subscribers on an a la carte basis, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

Mr. MCCAIN. Today I am introducing the Television Consumer Freedom Act of 2013. The legislation has three principal objectives:

One, encourage the wholesale and retail unbundling of programming by distributors and programmers. Allow the consumer, the television viewer who subscribes to cable, to have a la carte capability—in other words, not be required to buy a whole bunch of channels that consumer may not wish to subscribe to—in order words, a la carte. If you want to watch one television program, you can watch it. If you do not, you do not have to. The situation today obviously is far different from that.

It would also establish consequences if broadcasters choose to downgrade their over-the-air service.

Three, it eliminates the sports blackout rule for events that are held in publicly financed stadiums.

For over 15 years, I have supported giving consumers the ability to buy cable channels individually, which is known as a la carte, to provide consumers more control over viewing options in their homes and, as a result, their monthly cable bills. The video industry—principally cable companies and satellite companies and the programmers that sell channels, such as NBC and Disney-ABC—continues to give consumers two options when buying TV programming: first, to purchase a package of channels whether they watch them all or not or, second, not purchase any cable programming at all.

There are two choices: You can either buy one of their packages or not watch it at all. That is unfair and wrong, especially when you consider how the regulatory deck is stacked in favor of industry against the American consumer. It is clear when one looks at how cable prices have gone up over the last 15 years, which was brought to the light by the most recent Federal Communications Commission pricing survey. In the FCC survey, the average monthly price of expanded basic service—basic service—for all communities surveyed increased 5.4 percent over the 12 months ending January 1, 2011, or to $54.46, compared to an increase of 1.6 percent in the Consumer Price Index. In other words, the cost of cable went up nearly four times the consumer prices people pay for everything else. You can only do that when you have a monopoly.

Over the last 15 years, this rise in cost has become even more evident. According to the FCC, the price of expanded basic cable has gone up at a compound average annual growth rate of 6.1 percent during the period from 1995 to 2011. This means that the average annual cable price has gone up about $25 a month from 1995, to over $54 today. That is a 100-percent price increase. People are on fixed incomes. People are hurting. Why in the world should they have a 100-percent cost increase? The only way it can be done is through monopolies.

Those that provide video directly to consumers, such as cable and satellite companies, are not solely to blame for the high prices consumers face today. Many articles have been written about the packages of channels—commonly called bundles—that are sold to cable and satellite companies by video programmers such as Comcast, NBC, Time Warner, Viacom, and the Walt Disney Company, which owns 80 percent of ESPN.

The worldwide leader in sports, as ESPN calls itself, thrives because of the advertising revenue it is able to generate and large subscriber fees. According to a January 2012 Newsweek article, ESPN charges $4.69 per household per month, citing a research company. By comparison, the next costliest national network, TNT, costs $1.16. Again, $4.69 for ESPN and the next most expensive one is $1.16 for TNT. Whether or not you watch ESPN—and I do all the time—all cable subscribers are forced to absorb this cost. Not every American watches ESPN. Not every American should be forced to watch ESPN and pay $4.69 per household per month in order to have it carried into their homes when they do not view it. Because these channels are bundled into packages, all cable consumers, whether they watch sports or not, are paying for them anyway.

Cable and satellite carriers that consider dropping ESPN must also contemplate losing other channels in the bundle, such as the Disney Channel. Some have described this as ''a tax on every American household.''

Others, like the CEO of the American Cable Association, have said:

> My next-door neighbor is 74, a widow. She says to me, ''Why do I have to get all that sports programming?'' She has no idea that in the course of a year, for just ESPN and ESPN2, she is sending a check to Disney for about $70. She would be apoplectic if she knew . . . Ultimately there is going to be a revolt over the cost. Or policymakers will get involved because the cost of these things are so out of line with the cost of living that someone's going to put up a stop sign.

Today we are putting up a stop sign. We are going to find out how powerful these companies are, as opposed to clearly correcting an injustice that is being inflicted on the American people. This legislation would eliminate regulatory barriers to a la carte by freeing up multichannel video programming distributors, such as cable, satellite, and others offering video services, to offer any video programming service on an a la carte basis. But if they want to keep bundling, they can do that too. They can make both offers to the American subscriber.

In order to give these companies an incentive to offer programming on an a la carte basis, the legislation links the availability of the compulsory copyright license to the voluntary offering of a la carte service by the MVPD. In other words, if these companies do not offer a broadcast station and any other channels owned by the broadcaster on an a la carte basis, then that company cannot rely on the compulsory license to carry those broadcast stations. The compulsory license is a benefit conferred on these corporations, so it is reasonable to ask the recipients of that benefit to provide consumers with an a la carte option. I emphasize ''an option.''

To address the notion that a la carte options are being denied distributors,

the legislation conditions important regulatory benefits such as network nonduplication, syndicated exclusivity, blackout rights, and retransmission consent option on the programmers, allowing MVPDs to sell their channels on an a la carte basis.

It is time that the consumers got something in return, other than a higher bill at the end of the month.

Furthermore, because not all programmers also own broadcast stations, the bill contains a provision that would create a wholesale a la carte market by allowing programmers to bundle their services in a package only if they also offer these services for the MVPDs to purchase on an individual channel basis. If a cable operator does not want to carry channels like MTV, it would have the option of not doing so and only buying and carrying the channels it thinks its consumers want to watch.

Finally, the bill provides that if the parties cannot agree to the terms of a carriage agreement, the final offer made by each side must be disclosed to the FCC.

The second section of the bill responds to statements by broadcast executives that they may downgrade the content of their over-the-air signals or pull them altogether so that the program received by MVPD customers is preferable to that available over the air. Our country is facing a spectrum crunch. If broadcasters that are using the public airwaves in return for meeting certain public interest obligations are going to deviate from those obligations, it is my view that we should consider whether that is the most efficient use of our country's spectrum. It would be a distortion of this basic social compact if over-the-air viewers were treated as second-class citizens.

This bill provides a legislative response if broadcasters either downgrade their signal or pull it altogether. The bill provides that a broadcaster will lose its spectrum allocation and that spectrum will be auctioned by the FCC if the broadcaster does not provide the same content over the air as it provides through MVPDs.

Finally, my bill touches on sports blackout rules that can limit the ability of subscribers to see sporting events when they take place in their local community but are not broadcast on a local station. When the venues in which these sporting events take place have been the beneficiary of taxpayer funding, it is unconscionable to deny those taxpayers who paid for it the ability to watch the games on television when they would otherwise be available. Therefore, the bill proposes to repeal the sports blackout rules so far as they apply to events taking place in publicly financed venues and/or involve a publicly financed local sports team.

In the end, this Television Consumer Freedom Act is about giving the consumer more choices when watching television. It is time for us to help shift the landscape to benefit television consumers. I know the broadcasters and cable companies are likely to suggest that the government should not micromanage how they offer their product to customers and that bundling can promote diverse offerings. What those interests fail to mention is that the government has already entered the marketplace and conferred certain rights and privileges, such as a compulsory license, network nonduplication, syndicated exclusivity, and retransmission consent, which stack the deck in favor of everyone but the American consumer.

I hope the introduction of this act furthers the debate on issues such as a la carte channel selection. I look forward to the Chamber's consideration of the bill.

By Mr. COCHRAN (for himself and Mr. WICKER):

S. 914. A bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to permit direct payment to pharmacies for certain compounded drugs that are prepared by the pharmacies for a specific beneficiary for use through an implanted infusion pump; to the Committee on Finance.

Mr. COCHRAN. Mr. President, on January 1, 2013, the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services began implementing a final rule to prohibit compounding pharmacies that prepare medications used in implanted infusion pumps from billing Medicare directly for these services. This reverses a policy that has been permissible in several States for over 20 years. Since the proposed change in May 2011, I have worked with Senator WICKER and other Members of Congress to delay this change until its effects have been fully considered.

During the public comment period for this rule, pharmacies, physicians, and patients overwhelmingly opposed this policy change. In Mississippi, the State board of pharmacy prohibits pharmacies from selling compounded pain medications to physicians, resulting in decreased access to effective treatments for chronic pain disorders. States across the nation are coming to realize the negative implications of this policy change.

With this final rule, the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services has not fully taken into account patient impact or State regulations. In addition, pharmacies that bill Medicare must comply with Federal accreditation rules, further enhancing patient safety. We should protect patient access to effective treatments rather than hinder it. This bill would allow compounding pharmacies to continue to bill Medicare directly for their services in the interest of helping patients receive the quality care they deserve.

By Mr. WYDEN (for himself, Mr. RUBIO, and Mr. WARNER):

S. 915. A bill to amend the Higher Education Act of 1965 to update reporting requirements for institutions of higher education and provide for more accurate and complete data on student retention, graduation, and earnings outcomes at all levels of postsecondary enrollment; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

Mr. WYDEN. Mr. President, when my colleagues and I went to college, things were a lot different. We took out loans, but those loans were manageable, and there were jobs waiting after graduation. Today, too often, that's simply not the case. In fact, the majority of students today will leave school weighed down with more than $26,000 in debt and will attempt to enter a labor market in an environment where there are more unemployed Americans than there are jobs available.

For the first time in our Nation's history, student loan debt exceeds credit card debt and now totals over $1 trillion.

James Garfield once said, ''Next in importance to freedom and justice is popular education, without which neither freedom nor justice can be permanently maintained.'' He was right. Investment in higher education is an economic imperative. Education is the great equalizer. It enables upward economic mobility and breaks down class structures. A highly skilled and educated workforce is the basis for any healthy economy. It is the foundation of our country's future.

In nearly every financial decision Americans make, individuals and families try to evaluate the economic value of that decision. Like prospective homebuyers who inspect and assess the potential value of their future home, students should be able to compare colleges and programs based on what the likely return on their investment will be.

Our capital markets work best when there is transparency so we can accurately measure the value of what we choose to invest in. We saw what happens when this is not the case with the burst of the housing bubble. Our economy is still struggling to recover from the mortgage crisis. Misinformed consumers bought a product based on misleading information and, often times, fell victim to bad loans offered by predatory lenders.

Consumers must know what they can expect from their investments. Similarly, students are entitled to know the value of their education before they borrow tens of thousands of dollars from banks and the government to finance their future.

Right now, consumers don't have this information. It is unavailable to students and families who are making critical decisions that will impact not only their future, both their financial future and career path, but also the collective future of our country. That is why today, Senator RUBIO, Senator WARNER and I are introducing an updated version of the Student Right to Know Before You Go Act which will help inform consumers and prevent market failures.

This proposal would ensure future students and their families can make well-informed decisions by creating a market in which specific schools and specific programs can be evaluated based on the average annual earnings and employment outcomes of graduates; rates of remedial enrollment and success of students that participate in remedial education; the percent of students that receive Federal, State, and institutional grant aid or loans; the average amount of total Federal loan debt of students upon graduation; the average amount of total Federal loan debt for students that do not complete a program; transfer success rates; and rates at which students continue on to higher levels of education.

The Department of Education has created a College Scorecard which is a step in the right direction. The Scorecard, however, does not fully capture any of the metrics outlined above and includes no information to prospective students to evaluate the economic returns of their program of study. The Wyden-Rubio-Warner bill generates this critical information.

Markets fail when there is too little information and until now, it has been impossible to ''Collect this data in a cost-effective way while ensuring student privacy.

This proposal makes it possible to secure a return on investment for students, parents, policy makers, and taxpayers while creating a workforce that meets the demands of today's businesses and ensures that American workers can successfully compete in the global economy.

By Mr. KAINE (for himself, Mr. COCHRAN, and Mr. HEINRICH):

S. 916. A bill to authorize the acquisition and protection of nationally significant battlefields and associated sites of the Revolutionary War and the War of 1812 under the American Battlefield Protection Program; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

Mr. KAINE. Mr. President, the battlefields on American soil contain our national history and commemorate the events that made our nation what it is today. Too many of these sites are open to urban development that could leave no trace of the sacrifices made there.

That is why I am pleased to introduce the American Battlefield Protection Program Amendments Act, which reauthorizes Federal competitive matching grants to protect these historic lands. I was proud to have supported this program at the State level when I was Governor of Virginia, and I am proud to be joined on this bipartisan legislation by my colleague, Senator THAD COCHRAN from Mississippi. Our States hosted key battles of the Civil War, and we have led the Nation in preserving the land on which these defining battles were fought.

This bill extends the authorization for the American Battlefield Protection Program for 5 years at the current funding level and adds sites of the Revolutionary War and the War of 1812 to the program's eligibility. These grants have a 1/1 federal/non-federal match, which is often exceeded on the non-federal side by private contributions from people interested in American history.

This program is strictly voluntary. The bill specifies that land will be acquired only from willing sellers and only at fair market value. It also authorizes funding solely for land acquisition and does not incur development or maintenance costs for the National Park Service.

It would be worth protecting these battlefields for the historic value alone, but these activities also have economic value. Battlefield tourists do not simply pass through a region. They pay for guided tours. They stay in hotels and bed and breakfasts. They dine at local restaurants. They browse the shops on town streets. According to a study by the Virginia Tourism Corporation, Civil War tourists in Virginia stay twice as long and spend double the money of the average tourist. Of out-of-town visitors interviewed at 20 battlefields, two-thirds were visiting the area specifically to see the battlefield, and three-quarters said they would visit other Civil War sites while in the area.

Virginia is a state where history is all around us, and to understand this history is to understand ourselves as Americans. This effort brings together federal, state, and private sector supporters to ensure that future generations will be able to visit these sites and appreciate the historic deeds that transpired on this hallowed ground.

Mr. COCHRAN. Mr. President, I am pleased to join the junior Senator from Virginia in introducing the American Battlefield Protection Program Amendments Act. I doubt there has been a more defining period in this country's history than the Civil War. The scars left by that conflict were deep and slow to heal. This year marks the 150th anniversary of the first major Civil War battle in the western theater and with Memorial Day approaching, the preservation of historic battlefields reminds Americans of those who have fought and died for freedom. Stressing preservation, commemoration, and education, the Civil War Battlefield Preservation Program, for almost 15 years, has partnered with neighboring communities to promote resource protection and heritage tourism. By bringing together local, State, and national stakeholders to preserve America's most historically significant Civil War battlefields, the program has built a consensus to protect 19,000 acres of hallowed ground in 16 states. In my state, more than 3,300 acres of related Civil War battles have been protected. Among the many other battlefields that have benefited from this program are: Antietam, Maryland; Averasboro, North Carolina; Chancellorsville, Virginia; Chattanooga, Tennessee; Gettysburg, Pennsylvania; Harpers Ferry, West Virginia; Mill Springs, Kentucky; and Prairie Grove, Arkansas. I am pleased that this legislation will extend program eligibility to Revolutionary War and War of 1812 battlefields. This is an appropriate time for the Congress to embrace this legislation and to preserve and discover our history, our culture and our individual stories. By highlighting the history and cultural significance of these battle sites, we can help maintain our sense of place as Americans. With it, we can be more aware of our history and reflect upon how we have become who we are as individuals and who we are collectively as Americans. It is an investment in the preservation of our history and culture, which is well spent.

By Mr. CARDIN (for himself, Ms. COLLINS, Ms. BALDWIN, Mr. BEGICH, Mr. COCHRAN, Mr. COONS, Mr. COWAN, Mr. MENENDEZ, Mr. MERKLEY, Ms. MIKULSKI, Mr. SANDERS, Mr. SCHUMER, Mr. TESTER, Mr. WICKER, Mr. WYDEN, Mr. CARPER, Mr. PORTMAN, and Mr. KING):

S. 917. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to provide a reduced rate of excise tax on beer produced domestically by certain qualifying producers; to the Committee on Finance.

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. President, next week is American Craft Beer Week so I am pleased to rise today with my friend and colleague, the senior Senator from Maine, Senator COLLINS, to introduce the Small Brewer Reinvestment & Expanding Workforce Act of 2013, otherwise known as the Small BREW Act. Our esteemed former colleague, Senator Kerry, now Secretary of State, introduced this bill in the 112th Congress. I am honored to take up the mantel.

The Small BREW Act of 2013 would reduce the excise tax on America's craft brewers. Under current federal law, brewers producing fewer than 2 million barrels annually pay $7 per barrel on the first 60,000 barrels they brew, and $18 per barrel on every barrel thereafter, one barrel = 31 gallons. The Small BREW Act would create a new excise tax rate structure that helps start-up and small breweries and reflects the evolution of the craft brewing industry. The rate for the smallest packaging breweries and brewpubs would be $3.50 per barrel on the first 60,000 barrels. For production between 60,001 and 2 million barrels, the rate would be $16.00 per barrel. Thereafter, the rate would be $18.00 per barrel. Breweries with an annual production of 6 million barrels or less would qualify for these recalibrated tax rates.

The small brewer threshold and tax rate were established in 1976 and have never been updated. Since then, the annual production of the largest U.S. brewery has increased from 45 million barrels to 105 million barrels. Raising

the ceiling that defines small breweries from 2 million barrels to 6 million barrels more accurately reflects the intent of the original differentiation between large and small brewers in the U.S. Because of differences in economies of scale, small brewers have higher costs for raw materials, production, packaging, and market entry compared to larger, well-established multi-national competitors. Adjusting the excise tax rate would provide small brewers with an additional $67 million each year they could use to start or expand their businesses on a regional or national scale.

Three years ago, the Joint Committee on Taxation, JCT, scored the bill at roughly $33 million annually and $324 million over 10 years. A more recent, March 2013, study on the costs and benefits of the House companion bill that Harvard University economist John Friedman prepared on behalf of the Brewers Association indicates that the bill would directly reduce the excise tax revenue collected by the Federal Government by $67.0 million in 2013. But Professor Friedman notes that such a loss would be offset in large part by $49.1 million in new payroll and income taxes collected on the increased economic activity. As craft beer prices decline, demand would rise and the Federal Government would collect an additional $1.1 million in excise taxes from the increased sales. The net yearly revenue loss, therefore, would be $16.9 million in 2013. The total net revenue loss over 5 years would be $95.9 million. The bill would lead to the creation of 5,230 new jobs in the first 12–18 months after passage and the cost of each new job in foregone revenue would be just $3,300.

While some people may think this is a bill about beer, it is really about jobs. Small brewers are small business owners in communities in each and every State across the country. Nationally, small and independent brewers employ over 108,000 full and part-time employees, generate more than $3 billion in wages and benefits, and pay more than $2.3 billion in business, personal and consumption taxes, according to the Brewers Association. As the craft beer industry grows so, too, does the demand for American-grown barley and hops and American-made brewing, bottling, canning, and other equipment.

Maryland is home to 29 craft brewers, with at least 24 more in the planning stages. According to the Brewers Association of Maryland, there were 342 people employed full-time who were directly involved in producing craft beer in the State last year, and another 1,420 people employed full or part-time who were indirectly involved, including brew-pub restaurant staff and associated employees. The brewing industry accounted for $8.9 million in State excise taxes and $56.7 million in Federal excise taxes, paid some $13 million in wages, and generated nearly $95 million in economic activity.

Small brewers have been anchors of local communities and America's economy since the start of our history. Indeed, there is a Mayflower document published in 1622 that explains why the Pilgrims landed at Plymouth Rock which states, ''For we could not now take time for further search or consideration: our victuals being much spent, especially our beer.'' Presidents from George Washington to Barack Obama have been homebrewers. Going back much further, the oldest extant recipe is for beer. And many people would argue that our thirst for beer is what drove man from being a hunter-gatherer to a crop cultivator since the earliest domesticated cereal grains were various types of barley better suited for beer production than making bread. Saint Arnulf of Metz, also known as St. Arnold, who lived from roughly 582 to 640 AD, is known as the ''Patron Saint of Brewers'' because he recognized that beer, which is boiled first, contains alcohol and is slightly acidic, was much safer to consume than water. French chemist and microbiologist Louis Pasteur, who discovered yeast and propounded the germ theory that is the basis of so much of modern medicine, worked for breweries for much of his career. The pH scale, the standard measurement of acidity, was developed by the head of Carlsberg Laboratory's Chemical Department in 1909. Dr. Søren Sørensen developed the pH scale during his pioneering research into proteins, amino acids and enzymes—the basis of today's protein chemistry. So it is fair to say that civilization and beer go hand-in-hand.

In addition to making high-quality beers, craft brewers such as Maryland's Flying Dog, Clipper City, Union Craft, Ruddy Duck, and Baying Hound create jobs and reinvest their profits back into their local economies. The Federal Government needs to be investing in industries that invest in America and create real jobs here at home. With more than 2,400 small and independent breweries and brew-pubs currently operating in the United States, and many more being planned, now is the time to take meaningful action to help them and our economy grow.

I am proud to announce that Senators BALDWIN, BEGICH, CARPER, COCHRAN, COONS, COWAN, KING, MENENDEZ, MERKLEY, MIKULSKI, PORTMAN, SANDERS, SCHUMER, TESTER, WICKER, and WYDEN have all signed on as original co-sponsors of the Small BREW Act, and I encourage the rest of my Senate colleagues to consider joining us in this worthwhile legislative endeavor.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the text of the bill be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the text of the bill was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

S. 917

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 ''Small Brewer Reinvestment and Expanding Workforce Act of 2013''.

SEC. 2. REDUCED RATE OF EXCISE TAX ON BEER PRODUCED DOMESTICALLY BY CERTAIN QUALIFYING PRODUCERS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Paragraph (2) of section 5051(a) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 is amended—

(1) by redesignating subparagraphs (B) and (C) as subparagraphs (C) and (D), respectively, and

(2) by striking subparagraph (A) and inserting the following new subparagraphs:

''(A) IN GENERAL.—In the case of a brewer who produces not more than 6,000,000 barrels of beer during the calendar year, the per barrel rate of tax imposed by this section shall be—

''(i) $3.50 on the first 60,000 qualified barrels of production, and

''(ii) $16 on the first 1,940,000 qualified barrels of production to which clause (i) does not apply.

''(B) QUALIFIED BARRELS OF PRODUCTION.—For purposes of this paragraph, the term 'qualified barrels of production' means, with respect to any brewer for any calendar year, the number of barrels of beer which are removed in such year for consumption or sale and which have been brewed or produced by such brewer at qualified breweries in the United States.''.

(b) CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.—

(1) Subparagraph (C) of section 5051(a)(2) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, as redesignated by this section, is amended—

(A) by striking ''2,000,000 barrel quantity'' and inserting ''6,000,000 barrel quantity'', and

(B) by striking ''60,000 barrel quantity'' and inserting ''60,000 and 1,940,000 barrel quantities''.

(2) Subparagraph (D) of such section, as so redesignated, is amended by striking ''2,000,000 barrels'' and inserting ''6,000,000 barrels''.

(c) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by this section shall apply to beer removed during calendar years beginning after the date of the enactment of this Act.

By Mr. SANDERS:

S. 922. A bill to require the Secretary of Labor to carry out a pilot program on providing wage subsidies to employers who employ certain veterans and members of the Armed Forces and require the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to carry out a pilot program on providing career transition services to young veterans, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

Mr. SANDERS. Mr. President, as the Chairman of the Veterans' Affairs Committee, I have pledged to improve and expand employment training and development programs for our Nation's servicemembers and veterans.

While our country continues with its economic recovery, we must ensure that veterans are not left behind. Veterans possess the skills, the discipline, and the leadership necessary to succeed in a 21st century workforce. Coupled with an array of practical skills, it would seem that transitioning to civilian employment after separation from service would be effortless. Yet we continue to find high unemployment rates among veterans, especially the youngest generation. Through their service and sacrifice, each of our Nation's veterans have earned a fair shot at a job,

a fair shot at supporting their families, and a fair shot to prosper and resume their lives back home.

Although unemployment numbers are getting better for everyone, there is still reason for concern and work to be done. The unemployment rate for our youngest veterans, ages 18–24, transitioning from the military, averaged 20 percent in 2012, compared to 15 percent for non-veterans between the ages 18–24. Furthermore, in 2012, the unemployment rate among post-9/11 veterans was nearly 10 percent, while the unemployment rate for all veterans and non-veterans was less than 8 percent. This trend continues into this year, with our younger post-9/11 veterans encountering the most difficulty finding employment.

Businesses in the private sector have shown an interest in hiring veterans, but often find that veterans who apply lack industry specific experience to compete with non-veteran candidates. While it is important to ensure we provide programs to help veterans translate their military skills into the civilian sector, there remains a need to: equip veterans with civilian skills and experience necessary to meet the challenges of competing with those who have years of experience in the civilian workforce; find employers who understand military skills; and assist in helping them to readjust back to their local communities.

The Department of Defense reports that approximately one in five enlisted servicemembers separating from active duty have a military-learned skill that is not easily transferable to a civilian occupation. Many of these servicemembers will need to transition into a civilian career field that is different than their military occupation.

We have a responsibility to those who served in the military, and that includes providing practical solutions. I am proud to introduce legislation, The Veterans Equipped for Success Act of 2013, that would provide our veterans the tools necessary to transition to the civilian workforce.

First, the legislation, establishes a three-year pilot program that will partner certain unemployed veterans with employers in the private-sector. In general, the program will provide employers a wage subsidy, up to 75 percent of the wages paid, capped at $14,000 a year, and incentives to hire these veterans. Not only does the program stimulate job creation, but will provide potentially more than 150,000 veterans with the valuable work experience and civilian skills they need to obtain long-term employment.

Second, The Veterans Equipped for Success Act of 2013 focuses on providing employment opportunities and civilian work experience to our younger veterans ages 18–30. Under another three-year pilot program, up to 50,000 participating veterans, at a time, would be paired with private-sector employers for one year and provided a salary from the Department of Veterans Affairs. Employers would provide veterans mentorship, job shadowing, and valuable civilian work experience, while having the opportunity to learn about the work veterans performed in the military and the skills they acquired. The legislation also helps veterans reintegrate into their communities and give back to other veterans.

We have made a solemn commitment to aid veterans by creating job opportunities and providing them with the necessary skills to succeed. There is clearly a need for improved employment opportunities for veterans, particularly our younger transitioning veterans. This legislation would help veterans meet the challenges of competing in the civilian workforce by filling gaps not addressed by current programs. We owe it to our veterans to ensure they have the opportunity to gain valuable skills and work experience to assist them in successfully transitioning into the civilian workforce.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the text of the bill be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the text of the bill was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

S. 922

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 ''Veterans Equipped for Success Act of 2013''.

SEC. 2. PILOT PROGRAM ON PROVISION OF SUBSIDIES TO EMPLOYERS FOR EMPLOYMENT OF CERTAIN VETERANS AND MEMBERS OF THE ARMED FORCES.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Commencing not later than January 1, 2014, the Secretary of Labor shall, acting through the Assistant Secretary of Labor for Veterans' Employment and Training and in collaboration with the Secretary of Veterans Affairs, carry out a pilot program to assess the feasibility and advisability of providing subsidies to eligible employers to employ eligible individuals—

(1) to provide eligible individuals with valuable work experience;

(2) to increase the skills of eligible individuals; and

(3) to assist eligible individuals in obtaining long-term employment.

(b) ELIGIBLE INDIVIDUAL.—For purposes of the pilot program, an eligible individual is an individual who—

(1) is—

(A) a veteran of the Armed Forces who was discharged or released from service therein under conditions other than dishonorable; or

(B) a member of a reserve component of the Armed Forces (including the National Guard) who—

(i) served on active duty in the Armed Forces (other than active duty for training) for more than 180 consecutive days during the two-year period ending on the date of commencement of the participation in the pilot program; and

(ii) is not serving on active duty on the date of commencement of participation in the pilot program;

(2) is, at the time at which the individual applies for participation in the pilot program—

(A) 18 years of age or more but not more than 34 years of age; or

(B) 55 years of age or more but not more than 64 years of age;

(3) is not in receipt of compensation under chapter 11 of title 38, United States Code, by reason of unemployability;

(4) is not enrolled on the date of commencement of participation in the pilot program in a Federal or State job training program; and

(5) is considered by the Secretary to be unemployed or underemployed.

(c) ELIGIBLE EMPLOYER.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—For purposes of the pilot program, an eligible employer is an employer determined by the Secretary to meet such criteria for participation in the pilot program as the Secretary shall establish for purposes of the pilot program, except that an employer may not be determined to be an eligible employer for that purpose if the employer—

(A) has been investigated or subject to a case or action by the Federal Trade Commission during the 180-day period ending on the date the employer would otherwise commence participation in the pilot program;

(B) has not been in good standing with a State business bureau during the period described in subparagraph (A);

(C) is an agency of the Federal Government or a State or local government;

(D) is delinquent with respect to payment of any taxes or employer contributions described under sections 3301 and 3302(a)(1) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 (26 U.S.C. 3301 and 3302(a)(1)) or with respect to any related reporting requirement;

(E) has previously participated in the pilot program and, as determined by the Secretary, failed to abide by a requirement of the pilot program;

(F) does not provide assurances to the Secretary at the time the employer would otherwise commence participation in the pilot program that the employer will comply under the pilot program with the requirements for non-displacement of current employees specified in paragraph (2); or

(G) receives more than 75 percent of its revenue from the Federal Government or a State or local government.

(2) NON-DISPLACEMENT OF CURRENT EMPLOYEES.—The requirements specified in this paragraph are the following:

(A) That an employer shall not use an individual participating in the pilot program to displace any employee of the employer at the time of commencement of participation in the pilot program from employment or any employment benefits, including a partial displacement (such as a reduction in the hours of non-overtime work, wages, or employment benefits).

(B) That an employer shall not permit an individual participating in the pilot program to perform work activities related to any job for which—

(i) any other individual is on layoff from the same or any substantially-equivalent position; or

(ii) the employer has terminated the employment of any employee or otherwise reduced the workforce of the employer with the intention of filling or partially filling the vacancy so created with the work activities to be performed by the individual participating in the pilot program.

(C) That an employer shall not create a job for an individual participating in the pilot program in a manner that will infringe in any way upon the opportunities for promotion of individuals employed by the employer on the date of the employer's commencement of participation in the pilot program.

(D) That—

(i) an employer shall not, by means of assigning work activities under the pilot program, impair an existing contract for services or a collective bargaining agreement; and

(ii) work activities that would be inconsistent with the terms of a collective bargaining agreement shall not be undertaken by an individual participating in the pilot program without the written concurrence of the labor organization that is signatory to the collective bargaining agreement.

(d) DURATION AND NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS.—

(1) DURATION.—The Secretary shall carry out the pilot program during the three-year period beginning on the date of the commencement of the pilot program.

(2) NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS.—Not more than 50,000 eligible individuals may concurrently participate in the pilot program.

(e) LOCATIONS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall carry out the pilot program in four locations selected by the Secretary for purposes of the pilot program from among areas with populations the Secretary determines have high concentrations of veterans.

(2) CONSULTATION WITH SECRETARY OF VETERANS AFFAIRS.—In selecting locations under paragraph (1), the Secretary of Labor may consult with the Secretary of Veterans Affairs, particularly with respect to determining which areas have populations with high concentrations of veterans.

(f) SUBSIDIES.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—For each eligible employer approved by the Secretary to participate in the pilot program who employs on a full-time basis an eligible individual approved by the Secretary to participate in the pilot program, the Secretary shall provide a subsidy for the employment of such eligible individual by such eligible employer during such period as—

(A) the eligible individual is employed by the eligible employer;

(B) the eligible individual is participating in the pilot program; and

(C) the eligible employer is participating in the pilot program.

(2) AMOUNT.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in subparagraph (B), a subsidy provided by the Secretary under the pilot program to an eligible employer for the employment of an eligible individual shall be an amount equal to—

(i) except as provided in clause (ii), 60 percent of the basic pay provided by the eligible employer under the pilot program to the eligible individual; and

(ii) in the case in which the eligible employer provides employment that includes an apprenticeship (which must be approved for purposes of the pilot program not later than two years after the date of the commencement of the pilot program), 75 percent of the basic pay provided by the eligible employer under the pilot program to the eligible individual.

(B) MAXIMUM AMOUNT.—Except as provided in subparagraph (D), the aggregate amount of subsidy provided under the pilot program to an eligible employer for the employment of an eligible individual may not exceed—

(i) except as provided in clause (ii), $11,000; or

(ii) in the case described in subparagraph (A)(ii), $14,000.

(C) DISBURSEMENT OF PAYMENTS.—

(i) PAYMENTS ON QUARTERLY BASIS.—Except as provided in clause (ii), subsidies paid to an eligible employer under subparagraph (A) shall be paid to the eligible employer on a quarterly basis.

(ii) PAYMENTS ON MONTHLY BASIS.—In order to relieve financial burden on an eligible employer participating in the pilot program whom the Secretary determines has few employees, the Secretary may pay subsidies under subparagraph (A) to such employer on a monthly basis as the Secretary considers appropriate.

(D) ADDITIONAL HIRING INCENTIVE.—If an eligible employer who received a subsidy under the pilot program for the employment of an eligible individual hires such eligible individual on a full-time basis following the completion of the participation of such eligible individual in the pilot program, the Secretary shall pay such eligible employer an additional amount equal to 10 percent of the aggregate amount of subsidy paid to the eligible employer under subparagraph (A) during the last six months of such eligible individual's employment with such eligible employer while participating in the pilot program. Any amount paid under this subparagraph shall not apply against the aggregate maximum amount specified in subparagraph (B).

(E) APPRENTICESHIPS.—The Secretary may establish guidelines or criteria for the approval or disapproval of apprenticeships for purposes of the pilot program.

(3) DURATION.—A subsidy provided to an eligible employer to employ an eligible individual under the pilot program shall be for the lesser of—

(A) a period of one year; and

(B) the duration of such eligible individual's employment with the eligible employer.

(4) CONSIDERATION CONCERNING RECEIPT OF CONCURRENT SUBSIDIES.—In the case of an eligible employer who is already receiving one or more subsidies under the pilot program for the employment of one or more eligible individuals, when determining whether to provide an additional subsidy to such employer to employ an additional eligible individual, the Secretary may take into consideration, if after hiring such additional eligible individual, the number of eligible individuals for whom the employer is receiving a subsidy under the pilot program would constitute more than 10 percent of the workforce of the eligible employer.

(5) MINIMUM WAGE.—No eligible employer may receive a subsidy under the pilot program for the employment of an eligible individual if the rate of pay for such employment is less than the greater of the rate specified in section 6(a)(1) of the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938 (29 U.S.C. 206(a)(1)) or the rate specified in the applicable State minimum wage law.

(6) SENSE OF CONGRESS ON EXCLUSION OF CERTAIN EMPLOYMENT.—It is the sense of Congress that an employer should not be provided a subsidy under the pilot program for employment of an eligible individual in a position under a contract, grant, or cooperative agreement with the Federal Government or a State or local government that involves functions that are so inherently governmental that the position would not provide the eligible individual with experience, training, or skills necessary for employment in the private sector in a position not involving such functions.

(g) PARTICIPATION.—

(1) APPLICATION.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—An eligible employer or an eligible individual seeking to participate in the pilot program shall submit to the Secretary an application therefor at such time and in such manner as the Secretary shall specify.

(B) ELEMENTS.—Except as provided in subparagraph (C), each application submitted under subparagraph (A) shall contain such information as the Secretary may specify.

(C) REQUIREMENTS OF ELIGIBLE EMPLOYERS.—An application submitted by an eligible employer under subparagraph (A) shall include assurance that the eligible employer will comply with the requirements for nondisplacement of current employees specified in subsection (c)(2) under the pilot program.

(2) SELECTION.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall review each application submitted by an applicant under paragraph (1) and approve or disapprove the applicant for participation in the pilot program.

(B) EMPLOYER SELECTION CONSIDERATIONS.—In approving or disapproving an eligible employer for participation in the pilot program, the Secretary may consider past performance of the eligible employer with respect to the following:

(i) Job training, basic skills training, and related activities.

(ii) Fiscal accountability.

(iii) Demonstration of a high potential for growth and long-term job creation.

(C) CONSIDERATIONS CONCERNING SELECTION OF FOR-PROFIT AND NOT-FOR-PROFIT EMPLOYERS.—The Secretary may consider approving both for-profit and not-for-profit employers who are eligible employers for participation in the pilot program.

(D) CONSIDERATIONS CONCERNING PARTICIPATION OF SMALL BUSINESS CONCERNS.—In selecting eligible employers for participation in the pilot program, the Secretary may consider the extent to which small business concerns are afforded opportunities to participate in the pilot program.

(3) EARLY TERMINATION OR SEPARATION OF ELIGIBLE INDIVIDUAL PARTICIPANTS BY SECRETARY.—If the Secretary determines that an eligible individual participating in the pilot program is not making satisfactory attendance in employment, or has been removed from placement for misconduct, the Secretary may terminate such eligible individual's status as a participant in the pilot program and bar such eligible individual from further participation in the pilot program.

(4) EMPLOYMENT STATUS.—

(A) COMPENSATION FOR WORK INJURIES.—An eligible individual employed by an eligible employer who receives a subsidy for such employment under the pilot program shall be deemed, during the period of such subsidy, an employee of the United States for the purposes of the benefits of chapter 81 of title 5, United States Code, but not for the purposes of laws administered by the Office of Personnel Management.

(B) HEALTH BENEFITS.—For purposes of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (Public Law 111–148), an eligible individual employed by an eligible employer shall be considered an employee of the Department of Labor and not the eligible employer during such period as the eligible employer receives a subsidy under the pilot program for the employment of such eligible individual.

(h) TRANSPORTATION SUPPORT FOR PARTICIPATING ELIGIBLE INDIVIDUALS.—In accordance with criteria established by the Secretary for purposes of the pilot program, the Secretary may pay an allowance based upon mileage, of any eligible individual whose employment is subsidized under the pilot program not in excess of 75 miles to or from a facility of the eligible employer or other place in connection with such employment.

(i) GRANTS TO ELIGIBLE ENTITIES.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary may award grants to not more than four eligible entities to assist the Secretary in carrying out the pilot program.

(2) ELIGIBLE ENTITIES.—For purposes of the pilot program, an eligible entity is a nonprofit organization.

(3) CONSIDERATIONS.—In awarding grants under this subsection, the Secretary may consider whether an eligible entity—

(A) has an understanding of the unemployment problems of eligible individuals and members of the Armed Forces transitioning from service in the Armed Forces to civilian life;

(B) is familiar with a location selected under subsection (e) and has an understanding of employment in such location and employment assistance available to eligible individuals in such location; and

(C) has the capability to assist the Secretary in administering effectively the pilot program and provide employment assistance to eligible individuals.

(4) USE OF FUNDS.—Amounts received by a recipient of a grant under this subsection may be used as follows:

(A) To assist the Secretary in carrying out the pilot program.

(B) To recruit eligible employers and eligible individuals to participate in the pilot program.

(C) To coordinate and implement job placement and other employer outreach activities in connection with the pilot program.

(D) To carry out such other activities as the Secretary considers appropriate for purposes of the pilot program.

(j) ADDITIONAL PILOT PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS.—Under the pilot program, the Secretary shall—

(1) develop an objective assessment process that will identify the work experience, skill levels, and interests of eligible individuals participating in the pilot program;

(2) ensure that employment and counseling services are available to eligible individuals participating in the pilot program, including by connecting eligible individuals with services available to the eligible individuals through State or local employment service or other public agencies;

(3) develop and implement procedures for evaluating job placement and employment of eligible individuals participating in the pilot program; and

(4) carry out such other activities as the Secretary considers appropriate for purposes of the pilot program.

(k) OUTREACH.—The Secretary of Labor and the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall jointly conduct a program of outreach to inform eligible employers and eligible individuals about the pilot program and the benefits of participating in the pilot program.

(l) MINIMIZATION OF ADMINISTRATIVE BURDEN ON PARTICIPATING EMPLOYERS.—The Secretary of Labor shall take such measures as may be necessary to minimize administrative burdens incurred by eligible employers in participating in the pilot program.

(m) REPORTS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 45 days after the completion of the first year of the pilot program and not later than 180 days after the completion of the second and third years of the pilot program, the Secretary shall submit to Congress a report on the pilot program.

(2) CONTENTS.—Each report submitted under paragraph (1) shall include the following:

(A) An evaluation of the pilot program.

(B) The number and characteristics of individuals participating in the pilot program.

(C) The number and characteristics of employers participating in the pilot program.

(D) The number and types of positions of employment in which eligible individuals were placed under the pilot program.

(E) The number of individuals who obtained long-term full-time employment positions as a result of the pilot program, the hourly wage and nature of such employment, and if available, whether such individuals were still employed in such positions three months after obtaining such positions.

(F) A description of the outreach activities undertaken to raise awareness of the pilot program by potential eligible individuals and eligible employers, and an assessment of the effectiveness of such activities.

(G) An assessment of the feasibility and advisability of providing subsidies to eligible employers to employ eligible individuals.

(H) An assessment of the effect of the pilot program on earnings of eligible individuals and the employment of eligible individuals.

(I) Such recommendations for legislative and administrative action as the Secretary considers appropriate to improve the pilot program, to expand the pilot program, or to improve the employment of eligible individuals.

(n) RELATION TO OTHER FEDERAL ASSISTANCE.—Notwithstanding any other provision of law, wages received by an individual that are subsidized under the pilot program may not be used in any calculation to determine the eligibility of such individual for any Federal program for the purpose of obtaining child care assistance.

(o) FUNDING LIMITATIONS.—

(1) WAGE SUBSIDIES.—Not less than 95 percent of amounts appropriated or otherwise made available for the pilot program shall be used to provide subsidies under subsection (f).

(2) ADMINISTRATION.—Not more than 5 percent of amounts appropriated or otherwise made available for the pilot program may be used to administer the pilot program.

(p) COORDINATION WITH WORK OPPORTUNITY TAX CREDIT.—Section 51 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 is amended by adding at the end the following new subsection:

''(j) COORDINATION WITH PILOT PROGRAM ON PROVISION OF SUBSIDIES TO EMPLOYERS FOR EMPLOYMENT OF CERTAIN VETERANS AND MEMBERS OF ARMED FORCES.—No credit shall be allowed under subsection (a) with respect to any wages paid to a qualified veteran if the taxpayer has received a subsidy under section 2(f) of the Veterans Equipped for Success Act of 2013 with respect to such qualified veteran.''.

(q) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

(1) APPRENTICESHIP.—The term ''apprenticeship'' means a program of apprenticeship approved by the Office of Apprenticeship of the Department of Labor or a State apprenticeship as meeting the standards of apprenticeship published by the Secretary of Labor pursuant to section 2 of the Act of August 16, 1937 (popularly known as the ''National Apprenticeship Act'') (29 U.S.C. 50a).

(2) FULL-TIME BASIS.—The term ''full-time basis'', with respect to employment, means employment of a minimum of 30 hours a week.

(3) SMALL BUSINESS CONCERN.—The term ''small business concern'' has the meaning given that term under section 3(a) of the Small Business Act (15 U.S.C. 632(a)).

SEC. 3. PILOT PROGRAM ON PROVISION OF CAREER TRANSITION SERVICES TO YOUNG VETERANS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Commencing not later than January 1, 2014, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall, in collaboration with the Secretary of Labor, carry out a pilot program to assess the feasibility and advisability of establishing a program to provide career transition services to eligible individuals—

(1) to provide eligible individuals with work experience in the civilian sector;

(2) to increase the marketable skills of eligible individuals;

(3) to assist eligible individuals in obtaining long-term employment; and

(4) to assist in integrating eligible individuals into their local communities.

(b) ELIGIBLE INDIVIDUALS.—For purposes of the pilot program, an eligible individual is an individual who—

(1) is—

(A) a veteran of the Armed Forces who was discharged or released from service therein under conditions other than dishonorable; or

(B) a member of a reserve component of the Armed Forces (including the National Guard) who—

(i) served on active duty in the Armed Forces (other than active duty for training) for more than 180 consecutive days during the two-year period ending on the date of the commencement of the individual's participation in the pilot program; and

(ii) is not serving on active duty on the date of the commencement of the individual's participation in the pilot program;

(2) is unemployed or underemployed, as determined by the Secretary; and

(3) is, at the time at which the individual applies for participation in the pilot program, 18 years of age or older, but not more than 30 years of age.

(c) DURATION AND NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS.—

(1) DURATION.—The Secretary shall carry out the pilot program during the three-year period beginning on the date of the commencement of the pilot program.

(2) NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS.—Not more than 50,000 eligible individuals may concurrently participate in the pilot program.

(d) LOCATIONS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The pilot program shall be carried out in four locations selected by the Secretary for purposes of the pilot program and in accordance with the provisions of this subsection.

(2) CONSIDERATION OF AREAS OF HIGH CONCENTRATIONS OF YOUNG ELIGIBLE INDIVIDUALS.—In selecting locations under paragraph (1), the Secretary shall consider areas with populations the Secretary determines have high concentrations of eligible individuals, particularly those with high concentrations of eligible individuals who are age 25 or younger.

(e) CAREER TRANSITION SERVICES.—For purposes of the pilot program, career transition services are the following:

(1) Internships under subsection (f).

(2) Mentorship and job-shadowing under subsection (g).

(3) Volunteer opportunities under subsection (h).

(4) Professional skill workshops under subsection (i).

(5) Skills assessment under subsection (j).

(6) Additional services under subsection (k).

(f) INTERNSHIPS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—For each eligible individual whom the Secretary approves for participation in the pilot program, the Secretary shall attempt to place such eligible individual in an internship on a full-time basis with an eligible employer whom the Secretary has approved for participation in the pilot program.

(2) ELIGIBLE EMPLOYER.—For purposes of the pilot program, an eligible employer is an employer determined by the Secretary to meet such criteria for participation in the pilot program as the Secretary shall establish for purposes of the pilot program, except that an employer may not be determined to be an eligible employer for that purpose if the employer—

(A) has been investigated or subject to a case or action by the Federal Trade Commission during the 180-day period ending on the date the employer would otherwise commence participation in the pilot program;

(B) has not been in good standing with a State business bureau during the period described in subparagraph (A);

(C) is an agency of the Federal Government or a State or local government;

(D) is delinquent with respect to payment of any taxes or employer contributions described under sections 3301 and 3302(a)(1) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 (26 U.S.C. 3301 and 3302(a)(1)) or with respect to any related reporting requirement;

(E) has previously participated in the pilot program and, as determined by the Secretary, failed to abide by a requirement of the pilot program; or

(F) receives more than 75 percent of its revenue from the Federal Government or a State or local government.

(3) DURATION.—Each internship under the pilot program shall be for a period of one year.

(4) WAGES.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in subparagraph (B), the Secretary shall furnish pay to each eligible individual participating in an internship under the pilot program for the duration of such participation at a rate equal to the greater of—

(i) the rate specified in section 6(a)(1) of the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938 (29 U.S.C. 206(a)(1)) or the rate specified in the applicable State minimum wage law; and

(ii) if the eligible individual was receiving unemployment compensation before being placed in the internship, the rate of such unemployment compensation.

(B) MAXIMUM AMOUNT.—An eligible individual may not receive an aggregate amount of more than $30,000 in pay from the Secretary under this paragraph.

(5) EMPLOYMENT STATUS.—

(A) COMPENSATION FOR WORK INJURIES.—An eligible individual placed in an internship with an eligible employer under the pilot program shall be deemed, during the period of such internship under the pilot program, an employee of the United States for the purposes of the benefits of chapter 81 of title 5, United States Code, but not for the purposes of laws administered by the Office of Personnel Management.

(B) HEALTH BENEFITS.—For purposes of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (Public Law 111–148), an eligible individual placed in an internship with an eligible employer under the pilot program shall be considered an employee of the Department of Veterans Affairs and not the eligible employer during the period of such internship under the pilot program.

(6) RELATION TO OTHER FEDERAL ASSISTANCE.—Notwithstanding any other provision of law, pay received by an individual under this subsection may not be used in any calculation to determine the eligibility of such individual for any Federal program for the purpose of obtaining child care assistance.

(7) LIMIT ON NUMBER OF INTERN PLACEMENTS.—In the case of an eligible employer at which one or more eligible individuals have been placed for an internship under the pilot program, the Secretary may consider, in determining whether to place an additional eligible individual at such employer for an internship under the pilot program, whether if after such additional placement, the number of eligible individuals placed in internships at such employer under the pilot program would constitute more than 10 percent of the eligible employer's workforce. For purposes of the previous sentence, being an intern under the pilot program placed at the eligible employer shall be considered part of the employer's workforce.

(g) MENTORSHIP AND JOB-SHADOWING.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—As a condition of an eligible employer's participation in the pilot program and the placement of an eligible individual in an internship at the eligible employer, the eligible employer shall provide each eligible individual placed in an internship at the eligible employer under the pilot program with at least one mentor who is an employee of the eligible employer.

(2) JOB-SHADOWING AND CAREER COUNSELING.—To the extent practicable, a mentor assigned to an eligible individual participating in the pilot program shall provide such eligible individual with job shadowing and career counseling.

(h) VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—As a condition on participation in the pilot program, each eligible individual who participates in the pilot program shall, not less frequently than once each month in which the eligible individual participates in the pilot program, engage in a qualifying volunteer activity in accordance with guidelines the Secretary shall establish.

(2) QUALIFYING VOLUNTEER ACTIVITIES.—For purposes of this subsection, a qualifying volunteer activity is any activity the Secretary considers related to providing assistance to, or for the benefit of, a veteran. Such activities may include the following:

(A) Outreach.

(B) Assisting an organization recognized by the Secretary for the representation of veterans under section 5902 of title 38, United States Code, on a volunteer basis.

(C) Service benefitting a veteran in a State home or a Department of Veterans Affairs medical facility.

(D) Service benefitting a veteran at an institution of higher education.

(i) PROFESSIONAL SKILLS WORKSHOPS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall provide eligible individuals participating in the pilot program with workshops for the development and improvement of the professional skills of such eligible individuals.

(2) TAILORED.—The workshops provided by the Secretary shall be tailored to meet the particular needs of eligible individuals participating in the pilot program as determined under subsection (j).

(3) TOPICS.—The workshops provided to eligible individuals participating in the pilot program may include workshops for the development of such professional skills as the Secretary considers appropriate, which may include the following:

(A) Written and oral communication skills.

(B) Basic word processing and other computer skills.

(C) Interpersonal skills.

(4) MANNER OF PRESENTATION.—Workshops on particular topics shall be provided through such means as may be appropriate, effective, and approved of by the Secretary for purposes of the pilot program. Such means may include use of electronic communication.

(5) ASSESSMENTS.—The Secretary shall conduct an assessment of a participant in a workshop conducted under this subsection to assess the participant's knowledge acquired as a result of participating in the workshop.

(j) SKILLS ASSESSMENT.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Under the pilot program, the Secretary shall develop and implement an objective assessment of eligible individuals participating in the pilot program to assist in the placement of such individuals in internships under subsection (f) and to assist in the tailoring of workshops under subsection (i).

(2) ELEMENTS.—The assessment may include an assessment of the skill levels and service needs of each participant, which may include a review of basic professional entry-level skills, prior work experience, employability, and the individual's interests.

(k) ADDITIONAL SERVICES.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in paragraph (2), the Secretary shall, under the pilot program, furnish the following services to an eligible individual participating in the pilot program when assessment under subsection (j) indicates such services are appropriate:

(A) Counseling, such as job counseling and career counseling.

(B) Job search assistance.

(C) Follow-up services with participants that are offered unsubsidized employment by the employer with whom they were assigned.

(D) Transportation, as described in paragraph (2).

(2) REFERRALS.—In lieu of furnishing a service to an eligible individual under paragraph (1), the Secretary may refer such eligible individual to another Federal, State, or local government program that provides such service.

(3) TRANSPORTATION.—In accordance with criteria established by the Secretary for purposes of the pilot program, the Secretary may pay an allowance based upon mileage, of any eligible individual placed in an internship under the pilot program not in excess of 75 miles to or from a facility of the eligible employer or other place in connection with such internship.

(l) PARTICIPATION.—

(1) APPLICATION.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—An eligible employer, eligible individual, or member of the Armed Forces described in subparagraph (B) seeking to participate in the pilot program shall submit to the Secretary of Veterans Affairs an application therefor at such time, in such manner, and containing such information as the Secretary shall specify.

(B) MEMBERS OF ARMED FORCES.—A member of the Armed Forces described in this subparagraph is a member of the Armed Forces who—

(i) is expected, within 180 days, to be discharged or released from service in the active military, naval, or air service under conditions other than dishonorable; and

(ii) has not accepted an offer of employment that would begin after such discharge or release.

(2) SELECTION.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall review each application submitted by an applicant under paragraph (1) and approve or disapprove the applicant for participation in the pilot program.

(B) CONSIDERATION OF EMPLOYER PERFORMANCE.—In approving or disapproving an eligible employer for participation in the pilot program, the Secretary may consider past performance of the eligible employer with respect to the following:

(i) Job training, basic skills training, and related activities.

(ii) Fiscal accountability.

(iii) Demonstration of a high potential for growth and long-term job creation.

(C) CONSIDERATIONS CONCERNING SELECTION OF FOR-PROFIT AND NOT-FOR-PROFIT EMPLOYERS.—The Secretary may consider approving both for-profit and not-for-profit employers who are eligible employers for placement of interns under the pilot program.

(D) CONSIDERATIONS CONCERNING PARTICIPATION OF SMALL BUSINESS CONCERNS.—In selecting eligible employers for participation in the pilot program, the Secretary may consider the extent to which small business concerns are afforded opportunities to participate in the pilot program.

(m) GRANTS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary may award grants to not more than four eligible entities to assist the Secretary in carrying out the pilot program.

(2) ELIGIBLE ENTITIES.—For purposes of the pilot program, an eligible entity is a nonprofit organization.

(3) CONSIDERATIONS.—In awarding grants under this subsection, the Secretary may consider whether an eligible entity—

(A) has an understanding of the unemployment problems of eligible individuals and members of the Armed Forces transitioning from service in the Armed Forces to civilian life;

(B) is familiar with one or more locations selected under subsection (d); and

(C) have the capability to assist the Secretary in administering effectively the pilot program and providing career transition services to eligible individuals.

(4) USE OF FUNDS.—Amounts received by a recipient of a grant under this subsection may be used as the Secretary considers appropriate for purposes of the pilot program, including as follows:

(A) To assist the Secretary in carrying out the pilot program.

(B) To recruit eligible employers and eligible individuals to participate in the pilot program.

(C) To match eligible individuals participating in the pilot program with internship opportunities at eligible employers participating in the pilot program.

(D) To coordinate and carry out job placement and other employer outreach activities.

(n) OUTREACH.—The Secretary of Veterans Affairs and the Secretary of Labor shall jointly carry out a program of outreach to inform eligible employers and eligible individuals about the pilot program and the benefits of participating in the pilot program.

(o) AWARDS FOR OUTSTANDING CONTRIBUTIONS TO PILOT PROGRAM.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Each year of the pilot program, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs may recognize one or more eligible employers or one or more eligible individuals participating in the pilot program for demonstrating outstanding achievement in carrying out or in contributing to the success of the pilot program.

(2) CRITERIA.—The Secretary shall establish such selection procedures and criteria as the Secretary considers appropriate for the award of recognition under this subsection.

(p) MINIMIZATION OF ADMINISTRATIVE BURDEN ON PARTICIPATING EMPLOYERS.—The Secretary shall take such measures as may be necessary to minimize administrative burdens incurred by eligible employers due to participation in the pilot program.

(q) REPORTS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 45 days after the completion of the first year of the pilot program and not later than 180 days after the completion of the second and third years of the pilot program, the Secretary shall submit to Congress a report on the pilot program.

(2) CONTENTS.—Each report submitted under paragraph (1) shall include the following:

(A) An evaluation of the pilot program.

(B) The number and characteristics of participants in the pilot program.

(C) The number and types of internships in which eligible individuals were placed under the pilot program.

(D) The number of individuals who obtained long-term full-time unsubsidized employment positions as a result of the pilot program, the hourly wage and nature of such employment, and if available, whether such individuals were still employed in such positions three months after obtaining such positions.

(E) An assessment of the feasibility and advisability of providing career transition services to eligible individuals.

(F) An assessment of the effect of the pilot program on earnings of eligible individuals and the employment of eligible individuals.

(G) Such recommendations for legislative and administrative action as the Secretary may have to improve the pilot program, to expand the pilot program, or to improve the employment of eligible individuals.

(r) FUNDING LIMITATIONS.—

(1) WAGES FOR INTERNSHIPS.—Not less than 95 percent of amounts appropriated or otherwise made available for the pilot program shall be used to provide pay under subsection (f)(4).

(2) ADMINISTRATION.—Not more than 5 percent of amounts appropriated or otherwise made available for the pilot program may be used to administer the pilot program.

(s) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

(1) ACTIVE DUTY, ACTIVE MILITARY, NAVAL, OR AIR SERVICE, RESERVE COMPONENT, AND VETERAN.—The terms ''active duty'', ''active military, naval, or air service'', ''reserve component'', and ''veteran'' have the meanings given such terms in section 101 of title 38, United States Code.

(2) FULL-TIME BASIS.—The term ''full-time basis'', with respect to an internship, means participation in the internship of not fewer than 30 hours per week and not more than 40 hours per week.

(3) SMALL BUSINESS CONCERN.—The term ''small business concern'' has the meaning given that term under section 3(a) of the Small Business Act (15 U.S.C. 632(a)).

(4) UNEMPLOYMENT COMPENSATION.—The term ''unemployment compensation'' means regular compensation (as defined in section 205 of the Federal-State Extended Unemployment Compensation Act of 1970), compensation under the Federal-State Extended Compensation Act of 1970, and compensation under the emergency unemployment compensation program under title IV of the Supplemental Appropriations Act, 2008.

By Mr. SANDERS:

S. 928. A bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to improve the processing of claims for compensation under laws administered by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

Mr. SANDERS. Mr. President, it is my belief that the inability to provide compensation benefits in a timely manner tarnishes the reputation of the Department of Veterans Affairs and overshadows much of the good work done there. As I have said before, I never want a veteran's negative experience with the claims system to prevent him or her from seeking mental health care or help in battling homelessness. That is why, today, I am introducing the Claims Processing Improvement Act of 2013, a bill that would help to provide veterans and their family members with the timely and accurate claims decisions they deserve.

The fact that nearly 70 percent of claims are pending longer than the Department's goal of 125 days is completely unacceptable. VA knows this, and the Department has set ambitious goals, put forward a plan, and has been working hard to transform the compensation claims system. Despite these efforts, it is clear that much work remains to be done. That is why we must continue to work together to find innovative solutions until the claims system is transformed into one fit for the 21st century.

Now is the time to truly apply all of the latest technological advances, the insight and experience of veterans service organizations, the lessons learned from the wealth of studies that have already looked at the claims system, and the resources of the Federal Government to tackle this problem from all angles and to finally make real progress.

The Claims Processing Improvement Act of 2013 is a critical part of the solution. This bill is a holistic approach to addressing the challenges of the claims system and would provide long-term reforms that will improve VA's claims process from start to finish—from the regional offices located across the nation to the Board of Veterans' Appeals. I would like to highlight just a few of the important provisions in this legislation.

VA must do a better job of showing not only Congress, but also veterans and their survivors about how VA plans to accomplish the ambitious goal of eliminating the claims backlog by 2015. That is why this bill, for the first time, would require VA to publicly report on a quarterly basis information on both VA's quarterly goals and actual production. This would allow Congress and the public to see both the successes and failures of VA's transformation efforts, measure VA's progress, and allow for quicker course corrections when necessary.

At VA regional offices across this country, employees are trying to adapt to a changing work environment as VA continues its transition to a paperless claims processing system. These employees are given credit for work in a manner that does not accurately reflect the realities of an electronic claims processing system. VA's work credit system also focuses almost exclusively on speed, often to the detriment of quality.

During a hearing held by the Senate Committee on Veterans' Affairs earlier this year, Mr. Bart Stichman, Joint Executive Director of the National Veterans Legal Services Program, commented that ''VA regional office adjudicators prematurely decide claims—without taking the time to obtain and assemble the evidence necessary to properly decide a claim—in an effort to ensure that the average time for deciding an initial claim that is reported to VA managers and Congress is a low number of days.'' I have heard from other veterans service organizations about the need for a cultural change at VA. In order for this change to occur, employees must operate within an environment that accurately reflects the important tasks they are asked to accomplish and an environment that focuses equally on speed and quality.

This bill would facilitate that cultural change through the establishment of a work group designed to reassess the way employees are credited for their work. The work group, tasked with providing solutions, would include the very employees and organizations with the necessary expertise to finally establish a work credit system based on a data driven methodology and one

that is updated on a consistent and predictable basis. VA employees, many of whom are veterans themselves, deserve nothing less.

This bill would also address the workforce needs of VA and other Federal agencies with claims adjudication responsibilities. In fiscal year 2012, VA lost approximately 6 percent of its claims staff. This legislation would address employee attrition by establishing a task force to develop a strategic plan and initiate training to support the hiring of veterans in claims processing and adjudication positions throughout the Federal Government. This task force would simultaneously prepare servicemembers for the jobs that consistently need to be filled and create a generation of adjudicators throughout VA who can identify with the experiences of the population they serve.

This bill would address concerns raised by the Disabled American Veterans by ensuring appropriate oversight of the disability examination system and encouraging the use of private medical evidence when appropriate. As Mr. Violante, the National Legislative Director of Disabled American Veterans, pointed out at a Veterans' Affairs hearing on the disability claims system in March, disability benefits questionnaires were ''designed to allow private physicians to submit medical evidence on behalf of veterans they treat in a format that aids rating specialists.'' Making better use of private medical evidence, and awarding appropriate work credit for doing so, would save VA adjudicators precious time, taxpayers the added expense, and would relieve veterans from the stress of excessive medical exams.

While providing veterans with timely and accurate initial claims decisions has been the focus of much attention, I remain very concerned about the staggering number of appeals pending at the Board of Veterans' Appeals. According to the Report of the Chairman of the Board of Veterans' Appeals, there were 45,959 cases pending before the Board at the end of fiscal year 2012. The Chairman's Report also provided the average length of time between the filing of an appeal and the Board's disposition, which was 1,040 days in fiscal year 2012. It is 2 unconscionable that a veteran or a family member had to wait, on average, nearly three years for a decision on an appeal. This bill contains a number of provisions that would improve efficiency at the Board of Veterans' Appeals.

This legislation would expand the use of video hearings in order to serve more veterans, reduce an appellant's wait time for a hearing, and increase efficiency in issuing final decisions on appeals by reducing the number of travel days for employees issuing decisions. However, the right to an in-person hearing would be preserved should the veteran desire such a hearing. This bill would also streamline the appellate process by requiring veterans to more quickly file a notice of disagreement. Many veterans already take quick action but to ensure veterans are protected this legislation would provide a good cause exception in the event a notice of disagreement is not filed in a timely manner, such as in cases where a physical, mental, educational, or linguistic limitation prevented timely filing.

These are just a few of the provisions of this bill, which would positively impact the claims system. This legislation is the result of a collective body of information and insight gathered from Congressional hearings, meetings with veterans service organizations and VA staff, correspondence from veterans, and aggressive oversight by the Senate Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

The challenges of the claims system are enormously complex and there is no single silver bullet that will magically solve every problem. The Claims Processing Improvement Act of 2013 would, however, provide a number of the solutions necessary to ensure veterans and their family members receive timely and accurate benefit decisions.

Clearly there is much work yet to be done. I ask my colleagues to join with me in working together to find innovative solutions until we have truly created a claims system fit for the 21st century. As a nation we have asked more of these individuals than most of us can comprehend. We must now honor the promise we made as a nation—to take care of those who have taken care of us.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the text of the bill be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the text of the bill was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

S. 928

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

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE; TABLE OF CONTENTS.

(a) SHORT TITLE.—This Act may be cited as the ''Claims Processing Improvement Act of 2013''.

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

Sec. 1. Short title; table of contents.

TITLE I—AGENCY OF ORIGINAL JURISDICTION

Sec. 101. Establishment of working group to improve employee work credit and work management systems of Veterans Benefits Administration.

Sec. 102. Establishment of task force on retention and training of Department of Veterans Affairs claims processors and adjudicators.

Sec. 103. Streamlining non-Department of Veterans Affairs Federal records requests.

Sec. 104. Recognition of representatives of Indian tribes in the preparation, presentation, and prosecution of claims under laws administered by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs.

Sec. 105. Pilot program on participation of local and tribal governments in improving quality of claims for disability compensation submitted to Department of Veterans Affairs.

Sec. 106. Quarterly reports on progress of Department of Veterans Affairs in eliminating backlog of claims for compensation that have not been adjudicated.

TITLE II—BOARD OF VETERANS' APPEALS AND COURT OF APPEALS FOR VETERANS CLAIMS

Sec. 201. Modification of filing period for notice of disagreement to initiate appellate review of decisions of Department of Veterans Affairs.

Sec. 202. Determination of manner of appearance for hearings before Board of Veterans' Appeals.

Sec. 203. Disclosure of certain medical records in appellate proceedings in certain courts.

TITLE III—OTHER MATTERS

Sec. 301. Extension of authority for operations of Manila Department of Veterans Affairs Regional Office.

Sec. 302. Extended period for scheduling of medical exams for veterans receiving temporary disability ratings for severe mental disorder.

Sec. 303. Extension of marriage delimiting date for surviving spouses of Persian Gulf War veterans to qualify for death pension.

Sec. 304. Making effective date provision consistent with provision for benefits eligibility of a veteran's child based upon termination of remarriage by annulment.

Sec. 305. Extension of temporary authority for performance of medical disabilities examinations by contract physicians.

TITLE I—AGENCY OF ORIGINAL JURISDICTION

SEC. 101. ESTABLISHMENT OF WORKING GROUP TO IMPROVE EMPLOYEE WORK CREDIT AND WORK MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS OF VETERANS BENEFITS ADMINISTRATION.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 90 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall establish a working group to assess and develop recommendations for the improvement of the employee work credit and work management systems of the Veterans Benefits Administration.

(b) COMPOSITION.—The working group shall be composed of the following:

(1) The Secretary or the Secretary's designee.

(2) Individuals selected by the Secretary from among employees of the Department of Veterans Affairs who—

(A) handle claims for compensation and pension benefits; and

(B) are recommended to the Secretary by a labor organization for purposes of this section.

(3) Not fewer than three individuals selected by the Secretary to represent different organizations recognized by the Secretary for the representation of veterans under section 5902 of title 38, United States Code.

(c) DUTIES.—The duties of the working group are as follows:

(1) To assess and develop recommendations for the improvement of the employee work credit and work management systems of the Veterans Benefits Administration.

(2) To develop a data based methodology to be used in revising the employee work credit system of the Department and a schedule by which revisions to such system should be made.

(3) To assess and develop recommendations for improvement of the resource allocation model of the Veterans Benefits Administration.

(d) REVIEW AND INCORPORATION OF FINDINGS FROM PRIOR STUDY.—In carrying out its duties under subsection (c), the working group shall review the findings and conclusions of the Secretary regarding previous studies of the employee work credit and work management systems of the Veterans Benefits Administration.

(e) REPORTS.—

(1) INTERIM REPORT.—Not later than 180 days after the date of the establishment of the working group, the working group shall submit to Congress a report on the progress of the working group.

(2) FINAL REPORT.—Not later than one year after the date of the establishment of the working group, the working group shall submit to Congress the methodology and schedule developed under subsection (c)(2).

(f) IMPLEMENTATION OF METHODOLOGY AND SCHEDULE.—After submitting the report under subsection (e), the Secretary shall take such actions as may be necessary to apply the methodology developed under subsection (c)(2) and apply such methodology according to the schedule developed under such subsection.

SEC. 102. ESTABLISHMENT OF TASK FORCE ON RETENTION AND TRAINING OF DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS CLAIMS PROCESSORS AND ADJUDICATORS.

(a) ESTABLISHMENT.—The Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall establish a task force to assess retention and training of claims processors and adjudicators that are employed by the Department of Veterans Affairs and other Federal agencies and departments.

(b) COMPOSITION.—The task force shall be composed of the following:

(1) The Secretary of Veterans Affairs.

(2) The Director of the Office of Personnel Management.

(3) The Commissioner of Social Security.

(4) An individual selected by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs who represents an organization recognized by the Secretary for the representation of veterans under section 5902 of title 38, United States Code.

(5) Such other individuals selected by the Secretary who represent such other organizations and institutions as the Secretary considers appropriate.

(c) DURATION.—The task force established under subsection (a) shall terminate not later than two years after the date on which the task force is establish under such subsection.

(d) DUTIES.—The duties of the task force are as follows:

(1) To identify key skills required by claims processors and adjudicators to perform the duties of claims processors and adjudicators in the various claims processing and adjudication positions throughout the Federal Government.

(2) To identify reasons for employee attrition from claims processing positions.

(3) Not later than one year after the date of the establishment of the task force, to develop a Government-wide strategic and operational plan for promoting employment of veterans in claims processing positions in the Federal Government.

(4) To coordinate with educational institutions to develop training and programs of education for members of the Armed Forces to prepare such members for employment in claims processing and adjudication positions in the Federal Government.

(5) To identify and coordinate offices of the Department of Defense and the Department of Veterans Affairs located throughout the United States to provide information about, and promotion of, available claims processing positions to members of the Armed Forces transitioning to civilian life and to veterans with disabilities.

(6) To establish performance measures to assess the plan developed under paragraph (3), to assess the implementation of such plan, and revise such plan as the task force considers appropriate.

(7) To establish performance measures to evaluate the effectiveness of the task force.

(e) REPORTS.—

(1) SUBMITTAL OF PLAN.—Not later than one year after the date of the establishment of the task force, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall submit to Congress a report on the plan developed by the task force under subsection (d)(3).

(2) ASSESSMENT OF IMPLEMENTATION.—Not later than 120 days after the termination of the task force, the Secretary shall submit to Congress a report that assesses the implementation of the plan developed by the task force under subsection (d)(3).

SEC. 103. STREAMLINING NON-DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS FEDERAL RECORDS REQUESTS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Paragraph (2) of section 5103A(c) of title 38, United States Code, is amended to read as follows:

''(2)(A) Whenever the Secretary attempts to obtain records from a Federal department or agency, other than the Department, under this subsection, the Secretary shall make not fewer than two attempts to obtain the records, unless the records are obtained or the response to the first request makes evident that a second request for such records would be futile.

''(B) The notification requirements under subsection (b)(2) of this section shall apply if the Secretary is unable to obtain all of the records sought from a Federal department or agency other than the Department.''.

(b) SUBSEQUENT ATTAINMENT OF RECORDS.—Such section is further amended by adding at the end the following new paragraph:

''(3) If, after adjudicating a claim for a benefit under a law administered by the Secretary, the Secretary receives a record relevant to such claim (or associates with the file for such claim a record) that the Secretary requested from a Federal department or agency before the adjudication, the record received (or associated) shall be deemed to have been in the file for such claim as of the date of the original filing of the claim for such benefit.''.

(c) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by this section shall take effect on the date that is 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act and shall apply with respect to any claim that—

(1) is filed on or after the date that is 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act; or

(2) was filed before the date of the enactment of this Act and was not final as of such date.

SEC. 104. RECOGNITION OF REPRESENTATIVES OF INDIAN TRIBES IN THE PREPARATION, PRESENTATION, AND PROSECUTION OF CLAIMS UNDER LAWS ADMINISTERED BY THE SECRETARY OF VETERANS AFFAIRS.

Section 5902(a)(1) of title 38, United States Code, is amended by inserting ''Indian tribes (as defined in section 4 of the Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act (25 U.S.C. 450b))'' after ''Foreign Wars,''.

SEC. 105. PILOT PROGRAM ON PARTICIPATION OF LOCAL AND TRIBAL GOVERNMENTS IN IMPROVING QUALITY OF CLAIMS FOR DISABILITY COMPENSATION SUBMITTED TO DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS.

(a) PILOT PROGRAM REQUIRED.—The Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall carry out a pilot program to assess the feasibility and advisability of entering into memorandums of understanding with local governments and tribal organizations—

(1) to improve the quality of claims submitted to the Secretary for compensation under chapter 11 and pension under chapter 15 of title 38, United States Code; and

(2) to provide assistance to veterans who may be eligible for such compensation or pension in submitting such claims.

(b) MINIMUM NUMBER OF PARTICIPATING TRIBAL ORGANIZATIONS.—In carrying out the pilot program required by subsection (a), the Secretary shall enter into memorandums of understanding with at least—

(1) two tribal organizations; and

(2) 10 State or local governments.

(c) TRIBAL ORGANIZATION DEFINED.—In this section, the term ''tribal organization'' has the meaning given that term in section 3765 of title 38, United States Code.

SEC. 106. QUARTERLY REPORTS ON PROGRESS OF DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS IN ELIMINATING BACKLOG OF CLAIMS FOR COMPENSATION THAT HAVE NOT BEEN ADJUDICATED.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 90 days after the date of the enactment of this Act and not less frequently than quarterly thereafter through calendar year 2015, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall submit to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the House of Representatives a report on the backlog of claims filed with the Department of Veterans Affairs for compensation that have not been adjudicated by the Department.

(b) CONTENTS.—Each report submitted under subsection (a) shall include the following:

(1) For each month through calendar year 2015, a projection of the following:

(A) The number of claims completed.

(B) The number of claims received.

(C) The number of claims backlogged at the end of the month.

(D) The number of claims pending at the end of the month.

(E) A description of the status of the implementation of initiatives carried out by the Secretary to address the backlog.

(2) For each quarter through calendar year 2015, a projection of the average accuracy of disability determinations for compensation claims that require a disability rating (or disability decision).

(3) For each month during the most recently completed quarter, the following:

(A) The number of claims completed.

(B) The number of claims received.

(C) The number of claims backlogged at the end of the month.

(D) The number of claims pending at the end of the month.

(E) A description of the status of the implementation of initiatives carried out by the Secretary to address the backlog.

(4) For the most recently completed quarter, an assessment of the accuracy of disability determinations for compensation claims that require a disability rating (or disability decision).

(c) AVAILABILITY TO PUBLIC.—The Secretary shall make each report submitted under subsection (a) available to the public.

(d) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

(1) BACKLOGGED.—The term ''backlogged'', with respect to a claim for compensation received by the Secretary, means a claim that has been pending for more than 125 days.

(2) PENDING.—The term ''pending'', with respect to a claim for compensation received by the Secretary, means a claim that has not been adjudicated by the Secretary.

TITLE II—BOARD OF VETERANS' APPEALS AND COURT OF APPEALS FOR VETERANS CLAIMS

SEC. 201. MODIFICATION OF FILING PERIOD FOR NOTICE OF DISAGREEMENT TO INITIATE APPELLATE REVIEW OF DECISIONS OF DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS.

(a) FILING OF NOTICE OF DISAGREEMENT BY CLAIMANTS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Paragraph (1) of section 7105(b) of title 38, United States Code, is amended—

(A) by striking ''one year'' and inserting ''180 days'' in the first sentence; and

(B) by striking ''one-year'' and inserting ''180-day'' in the third sentence.

(2) ELECTRONIC FILING.—Such paragraph is further amended by inserting ''or transmitted by electronic means'' after ''postmarked''.

(3) GOOD CAUSE EXCEPTION FOR UNTIMELY FILING OF NOTICES OF DISAGREEMENT.—Such section 7105(b) is amended by adding at the end the following new paragraph:

''(3)(A) A notice of disagreement not filed within the time prescribed by paragraph (1) shall be treated by the Secretary as timely filed if—

''(i) the Secretary determines that the claimant, legal guardian, or other accredited representative, attorney, or authorized agent filing the notice had good cause for the lack of filing within such time; and

''(ii) the notice of disagreement is filed not later than 186 days after the period prescribed by paragraph (1).

''(B) For purposes of this paragraph, good cause shall include the following:

''(i) Circumstances relating to any physical, mental, educational, or linguistic limitation of the claimant, legal guardian, representative, attorney, or authorized agent concerned (including lack of facility with the English language).

''(ii) Circumstances relating to significant delay in the delivery of the initial decision or of the notice of disagreement because of natural disaster or factors relating to geographic location.

''(iii) A change in financial circumstances, including the payment of medical expenses or other changes in income or net worth that are considered in determining eligibility for benefits and services on an annualized basis for purposes of needs-based benefits under chapters 13, 15, and 17 of this title.''.

(b) APPLICATION BY DEPARTMENT FOR REVIEW ON APPEAL.—Section 7106 of such title is amended in the first sentence by striking ''one-year period described in section 7105'' and inserting ''period described in section 7105(b)(1)''.

(c) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by this section shall apply with respect to claims for compensation and benefits under laws administered by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs filed with the Secretary after the date of the enactment of this Act.

SEC. 202. DETERMINATION OF MANNER OF APPEARANCE FOR HEARINGS BEFORE BOARD OF VETERANS' APPEALS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 7107 of title 38, United States Code, is amended—

(1) by redesignating subsection (f) as subsection (g);

(2) in subsection (a)(1), by striking ''in subsection (f)'' and inserting ''in subsection (g)''; and

(3) by striking subsections (d) and (e) and inserting the following new subsections:

''(d)(1) Except as provided in paragraph (2), a hearing before the Board shall be conducted through picture and voice transmission, by electronic or other means, in such a manner that the appellant is not present in the same location as the members of the Board during the hearing.

''(2)(A) A hearing before the Board shall be conducted in person upon the request of an appellant.

''(B) In the absence of a request under subparagraph (A), a hearing before the Board may also be conducted in person as the Board considers appropriate.

''(e)(1) In a case in which a hearing before the Board is to be held as described in subsection (d)(1), the Secretary shall provide suitable facilities and equipment to the Board or other components of the Department to enable an appellant located at an appropriate facility within the area served by a regional office to participate as so described.

''(2) Any hearing conducted as described in subsection (d)(1) shall be conducted in the same manner as, and shall be considered the equivalent of, a personal hearing.

''(f)(1) In a case in which a hearing before the Board is to be held as described in subsection (d)(2), the appellant may request that the hearing be held at the principal location of the Board or at a facility of the Department located within the area served by a regional office of the Department.

''(2) A hearing to be held within an area served by a regional office of the Department shall (except as provided in paragraph (3)) be scheduled to be held in accordance with the place of the case on the docket under subsection (a) relative to other cases on the docket for which hearings are scheduled to be held within that area.

''(3) A hearing to be held within an area served by a regional office of the Department may, for cause shown, be advanced on motion for an earlier hearing. Any such motion shall set forth succinctly the grounds upon which the motion is based. Such a motion may be granted only—

''(A) if the case involves interpretation of law of general application affecting other claims;

''(B) if the appellant is seriously ill or is under severe financial hardship; or

''(C) for other sufficient cause shown.''.

(b) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by subsection (a) shall apply with respect to cases received by the Board of Veterans' Appeals pursuant to notices of disagreement submitted on or after the date of the enactment of this Act.

SEC. 203. DISCLOSURE OF CERTAIN MEDICAL RECORDS IN APPELLATE PROCEEDINGS IN CERTAIN COURTS.

Section 7332(b)(2) of title 38, United States Code, is amended—

(1) by redesignating subparagraphs (E) through (G) as subparagraphs (F) through (H), respectively; and

(2) by inserting after subparagraph (D) the following new subparagraph (E):

''(E) To the Supreme Court of the United States, the United States Court of Appeals for the Federal Circuit, or the United States Court of Appeals for Veterans Claims, and all parties of record, in a case that is appealed to such court and such records are included in the record on appeal. Upon disclosure of such records, the court concerned shall impose appropriate safeguards against unauthorized disclosure that are consistent with the provisions of section 7268 of this title.''.

TITLE III—OTHER MATTERS

SEC. 301. EXTENSION OF AUTHORITY FOR OPERATIONS OF MANILA DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS REGIONAL OFFICE.

Section 315(b) of title 38, United States Code, is amended by striking ''December 31, 2013'' and inserting ''December 31, 2014''.

SEC. 302. EXTENDED PERIOD FOR SCHEDULING OF MEDICAL EXAMS FOR VETERANS RECEIVING TEMPORARY DISABILITY RATINGS FOR SEVERE MENTAL DISORDER.

Section 1156(a)(3) of title 38, United States Code, is amended by striking ''six months'' and inserting ''540 days''.

SEC. 303. EXTENSION OF MARRIAGE DELIMITING DATE FOR SURVIVING SPOUSES OF PERSIAN GULF WAR VETERANS TO QUALIFY FOR DEATH PENSION.

Section 1541(f)(1)(E) of title 38, United States Code, is amended by striking ''January 1, 2011'' and inserting ''the date that is 10 years and one day after the date on which the Persian Gulf War was terminated, as prescribed by Presidential proclamation or by law''.

SEC. 304. MAKING EFFECTIVE DATE PROVISION CONSISTENT WITH PROVISION FOR BENEFITS ELIGIBILITY OF A VETERAN'S CHILD BASED UPON TERMINATION OF REMARRIAGE BY ANNULMENT.

Section 5110(l) of title 38, United States Code, is amended by striking '', or of an award or increase of benefits based on recognition of a child upon termination of the child's marriage by death or divorce,''.

SEC. 305. EXTENSION OF TEMPORARY AUTHORITY FOR PERFORMANCE OF MEDICAL DISABILITIES EXAMINATIONS BY CONTRACT PHYSICIANS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 704(c) of the Veterans Benefits Act of 2003 (Public Law 108–183; 38 U.S.C. 5101 note) is amended by striking ''December 31, 2013'' and inserting ''December 31, 2014''.

(b) REPORT ON DISABILITY MEDICAL EXAMINATIONS FURNISHED BY DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall submit to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the House of Representatives a report on the furnishing of general medical and specialty medical examinations by the Department of Veterans Affairs for purposes of adjudicating claims for benefits under laws administered by the Secretary.

(2) CONTENTS.—The report submitted under paragraph (1) shall include the following:

(A) The number of general medical examinations furnished by the Department during the period of fiscal years 2009 through 2012 for purposes of adjudicating claims for benefits under laws administered by the Secretary.

(B) The number of general medical examinations furnished by the Department during the period of fiscal years 2009 through 2012 for purposes of adjudicating a claim in which a comprehensive joint examination was conducted, but for which no disability relating to a joint, bone, or muscle had been asserted as an issue in the claim.

(C) The number of specialty medical examinations furnished by the Department during the period of fiscal years 2009 through 2012 for purposes of adjudicating a claim.

(D) The number of specialty medical examinations furnished by the Department during the period of fiscal years 2009 through 2012 for purposes of adjudicating a claim in which one or more joint examinations were conducted.

(E) A summary (including citations of) any medical and scientific studies which provide a scientific basis for determining that three repetitions is adequate to determine the effect of repetitive use on functional impairments.

(F) The names of all examination reports, including general medical examinations and Disability Benefits Questionnaires, used for evaluation of compensation and pension disability claims which require measurement of

repeated ranges of motion testing and the number of examinations requiring such measurements which were conducted in fiscal year 2012.

(G) The average amount of time taken by an individual conducting a medical examination to perform the three repetitions.

(H) A discussion of whether there are more efficient and effective scientifically reliable methods of testing for functional loss on repetitive use of an extremity other than the three time repetition currently used by the Department.

(I) Recommendations as to the continuation of the practice of measuring functional impairment by using three repetitions during the examination as a criteria for evaluating the effect of repetitive motion on functional impairment with supporting rationale.

(c) REPORT ON PROGRESS OF ACCEPTABLE CLINICAL EVIDENCE INITIATIVE.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall submit to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the House of Representatives a report on the progress of the Acceptable Clinical Evidence initiative of the Department of Veterans Affairs in reducing the necessity for in-person disability examinations and other efforts to comply with the provisions of section 5125 of title 38, United States Code.

(2) CONTENTS.—The report required by paragraph (1) shall include the following:

(A) The number of claims eligible for the Acceptable Clinical Evidence initiative during the period beginning on the date of the initiation of the initiative and ending on the date of the enactment of this Act, disaggregated by fiscal year.

(B) The total number of claims eligible for the Acceptable Clinical Evidence initiative that required a medical examiner of the Department to supplement the evidence with information obtained during a telephone interview with a claimant.

(C) Information on any other initiatives or efforts of the Department to further encourage the use of private medical evidence and reliance upon reports of a medical examination administered by a private physician if the report is sufficiently complete to be adequate for the purposes of adjudicating a claim.

By Mr. CORNYN:

S. 929. A bill to impose sanctions on individuals who are complicit in human rights abuses committed against nationals of Vietnam or their family members, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the text of the bill be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the text of the bill was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

S. 929

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 ''Vietnam Human Rights Sanctions Act''.

SEC. 2. FINDINGS.

Congress makes the following findings:

(1) The relationship between the United States and the Socialist Republic of Vietnam has grown substantially since the end of the trade embargo in 1994, with annual trade between the countries reaching more than $24,800,000,000 in 2012.

(2) However, the transition by the Government of Vietnam toward greater economic activity and trade, which has led to increased bilateral engagement between the United States and Vietnam, has not been matched by greater political freedom or substantial improvements in basic human rights for the people of Vietnam.

(3) Vietnam remains an authoritarian state ruled by the Communist Party of Vietnam, which continues to deny the right of the people of Vietnam to participate in free and fair elections.

(4) According to the Department of State's 2012 Country Reports on Human Rights Practices, Vietnam's ''most significant human rights problems . . . continued to be severe government restrictions on citizens' political rights, particularly their right to change their government; increased measures to limit citizens' civil liberties; and corruption in the judicial system and police''.

(5) The Country Reports also state that the Government of Vietnam ''increasingly limited freedoms of speech and press and suppressed dissent; further restricted Internet freedom; reportedly continued to be involved in attacks against Web sites containing criticism; maintained spying on dissident bloggers; and continued to limit privacy rights and freedoms of assembly, association, and movement''.

(6) Furthermore, the Department of State documents that ''arbitrary arrest and detention, particularly for political activists, remained a problem'', with the Government of Vietnam sentencing ''at least 35 arrested activists during [2012] to a total of 131 years in jail and 27 years of probation for exercising their rights''.

(7) At the end of 2012, the Government of Vietnam reportedly held more than 120 political prisoners, and diplomatic sources maintained that 4 reeducation centers in Vietnam held approximately 4,000 prisoners.

(8) On September 24, 2012, 3 prominent Vietnamese bloggers—Nguyen Van Hai (also known as Dieu Cay), Ta Phong Tan, and Phan Thanh Hai (also known as Anh Ba Saigon)—were sentenced to prison based on 3-year-old blog postings criticizing the Government and leaders of Vietnam and the Communist Party of Vietnam.

(9) United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights Navi Pillay responded to the sentencing of the bloggers on September 25, 2012, stating that ''[t]he harsh prison terms handed down to bloggers exemplify the severe restrictions on freedom of expression in Vietnam'' and calling the sentences an ''unfortunate development that undermines the commitments Vietnam has made internationally . . . to protect and promote the right to freedom of expression''.

(10) On March 21, 2013, Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor Daniel B. Baer testified before the Subcommittee on East Asian and Pacific Affairs of the Committee on Foreign Relations of the Senate that ''in Vietnam we've been disappointed in recent years to see backsliding, particularly on . . . freedom of expression issues . . . people are being prosecuted for what they say online under really draconian national security laws . . . that is an issue that we continue to raise, both in our human rights dialogue with the Vietnamese as well as in other bilateral engagements''.

(11) Although the Constitution of Vietnam provides for freedom of religion, the Department of State's 2012 Country Reports on Human Rights Practices maintains that ''Vietnamese who exercise their right to freedom of religion continued to be subject to harassment, differing interpretations and applications of the law, and inconsistent legal protection, especially at provincial and village levels''.

(12) Likewise, the United States Commission on International Religious Freedom 2013 Annual Report states that ''[r]eligious freedom conditions remain very poor'' in Vietnam and the ''Vietnamese government continues to imprison individuals for religious activity or religious freedom advocacy'' using a ''specialized religious police force . . . and vague national security laws to suppress independent Buddhist, Protestant, Hoa Hao, and Cao Dai activities, and seeks to stop the growth of ethnic minority Protestantism and Catholicism via discrimination, violence and forced renunciations of their faith''.

(13) The 2013 Annual Report notes that in 2004 the United States designated Vietnam as a country of particular concern for religious freedom pursuant to section 402(b)(1) of the International Religious Freedom Act of 1998 (22 U.S.C. 6442(b)(1)), and that Vietnam responded at that time by releasing prisoners, prohibiting the policy of forced renunciations of faith, and expanding protections for religious groups, and that ''[m]ost religious leaders in Vietnam attributed these positive changes to the [country of particular concern] designation and the priority placed on religious freedom concerns in U.S.-Vietnamese bilateral relations''.

(14) However, the 2013 Annual Report concludes that since the designation as a country of particular concern was lifted from Vietnam in 2006, ''religious freedom conditions in Vietnam remain mixed'', and therefore recommends to the Department of State that Vietnam should be redesignated as a country of particular concern.

(15) Deputy Assistant Secretary of State Baer likewise testified that ''[i]n Vietnam the right to religious freedom, which seemed to be improving several years ago, has been stagnant for several years''.

SEC. 3. IMPOSITION OF SANCTIONS ON CERTAIN INDIVIDUALS WHO ARE COMPLICIT IN HUMAN RIGHTS ABUSES COMMITTED AGAINST NATIONALS OF VIETNAM OR THEIR FAMILY MEMBERS.

(a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

(1) ADMITTED; ALIEN; IMMIGRATION LAWS; NATIONAL; SPOUSE.—The terms ''admitted'', ''alien'', ''immigration laws'', ''national'', and ''spouse'' have the meanings given those terms in section 101 of the Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C. 1101).

(2) APPROPRIATE CONGRESSIONAL COMMITTEES.—The term ''appropriate congressional committees'' means—

(A) the Committee on Finance, the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs, and the Committee on Foreign Relations of the Senate; and

(B) the Committee on Ways and Means, the Committee on Financial Services, and the Committee on Foreign Affairs of the House of Representatives.

(3) CONVENTION AGAINST TORTURE.—The term ''Convention against Torture'' means the United Nations Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment, done at New York on December 10, 1984.

(4) UNITED STATES PERSON.—The term ''United States person'' means—

(A) a United States citizen or an alien lawfully admitted for permanent residence to the United States; or

(B) an entity organized under the laws of the United States or of any jurisdiction within the United States, including a foreign branch of such an entity.

(b) IMPOSITION OF SANCTIONS.—Except as provided in subsections (e) and (f), the President shall impose the sanctions described in

subsection (d) with respect to each individual on the list required by subsection (c)(1).

(c) LIST OF INDIVIDUALS WHO ARE COMPLICIT IN CERTAIN HUMAN RIGHTS ABUSES.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 90 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the President shall submit to the appropriate congressional committees a list of individuals who are nationals of Vietnam that the President determines are complicit in human rights abuses committed against nationals of Vietnam or their family members, regardless of whether such abuses occurred in Vietnam.

(2) UPDATES OF LIST.—The President shall submit to the appropriate congressional committees an updated list under paragraph (1) as new information becomes available and not less frequently than annually.

(3) PUBLIC AVAILABILITY.—The list required by paragraph (1) shall be made available to the public and posted on the websites of the Department of the Treasury and the Department of State.

(4) CONSIDERATION OF DATA FROM OTHER COUNTRIES AND NONGOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS.—In preparing the list required by paragraph (1), the President shall consider data already obtained by other countries and nongovernmental organizations, including organizations in Vietnam, that monitor the human rights abuses of the Government of Vietnam.

(d) SANCTIONS.—

(1) PROHIBITION ON ENTRY AND ADMISSION TO THE UNITED STATES.—An individual on the list required by subsection (c)(1) may not—

(A) be admitted to, enter, or transit through the United States;

(B) receive any lawful immigration status in the United States under the immigration laws, including any relief under the Convention Against Torture; or

(C) file any application or petition to obtain such admission, entry, or status.

(2) FINANCIAL SANCTIONS.—The President shall freeze and prohibit all transactions in all property and interests in property of an individual on the list required by subsection (c)(1) if such property and interests in property are in the United States, come within the United States, or are or come within the possession or control of a United States person.

(e) EXCEPTIONS TO COMPLY WITH INTERNATIONAL AGREEMENTS.—The President may, by regulation, authorize exceptions to the imposition of sanctions under this section to permit the United States to comply with the Agreement between the United Nations and the United States of America regarding the Headquarters of the United Nations, signed June 26, 1947, and entered into force November 21, 1947, and other applicable international agreements.

(f) WAIVER.—The President may waive the requirement to impose or maintain sanctions with respect to an individual under subsection (b) or the requirement to include an individual on the list required by subsection (c)(1) if the President—

(1) determines that such a waiver is in the national interest of the United States; and

(2) submits to the appropriate congressional committees a report describing the reasons for the determination.

(g) TERMINATION OF SANCTIONS.—The provisions of this section shall terminate on the date on which the President determines and certifies to the appropriate congressional committees that the Government of Vietnam has—

(1) unconditionally released all political prisoners;

(2) ceased its practices of violence, unlawful detention, torture, and abuse of nationals of Vietnam while those nationals are engaging in peaceful political activity; and

(3) conducted a transparent investigation into the killings, arrest, and abuse of peaceful political activists in Vietnam and prosecuted those responsible.

SEC. 4. SENSE OF CONGRESS ON DESIGNATION OF VIETNAM AS A COUNTRY OF PARTICULAR CONCERN WITH RESPECT TO RELIGIOUS FREEDOM.

It is the sense of Congress that—

(1) the relationship between the United States and Vietnam cannot progress while the record of the Government of Vietnam with respect to human rights and the rule of law continues to deteriorate;

(2) the designation of Vietnam as a country of particular concern for religious freedom pursuant to section 402(b)(1) of the International Religious Freedom Act of 1998 (22 U.S.C. 6442(b)(1)) would be a powerful and effective tool in highlighting abuses of religious freedom in Vietnam and in encouraging improvement in the respect for human rights in Vietnam; and

(3) the Secretary of State should, in accordance with the recommendation of the United States Commission on International Religious Freedom, designate Vietnam as a country of particular concern for religious freedom.

By Mr. CARDIN (for himself, Mr. KIRK, Ms. MIKULSKI, Ms. MURKOWSKI, Mr. HARKIN, Mr. SANDERS, Mr. LEVIN, Mr. MENENDEZ, Ms. STABENOW, Mr. HEINRICH, Mrs. BOXER, Mrs. GILLIBRAND, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. LAUTENBERG, Mr. MURPHY, Ms. BALDWIN, Ms. LANDRIEU, Mr. BROWN, Mr. BEGICH, and Ms. HIRONO):

S.J. Res. 15. A joint resolution removing the deadline for the ratification of the equal rights amendment; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. President, as we prepare to celebrate Mother's Day this Sunday, I am today introducing a joint resolution which would remove the deadline for the ratification by the States of the equal rights amendment, the ERA.

I thank my cosponsors. As of this morning my cosponsors included Senator KIRK, Senator MIKULSKI, Senator MURKOWSKI, Senator HARKIN, Senator SANDERS, Senator LEVIN, Senator MENENDEZ, Senator STABENOW, Senator HEINRICH, Senator BOXER, Senator GILLIBRAND, Senator DURBIN, Senator LAUTENBERG, Senator MURPHY, Senator BALDWIN, Senator LANDRIEU, Senator BROWN, and Senator BEGICH.

When Congress passed the ERA in 1972, it provided that the measure had to be ratified by three-fourths of the States, or 38 States, within 7 years. This deadline was later extended to 10 years by a joint resolution enacted by Congress, but ultimately only 35 of the 38 States required ratified the ERA when the deadline expired in 1982. Congress has the authority to give the States another chance, and should do so. I want to point out to my colleagues that in 1992, the 27th Amendment to the Constitution prohibiting immediate Congressional pay raises was ratified after 203 years. So this additional delay is certainly in keeping with our prior precedent.

Article 5 of the Constitution contains no time limit for the ratification of constitutional changes, and the ERA time limit was contained in a joint resolution, not the actual text of the amendment.

The 14th Amendment of the Constitution requires equal protection of the laws, and so far the Supreme Court has held most sex and gender classifications are subject only to intermediate scrutiny when analyzing the laws that have a discriminatory impact. In other words, right now gender discrimination does not have the strict interpretation standard; it is not subject to the higher standard which it should be.

In 2011, Supreme Court Justice Scalia gave an interview in which he stated:

> Certainly the Constitution does not require discrimination on the basis of sex. The only issue is whether it prohibits it. It doesn't.

In other words, we don't have that protection in the Constitution today. Ratification of the ERA by State legislatures would provide the courts with a clearer guidance in holding gender or sex clarification to the strict scrutiny standard.

The ERA is a simple and straightforward constitutional amendment. It reads:

> Equality of rights under the law shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any State on account of sex.

The amendment gives power to Congress to enforce its provisions by appropriate legislation, and the amendment would take effect 2 years after ratification.

Today nearly half the States have a version of ERA written into their State constitutions. The constitution of my own State of Maryland reads that ''Equality of rights under the law shall not be abridged or denied because of sex.''

I am therefore pleased to introduce this joint resolution today, and I thank Representative ANDREWS for introducing a companion version in the House today as well. This legislation is endorsed by a wide variety of groups, including United 4 Equality, the National Council of Women's Organizations, the American Association of University Women, Business & Professional Women's Foundation, Federally Employed Women, and the U.S. Women's Chamber of Commerce.

I urge my colleagues to support this legislation.

SUBMITTED RESOLUTIONS

SENATE RESOLUTION 135—DESIGNATING THE WEEK OF OCTOBER 7 THROUGH OCTOBER 13, 2013, AS ''NATUROPATHIC MEDICINE WEEK'' TO RECOGNIZE THE VALUE OF NATUROPATHIC MEDICINE IN PROVIDING SAFE, EFFECTIVE, AND AFFORDABLE HEALTH CARE

Ms. MIKULSKI submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on the Judiciary:

S. RES. 135

Whereas, in the United States, 75 percent of all health care spending is for the treatment of preventable chronic illnesses, including high blood pressure, which affects 68,000,000 people in the United States, and diabetes, which affects 26,000,000 people in the United States;

Whereas nearly two-thirds of adults in the United States are overweight or obese and, consequently, at risk for serious health conditions, such as high blood pressure, diabetes, cardiovascular disease, arthritis, and depression;

Whereas 70 percent of people in the United States experience physical or nonphysical symptoms of stress, which can contribute to chronic health conditions, such as high blood pressure, obesity, and diabetes;

Whereas the aforementioned health conditions are among the most preventable health conditions and are especially responsive to the preventive, whole-person approach favored by naturopathic medicine;

Whereas naturopathic medicine provides noninvasive, holistic treatments that support the inherent self-healing capacity of the human body and encourage self-responsibility in health care;

Whereas naturopathic medicine reduces health care costs because of its focus on patient-centered care, the prevention of chronic illnesses, and early intervention in the treatment of chronic illnesses;

Whereas naturopathic physicians attend 4-year, graduate level programs with rigorous admission requirements at institutions that are recognized by the Department of Education;

Whereas naturopathic physicians are especially skilled in treating chronic illnesses, such as diabetes, asthma, autoimmune disorders, and gastrointestinal disorders, because of their focus on whole-body medicine rather than symptom management;

Whereas naturopathic physicians are trained to serve as primary care physicians and can help redress the shortage of primary care providers in the United States;

Whereas naturopathic physicians are trained to refer patients to conventional physicians and specialists when necessary;

Whereas patients of naturopathic physicians report higher patient satisfaction and health improvement than patients of conventional medicine;

Whereas the profession of naturopathic medicine is dedicated to providing health care to underserved populations;

Whereas naturopathic medicine provides consumers in the United States with more choice in health care, in line with the increased use of a variety of integrative medical treatments; and

Whereas the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (Public Law 111–148; 124 Stat. 119) requires that insurers include and reimburse licensed health care providers, including naturopathic physicians, in health insurance plans: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) designates the week of October 7 through October 13, 2013, as ''Naturopathic Medicine Week'';

(2) recognizes the value of naturopathic medicine in providing safe, effective, and affordable health care; and

(3) encourages the people of the United States to learn about naturopathic medicine and the role that naturopathic physicians play in preventing chronic and debilitating illnesses and conditions.

SENATE RESOLUTION 136—RECOGNIZING THE 60TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE KOREAN WAR ARMISTICE AND THE MUTUAL DEFENSE TREATY OF 1953, AND CONGRATULATING PARK GEUN-HYE ON HER ELECTION TO THE PRESIDENCY OF THE REPUBLIC OF KOREA

Mr. CARDIN (for himself, Mr. RUBIO, Mr. MENENDEZ, Mr. WICKER, Mr. BEGICH, Ms. HIRONO, Mr. ISAKSON, and Mr. MURPHY) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 136

Whereas the Governments and people of the United States and the Republic of Korea share a comprehensive alliance, a dynamic partnership, and a personal friendship rooted in the common values of freedom, democracy, and a free market economy;

Whereas the relationship between the people of the United States and the Republic of Korea stretches back to Korea's Chosun Dynasty, when the United States and Korea established diplomatic relations under the 1882 Treaty of Peace, Amity, Commerce, and Navigation.

Whereas July 27, 2013, will mark the 60th anniversary of the cessation of hostilities and the armistice of the Korean War, signed at Panmunjom, and 60 years in which the peninsula has seen no major hostilities, despite tensions and provocations from the Government of North Korea;

Whereas the United States-Republic of Korea alliance was forged in blood, with casualties of the United States during the Korean War of 54,246 dead (of whom 33,739 were battle deaths) and more than 103,284 wounded, and casualties of the Republic of Korea of over 50,000 soldiers dead and over 10,000 wounded;

Whereas the Korean War Veterans Recognition Act (Public Law 111–41) was enacted on July 27, 2009, and President Barack Obama issued a proclamation to designate the date as the National Korean War Veterans Armistice Day and called upon Americans to display flags at half-staff in memory of the Korean War veterans;

Whereas October 1, 2013, will mark the 60th anniversary of the Mutual Defense Treaty of 1953, to which the Senate gave its advice and consent to ratification on January 26, 1954;

Whereas the Republic of Korea has stood shoulder-to-shoulder alongside the United States in all 4 major engagements the United States has faced since World War II—the Vietnam War, the Persian Gulf War, in Afghanistan, and in Iraq;

Whereas the Republic of Korea has shown global leadership in humanitarian and peacekeeping missions in Lebanon, the Gulf of Aden, and other nations around the world, such as Haiti;

Whereas the Governments and people of the United States and the Republic of Korea are working closely together to promote international peace and security, economic prosperity, human rights, and the rule of law;

Whereas the Government of the Republic of Korea is consistently a top-10 purchaser of United States defense articles and equipment, and is a member of the NATO+4 group for United States foreign military sales through the enactment on October 15, 2008, of the Naval Vessel Transfer Act of 2008 (Public Law 110–429);

Whereas, in the 60 years since the Korean War armistice and the founding of the alliance, the Republic of Korea emerged from war-torn poverty into a $1,000,000,000,000 economy with a $30,000 per capita GDP, a success of the post-World War II era built by South Koreans' perseverance and supported by the strength of the United States-Republic of Korea partnership;

Whereas the Republic of Korea is a member of the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) and a nonpermanent member of the United Nations Security Council and has hosted global forums, such as the G–20 Summit and the 2012 Nuclear Security Summit;

Whereas the Republic of Korea is a major economic and trade partner of the United States and cemented a Free Trade Agreement (Public Law 112–41) on October 21, 2011, which entered into force on March 15, 2012;

Whereas there are deep cultural and personal ties between the peoples of the United States and the Republic of Korea, as exemplified by the large flow of visitors and exchanges each year between the two countries, including Korean students studying in United States colleges and universities, and nearly 2,000,000 Korean-Americans that reside in the United States;

Whereas the Implementing Recommendations of the 9/11 Commission Act of 2007 (Public Law 110–53) set the criteria for Korea's successful entry into the United States visa waiver program on November 17, 2008;

Whereas the election on December 19, 2012, and the inauguration on February 17, 2013, of Park Geun-Hye to the presidency of the Republic of Korea marks an historic milestone as the first female head of state ever democratically elected in the Northeast Asia region;

Whereas the United States looks forward to the next 60 years and beyond of an increasingly solid and enduring partnership with the Republic of Korea with expanded cooperation on security, economic, environmental, and cultural issues bilaterally and in the region; and

Whereas, on May 8, 2013, President Park will address a Joint Meeting of Congress at the invitation of the Speaker of the House: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) recognizes the 60th anniversary of the Korean War Armistice and the Mutual Defense Treaty of 1953;

(2) reaffirms the importance and resiliency of the United States-Korea alliance as a linchpin in maintaining peace and stability on the Korean Peninsula and in the greater East Asia region; and

(3) congratulates Park Geun-Hye on her historic election to the presidency of the Republic of Korea and wishes her well during her tenure of leadership.

SENATE RESOLUTION 137—DESIGNATING MAY 2013 AS ''OLDER AMERICANS MONTH''

Mr. NELSON (for himself, Ms. COLLINS, Mr. SANDERS, and Mr. COONS) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 137

Whereas President John F. Kennedy first designated May as ''Senior Citizens Month'' in 1963;

Whereas, in 1963, only 17,000,000 living people in the United States had reached their 65th birthday, approximately ⅓ of older people in the United States lived in poverty, and there were few programs to meet the needs of older people in the United States;

Whereas, as of 2013, there are more than 41,000,000 people in the United States who are 65 years of age or older;

Whereas, as of 2013, there are more than 9,000,000 veterans of the Armed Forces who are 65 years of age or older;

Whereas older people in the United States rely on Federal programs such as Social Security, Medicare, Medicaid, and, in the case of veterans, TRICARE and the health care system of the Department of Veterans Affairs, for financial security and high-quality, affordable health care;

Whereas the Older Americans Act of 1965 (42 U.S.C. 3001 et seq.) provides federally funded community-based social services and nutritional support programs to nearly 2,600,000 older people in the United States each year;

Whereas many people in the United States are living longer, working longer, and enjoying healthier, more active lifestyles than in past generations;

Whereas older people play an important role by continuing to contribute experience, knowledge, wisdom, and accomplishments;

Whereas older people are active community members involved in volunteering, mentorship, arts and culture, and civic engagement; and

Whereas recognizing the successes of older people in the community encourages ongoing participation and further accomplishments: Now therefore be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) designates May 2013 as ''Older Americans Month'';

(2) recognizes May 2013 as the 50th anniversary of ''Older Americans Month''; and

(3) encourages the people of the United States to provide opportunities for older people to continue to flourish by—

(A) emphasizing the importance of older people and their leadership by publicly recognizing their continued achievements;

(B) presenting opportunities for older people to share their wisdom, experience, and skills; and

(C) recognizing older people as a valuable asset in strengthening the communities of the United States.

SENATE RESOLUTION 138—CONGRATULATING THE STUDENTS, PARENTS, TEACHERS, AND ADMINISTRATORS OF CHARTER SCHOOLS ACROSS THE UNITED STATES FOR THEIR ONGOING CONTRIBUTIONS TO EDUCATION, AND SUPPORTING THE IDEALS AND GOALS OF THE 14TH ANNUAL NATIONAL CHARTER SCHOOLS WEEK, TO BE CELEBRATED THE WEEK OF MAY 5 THROUGH MAY 11, 2013

Ms. LANDRIEU (for herself, Mr. ALEXANDER, Mr. BURR, Mr. CARPER, Mr. KIRK, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. ISAKSON, Mr. RUBIO, Mr. CORNYN, Mr. CRUZ, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, and Mr. MCCONNELL) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 138

Whereas charter schools are public schools that do not charge tuition and that enroll any student who wants to attend, often through a random lottery when too many students want to attend a single charter school;

Whereas charter schools deliver high-quality public education and challenge all students to reach their potential;

Whereas charter schools promote innovation and excellence in public education;

Whereas charter schools provide thousands of families with diverse and innovative educational options for their children;

Whereas charter schools are authorized by a designated public entity and—

(1) respond to the needs of communities, families, and students in the United States; and

(2) promote the principles of quality, accountability, choice, and innovation;

Whereas, in exchange for flexibility and autonomy, charter schools are held accountable by their sponsors for improving student achievement and for the financial and other operations of the charter schools;

Whereas charter schools are required to meet the student achievement accountability requirements under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 6301 et seq.) in the same manner as traditional public schools;

Whereas charter schools often set higher expectations for students in addition to the requirements under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 6301 et seq.) to ensure that charter schools are of high quality and are truly accountable to the public;

Whereas 42 States and the District of Columbia have enacted laws authorizing charter schools;

Whereas more than 6,000 charter schools are serving more than 2,300,000 children;

Whereas, in the United States—

(1) in 110 school districts, more than 10 percent of public school students are enrolled in charter schools;

(2) in 25 school districts, more than 20 percent of public school students are enrolled in charter schools; and

(3) in 7 districts, at least 30 percent of public school students are enrolled in charter schools;

Whereas charter schools improve the achievement of students they enroll and stimulate improvement in traditional public schools;

Whereas charter schools—

(1) give parents the freedom to choose public schools;

(2) routinely measure parental satisfaction levels; and

(3) must prove their ongoing success to parents, policymakers, and the communities they serve;

Whereas an estimated 610,000 students were on waiting lists to attend charter schools before the beginning of the 2011–2012 academic year; and

Whereas the 14th annual National Charter Schools Week is scheduled to be celebrated the week of May 5 through May 11, 2013: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) congratulates the students, parents, teachers, and administrators of charter schools across the United States for—

(A) their ongoing contributions to education;

(B) impressive strides made in closing the academic achievement gap in schools in the United States; and

(C) improving and strengthening the public school system in the United States;

(2) supports the ideals and goals of the 14th annual National Charter Schools Week, a weeklong celebration to be held the week of May 5 through May 11, 2013, in communities throughout the United States; and

(3) encourages the people of the United States to hold appropriate programs, ceremonies, and activities during National Charter Schools Week to demonstrate support for charter schools.

AMENDMENTS SUBMITTED AND PROPOSED

SA 858. Mr. COBURN (for himself and Mr. INHOFE) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 601, to provide for the conservation and development of water and related resources, to authorize the Secretary of the Army to construct various projects for improvements to rivers and harbors of the United States, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 859. Mr. DURBIN (for himself, Mr. BLUNT, Mr. PRYOR, Mrs. MCCASKILL, Mr. BOOZMAN, Mr. KIRK, Mr. COCHRAN, Mr. HARKIN, Ms. LANDRIEU, and Mr. WICKER) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 601, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 860. Mrs. FEINSTEIN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill S. 601, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 861. Mr. CARDIN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 601, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 862. Mr. HOEVEN (for himself, Mr. THUNE, Ms. HEITKAMP, and Mr. JOHNSON of South Dakota) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 601, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 863. Mr. HOEVEN (for himself, Mr. THUNE, Ms. HEITKAMP, and Mr. JOHNSON of South Dakota) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 601, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 864. Mrs. SHAHEEN (for herself and Mr. FLAKE) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill S. 601, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 865. Mrs. SHAHEEN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill S. 601, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 866. Mr. MERKLEY (for himself and Mr. BROWN) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 601, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 867. Mr. INHOFE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 601, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 868. Mr. BARRASSO (for himself, Mr. SESSIONS, Mr. VITTER, Mr. CRAPO, Mrs. FISCHER, Mr. WICKER, and Mr. JOHANNS) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 601, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 869. Mr. MERKLEY (for himself and Mr. BROWN) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 601, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 870. Mr. WYDEN (for himself and Mr. MERKLEY) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 601, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 871. Mr. BOOZMAN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 601, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 872. Mr. BOOZMAN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 601, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 873. Mr. WARNER (for himself and Mr. KAINE) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 601, supra.

SA 874. Mr. LEVIN (for himself, Mr. SCHUMER, Ms. BALDWIN, and Mr. BROWN) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 601, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 875. Ms. COLLINS (for herself, Mr. KING, and Mrs. SHAHEEN) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill S. 601, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 876. Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. JOHNSON of South Dakota) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him

to the bill S. 601, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 877. Mr. NELSON submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 601, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 878. Mr. UDALL of New Mexico submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 601, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 879. Mr. KAINE (for himself and Mr. WARNER) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 601, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 880. Mr. CORNYN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 601, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 881. Mr. CORNYN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 601, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 882. Mr. CARPER (for himself, Mr. CASEY, Mr. COONS, Mrs. GILLIBRAND, Mr. LAUTENBERG, Mr. MENENDEZ, and Mr. SCHUMER) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 601, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 883. Mr. REID (for Mr. LAUTENBERG (for himself, Mr. MENENDEZ, and Mr. SCHUMER)) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by Mr. REID of NV to the bill S. 601, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 884. Ms. KLOBUCHAR (for herself and Mr. FRANKEN) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill S. 601, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 885. Mr. COONS submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 601, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 886. Mr. COONS (for himself, Mr. CARPER, Mr. LAUTENBERG, Mr. SCHUMER, Mr. MENENDEZ, and Mr. CASEY) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 601, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 887. Ms. LANDRIEU (for herself, Mr. VITTER, and Mr. SCHUMER) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill S. 601, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 888. Ms. LANDRIEU (for herself, Mr. VITTER, Mr. SCHUMER, and Mr. LAUTENBERG) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill S. 601, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 889. Mr. SANDERS (for himself and Mr. LEAHY) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 601, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

TEXT OF AMENDMENTS

SA 858. Mr. COBURN (for himself and Mr. INHOFE) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 601, to provide for the conservation and development of water and related resources, to authorize the Secretary of the Army to construct various projects for improvements to rivers and harbors of the United States, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of title V, add the following:

SEC. 5_____. LAND CONVEYANCE AT OPTIMA LAKE, TEXAS COUNTY, OKLAHOMA.

(a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

(1) FAIR MARKET VALUE.—The term ''fair market value'' means the amount for which a willing buyer would purchase and a willing seller would sell a parcel of land, as determined by a qualified, independent land appraiser.

(2) PREVIOUS OWNER OF LAND.—The term ''previous owner of land'' means a person (including a corporation) that conveyed, or a direct descendant of an individual who conveyed, land to the Corps of Engineers for use in the Optima Lake project in Texas County, Oklahoma.

(b) DEAUTHORIZATION OF PROJECT.—The Corps of Engineers project relating to Optima Lake in Texas County, Oklahoma is deauthorized, including any operation, maintenance, or other activities relating to the project that are ongoing as of the date of enactment of this Act.

(c) CONVEYANCES.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall convey all right, title, and interest of the United States in and to the land acquired by the United States for the Optima Lake project in Texas County, Oklahoma in accordance with this subsection.

(2) FIRST PURCHASE OPTIONS.—

(A) STATE OF OKLAHOMA.—The Secretary shall give the State of Oklahoma through an Act passed by the legislature of that State and signed by the Governor of that State the first option to purchase the land described in paragraph (1).

(B) PREVIOUS OWNERS OF LAND.—

(i) IN GENERAL.—If the State of Oklahoma has not acted to purchase the land by the date that is 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall give a previous owner of land the option to purchase the land described in paragraph (1).

(ii) APPLICATION.—

(I) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 180 days after the official date of notice to the previous owner of land under paragraph (5), a previous owner of land who desires to purchase the land described in paragraph (1) that was owned by that previous owner of land, or by the individual from whom the previous owner of land is descended, shall file an application to purchase the land with the Secretary.

(II) FIRST TO FILE HAS FIRST OPTION.—If more than 1 application is filed to purchase a parcel of land described in paragraph (1), the first option to purchase the parcel of land shall be determined based on the order in which applications for the parcel of land were filed.

(iii) IDENTIFICATION OF PREVIOUS OWNERS OF LAND.—If the State of Oklahoma has failed to purchase the land within the period described in clause (i), the Secretary shall, not later than 90 days after that date, identify each previous owner of the land described in paragraph (1).

(iv) CONSIDERATION.—Consideration for land conveyed under this section shall be an amount equal to the fair market value of the land.

(3) DISPOSAL.—Any land described in paragraph (1) that is not purchased under paragraph (2) within the applicable time period shall be disposed of in accordance with applicable Federal law.

(4) EXTINGUISHMENT OF EASEMENTS.—All flowage easements acquired by the United States for use in the Optima Lake project in Texas County, Oklahoma, are extinguished.

(5) NOTICE.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—If the State of Oklahoma has failed to purchase the land within the period described in paragraph (2)(B)(i), the Secretary shall notify of the conveyance under this section—

(i) by United States mail, each person identified as a previous owner of land under paragraph (2)(B)(iii) by not later than 90 days after the date of identification; and

(ii) by publication in the Federal Register, the general public by not later than 90 days after the date that is 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act.

(B) CONTENTS OF NOTICE.—Notice under this subsection shall include—

(i) a copy of this section;

(ii) information sufficient to separately identify each parcel of land subject to this section; and

(iii) specification of the fair market value of each parcel of land subject to this section.

(C) OFFICIAL DATE OF NOTICE.—The official date of notice under this section shall be the later of—

(i) the date on which actual notice is mailed; or

(ii) the date of publication of the notice in the Federal Register.

(d) FLOOD CONTROL GATES.—Prior to the conveyance of any land under this section, the Secretary shall disable or remove, whichever option is most cost-effective, any flood control gate on the dam constructed by the Corps of Engineers in carrying out the Optima Lake project.

(e) RESTRICTION.—The Secretary shall carry out this section, including all land conveyances under this section, not later than 3 years after the date of enactment of this Act.

(f) EFFECT OF ACT.—Nothing in this section affects the jurisdiction of the State of Oklahoma (including localities) over any existing road or rights-of-way on the land described in subsection (c)(1).

(g) OFFSET.—An amount that equals the amount necessary to offset, in the aggregate, any net increase in spending and foregone revenues resulting from the implementation of this section shall be derived from the proceeds of the sale of the land described in subsection (c)(1).

SA 859. Mr. DURBIN (for himself, Mr. BLUNT, Mr. PRYOR, Mrs. MCCASKILL, Mr. BOOZMAN, Mr. KIRK, Mr. COCHRAN, Mr. HARKIN, Ms. LANDRIEU, and Mr. WICKER) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 601, to provide for the conservation and development of water and related resources, to authorize the Secretary of the Army to construct various projects for improvements to rivers and harbors of the United States, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of title V, add the following:

SEC. 5_____. GREATER MISSISSIPPI RIVER BASIN SEVERE FLOODING AND DROUGHT MANAGEMENT STUDY.

(a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

(1) GREATER MISSISSIPPI RIVER BASIN.—The term ''greater Mississippi River Basin'' means the area covered by hydrologic units 5, 6, 7, 8, 10, and 11, as identified by the United States Geological Survey as of the date of enactment of this Act.

(2) LOWER MISSISSIPPI RIVER.—The term ''lower Mississippi River'' means the portion of the Mississippi River that begins at the confluence of the Ohio River and flows to the Gulf of Mexico.

(3) MIDDLE MISSISSIPPI RIVER.—The term ''middle Mississippi River'' means the portion of the Mississippi River that begins at the confluence of the Missouri River and flows to the lower Mississippi River.

(4) SEVERE FLOODING AND DROUGHT.—The term ''severe flooding and drought'' means severe weather events that threaten personal safety, property, and navigation on the inland waterways of the United States.

(b) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall carry out a study of the greater Mississippi River Basin—

(1) to improve the coordinated and comprehensive management of water resource

projects in the greater Mississippi River Basin relating to severe flooding and drought conditions; and

(2) to evaluate the feasibility of any modifications to those water resource projects and develop new water resource projects to improve the reliability of navigation and more effectively reduce flood risk.

(c) CONTENTS.—The study shall—

(1) identify any Federal actions necessary to prevent and mitigate the impacts of severe flooding and drought, including changes to authorized channel dimensions, operational procedures of locks and dams, and reservoir management within the Mississippi River Basin;

(2) evaluate the effect on navigation and flood risk management to the Mississippi River of all upstream rivers and tributaries, especially the confluence of the Illinois River, Missouri River, Arkansas River, White River, and Ohio River;

(3) identify and make recommendations to remedy challenges to the Corps of Engineers presented by severe flooding and drought, including river access, in carrying out its mission to maintain safe, reliable navigation; and

(4) identify and locate natural or other potential impediments to maintaining navigation on the middle and lower Mississippi River during periods of low water.

(d) CONSULTATION AND USE OF EXISTING DATA.—In carrying out the study, the Secretary shall—

(1) consult with appropriate committees of Congress, Federal, State, tribal, and local agencies, environmental interests, river navigation industry representatives, other shipping and business interests, organized labor, and nongovernmental organizations;

(2) to the maximum extent practicable, use data in existence as of the date of enactment of this Act; and

(3) incorporate lessons learned and best practices developed as a result of past severe flooding and drought events, including major floods and the successful effort to maintain navigation during the near historic low water levels on the Mississippi River during the winter of 2012–2013.

(e) COST-SHARING.—The Federal share of the cost of carrying out the study under this section shall be 100 percent.

(f) REPORT.—Not later than 3 years after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall submit to Congress a report on the study carried out under this section.

SA 860. Mrs. FEINSTEIN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill S. 601, to provide for the conservation and development of water and related resources, to authorize the Secretary of the Army to construct various projects for improvements to rivers and harbors of the United States, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 149, strike lines 13 through 16 and insert the following:

Section 214 of the Water Resources Development Act of 2000 (Public Law 106–541; 33 U.S.C. 2201 note) is amended—

(1) in subsection (a)—

(A) by inserting ''or public utility'' after ''public entity''; and

(B) by inserting ''or utility'' after ''that entity''; and

(2) by striking subsections (d) and (e) and inserting the following:

SA 861. Mr. CARDIN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 601, to provide for the conservation and development of water and related resources, to authorize the Secretary of the Army to construct various projects for improvements to rivers and harbors of the United States, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 121, strike lines 1 through 3, and insert the following:

''(II) conflict with the ability of a cooperating agency to carry out applicable Federal laws (including regulations).

SA 862. Mr. HOEVEN (for himself, Mr. THUNE, Ms. HEITKAMP, and Mr. JOHNSON of South Dakota) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 601, to provide for the conservation and development of water and related resources, to authorize the Secretary of the Army to construct various projects for improvements to rivers and harbors of the United States, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 190, after line 23, add the following:

SEC. 2060. RESTRICTION ON CHARGES FOR CERTAIN WATER STORAGE.

Notwithstanding section 6 of the Act of December 22, 1944 (33 U.S.C. 708) and section 301 of the Water Supply Act of 1958 (43 U.S.C. 390b), no fee for water storage shall be charged under a contract for water storage if the contract is for water storage stored on the Missouri River.

SA 863. Mr. HOEVEN (for himself, Mr. THUNE, Ms. HEITKAMP, and Mr. JOHNSON of South Dakota) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 601, to provide for the conservation and development of water and related resources, to authorize the Secretary of the Army to construct various projects for improvements to rivers and harbors of the United States, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 190, after line 23, add the following:

SEC. 2060. RESTRICTION ON CHARGES FOR CERTAIN SURPLUS WATER.

Notwithstanding section 6 of the Act of December 22, 1944 (33 U.S.C. 708) and section 301 of the Water Supply Act of 1958 (43 U.S.C. 390b), no fee for surplus water shall be charged under a contract for surplus water if the contract is for surplus water stored on the Missouri River.

SA 864. Mrs. SHAHEEN (for herself and Mr. FLAKE) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill S. 601, to provide for the conservation and development of water and related resources, to authorize the Secretary of the Army to construct various projects for improvements to rivers and harbors of the United States, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 167, strike line 19, and insert the following:

element of the project during that period.

''(D) AVAILABILITY OF FUNDS.—For each fiscal year, 5 percent of the funds appropriated to the Chief of Engineers for general expenses shall not be obligated until the date on which the list under paragraph (1) is submitted.''; and

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SA 865. Mrs. SHAHEEN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill S. 601, to provide for the conservation and development of water and related resources, to authorize the Secretary of the Army to construct various projects for improvements to rivers and harbors of the United States, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 301, strike lines 19 through 22 and insert the following:

(33 U.S.C. 2211(b)) is amended by adding at the end the following:

SA 866. Mr. MERKLEY (for himself and Mr. BROWN) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 601, to provide for the conservation and development of water and related resources, to authorize the Secretary of the Army to construct various projects for improvements to rivers and harbors of the United States, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of title X, add the following:

SEC. 100___. USE OF AMERICAN IRON, STEEL, AND MANUFACTURED GOODS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in subsection (b), none of the amounts made available under this Act may be used for the construction, alteration, maintenance, or repair of a project eligible for assistance under this title unless all of the iron, steel, and manufactured goods used in the project are produced in the United States.

(b) EXCEPTION.—Subsection (a) shall not apply in any case or category of cases in which the Secretary finds that—

(1) applying subsection (a) would be inconsistent with the public interest;

(2) iron, steel, and the relevant manufactured goods are not produced in the United States in sufficient and reasonably available quantities and of a satisfactory quality; or

(3) inclusion of iron, steel, and manufactured goods produced in the United States will increase the cost of the overall project by more than 25 percent.

(c) PUBLIC NOTICE.—If the Secretary determines that it is necessary to waive the application of subsection (a) based on a finding under subsection (b), the Secretary shall publish in the Federal Register a detailed written justification as to why the provision is being waived.

(d) INTERNATIONAL AGREEMENTS.—This section shall be applied in a manner consistent with United States obligations under international agreements.

SA 867. Mr. INHOFE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 601, to provide for the conservation and development of water and related resources, to authorize the Secretary of the Army to construct various projects for improvements to rivers and harbors of the United States, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of title XI, add the following:

SEC. 11004. AUTHORITY TO ACCEPT AND EXPEND NON-FEDERAL AMOUNTS.

The Secretary is authorized to accept and expend amounts provided by non-Federal interests for the purpose of repairing, restoring, or replacing water resources projects that have been damaged or destroyed as a result of a major disaster or other emergency if the Secretary determines that the acceptance and expenditure of those amounts is in the public interest.

SA 868. Mr. BARRASSO (for himself, Mr. SESSIONS, Mr. VITTER, Mr. CRAPO, Mrs. FISCHER, Mr. WICKER, and Mr. JOHANNS) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 601, to provide for the conservation and development of water and related resources, to authorize the Secretary of the Army to construct various projects for improvements to rivers and harbors of the United States, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 452, between lines 14 and 15, insert the following:

SEC. 2055. IDENTIFICATION OF WATERS PROTECTED BY THE CLEAN WATER ACT.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Neither the Secretary of the Army nor the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency shall—

(1) finalize the proposed guidance described in the notice of availability and request for comments entitled ''EPA and Army Corps of Engineers Guidance Regarding Identification of Waters Protected by the Clean Water Act'' (EPA–HQ–OW–2011–0409) (76 Fed. Reg. 24479 (May 2, 2011)); or

(2) use the guidance described in paragraph (1), or any substantially similar guidance, as the basis for any decision regarding the scope of the Federal Water Pollution Control Act (33 U.S.C. 1251 et seq.) or any rulemaking.

(b) RULES.—The use of the guidance described in subsection (a)(1), or any substantially similar guidance, as the basis for any rule shall be grounds for vacation of the rule.

SA 869. Mr. MERKLEY (for himself and Mr. BROWN) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 601, to provide for the conservation and development of water and related resources, to authorize the Secretary of the Army to construct various projects for improvements to rivers and harbors of the United States, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of title X, add the following:

SEC. 100___. USE OF AMERICAN IRON, STEEL, AND MANUFACTURED GOODS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in subsection (b), none of the amounts made available under this Act may be used for the construction, alteration, maintenance, or repair of a project eligible for assistance under this title unless all of the iron, steel, and manufactured goods used in the project are produced in the United States.

(b) EXCEPTION.—Subsection (a) shall not apply in any case or category of cases in which the Secretary finds that—

(1) applying subsection (a) would be inconsistent with the public interest;

(2) iron, steel, and the relevant manufactured goods are not produced in the United States in sufficient and reasonably available quantities and of a satisfactory quality; or

(3) inclusion of iron, steel, and manufactured goods produced in the United States will increase the cost of the overall project by more than 25 percent.

(c) PUBLIC NOTICE.—If the Secretary determines that it is necessary to waive the application of subsection (a) based on a finding under subsection (b), the Secretary shall publish in the Federal Register a detailed written justification as to why the provision is being waived.

(d) INTERNATIONAL AGREEMENTS.—This section shall be applied in a manner consistent with United States obligations under international agreements.

SA 870. Mr. WYDEN (for himself and Mr. MERKLEY) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 601, to provide for the conservation and development of water and related resources, to authorize the Secretary of the Army to construct various projects for improvements to rivers and harbors of the United States, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

Beginning on page 299, strike line 9 and all that follows through page 301, line 16, and insert the following:

''(D) LOW-USE PORT.—The term 'low-use port' means a port at which not more than 1,000,000 tons of cargo are transported each calendar year.

''(E) MODERATE-USE PORT.—The term 'moderate-use port' means a port at which more than 1,000,000, but fewer than 10,000,000, tons of cargo are transported each calendar year.

''(2) PRIORITY.—Of the amounts made available under this section to carry out projects described in subsection (a)(2) that are in excess of the amounts made available to carry out those projects in fiscal year 2012, the Secretary of the Army, acting through the Chief of Engineers, shall give priority to those projects in the following order:

''(A)(i) In any fiscal year in which all projects subject to the harbor maintenance fee under section 24.24 of title 19, Code of Federal Regulations (or a successor regulation) are not maintained to their constructed width and depth, the Secretary shall prioritize amounts made available under this section for those projects that are high-use deep draft and are a priority for navigation in the Great Lakes Navigation System.

''(ii) Of the amounts made available under clause (i)—

''(I) 80 percent shall be used for projects that are high-use deep draft; and

''(II) 20 percent shall be used for projects that are a priority for navigation in the Great Lakes Navigation System.

''(B) In any fiscal year in which all projects identified as high-use deep draft are maintained to their constructed width and depth, the Secretary shall—

''(i) equally divide among each of the districts of the Corps of Engineers in which eligible projects are located 10 percent of remaining amounts made available under this section for moderate-use and low-use port projects—

''(I) that have been maintained at less than their constructed width and depth during the preceding 8 fiscal years; and

''(II) for which significant State and local investments in infrastructure have been made at those projects during the preceding 8 fiscal years; and

''(ii) prioritize any remaining amounts made available under this section for those projects that are not maintained to the minimum width and depth necessary to provide sufficient clearance for fully loaded commercial vessels using those projects to maneuver safely.

''(3) ADMINISTRATION.—For purposes of this subsection, State and local investments in infrastructure shall include infrastructure investments made using amounts made available for activities under section 105(a)(9) of the Housing and Community Development Act of 1974 (42 U.S.C. 5305(a)(9)).

''(4) EXCEPTIONS.—The Secretary may prioritize a project not identified in paragraph (2) if the Secretary determines that funding for the project is necessary to address—

''(A) hazardous navigation conditions; or

''(B) impacts of natural disasters, including storms and droughts.

''(5) REPORTS TO CONGRESS.—Not later than September 30, 2013, and annually thereafter, the Secretary shall submit to Congress a report that describes, with respect to the preceding fiscal year—

''(A) the amount of funds used to maintain high-use deep draft projects and projects at moderate-use ports and low-use ports to the constructed depth and width of the projects;

''(B) the respective percentage of total funds provided under this section used for high use deep draft projects and projects at moderate-use ports and low-use ports;

''(C) the remaining amount of funds made available to carry out this section, if any; and

''(D) any additional amounts needed to maintain the high-use deep draft projects and projects at moderate-use ports and low-use ports to the constructed depth and width of the projects.''.

SA 871. Mr. BOOZMAN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 601, to provide for the conservation and development of water and related resources, to authorize the Secretary of the Army to construct various projects for improvements to rivers and harbors of the United States, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 316, line 20, strike ''drinking water'' and insert ''water supply''.

On page 322, line 18, after ''flood control'' insert '', water supply,''.

On page 322, lines 23 and 24, strike ''or protect natural resources'' and insert ''protect natural resources, or accomplish other water resource purposes''.

SA 872. Mr. BOOZMAN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 601, to provide for the conservation and development of water and related resources, to authorize the Secretary of the Army to construct various projects for improvements to rivers and harbors of the United States, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of title II, add the following:

SEC. 2_____. IMPROVING PLANNING AND ADMINISTRATION OF WATER SUPPLY STORAGE.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall carry out activities to enable non-Federal interests to anticipate and accurately budget for annual operations and maintenance costs and, as applicable, repair, rehabilitation, and replacements costs, including through—

(1) the formulation by the Secretary of a uniform billing statement format for those storage agreements relating to operations and maintenance costs, and as applicable, repair, rehabilitation, and replacement costs, incurred by the Secretary, which, at a minimum, shall include—

(A) a detailed description of the activities carried out relating to the water supply aspects of the project;

(B) a clear explanation of why and how those activities relate to the water supply aspects of the project; and

(C) a detailed accounting of the cost of carrying out those activities; and

(2) a review by the Secretary of the regulations and guidance of the Corps of Engineers relating to criteria and methods for the equitable distribution of joint project costs across project purposes in order to ensure consistency in the calculation of the appropriate share of joint project costs allocable to the water supply purpose.

(b) REPORT TO CONGRESS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall submit to Congress a report on the findings of the reviews carried out under subsection (a)(2) and any subsequent actions taken by the Secretary relating to those reviews.

(2) INCLUSIONS.—The report under paragraph (1) shall include an analysis of the feasibility and costs associated with the provision by the Secretary to each non-Federal interest of not less than 1 statement each year that details for each water storage agreement with non-Federal interests at Corps of Engineers projects the estimated amount of the operations and maintenance costs and, as applicable, the estimated amount of the repair, rehabilitation, and replacement costs, for which the non-Federal interest will be responsible in that fiscal year.

(3) EXTENSION.—The Secretary may delay the submission of the report under paragraph (1) for a period not to exceed 180 days after the deadline described in paragraph (1), subject to the condition that the Secretary submits a preliminary progress report to Congress not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act.

SA 873. Mr. WARNER (for himself and Mr. KAINE) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 601, to provide for the conservation and development of water and related resources, to authorize the Secretary of the Army to construct various projects for improvements to rivers and harbors of the United States, and for other purposes; as follows:

On page 216, between lines 3 and 4, insert the following:

SEC. 3019. FOUR MILE RUN, CITY OF ALEXANDRIA AND ARLINGTON COUNTY, VIRGINIA.

Section 84(a)(1) of the Water Resources Development Act of 1974 (Public Law 93–251; 88 Stat. 35) is amended by striking ''twenty-seven thousand cubic feet per second'' and inserting ''18,000 cubic feet per second''.

SA 874. Mr. LEVIN (for himself, Mr. SCHUMER, Ms. BALDWIN, and Mr. BROWN) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 601, to provide for the conservation and development of water and related resources, to authorize the Secretary of the Army to construct various projects for improvements to rivers and harbors of the United States, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

Beginning on page 309, strike line 21 and all that follows through page 310, line 4, and insert the following:

the amount that is equal to 10 percent of the amounts made available under section 210 to carry out projects described in subsection (a)(2) of that section that are in excess of the amounts made available to carry out those projects in fiscal year 2012.

SA 875. Ms. COLLINS (for herself, Mr. KING, and Mrs. SHAHEEN) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill S. 601, to provide for the conservation and development of water and related resources, to authorize the Secretary of the Army to construct various projects for improvements to rivers and harbors of the United States, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of title V, add the following:

SEC. 50_____. CAPE ARUNDEL DISPOSAL SITE, MAINE.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Cape Arundel Disposal Site selected by the Department of the Army as an alternative dredged material disposal site under section 103(b) of the Marine Protection, Research, and Sanctuaries Act of 1972 (33 U.S.C. 1413(b)) (referred to in this section as the ''Site'') is reopened, in concurrence with the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency, and shall remain open and available until the earlier of—

(1) the date on which the Site does not have any remaining disposal capacity;

(2) the date on which an environmental impact statement designating an alternative dredged material disposal site for southern Maine has been completed; or

(3) the date that is 5 years after the date of enactment of this Act.

(b) LIMITATIONS.—The use of the Site as a dredged material disposal site under subsection (a) shall be subject to the conditions that—

(1) conditions at the Site remain suitable for the continued use of the Site as a dredged material disposal site; and

(2) the Site not be used for the disposal of more than 80,000 cubic yards from any single dredging project.

SA 876. Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. JOHNSON of South Dakota) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 601, to provide for the conservation and development of water and related resources, to authorize the Secretary of the Army to construct various projects for improvements to rivers and harbors of the United States, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 234, between lines 16 and 17, insert the following:

SEC. 5009. UPPER MISSOURI BASIN SHORELINE EROSION PREVENTION.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary may provide planning, design, and construction assistance to not more than 3 federally-recognized Indian tribes in the Upper Missouri River Basin to undertake measures to address shoreline erosion that is jeopardizing existing infrastructure resulting from operation of a reservoir constructed under the Pick-Sloan Missouri River Basin Program (authorized by section 9 of the Act of December 22, 1944 (commonly known as the ''Flood Control Act of 1944'') (58 Stat. 891, chapter 665)).

(b) FEDERAL COST SHARE.—The Federal share of the costs of carrying out this section shall be not less than 80 percent.

(c) CONDITIONS.—The Secretary may provide the assistance described in subsection (a) only after—

(1) consultation with the Department of the Interior; and

(2) execution by the Indian tribe of a memorandum of agreement with the Secretary that specifies that the tribe shall—

(A) be responsible for—

(i) all operation and maintenance activities required to ensure the integrity of the measures taken; and

(ii) providing any required real estate interests in and to the property on which such measures are to be taken; and

(B) hold and save the United States free from damages arising from planning, design, or construction assistance provided under this section, except for damages due to the fault or negligence of the United States or its contractors.

(d) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—For each Indian tribe eligible under this section, there is authorized to be appropriated to carry out this section not more than $30,000,000.

SA 877. Mr. NELSON submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 601, to provide for the conservation and development of water and related resources, to authorize the Secretary of the Army to construct various projects for improvements to rivers and harbors of the United States, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of title III, add the following:

SEC. _____. APALACHICOLA, CHATTAHOOCHEE, AND FLINT RIVER PROJECTS.

(a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

(1) APALACHICOLA-CHATTAHOOCHEE-FLINT PROJECTS.—The term ''Apalachicola-Chattahoochee-Flint projects'' means the Federal water resources projects on the Apalachicola, Chattahoochee, and Flint Rivers in the States of Alabama, Florida, and Georgia authorized by section 2 of the Act of March 2, 1945 (59 Stat. 17, chapter 19; 60 Stat. 635, chapter 595) and section 203 of the Flood Control Act of 1962 (76 Stat. 1182), including—

(A) Buford Dam and Reservoir;

(B) West Point Dam and Reservoir;

(C) George W. Andrews Dam and Reservoir;

(D) Walter F. George Dam and Reservoir; and

(E) Jim Woodruff Dam and Reservoir.

(2) FRESHWATER FLOWS.—The term ''freshwater flows'' means the quality, quantity, timing, and variability of freshwater flows required—

(A) to support and reestablish—

(i) the physical, chemical, biological, and overall ecological integrity of the components, functions, and natural processes required for a thriving and resilient Apalachicola River, Apalachicola River floodplain, and Apalachicola Bay;

(ii) commercial and recreational fisheries dependent on freshwater flows into Apalachicola Bay and adjacent waters, including the Gulf of Mexico; and

(iii) thriving and diverse fish, wildlife, and plant populations having species composition, diversity, adaptability, and functional organization similar to those found in the Apalachicola River ecosystem prior to construction of the Apalachicola-Chattahoochee-Flint projects;

(B) to restore and recover species that are endangered, threatened, or at risk; and

(C) to prevent significantly harmful adverse impacts to the Apalachicola River ecosystem.

(b) PROJECT MODIFICATION.—Notwithstanding any authorized purpose of the Apalachicola-Chattahoochee-Flint projects, the Secretary shall operate the Apalachicola-

Chattahoochee-Flint projects in a manner that ensures the maintenance of freshwater flows.

(c) REVISION OF WATER CONTROL MANUALS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 18 months after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall complete the ongoing revision of the water control manuals for the Apalachicola-Chattahoochee-Flint projects and issue revised water control manuals for those projects that ensure the maintenance of freshwater flows.

(2) INDEPENDENT PEER REVIEW OF WATER CONTROL MANUALS.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall enter into an arrangement with the National Academy of Sciences under which the National Academy of Sciences shall carry out an independent peer review of each revised water control manual, as required under section 2034 of the Water Resources Development Act of 2007 (33 U.S.C. 2343).

(B) COMPLIANCE.—Each independent peer review under this paragraph shall comply with section 2034 of the Water Resources Development Act of 2007 (33 U.S.C. 2343).

(3) FINAL APPROVAL.—Before a final water control manual may be issued, the Secretary shall obtain written approval of each water control manual developed under this subsection from—

(A) the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency;

(B) the Director of the United States Fish and Wildlife Service;

(C) the Director of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration; and

(D) the Director of the United States Geological Survey.

(d) APPLICABILITY OF OTHER FEDERAL AND STATE LAWS.—Except as provided in subsection (b), nothing in this section waives, limits, or otherwise affects the applicability of any provision of Federal or State law that would otherwise apply to the Apalachicola-Chattahoochee-Flint projects.

SA 878. Mr. UDALL of New Mexico submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 601, to provide for the conservation and development of water and related resources, to authorize the Secretary of the Army to construct various projects for improvements to rivers and harbors of the United States, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 227, after line 25, insert the following:

SEC. 5005. RIO GRANDE DROUGHT MANAGEMENT PROGRAM.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary, in conjunction with the Secretary of the Interior and the United States Section of the International Boundary and Water Commission, shall evaluate alternatives for operational changes and technically feasible structural modifications to completed water resources projects of the Corps of Engineers, the Bureau of Reclamation, and the United States Section of the International Boundary and Water Commission along the Rio Grande River—

(1) to minimize evaporation, seepage, and other losses; and

(2) to maximize the amount of water available to water users and the environment, including the support of recovery efforts for threatened and endangered species, during periods of drought disaster in significant areas of the Rio Grande Basin, as designated by the Secretary of Agriculture.

(b) AUTHORIZATION.—The Secretary, the Secretary of the Interior, and the United States Section of the International Boundary and Water Commission may, after notification to Congress and obtaining written consent from the appropriate State water resource agencies and tribal governments in which those completed projects are located, implement any operational changes or structural modifications identified under subsection (a).

(c) APPLICABILITY.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Nothing in this section alters, amends, repeals, interprets, or modifies—

(A) the Act entitled ''Giving the consent and approval of Congress to the Rio Grande compact signed at Santa Fe, New Mexico, on March 18, 1938'', approved May 31, 1939; or

(B) the Treaty relating to the utilization of waters of the Colorado and Tijuana Rivers and of the Rio Grande, and supplementary protocol signed at Washington February 3, 1944 (59 Stat. 1219).

(2) EFFECT ON STATE LAWS.—Nothing in this section supersedes any State law.

SA 879. Mr. KAINE (for himself and Mr. WARNER) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 601, to provide for the conservation and development of water and related resources, to authorize the Secretary of the Army to construct various projects for improvements to rivers and harbors of the United States, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 306, line 11, strike ''2,000,000'' and insert ''1,850,000''.

SA 880. Mr. CORNYN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 601, to provide for the conservation and development of water and related resources, to authorize the Secretary of the Army to construct various projects for improvements to rivers and harbors of the United States, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of title III, add the following:

SEC. 3_____. EAST FORK OF TRINITY RIVER, TEXAS.

The portion of the project for flood protection on the East Fork of the Trinity River, Texas, authorized by section 203 of the Flood Control Act of 1962 (76 Stat. 1185), that consists of the 2 levees identified as ''Kaufman County Levees K5E and K5W'' shall no longer be authorized as a part of the Federal project as of the date of enactment of this Act.

SA 881. Mr. CORNYN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 601, to provide for the conservation and development of water and related resources, to authorize the Secretary of the Army to construct various projects for improvements to rivers and harbors of the United States, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

In section 2014, add at the end the following:

(h) EXEMPTION OF CERTAIN FEDERAL FACILITIES.—This section shall not apply to a Federal facility located in a State or shared with a State if—

(1) the State has enacted laws governing and is implementing—

(A) environmental flows standards; and

(B) an environmental flow regime; and

(2) the Governor of the State certifies to the Secretary that it has met the requirements described in paragraph (1) and identifies the facilities to be exempted from this section.

SA 882. Mr. CARPER (for himself, Mr. CASEY, Mr. COONS, Mrs. GILLIBRAND, Mr. LAUTENBERG, Mr. MENENDEZ, and Mr. SCHUMER) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 601, to provide for the conservation and development of water and related resources, to authorize the Secretary of the Army to construct various projects for improvements to rivers and harbors of the United States, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 190, after line 23, add the following:

SEC. 20___. RIVER BASIN COMMISSIONS.

Section 5019 of the Water Resources Development Act of 2007 (121 Stat. 1201) is amended by striking subsection (b) and inserting the following:

''(b) AUTHORIZATION TO ALLOCATE.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—Subject to paragraph (2), the Secretary shall allocate funds from the General Expenses account of the civil works program of the Army Corps of Engineers to the Susquehanna River Basin Commission, Delaware River Basin Commission, and the Interstate Commission on the Potomac River Basin to fulfill the equitable funding requirements of the respective interstate compacts on an annual basis and in amounts equal to the amount determined by Commission in accordance with the respective interstate compact.

''(2) LIMITATION.—Not more than 1.5 percent of funds from the General Expenses account of the civil works program of the Army Corps of Engineers may be allocated in carrying out paragraph (1) for any fiscal year.

''(3) REPORT.—For any fiscal year in which funds are not allocated in accordance with paragraph (1), the Secretary shall submit to the Committee on Environment and Public Works of the Senate and the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the House of Representatives a report that describes—

''(A) the reaso§ns why the Corps of Engineers chose not to allocate funds in accordance with that paragraph; and

''(B) the impact of the decision not to allocate funds on water supply allocation, water quality protection, regulatory review and permitting, water conservation, watershed planning, drought management, flood loss reduction, and recreation in each area of jurisdiction of the respective Commission.''.

SA 883. Mr. REID (for Mr. LAUTENBERG (for himself, Mr. MENENDEZ, and Mr. SCHUMER)) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by Mr. REID of NV to the bill S. 601, to provide for the conservation and development of water and related resources, to authorize the Secretary of the Army to construct various projects for improvements to rivers and harbors of the United States, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of title II, add the following:

SEC. 20___. USE OF FUNDS TO INCREASE FEDERAL SHARE FOR CERTAIN PROJECTS.

Notwithstanding any other provision of law, the Secretary may use funds made

available under Public Law 113–2 (127 Stat. 4) to increase the Federal share up to 100 percent of the costs required for construction projects carried out by the Secretary under Public Law 113–2 that are not considered ongoing construction.

SA 884. Ms. KLOBUCHAR (for herself and Mr. FRANKEN) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill S. 601, to provide for the conservation and development of water and related resources, to authorize the Secretary of the Army to construct various projects for improvements to rivers and harbors of the United States, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. _____. UPPER MISSISSIPPI RIVER PROTECTION.

(a) DEFINITION OF UPPER ST. ANTHONY FALLS LOCK AND DAM.—In this section, the term ''Upper St. Anthony Falls Lock and Dam'' means the lock and dam located on Mississippi River mile 853.9 in Minneapolis, Minnesota.

(b) ECONOMIC IMPACT STUDY.—Not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall submit to Congress a report regarding the impact of closing the Upper St. Anthony Falls Lock and Dam on the economic and environmental well-being of the State of Minnesota.

(c) MANDATORY CLOSURE.—Notwithstanding subsection (b) and not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall close the Upper St. Anthony Falls Lock and Dam if the Secretary determines that the annual average tonnage moving through the Upper St. Anthony Falls Lock and Dam for the preceding 5 years is not more than 1,500,000 tons.

(d) EMERGENCY OPERATIONS.—Nothing in this section prevents the Secretary from carrying out emergency lock operations necessary to mitigate flood damage.

SA 885. Mr. COONS submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 601, to provide for the conservation and development of water and related resources, to authorize the Secretary of the Army to construct various projects for improvements to rivers and harbors of the United States, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 303, strike lines 13 through 16, and insert the following:

''(ii) STATE PRIORITY.—For each fiscal year, the operation and maintenance activities described in subparagraph (A) may be carried out in any State, with priority given to those States—

SA 886. Mr. COONS (for himself, Mr. CARPER, Mr. LAUTENBERG, Mr. SCHUMER, Mr. MENENDEZ, and Mr. CASEY) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 601, to provide for the conservation and development of water and related resources, to authorize the Secretary of the Army to construct various projects for improvements to rivers and harbors of the United States, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of title V, add the following:

SEC. 50_____. SENSE OF THE SENATE REGARDING THE IMPORTANCE OF THE DELAWARE RIVER BASIN COMMISSION.

(a) FINDINGS.—The Senate finds that—

(1) the Delaware River Basin is the longest undammed river in the eastern United States, draining into portions of Delaware, New York, and Pennsylvania (in this section referred to as the ''4 basin States'') and providing drinking water to 15 million people, including the populations of New York City and Philadelphia;

(2) over 8,500,000,000 gallons of water are withdrawn from the Delaware River Basin each day;

(3) in 1961, the Delaware River Basin Commission (in this section referred to as the ''DRBC'') was formed to address problems of drought, floods, and pollution by bringing the Governors of the 4 basin States and the Federal Government together to manage the water resources of the Delaware River Basin by using the watershed boundary, not political boundaries;

(4) the formation of the DRBC was approved by Congress and signed into law by President John F. Kennedy and the 4 basin States, marking the first time that the Federal Government and a group of States joined together as equal partners in a river basin planning, development, and regulatory agency;

(5) the DRBC serves Federal, State, and local interests by providing comprehensive and proactive water resources management for the 13,539 square mile Delaware River Basin through programs that address water quality protection, water supply allocation, flood loss reduction, drought management, water conservation, permitting, watershed planning, and recreation;

(6) the DRBC has proven to be invaluable in preventing water conflict and finding effective solutions to complicated and critical water resource challenges;

(7) after the multi year drought in the 1960s, the DRBC facilitated a series of negotiations that resulted in an agreement in the early 1980s to reduce water diversions to upstream and downstream users, create a water conservation program, and establish minimum flows to prevent saltwater from reaching further up the Delaware river and degrading freshwater supplies and ecosystem function;

(8) this agreement assisted the 4 basin States through numerous droughts without major water use changes or restrictions, and has conserved billions of gallons of water;

(9) the DRBC model of watershed management has proven to be so successful that other countries are interested learning from and replicating the DRBC model, and DRBC representatives have been invited to share knowledge with and offer technical assistance to Australia, Slovakia, Bulgaria, Sri Lanka, the People's Republic of China, Indonesia, the United Kingdom, South Korea, the Czech Republic, Hungary, Jordan, Portugal, Sweden, Turkey, Uganda, Uruguay, India, and Japan;

(10) the DRBC is funded by the 5 signatory parties to the Delaware River Basin Compact (Public Law 87–328; 75 Stat. 688), project review fees, water use charges, and fines, as well as Federal, State, and private grants;

(11) the 100-year Delaware River Basin Compact stipulates that the 5 signatory parties agree to support the annual expense budget of the DRBC;

(12) in 1988, the 5 members of the DRBC reached a tacit agreement to apportion signatory party contributions to the annual expense budget of the DRBC as follows: 12.5 percent for Delaware, 17.5 percent for New York, 25 percent for New Jersey, 25 percent for Pennsylvania, and 20 percent for the Federal Government;

(13) the Federal Government has provided funding to support the 20 percent contribution to the annual expense budget of the DRBC only 1 Federal fiscal year since 1996;

(14) the Federal Government is responsible for contributing $715,000 to the annual expense budget of the DRBC; and

(15) the cumulative shortfall of the Federal Government contribution to the annual expense budget of the DRBC from October 1996 through the DRBC fiscal year ending on June 30, 2013, is $10,709,250.

(b) SENSE OF THE SENATE.—It is the Sense of the Senate that—

(1) it is the responsibility of the Federal Government to pay a 20 percent contribution to the annual expense budget of the DRBC;

(2) the mission of the DRBC, as established in the Delaware River Basin Compact, is critical for local communities, business, and industry, States, and the region surrounding the Delaware River Basin, and for Federal interests such as emergency response, interstate commerce, and ecosystem management; and

(3) the President and Congress should provide Federal funding to the DRBC.

SA 887. Ms. LANDRIEU (for herself, Mr. VITTER, and Mr. SCHUMER) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill S. 601, to provide for the conservation and development of water and related resources, to authorize the Secretary of the Army to construct various projects for improvements to rivers and harbors of the United States, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of title II, add the following:

SEC. 20____. DELAY IN IMPLEMENTATION OF SECTION 100207 OF THE BIGGERT-WATERS FLOOD INSURANCE REFORM ACT OF 2012.

Notwithstanding any other provision of law, section 1308(h) of the National Flood Insurance Act of 1968, as added by section 100207 of the Biggert-Waters Flood Insurance Reform Act of 2012 (Public Law 112–141; 126 Stat. 919), shall have no force or effect until the date that is 5 years after the date of enactment of this Act.

SA 888. Ms. LANDRIEU (for herself, Mr. VITTER, Mr. SCHUMER, and Mr. LAUTENBERG) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill S. 601, to provide for the conservation and development of water and related resources, to authorize the Secretary of the Army to construct various projects for improvements to rivers and harbors of the United States, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of title II, add the following:

SEC. 20____. DELAY IN IMPLEMENTATION OF SECTION 100207 OF THE BIGGERT-WATERS FLOOD INSURANCE REFORM ACT OF 2012.

Notwithstanding any other provision of law, section 1308(h) of the National Flood Insurance Act of 1968, as added by section 100207 of the Biggert-Waters Flood Insurance Reform Act of 2012 (Public Law 112–141; 126 Stat. 919), shall have no force or effect until the date that is 5 years after the date of enactment of this Act.

SA 889. Mr. SANDERS (for himself and Mr. LEAHY) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 601, to provide for the

conservation and development of water and related resources, to authorize the Secretary of the Army to construct various projects for improvements to rivers and harbors of the United States, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. _____. RESTORATION OF CERTAIN PROPERTIES IMPACTED BY NATURAL DISASTERS.

For all major disasters declared under the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act on or after August 27, 2011, the Corps of Engineers and the Federal Emergency Management Agency shall consider eligible the costs necessary to comply with any State stream or river alteration permit required for the repair or replacement of otherwise eligible damaged infrastructure, such as culverts and bridges, including any design standards required to be met as a condition of permit issuance.

NOTICES OF HEARINGS

COMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND NATURAL RESOURCES

Mr. WYDEN. Mr. President, I would like to announce for the information of the Senate and the public that a meeting of the Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources has been scheduled to discuss natural gas issues. The meeting will be held on Tuesday, May 14, 2013, at 10 a.m., in room 216 of the Hart Senate Office Building.

The purpose of this meeting is to provide a forum to explore what the next applications are for natural gas and how this new demand will be met. Pipeline infrastructure and increased use of natural gas in the transportation sector will be specific points of interest.

Because of the limited time available for the forum, witnesses may testify by invitation only. However, those wishing to submit written testimony for the record may do so by sending it to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources, United States Senate, Washington, DC 20510–6150, or by e-mail to lauren_goldschmidt@energy.senate.gov.

For further information, please contact Todd Wooten at (202) 224–4971 or Lauren Goldschmidt at (202) 224–5488.

COMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND NATURAL RESOURCES

Mr. WYDEN. Mr. President, I would like to announce for the information of the Senate and the public that a business meeting has been scheduled before the Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources. The business meeting will be held on Thursday, May 16, 2013, at 10 a.m., in room 366 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building.

The purpose of the business meeting is to consider pending calendar business.

Because of the limited time available for the business meeting, witnesses may testify by invitation only. However, those wishing to submit written testimony for the business meeting record may do so by sending it to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources, United States Senate, Washington, DC 20510–6150, or by email to Abigail_campbell@energy.senate.gov.

For further information, please contact Sam Fowler at (202) 224–7571 or Abigail Campbell at (202) 224–4905.

AUTHORITY FOR COMMITTEES TO MEET

COMMITTEE ON HEALTH, EDUCATION, LABOR, AND PENSIONS

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions be authorized to meet, during the session of the Senate, to conduct a hearing entitled ''Pharmaceutical Compounding: Proposed Legislative Solution'' on May 9, 2013, at 10 a.m. in room 430 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building.

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

COMMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on the Judiciary be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate, on May 9, 2013, at 9:30 a.m., in SH–216 of the Hart Senate Office Building, to conduct an executive business meeting.

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

COMMITTEE ON VETERANS' AFFAIRS

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Veterans' Affairs be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on May 9, 2013, at 10 a.m. in room SR–418 of the Russell Senate office building.

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

SELECT COMMITTEE ON INTELLIGENCE

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Select Committee on Intelligence be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on May 9, 2013, at 2:30 p.m.

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

SUBCOMMITTEE ON STRATEGIC FORCES

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Subcommittee on Strategic Forces of the Committee on Armed Services be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on May 9, 2013, at 2:30 p.m.

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

FLOOD INSURANCE

Ms. LANDRIEU. Mr. President, I wish to speak for a few minutes in morning business to thank the leader for the remarks he has made and thank him and his staff for working with us throughout today, this afternoon, to try to mitigate against some of the difficulties that are being imposed not only on people in Louisiana but in many coastal States as these insurance rates rise because of new requirements in a bill this body never got to vote on because it never came to the Senate.

I wish to correct something I said in the RECORD earlier.

I am sorry. If the leader needs to finish his business, I will yield.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, if the Senator would be kind enough, we can move through this in about 2 or 3 minutes and then we will put it on automatic pilot for as long as the Senator cares to speak.

Ms. LANDRIEU. Of course. I thank the leader.

Mr. REID. I appreciate the courtesy of my friend.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT AGREEMENTS—EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that at a time to be determined by me, in consultation with Senator MCCONNELL, the Senate proceed to executive session to consider Calendar No. 40; that there be 1 hour for debate equally divided in the usual form; that upon the use or yielding back of time the Senate proceed to vote, without intervening action or debate on the nomination; that the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate; that no further motions be in order to the nomination; that any statements related to the nomination be printed in the RECORD; that the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action and the Senate resume legislative session.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. REID. I now ask unanimous consent that at a time to be determined by me, in consultation with Senator MCCONNELL, the Senate proceed to Calendar No. 91; that there be 3 hours of debate equally divided in the usual form; that upon the use or yielding back of time the Senate proceed to vote without intervening action or debate on the nomination; that the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table, with no intervening action or debate; that no further motions be in order to the nomination; that any statements related to the nomination be printed in the RECORD; that President Obama be immediately notified of the Senate's action and the Senate then resume legislative session.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

AWARDING OF THE CONGRESSIONAL GOLD MEDAL

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the consideration of H.R. 360.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will report the bill by title.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (H.R. 360) to award posthumously a Congressional Gold Medal to Addie Mae Collins, Denise McNair, Carole Robertson, and Cynthia Wesley to commemorate the lives they lost 50 years ago in the bombing of the Sixteenth Street Baptist Church, where these 4 little Black girls' ultimate sacrifice served as a catalyst for the Civil Rights Movement.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the bill.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the bill be read a third time and passed, the motion to reconsider be laid upon the table, and that any statements relating to this matter be printed in the RECORD.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The bill (H.R. 360) was ordered to a third reading, was read the third time, and passed.

RESOLUTIONS SUBMITTED TODAY

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the consideration en bloc of the following resolutions which were submitted earlier today: S. Res. 136, S. Res. 137, and S. Res. 138.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the resolutions en bloc.

S. RES. 137

Mr. NELSON. Mr. President, today I rise in recognition of May as Older Americans Month. I am pleased to be submitting a resolution commemorating the month with my colleagues, Senator COLLINS and Senator SANDERS. The 2010 Census estimated that 40 million adults in the United States are over the age of 65. By 2030, there may be as many as 72 million seniors, or almost 20 percent of the entire U.S. population.

President John Kennedy recognized the first Older Americans Month 50 years ago. By continuing to observe the month of May as Older Americans Month, we are not only reminding ourselves of our duty to provide for the needs of this population, we are showing our respect for the numerous valuable contributions and lessons these individuals give to us every day.

Let me give one motivating example out of many from my home State of Florida. Cecil Daniels, a 70-year-old Miami resident, was recently recognized in a nationwide competition as the 2012 Richard L. Swanson Inspiration Award from the Healthways SilverSneakers Fitness Program. Mr. Daniels has successfully changed his lifestyle to better manage his diabetes and high blood pressure. Thanks to changing his diet and joining friends in fitness classes, he now receives encouraging reports from his physicians about his health.

Mr. President, in honor of Cecil Daniels and all older Americans, I am pleased to recognize May as Older Americans Month and celebrate the contributions and achievements of seniors nationwide.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the resolutions be agreed to, the preambles be agreed to, and the motions to reconsider be laid upon the table en bloc, with no intervening action or debate.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The resolutions were agreed to.

The preambles were agreed to.

(The resolutions, with their preambles, are printed in today's RECORD under ''Submitted Resolutions.'')

APPOINTMENT

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Chair, on behalf of the Republican leader, pursuant to Public Law 112–275, appoints the following individual to be a member of the Commission to Eliminate Child Abuse and Neglect Fatalities: Dr. Wade F. Horn of Maryland.

ORDERS FOR MONDAY, MAY 13, 2013

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that when the Senate completes its business today, it adjourn until 2 p.m. on Monday, May 13, 2013; 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 be in a period of morning business until 5 p.m., with Senators permitted to speak for up to 10 minutes each; further, that the filing deadline for all first-degree amendments to S. 601, the Water Resources Development Act, be 4 p.m. on Monday.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

PROGRAM

Mr. REID. Mr. President, as previously announced, there will be no rollcall votes on Monday. The next rollcall vote will be on Tuesday prior to the caucus meetings.

ORDER FOR ADJOURNMENT

Mr. REID. Mr. President, if there is no further business to come before the Senate, I ask unanimous consent that it adjourn following the remarks of the Senator from Louisiana, Ms. LANDRIEU.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The Senator from Louisiana.

WATER RESOURCES DEVELOPMENT ACT

Ms. LANDRIEU. Mr. President, I wish to continue and again thank the majority leader for his kind comments and assure him I am working with the Republican leadership as well to try to find a way forward to minimize the impact on many businesses and homeowners who will be negatively affected by the new requirements of the Federal flood insurance program.

I have an amendment which has been filed. It is amendment No. 888. I will be offering it for myself and Senator VITTER. Senator SCHUMER and Senator LAUTENBERG are also cosponsors of this amendment. Hopefully we can get a vote. I do not mind trying to meet the 60-vote threshold. I understand that would be a requirement should we be able to move to a vote next week on this amendment.

We will be working very hard over the weekend to get additional cosponsors on the first amendment I filed, which had a multimillion-dollar cost to it. We had 62 people who had committed to vote. So we have a strong network of Senators, Republicans and Democrats, who are very supportive of the effort Senator VITTER and I are leading to try to mitigate some of the harshest provisions of this bill that passed last year. The bill never was voted on in this Chamber. It came out of the Banking Committee. A separate bill came out of the House with a strong bipartisan vote. Then what happened was both bills never went to a formal conference. It got pushed inside of a larger bill. A few things did not get pushed in the correct way, at least from the perspective of those of us who believe that, yes, our flood insurance program should be cost-effective, should be affordable, and should not run at deficit levels any longer. But there are certain ways to do that that are more equitable and fair than others. So my amendment now—we have worked all throughout the day. I thank Senator CRAPO. Senator JOHNSON's staff has been helpful as well. We are not quite there yet, but we are working on a fix to delay the implementation of some of these rate increases to give our communities—this is not just for Louisiana. Texas is affected, Florida is affected, the east coast is affected. California is No. 3 in terms of policies that are related to flood insurance.

It will give us some time to give our people a little bit more breathing room until we can get our levees constructed, until this new mapping can be put into place, as not to shock homeowners and owners of commercial real estate with these very high premiums we hope to be able to avoid.

Again, it is amendment No. 888. There is no score attached to it. We will accept a 60-vote threshold. I hope my colleagues will look at this. I thank Senator VITTER for his leadership. It is a Landrieu-Vitter amendment, again with Senator SCHUMER and Senator LAUTENBERG and their staffs giving us plenty of help and assistance throughout the day.

We will work on it over the weekend. Hopefully, we can come to a final resolution early next week, and then get to

the passage of the WRDA bill which is so extremely important to people in Louisiana. I am very grateful for Senator BOXER's leadership. Senator VITTER is the ranking member. This bill came out of the EPW Committee with a fairly strong bipartisan and overwhelming vote.

We have millions of dollars of projects that are authorized in this bill. We have corps reform. It is important for us to be able to build our levees more quickly, more efficiently, to avoid some of the terrible devastation that has happened.

It is very important to get the WRDA bill passed. I am going to ask any colleagues, if you can join in helping on this flood insurance bill, please do. I look forward to working with people over the weekend on it.

I yield the floor.

ADJOURNMENT UNTIL MONDAY, MAY 13, 2013, AT 2 P.M.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the Senate stands adjourned until 2 p.m. on Monday, May 13, 2013.

Thereupon, the Senate, at 6:50 p.m., adjourned until Monday, May 13, 2013, at 2 p.m.

NOMINATIONS

Executive nominations received by the Senate:

THE JUDICIARY

MADELINE HUGHES HAIKALA, OF ALABAMA, TO BE UNITED STATES DISTRICT JUDGE FOR THE NORTHERN DISTRICT OF ALABAMA, VICE INGE PRYTZ JOHNSON, RETIRED.

GREGORY HOWARD WOODS, OF NEW YORK, TO BE UNITED STATES DISTRICT JUDGE FOR THE SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF NEW YORK, VICE BARBARA S. JONES, RETIRED.

FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION

THOMAS EDGAR WHEELER, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, TO BE A MEMBER OF THE FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION FOR THE REMAINDER OF THE TERM EXPIRING JUNE 30, 2013, VICE JULIUS GENACHOWSKI.

THOMAS EDGAR WHEELER, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, TO BE A MEMBER OF THE FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION FOR A TERM OF FIVE YEARS FROM JULY 1, 2013. (REAPPOINTMENT)

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

PENNY PRITZKER, OF ILLINOIS, TO BE SECRETARY OF COMMERCE, VICE JOHN EDGAR BRYSON, RESIGNED.

UNITED STATES TAX COURT

JOSEPH W. NEGA, OF ILLINOIS, TO BE A JUDGE OF THE UNITED STATES TAX COURT FOR A TERM OF FIFTEEN YEARS, VICE THOMAS B. WELLS, RETIRED.

MICHAEL B. THORNTON, OF VIRGINIA, TO BE A JUDGE OF THE UNITED STATES TAX COURT FOR A TERM OF FIFTEEN YEARS. (REAPPOINTMENT)

DEPARTMENT OF STATE

ROSE EILENE GOTTEMOELLER, OF VIRGINIA, TO BE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR ARMS CONTROL AND INTERNATIONAL SECURITY, VICE ELLEN O. TAUSCHER, RESIGNED.

GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE

DAVITA VANCE–COOKS, OF VIRGINIA, TO BE PUBLIC PRINTER, VICE WILLIAM J. BOARMAN.

CORPORATION FOR NATIONAL AND COMMUNITY SERVICE

MARK D. GEARAN, OF NEW YORK, TO BE A MEMBER OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE CORPORATION FOR NATIONAL AND COMMUNITY SERVICE FOR A TERM EXPIRING DECEMBER 1, 2015. (REAPPOINTMENT)

CONFIRMATIONS

Executive nominations confirmed by the Senate May 9, 2013:

THE JUDICIARY

SHELLY DECKERT DICK, OF LOUISIANA, TO BE UNITED STATES DISTRICT JUDGE FOR THE MIDDLE DISTRICT OF LOUISIANA.

NELSON STEPHEN ROMAN, OF NEW YORK, TO BE UNITED STATES DISTRICT JUDGE FOR THE SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF NEW YORK.

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

RECOGNIZING THE SERVICE OF COLONEL GRAHAM W. FOUNTAIN

HON. JEFF MILLER

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 9, 2013

Mr. MILLER of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Colonel Graham W. Fountain upon his retirement after a highly decorated and distinguished twenty-eight-year career in local and state law enforcement. Colonel Fountain's dedicated service to protecting and serving the people of Florida has been exemplary.

After graduating from Crestview High School in Crestview, Florida, Colonel Fountain attended Troy University, where he received a Bachelor's of Science degree in Criminal Justice. After completing his studies at Troy University, Colonel Fountain returned to his native Okaloosa County to become a Deputy Sheriff in the Okaloosa County Sheriff's Office. Colonel Fountain quickly established himself as a first-class law enforcement officer, and in 1991 he began his service in state law enforcement as a Law Enforcement Investigator with the Florida Office of the State Treasurer, where he served as an undercover operative, conducted interrogations, provided training to local law enforcement agencies, and drafted bill language for the agency to present to the Florida Legislature.

In 1995, Colonel Fountain returned to the Okaloosa County Sheriff's office, where he served as Undersheriff. In this important position, Colonel Fountain provided unparalleled leadership and administrative excellence overseeing over 250 law enforcement officers and support personnel.

Colonel Fountain's excellent record and demonstrated success led Florida Governor Jeb Bush to appoint Colonel Fountain as the Director of the Florida Department of Transportation's Office of Motor Carrier Compliance and Law Enforcement Operations. During his eight-year tenure at the department, Colonel Fountain spearheaded efforts to bring stakeholders in the trucking industry together with the Florida Legislature and Department of Transportation to dramatically improve the safety of Florida's highways without compromising the trucking industry's ability to transport freight. Colonel Fountain then brought his vast knowledge of the transportation sector to help develop Florida's "Pre-Pass" credentialing system, which has boosted efficiency and saved millions of hours of downtime. Colonel Fountain is an exceptional law enforcement officer and leader, and his sedulous work on behalf of the State of Florida was recognized by the Florida Department of Transportation when he was awarded their top honor, the "Leader of the Year" award.

Colonel Fountain has also used his vast experience in law enforcement to help improve local, state, and national efforts in homeland security, disaster preparedness, transportation, and law enforcement development. He has served in numerous important capacities outside of his law enforcement career, including as the Commissioner and Chairman of the Florida Commission on Law Enforcement Agency Accreditation, President of the State Law Enforcement Chiefs Association, Vice-Chair of Florida's Joint Task Force of Law Enforcement Communications for the Department of Justice's Homeland Security Advisory Council, and as a member of the Florida Seaports Security Standards Council. Colonel Fountain continues his outstanding service to Florida today as the Commissioner of the Florida Historical Commission.

Outside of his service to Florida, Colonel Fountain is a loving and devoted husband to his wife Felicia and a man of great faith. He is an active member of First Baptist Church in Crestview, where he serves in the church leadership. Colonel Fountain has also served in numerous capacities in state, local, and national political campaigns, including county chair and member of the National Public Safety Advisory Council and as Florida Co-Chair for Public Safety/First Responders.

Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the United States Congress, I am privileged to recognize Colonel Graham W. Fountain for his twenty-eight years of outstanding leadership and service to Florida. My wife Vicki and I wish Colonel Fountain and his family all the best.

IN RECOGNITION OF MONMOUTH COLLEGE AND THE COMPLETION OF THEIR NEW CENTER FOR SCIENCE AND BUSINESS

HON. CHERI BUSTOS

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 9, 2013

Mrs. BUSTOS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Monmouth College and the college's president, Mauri Ditzler, on the completion of the Center for Science and Business, which will have its dedication ceremony tomorrow, May 10. This is their first new academic building in over twenty years. It is a testament to Monmouth's commitment to its students by creating a learning environment conducive to motivating students to maximize their potential.

I visited Monmouth College on April 29, and was greatly impressed with this new facility as well as with the dedication President Ditzler and his staff have to the institution and its students. The idea of this building has now become a building of ideas.

The innovative combination of business and science within a single facility will promote interaction between what have traditionally been independent departments and will prove to be important for the academic and economic growth in the region. This new $40 million complex will house the departments of biology, chemistry, physics, mathematics and computer science, psychology, political economy and commerce, and accounting.

Mr. Speaker, I want to congratulate Monmouth College for this giant step forward and I look forward to working with the College, its faculty, and graduates as they make their dreams a reality.

IN MEMORIAM OF JACK GOSCH

HON. PAUL COOK

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 09, 2013

Mr. COOK. Mr. Speaker, I rise today with my colleagues KEN CALVERT and RAUL RUIZ to honor the memory of a friend of mine, Jack Gosch, who passed away late last month. As an active member of the Hemet, California, community, Jack was a natural salesman who lived a long, enthusiastic, and vibrant life. He contributed greatly over his lifetime to the economic success and vitality of the city, and will long be remembered.

Jack was born on June 26, 1928, in Norwich, Kansas. He attended Wilson High School in Long Beach and the University of California Los Angeles. He graduated from the university in 1951 with a business degree and served two years in the U.S. Air Force. Following his service managing a Post Exchange, he joined Ford Motor Company, where he worked his way up from an entry-level data position to general field manager for the Los Angeles region. In 1964, he established his first dealership in Hemet, California. In the following years he added to the Gosch Auto Group with new dealerships in Temecula and other cities throughout Riverside County.

During the 1970s, Jack was president of the Hemet Chamber of Commerce and the Hemet-San Jacinto Exchange Club. In 1974, Jack co-founded The Bank of Hemet, and through his retirement in 2001, Jack served as chairman of the board. He was also a founding board member of Valley-Wide Parks & Recreation District, which was established in 1972 and has since grown from one park to over 75 throughout San Jacinto, Menifee, and French Valley. He was a partner in many local businesses, such as Hemet Valley RV, Hemet Insurance, and the Valley Chronicle Newspaper, among others.

Jack is survived by his wife Gwenyth; sons Eric (Gisela) and Marc (Marie); grandchildren Courtney, Patrick, Kurt and Matthew; great-granddaughter Lily Mae, and sister Betty Davidson.

HONORING KANEKO BISHOP

HON. SUSAN A. DAVIS

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 9, 2013

Mrs. DAVIS of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor and congratulate Kaneko Oshima Bishop, whose work and contributions have

made her a well-known figure in San Diego and, most recently, recognized by the government of Japan.

On May 15, Ms. Bishop will receive the country's most prestigious decoration, the Order of the Rising Sun, with Gold and Silver Rays, for her contributions to promoting the regional relationship between Japan and the United States. Established in 1875, the Order of the Rising Sun is the Japanese government's oldest decoration.

Born in Nagoya, Japan, Kaneko Bishop moved to San Diego in 1972 and has since then made countless contributions to the Japanese-American community. She is the President of the San Diego-Yokohama Sister City Society. After the earthquake and tsunami in Japan, she led a fundraising effort that resulted in more than $10,000 for relief efforts. Our friends in Yokohama have also noted her tireless work. In 2003, when the wildfires ravaged in San Diego, it is no doubt that because of the good will and relationship she fostered, the Mayor of Yokohama led a campaign that raised $17,000 for relief efforts here at home.

Her life's work exemplifies what it means to promote mutual understanding and friendship between countries. As someone who has spent some time in Japan, it gives me tremendous pride to see such unwavering dedication to fostering cross-cultural understanding. Our communities are all the more better because of it, and it gives me great pleasure to congratulate Kaneko Oshima Bishop on receiving this prestigious honor.

HONORING OUR NATION'S TEACHERS

HON. JACKIE WALORSKI

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 9, 2013

Mrs. WALORSKI. Mr. Speaker, May 6–10 is Teacher Appreciation Week, and I rise today to honor teachers all across America.

My husband, Dean, is a teacher, and I see firsthand every day the love and dedication that go into teaching. By investing in the lives of our children and educating the next generation, our educators are ensuring a bright future for our nation.

Behind every successful adult is an even more successful teacher. Each Member of Congress would not be here today if we did not have teachers who invested in us, and I am sure each of us remembers a favorite teacher who made learning fun and empowered us to chase our dreams. As the first person in my family to attend college, I know firsthand the value of hard work and a quality education.

I am proud of the excellent, dedicated teachers we have in the State of Indiana, and I am grateful for their commitment to our children. To all the teachers in Indiana and across America, thank you for all you do for this nation and for the next generation. You are an inspiration to us all.

HONORING DIAGÉT MILLER

HON. PHIL GINGREY

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 9, 2013

Mr. GINGREY of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, today I rise in honor Diagét Miller, a Sprayberry High School student from Kennesaw, Georgia, and founder of Diagét Design Studio. Diagét was recently recognized as one of the National Federation of Independent Business' (NFIB) 2013 Young Entrepreneur Award winners.

It is a great source of pride to see one of the young people in Georgia's 11th District being nationally recognized for such focused ambition and willingness to take risk. It is this kind of initiative that truly embodies the American dream.

Diagét founded her design studio at the young age of 14 after realizing her talent for digital art when helping her mother design brochures. Since then, her company has grown, attracting business state-wide.

The yearly NFIB Young Entrepreneur Award is selected by an independent committee comprised of educators and small business leaders who not only evaluate applicants based on the quality of their businesses, but on their academic records, leadership qualities, and overall character.

As one of this year's deserving winners, Diagét's prize will include a $1,000 scholarship from the National Federation of Independent Business Young Entrepreneur Foundation, which she will put toward her education and goal of someday becoming an anesthesiologist.

Mr. Speaker, on behalf of Georgia's 11th District, I congratulate Diagét Miller on her tremendous success as an entrepreneur and wish her luck in all of her endeavors.

HONORING NANCI VANDERWEEL

HON. PETER J. ROSKAM

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 9, 2013

Mr. ROSKAM. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor a distinguished public servant from the 6th District of Illinois. Nanci Vanderweel has dedicated her life to her community and has worked tirelessly to help the less fortunate. She serves as a role model for us all and as proof that one dedicated person can change the lives of many.

In 1971 Nanci was elected as the first female Trustee for Elk Grove Village. A position that many would view as an impressive career finale, Nanci saw as a good starting point. She went on to become a Trustee for the Elk Grove Township where she currently serves as the Supervisor, after again becoming the first woman selected for the position. In addition she serves as the President of the Supervisor's Division of the Township Officials of Cook County.

While working full time for her community, Nanci found the time to be the Chairman of the Cook County Public Aid Committee; Chairman of the Judiciary, Planning and Zoning Committee for Elk Grove Village; she started the Elk Grove Village Community Blood Drive Program; is a Charter Member of the Friends of Harper College; served as the President of the Board of Directors for the Northwest Community Services; became a member of the United Way Needs Assessment Committee; a Unit Chair for the Salvation Army; and she chaired the referendum to assist ambulance accessibility on the I–290 interchange at Biesterfield Road.

As if that was not enough, Nanci published a book on the History of Elk Grove Township and even started the first free library in the township, for which she received the Governor's Hometown Award. Through hard work and no small amount of perseverance, Nanci Vanderweel has helped countless people and tremendously improved her community. Distinguished Members, please join me in congratulating Nanci Vanderweel on an accomplished life, and wishing her happiness and peace in her well-earned retirement.

HONORING HELEN LUCILE FISTONICH DIMAGGIO

HON. JANICE HAHN

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 9, 2013

Ms. HAHN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the memory of my friend and lifelong San Pedro resident, Helen Lucile Fistonich DiMaggio, who passed away on April 25, 2013.

Born on June 1, 1919 to Andrew and Mary Fistonich, Helen was the eldest daughter of three siblings. An independent and fearless spirit, Helen's greatest legacy lives in her dedication to others.

As a young woman, Helen excelled at school while working in the family business, Star Fisheries. A 1937 graduate of San Pedro High School, Helen earned a full scholarship to the University of California in Los Angeles, but chose instead, like so many women of her time, to remain in the workforce. In 1938, Helen met and married the love of her life, Neno DiMaggio, second-cousin to Joe DiMaggio, one of the greatest baseball players in history. Helen became the business director of Star Fisheries, and with Neno at her side, they managed the company for more than 60 years.

Helen was an avid supporter of many local charitable organizations such as the San Pedro Peninsula Cancer Guild, Little Sisters of the Poor, Mary Star of the Sea Church, Holy Trinity Church and the Assistance League of San Pedro. In the 1990's she was recognized among the ''Who's Who'' in America. Recently, she was named one of San Pedro's ''Living Treasures'' at a ceremony commemorating the 125th anniversary of our town and the individuals who were instrumental to its history.

She will be remembered as a woman of elegance and a pillar in our community. I was privileged to have called her my friend and she will be missed by her family, friends and loved ones.

Mr. Speaker, I ask all Members of the House to join me in a moment of silence to commemorate the memory of the late Helen Lucile Fistonich DiMaggio.

IN RECOGNITION OF RICHARD J. CLAYTON

HON. FRANK PALLONE, JR.

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 9, 2013

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Richard J. Clayton on his selection as the Greater Spring Lake Chamber of Commerce 2013 Citizen of the Year. Mr. Clayton's contributions to his community are truly deserving of this body's recognition.

Richard Clayton grew up in Spring Lake, New Jersey, graduating from St. Catharine's School in Spring Lake and Manasquan High School. He lived in Spring Lake with his wife Linda until 1980, when they moved to nearby Manasquan where they remain today. Mr. Clayton currently serves as President and co-owner of Clayton Livery Service in Spring Lake, which his family founded in 1917.

He began working at Clayton Livery Service after completing two years of higher education at Ocean County College and began a full-time career there in 1977. In addition to his employment at the Livery Service, Mr. Clayton also spent time working at a local funeral home, which has been an asset in the advancement of the Livery Service.

Mr. Clayton is a member of the Greater Spring Lake Chamber of Commerce, a member of the Chamber's Board of Directors, a member of the Spring Lake Downtown Steering Committee and Chairman of the Board of the Spring Lake Business Improvement District (BID). In addition to his role of Chairman of BID, he also serves on its Land Use Committee, Management Committee and Design Committee.

Not only is Mr. Clayton an active member of the Spring Lake business district, he is also active in the community. Together with his family, he began a LGB train display to raise money for the Ronald McDonald House in Long Branch and the Spring Lake Community House. Since beginning the display in their office, they have raised over $65,000 for the charities.

Mr. Speaker, please join me once again in honoring Richard Clayton as the Greater Spring Lake Chamber of Commerce 2013 Citizen of the Year. His dedication and service to the Spring Lake community is truly deserving of this body's recognition.

HONORING THE LIFE OF CAPTAIN BRANDON CYR

HON. BILL FOSTER

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 9, 2013

Mr. FOSTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life and sacrifice of Captain Brandon Cyr of the United States Air Force. Captain Cyr died in the Zabul province of Afghanistan when the MC–12 Liberty aircraft he was commanding crashed on April 27, 2013. He was a member of the 906th Air Refueling Squadron within the 375th Air Mobility Wing.

Captain Cyr, a former Oswego, Illinois resident, grew up in a military family. From a young age, he knew he wanted to serve his country, and in 2009 he was assigned to Scott Air Force Base in St. Clair County, Illinois. Over the course of his four deployments, Captain Cyr accumulated more than 1,700 hours of flight time, 900 of which were in combat. Commander Colonel David Almand, of the 375th Air Mobility Wing, called him ''an outstanding pilot, and a dedicated airman.''

Captain Cyr's patriotism, commitment and service are an example to us all. He made the ultimate sacrifice for his country, and his legacy will live on in the hearts and minds of his friends and family.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in remembering Captain Brandon Cyr. Our thoughts are with his loved ones, especially his parents, Phillip and Debbie Cyr. He will be deeply missed.

CONGRATULATIONS TO THE ERIE TIMES-NEWS ON THEIR 125TH ANNIVERSARY

HON. MIKE KELLY

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 9, 2013

Mr. KELLY of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, the Erie Times-News is celebrating its 125th anniversary of providing its readers with keen and extensive coverage of all relevant news and events.

The very first Erie Times-News newspaper was published on April 12, 1888, with the headline, ''Erie's Opportunity,'' at the price of 2 cents per issue. Having begun in a basement with only nine employees, the paper has flourished into a well-respected company that is a staple among the Erie community.

Within the past decade, the Erie Times-News was named Pennsylvania's ''Newspaper of the Year'' twice. In 2012, it was honored as one of ''10 Newspapers That Do It Right'' by Editor & Publisher. These accomplishments attest to the outstanding reputation the Erie Times-News has achieved in outputting valuable information.

I congratulate the Erie Times-News on the 9th day of May in the year 2013. I praise the paper for its devotion to covering all major events and breaking news stories throughout the Erie region over the past 125 years. The Erie Times-News continues to be an iconic media operation and is justly valued by the communities it serves.

HONORING ROCHESTER AREA HIGH SCHOOLS FOR BEING NAMED AMONG AMERICA'S BEST HIGH SCHOOLS

HON. LOUISE McINTOSH SLAUGHTER

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 9, 2013

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate 14 distinguished high schools in Monroe County, New York for being included in Newsweek and The Daily Beast's 2013 list of America's Best High Schools. I am honored to represent this community, which values the enrichment of a quality education and demands the best of its students, and in turn, its future workforce.

America's Best High Schools are schools that have proven to be the most effective in turning out college-ready graduates. An astounding 14 schools from my congressional district were chosen, including: Brighton High School, Brockport High School, Churchville-Chili Central School, East Rochester Jr./Sr. High School, Eastridge High School, Fairport High School, Irondequoit High School, Penfield High School, Pittsford Sutherland High School, Pittsford Mendon High School, Rush-Henrietta Senior High School, School of the Arts, Webster Thomas High School, and Webster Schroeder High School.

These remarkable schools scored at the top of the country in graduation rates, college acceptance rates, and enrollment and success in Advanced Placement (AP) courses, among several other criteria. Rochester's commitment to education is truly remarkable; thanks to the dedication of the many school administrators, teachers, parents, and students who understand that a quality high school education provides a critical foundation for future opportunities and endeavors, both personal and professional.

Please join me in congratulating these 14 outstanding Rochester area high schools and let us strive to provide all children with an education of the caliber offered by these schools.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. KEITH ELLISON

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 9, 2013

Mr. ELLISON. Mr. Speaker, on May 6, 2013, I missed rollcall votes No. 129–131 due to illness. Had I been present I would have voted ''yes.''

THE OCCASION OF STAFF SERGEANT CHARLES L. AARON III'S TRANSFER FROM THE UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS LIAISON OFFICE

HON. WALTER B. JONES

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 9, 2013

Mr. JONES. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to recognize and pay tribute to Staff Sergeant Charles L. Aaron III, U.S. Marine Corps, on the occasion of his transfer from the Marine Corps liaison office. I, and many other members of this chamber, have had the pleasure of working with him over the past three years that he has served as part of Headquarters U.S. Marine Corps, Office of Legislative Affairs and as the Congressional Liaison Staff Non-Commissioned Officer of the U.S.M.C. Liaison Office in the U.S. House of Representatives.

Everyday he served in direct support of not only the Marine Corps, Office of Legislative Affairs, but in support of every member of Congress. His keen abilities in organization, interpersonal relationships, and communication were extremely critical to the successful accomplishment of the Marine Corps, Office of Legislative Affairs' mission of serving the U.S. Congress.

While serving in the Liaison office, Staff Sergeant Aaron was able to develop and execute the legislative strategy for the U.S. Marine

Corps that was instrumental in creating a fiscal and policy landscape conducive to training and equipping the nation's most elite fighting force, which has helped to ensure our Marines success on the battlefield.

He routinely turned broad guidance into action which energized the Office of Legislative Affairs and members of Congress alike. His actions allowed the Marine Corps to engage members of Congress and their staffs, directly facilitating the increased emphasis on improving congressional relationships—a cornerstone of the Commandant of the Marine Corps' strategic vision.

The Marine Corps House of Representatives Liaison Office that Staff Sergeant Aaron leaves behind is responsive, highly integrated, and favors a proactive legislative strategy. While helping to lead the House Liaison Office through the extraordinary challenges associated with two ongoing wars he concurrently ensured that a myriad of daily congressional communications, taskings and events were executed flawlessly.

During Staff Sergeant Aaron's tour as the Staff Non-Commissioned Officer, he accomplished the full spectrum of the Marine Corps' legislative mission. He exemplified the candor and knowledge that we have come to expect from the Marine Corps and he played a key role in maintaining superb relationships between the Marine Corps and the House of Representatives.

Throughout his tour, Staff Sergeant Aaron effectively responded to several thousand congressional inquiries, many of which gained national level attention. During his time on Capitol Hill, Staff Sergeant Aaron successfully planned, coordinated and escorted over 50 international and domestic congressional and staff delegations. His detailed coordination with foreign government officials, U.S. State Department, and senior military officials ensured that each delegation was conducted professionally and flawlessly. His attention to detail and anticipation of requirements allowed representatives to focus on fact-finding and gleaning new insights to make informed critical decisions to support the interests of the people of the United States. He has made lasting contributions to the House of Representatives and for that I am eternally grateful.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. DANIEL WEBSTER

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 9, 2013

Mr. WEBSTER of Florida. Mr. Speaker, on rollcall No. 135, I was unavoidably detained off of the House floor. Therefore, I was unable to cast my vote on Amendment No. 1 to H.R. 1406, requiring the GAO to report to Congress on the use of and complaints related to compensatory time allowed under the FLSA. Had I been present, I would have voted "yes."

I was also unable to cast my vote on the Motion to Recommit with Instructions for H.R. 1406, the Working Families Flexibility Act of 2013, rollcall No. 136. Had I been present, I would have voted "no."

I was also unable to cast my vote on H.R. 1406, the Working Families Flexibility Act of 2013, rollcall No. 137. Had I been present, I would have voted "yes."

I was also unable to cast my vote On Ordering the Previous Question, rollcall no 138. Had I been present, I would have voted "yes."

I was also unable to cast my vote On Agreeing to the Resolution, H. Res. 202, rollcall No. 139. Had I been present, I would have voted "yes."

INTRODUCTION OF SUPPORTING WORKING MOMS ACT

HON. CAROLYN B. MALONEY

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 9, 2013

Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York. Mr. Speaker, today I am introducing an important piece of legislation, the Breastfeeding Promotion Act with my colleagues Ms. MOORE, Mr. LEVIN, Mr. RANGEL, Mr. GRIJALVA, Mr. CICILLINE, Ms. LEE, Mr. CONYERS.

The health benefits of breastfeeding, to both mother and child, are significant. Scientific studies show babies who are breastfed the first six months of life have a greatly reduced risk for acute and chronic disease, yet only ten percent of all infants in the U.S. are breastfed.

A 2001 USDA study found that if just half of the babies in the U.S. were exclusively breastfed for six months (as recommended by the United States Surgeon General), our nation would realize a savings of $3.6 billion in health care costs for the three leading childhood illnesses alone. According to the United States Breastfeeding Committee, if we replicate that study based on current breastfeeding statistics, the savings could reach nearly $11 billion in health care costs for all childhood illnesses in a single year.

I was so proud to partner with Senator JEFF MERKLEY (D–OR) to pass into law a provision of our bill, the Breastfeeding Promotion Act of 2009 (H.R. 2819, S. 1744), in comprehensive health care reform legislation signed by President Obama on March 23, 2010. The provision requires that employers provide breastfeeding employees, who are hourly workers, with "reasonable break time" and a private, non-bathroom place to express breast milk during the workday, up until the child's first birthday.

This was a great success but more work needs to be done. Our bill will further encourage and promote breastfeeding by removing common obstacles to breastfeeding and expressing milk in the workplace that many women face. This bill expands the requirement under current law for employers to provide break time to express breast milk, as well as make reasonable efforts to provide a private place for them to do so, to salaried workers in traditional work or office environments.

Public opinion and awareness of the benefits of breastfeeding continue to grow, and the momentum we've recently gained presents the perfect opportunity to build on that progress in achieving our goals.

We urge all of our colleagues to support this important legislation. The health and economic benefits of breastfeeding are overwhelming and public opinion and awareness of these benefits continue to grow. We must ensure that working moms who choose to breastfeed have the support they need to do so.

We urge all of our colleagues to support this important legislation.

REMEMBERING VINCENT ROPER

HON. STENY H. HOYER

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 9, 2013

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, I rise to remember Vincent Roper, who passed away on April 4 of natural causes at the age of 79.

For decades, Vince and his wife Roberta worked tirelessly to advance victims' rights in Prince George's County and throughout Maryland, advocating for rights and support services for crime victims and their families as they heal and seek justice.

Vince and Roberta suffered an unimaginable tragedy in 1982 when their daughter, Stephanie, was murdered. Following this tragic crime, the Roper family wasn't permitted to observe the trial and was denied the right to address the court at the sentencing. Their frustration led them to establish the Stephanie Roper Committee and Foundation, Inc., which is now known as the Maryland Crime Victims' Resource Center. The Center actively lobbies legislators in Annapolis and played a significant role in the passage of the Federal Crime Victims Rights Act, the Maryland Crime Victims Rights Act of 1997, and other legislation that is making a substantial difference in the lives of crime victims and their families in Maryland.

Born in Hazleton, Pennsylvania, in 1933, Vince later enlisted in the U.S. Navy at the age of 17 and was selected to attend the U.S. Naval Academy. A graduate of the class of 1956, he served our nation for thirty years as a naval officer and retired as a Captain. In addition to serving as the Treasurer of the Stephanie Roper Committee and Foundation, he served our community as a member of the Knights of Columbus, the Most Holy Rosary Council No. 11511, and the Naval Weather Service Association.

Prince George's County and the State of Maryland owe a great deal to Vince for his hard work and dedication to ensuring that every crime victim in Maryland is treated with the dignity and respect they deserve. I join our community in mourning his passing, and my thoughts and prayers are with Roberta and their family.

TRIBUTE TO JANET M. JOHNSON

HON. KEN CALVERT

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 9, 2013

Mr. CALVERT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor and pay tribute to a dear friend of mine, Janet M. Johnson. Janet passed away on Wednesday, April 24, 2013. A resident of Corona since 1968, she was a pillar of the community and will be deeply missed.

Beverly was born in Huntingdon, Pennsylvania, the daughter of Samuel N. and Elsie C. Miller. She attended a one-room schoolhouse until the eighth grade and graduated from Huntingdon High School. In the early 1950s, she and her sister Rachel moved west to Santa Monica, California, where Janet worked as a secretary at General Electric and the University of California, Los Angeles. At a dance at the Avalon Ballroom, she met her future

husband, Glenn E. Johnson and on November 7, 1953, they were married at the Trinity Baptist Church in Santa Monica. After living in Santa Monica, Janet and Glenn relocated to La Mirada before settling in Corona in 1968.

Janet and Glenn contributed generously to many civic causes, and she always found time for her community. She was active in several organizations, including the Buena Park Lionesses, Women's Improvement Club, Red Hats Society, Republican Women, California Republican Association (CRA), Navy League, Corona Heritage Park, Croquet Club, Model A Club, Packard Club, Ford Retractable Club, Bible Study Fellowship and Joy Bible Study. Janet's faith was important to her and she attended many churches throughout southern California: First Baptist in Buena Park, Riverside Baptist Temple, Faith Baptist in Corona, Pacific Coast Church in San Clemente and finally Crossroads Church in Corona.

Janet is survived by her husband Glenn; four children: Sandra Rowe (Rick), Linda Rither (Ross), Kirk Johnson (Dolly) and Eric Johnson; four grandchildren: Jessica Scautling (Kevin), Becky Cass (Drew), Cody Johnson and Morgan Rither; three great-grandchildren: Kassie Scautling, Kolten Scautling and Derik Cass; and one sister-in-law Louise Miller. She was preceded in death by her parents and four siblings: Dallas Miller, Dorothy Miller, Beulah Rose and Rachel Nagel.

On Thursday, May 9, 2013, a memorial honoring Janet's extraordinary life will be held. Janet will always be remembered for her incredible work ethic, generosity, contributions to the community and love of family. Her dedication to her family, work, and community are a testament to a life lived well and a legacy that will continue. I extend my condolences to Janet's family and friends; although Janet may be gone, the light and goodness she brought to the world remain and will never be forgotten.

HONORING GUNNERY SERGEANT LYNDON RAY SMITH'S RETIREMENT

HON. PHIL GINGREY

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 9, 2013

Mr. GINGREY of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Gunnery Sergeant Lyndon Ray Smith, who will retire after 34 years of service to our country.

While he currently serves as the first Naval Science Instructor in Kennesaw Mountain High School Navy Junior Reserve Officer Corps, he has worked in many different military capacities. After joining the Marines in 1974, Smith was first assigned to the 4th Marine Aircraft Wing in New Orleans. He served in Operations Desert Shield and Desert Storm, and has been assigned to military installations across the country.

Throughout his service, Smith has been awarded a Marine Aircraft Wing Marine of the Year Award, two National Recruiter of the Year awards, and several meritorious promotions.

Since becoming the first Naval Science Instructor at Kennesaw Mountain High School, Gunnery Sergeant Smith has been an invaluable leader and role model for the young people in his community. Under his leadership, his unit has been recognized nationally as a distinguished unit 11 consecutive times, and went to the U.S. Navy National Drill Championships in 2005. More importantly, Smith has directly helped develop over 2000 young adults into responsible citizens who value patriotism, community, and service to our great nation.

Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the 11th District of Georgia and my staff, my deepest thanks to Gunnery Sergeant Smith for devoting his life to upholding the Constitution of the United States and to the protection of its citizens. I wish him a happy—and well deserved—retirement.

COMMEMORATING COLONEL CHARLES E. MCGEE FOR HIS OUTSTANDING SERVICE TO OUR COUNTRY

HON. EMANUEL CLEAVER

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 9, 2013

Mr. CLEAVER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to join the Columbia College Alumni Association in my home state of Missouri in recognizing one of the College's most prestigious alumni. Colonel Charles McGee is among the most decorated and accomplished Air Force aviators, holding an Air Force record of 409 fighter combat missions flown in World War II, Korea and Vietnam. He has also served as a former public servant to the Kansas City area. I am proud to know Colonel McGee and applaud him for his invaluable service and contributions to the Air Force, Kansas City, and to our country.

Charles E. McGee was one of the renowned Tuskegee Airmen of World War II and continued as a career officer in the United States Air Force for 30 years. He was born in Cleveland, Ohio on December 7, 1919, and as a youth, Charles was a member of the Boy Scouts of America and earned the Eagle Scout award on August 9, 1940. He later served in district and regional positions in the Boy Scouts. At the 2010 National Scout Jamboree, he was recognized with the Distinguished Eagle Scout Award.

During the Vietnam War, as a Lt. Colonel, McGee flew 172 combat missions in a McDonnell RF–4 photo–reconnaissance aircraft. After a series of other appointments both in the United States as well as in Italy and Germany, and promotion to Colonel, McGee retired on January 31, 1973. He ended his military career with an impressive 6,308 flying hours. Following his military service, Col. McGee has held many prestigious functional and honorary positions within the field of aviation.

In 1978, at the age of 58, he completed his college degree at Columbia College in Kansas City, over thirty years after his initial enrollment at the University of Illinois. Though interrupted by World War II, attaining a college degree had been a lifelong goal. I am honored to have the opportunity to congratulate Colonel McGee for this great achievement and am proud that he chose to complete his studies and continue his impressive career in the great State of Missouri.

In his civilian life, Charles served as the Director of the Kansas City downtown airport and as a member of the Aviation Advisory Commission. For 30 years, he has been an ambassador of the Tuskegee Airmen, Inc., serving three times as national President and giving numerous public addresses and has received accolades including the National Aeronautical Associations ''Elder Statesman of Aviation.''

In 2005, Col. McGee was part of a group of former Tuskegee Airmen, who flew to Balad, Iraq, to speak to active duty airmen serving in the 332nd Air Expeditionary Wing, the current incarnation of the 332nd Fighter Group.

Colonel McGee has been recognized for his combat and military service with a number of awards including: Distinguished Flying Cross with two Oak Leaf Clusters, Legion of Merit with one Oak Leaf Cluster, Bronze Star, Air Medal with 25 Oak Leaf Clusters, Army Commendation Medal, Presidential Unit Citation, Korean Presidential Unit Citation, Hellenic Republic World War II Commemorative Medal along with related campaign and service ribbons.

In 2007, President George Bush awarded him and the surviving Tuskegee Airmen the Congressional Gold Medal of Honor, the nation's highest civilian award, and in 2011, he was inducted into the National Aviation Hall of Fame in Dayton, Ohio.

I am honored to join Columbia College in celebrating Colonel Charles McGee's accomplishments and service, from which we have all greatly benefited. I want to thank Colonel McGee for the lives he has touched and his leadership in the field of aviation, in our military, and in his community.

RECOGNIZING THE CHARTER CLASS GRADUATION OF THE UNIVERSITY OF CENTRAL FLORIDA COLLEGE OF MEDICINE

HON. DANIEL WEBSTER

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 9, 2013

Mr. WEBSTER of Florida. Mr. Speaker, it is my pleasure to recognize the charter class of medical students at the University of Central Florida College of Medicine. The commencement ceremony and graduation of the charter class will take place on May 17, 2013, and will be an historic and celebratory moment for the UCF College of Medicine.

The planning and development of the University of Central Florida College of Medicine was brought about as one way to address the shortage of physicians in the state of Florida. In 2005, the proposal for a College of Medicine was unanimously supported by the UCF Faculty Senate, and on May 30, 2006, the UCF College of Medicine was approved and established by Governor Jeb Bush. After receiving preliminary accreditation from the Liaison Committee on Medical Education (LCME), in February 2008, the College of Medicine began recruiting students for the fall 2009 term. Less than four years ago, these same students donned their white coats to symbolize the beginning of their medical training. Now, after thousands of hours of rigorous study and practice, they will embark on the next phase of this journey—residency—before hopefully returning to the state of Florida to serve their local communities.

The UCF Health Sciences Campus for the College of Medicine is located at Lake Nona's

Medical City in southeast Orlando. As a new medical school, the college plays a vital part in the foundation and the growth of the Medical City at Lake Nona and is strongly supported by the entire Central Florida community. UCF College of Medicine has a vision to become the nation's premier 21st century college of medicine and a national leader in medical education and research. UCF's College of Medicine empowers its students to discover their healthcare specialty of choice for their upcoming residencies and, in doing so, further prepares them to enter the healthcare profession.

I trust that the charter class of 2013 commencement will be an exciting day for the UCF community to celebrate their many exceptional accomplishments. On behalf of the citizens of Central Florida, it is my pleasure to congratulate President of UCF Dr. John Hitt, Dean of UCF College of Medicine Dr. Deborah German, the charter medical school graduates, and the facility and staff of the University of Central Florida College of Medicine on this outstanding accomplishment. I wish them all great success in their future pursuits.

HONORING THE SACRIFICE OF MARINE CORPORAL KYLE R. SCHNEIDER

HON. DANIEL B. MAFFEI

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 9, 2013

Mr. MAFFEI. Mr. Speaker, it is with great pride that I rise today to honor fallen Marine Corporal Kyle R. Schneider, who made the ultimate sacrifice to protect his fellow Marines and the freedoms of the United States of America.

On December 28, 2012, President Obama signed into law H.R. 5837, legislation renaming the post office at 26 East Genesee Street in Baldwinsville, New York, in honor of Corporal Schneider.

Kyle Schneider embodied the same values that make this country extraordinary: Dedication, Honor and Pride. I am moved that the Village of Baldwinsville will have this opportunity to pay a lasting tribute to Kyle's Legacy.

Corporal Schneider was born in Syracuse and grew up in Baldwinsville, New York. Kyle was an avid athlete, playing baseball, football, and track, before graduating from C.W. Baker High School in 2006. While at Onondaga Community College, Kyle realized that he wanted to do more for his country. As a result, in March 2008, Kyle fulfilled a lifelong dream and joined the United States Marine Corps.

In January of 2011, Kyle was deployed to Afghanistan in support of Operation Enduring Freedom with the II Marine Expeditionary Force. Kyle earned many distinguished military awards while in Afghanistan including the Purple Heart, Combat Action Ribbon, Good Conduct Medal, National Defense Medal, Afghanistan Campaign Medal, Global War on Terrorism Service Medal, Sea Service Deployment Ribbon, and the NATO Medal. On June 30, 2011, Corporal Kyle R. Schneider died as a result of enemy action in Helmand Province, Afghanistan. He was 23.

Kyle is survived by his parents, Richard and Lorie Schneider; a brother, Kevin Schneider of Phoenix; his fiance, Theresa Lynn Dodge of W. Columbia, TX; his maternal grandparents, Richard and Dianne Vrotny of Baldwinsville and maternal grandfather Gary E. (Helen A.) Younis; and his paternal grandparents, Carol Schneider and John Rouselle of Central Square.

Mr. Speaker, in appreciation of this young man's love for country who gave his life protecting this great nation, I ask this Honorable Body to join me in honoring the legacy of Marine Corporal Kyle R. Schneider.

''PREVENTING VICTIMS OF STALKING ACT OF 2013

HON. JANICE HAHN

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 9, 2013

Ms. HAHN. Mr. Speaker, under current federal law, individuals convicted of ''misdemeanor crimes of domestic violence'' are disqualified from possessing firearms. This policy has proven crucial to protecting victims of domestic violence from serious injury or death.

However, many states do not define stalking as a type of domestic violence crime, allowing convicted stalkers to own and purchase firearms and leaving victims of stalking unprotected. Moreover, while federal law prohibits the sale of firearms to someone ''subject to a court order restraining them from harassing, stalking or threatening an intimate partner,'' not all stalkers have a romantic relationship with their victims and thus don't fall into this category. However their lack of a romantic relationship does not preclude the fact that they still pose a considerable threat to their victims.

The Protecting Victims of Stalking Act of 2013 works to remedy these gaps in federal law. All victims, whether or not they have had a romantic relationship with their stalker, should be afforded these critical protections. The Protecting Victims of Stalking Act of 2013 closes these dangerous loopholes by prohibiting the sale of firearms to any person subject to a restraining order for stalking as well as prohibiting any individual convicted of stalking from buying or possessing a firearm. Only by addressing these glaring vulnerabilities can we begin to reduce the many injuries and deaths often associated with domestic violence.

IN HONOR OF BISHOP SIMON P. RAWLINGS

HON. ANDY BARR

OF KENTUCKY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 9, 2013

Mr. BARR. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize the accomplishments of a Kentucky native, Bishop Simon P. Rawlings. Bishop Rawlings was the Second Chief Apostle of the House of God, International, whose National Cathedral and World Headquarters are located in Lexington, my hometown and the center of the sixth Congressional District which I represent.

The House of God, International has churches in Africa, Australia, Canada, and Jamaica, but I am proud to state that the church was founded in the United States of America. Bishop R.A.R. Johnson initially founded the ''Commandment Keepers'' in 1910. The doctrine evolved and the church was firmly established in 1918 as the House of God, International. The Hebrew-Pentecostal denomination is based on Old Testament law and doctrine and is enthused by the joy, fervor and zeal of Christ's New Testament of spiritual revivalism.

Bishop Rawlings was born August 2, 1914 in Stamping Ground, Kentucky. He joined the House of God at the age of 16. He later exclaimed that God sent him to Lexington to build Him a church, also giving him a higher calling as detailed in Psalms 50:5 ''gather my saints together unto me, those that have made covenant with me by sacrifice.''

For 11 years he preached over the airways each Sunday night; a program that was enjoyed by many in the Christian community. With his lovely wife, Elect Lady Mary Scott Rawlings of Charlottesville, Virginia, whom he married on July 3, 1935, and other dedicated church members, Bishop Rawlings set up churches throughout the country and overseas. They built their first little church on Black Street in Lexington in 1937 and the following year they built the second church on Ash Street. In 1959, the church purchased the Chandler Arms School, a landmark of Kentucky Black history. They renovated the property. So, the next year in 1960, a host of members and friends marched from the Ash Street church to the new church at 548 Georgetown Street.

In 1947, he was ordained as a bishop. In 1950, Bishop Simon Rawlings was installed as the second Chief Apostle of the House of God, International—a position in which he humbly served for 40 years until his death on January 1, 1991. He received his Bachelor of Sacred Theology and Master's Degree from the Cooper Institute of Jacksonville, FL and a Doctor of Divinity degree from the Kentucky College of Contemporary Religion. He was very instrumental in the formation of the college and later served as its president until his death.

One of his greatest achievements was in 1987 when the church purchased the Julius Mark property, another one of Lexington's Black historical landmarks. In February 1990, Bishop Rawlings shared his vision with his wife, church and city officials, church members, and the general public at the groundbreaking ceremony of the present National Temple and World Headquarters, which is situated on that site located at 866 Georgetown Street.

During his 40 years of service as Chief Apostle and General Superintendent, and 56 years as pastor of the Lexington congregation, he held the following positions:

1. National Y.P.U. President
2. State Superintendent of Georgia
3. State Superintendent of South Carolina
4. Southern Division Superintendent
5. President of the Black Church Coalition of the Bluegrass
6. Honorary Citizen of Lexington Award (1991)
7. Kentucky Colonel

Though he was in failing health, Bishop Rawlings was able to attend the pre-dedication service of the National Temple he envisioned and built. He gave his farewell sermon during the Feast of Tabernacles in October of 1990.

Sadly, Bishop Rawlings did not live to see the visionary temple, but his legacy lives on in

his building, its congregation, and their commitment to our community.

HONORING THE LIFE OF KEVIN SANDERS

HON. BILL FOSTER

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 9, 2013

Mr. FOSTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the courageous actions of Kevin Sanders, a native resident of Plainfield, Illinois, who passed away earlier last month. Kevin was one of the first responders who gave their lives in the evacuation efforts when a fire broke out at a fertilizer plant in West, Texas on April 17, 2013.

Kevin was an extraordinary individual who made the ultimate sacrifice while protecting others. From a young age, he looked to heroes like Superman for inspiration. He was an individual who truly lived to serve others, as exemplified by his participation in the Plainfield Emergency Management Agency in Illinois and the Bruceville-Eddy Volunteer Fire Department in Texas.

His heroism lives on through his wife, Sarah, and his 3-month-old son, Reeve. Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in remembering a true hero—Kevin Sanders, a real life man of steel.

HONORING THE AROOSTOOK MEDICAL CENTER

HON. MICHAEL H. MICHAUD

OF MAINE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 9, 2013

Mr. MICHAUD. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor The Aroostook Medical Center (TAMC) on becoming the first facility in Maine, and second in the Nation, to use compressed natural gas for both heat and cooling.

For over 100 years, TAMC has played a vital role in providing health services to Maine's northern communities. TAMC is one of the area's largest economic drivers, employing over 1000 staff members and 60 physicians. On May 13, 2013, this Maine institution will cement its role as an environmental leader as well, kicking-off National Hospital Week by officially transitioning from oil fuel to compressed natural gas (CNG).

According to TAMC's Vice President of Diagnostic and Support Services James McKenney, CNG produces about 45 percent less carbon dioxide than coal, 30 percent less than oil, and 15 percent less than wood. In addition to dramatically reducing its environmental footprint, the conversion is expected to save the hospital between $400,000 and $500,000 each year.

TAMC's "valve turning" ceremony on the 13th is just part of the hospital's broader efforts to improve its environmental impact. The Food Service Department has eliminated foam cups and trays, while incentivizing staff to purchase coffee with mugs rather than paper cups. The hospital is also revamping its recycling processes, expanding composting activities, and switching to environmentally friendly chemicals wherever possible. These efforts have brought TAMC closer to local producers, the University of Maine at Presque Isle, and the City of Presque Isle itself.

I am pleased to join countless families across northern Maine in helping TAMC celebrate this exciting new chapter.

Mr. Speaker, please join me again in congratulating TAMC for taking this important next step forward.

NATIONAL NURSES WEEK

HON. JOHN LEWIS

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 9, 2013

Mr. LEWIS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize National Nurses Week. I am proud to honor the tireless work of the more than three million men and women who form the core of the American healthcare system.

Nurses are at the forefront of patient care in our hospitals and clinics, our schools and workplaces, in the military, and throughout our communities. They handle the daunting responsibility of caring for millions of unique patients with unparalleled grace. From bedside care to university classrooms, nurses are the leaders in promoting and maintaining our Nation's health. As equal parts caretakers, advocates, researchers, and educators, nurses work selflessly to protect the safety and well-being of all Americans. They are truly some of our Nation's most devoted professionals.

As our population ages, and our healthcare industry focuses increasingly on preventative care, the demand for nursing services will be greater than ever. We must do everything we can to support nursing students, and ensure that our healthcare system is able to meet growing patient needs for years to come.

Today, I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring nurses across the country. We should all be tremendously grateful for their invaluable work, not just this week, but every day of the year.

NATIONAL NURSES WEEK

HON. BARBARA LEE

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 9, 2013

Ms. LEE of California. Mr. Speaker, thank you Congresswoman EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON for hosting this special order and for your ongoing and unwavering leadership.

I rise today in recognition of National Nurses Week, and to thank the millions of nurses who are on the front lines of our health care system.

Although a doctor is usually considered to be the primary health care provider for a patient, Nurses are expert clinicians who provide high-quality and cost-effective care in every care community and in every setting throughout the world.

Let me just say that I have witnessed first-hand the dedication and commitment nurses have to their patients' health and well-being. Their crucial role delivering health care cannot be understated.

Around the world, nurses are the first and often the only link to health care for millions of people living in resource limited settings, particularly in Africa and parts of Asia.

So this week I urge my colleagues to join me in thanking the nurses who continue to serve us, and to renew our commitment to supporting this profession.

ACADEMIC COMPETITION RESOLUTION, 2013

HON. BILL FOSTER

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 9, 2013

Mr. FOSTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to welcome and congratulate students from the Oswego East High School Rocket Team and the Nequa Valley High School Rocket Team.

The Oswego East and Nequa Valley Rocket Teams are coming to Washington, D.C. to compete in the Team America Rocketry Challenge National Fly-Off competition on May 11th. They qualified for the National Fly-Off by finishing in the top 100 out of 725 teams that competed nationwide to build a rocket that could carry a raw egg 750 feet in the air, and then use a parachute to return the egg uncracked.

These students have spent many hours designing, building, testing and launching model rockets in order to create the entries that qualified for the National Fly-Off. I am proud of their hard work, perseverance, and creativity, and I commend them on this achievement.

I am also thrilled to see students embracing a project that involves elements of science, technology, engineering, and mathematics. As a scientist and manufacturer, I know how rewarding it can be to research and explore, and to discover what you can accomplish when you design and build things from scratch.

This country needs more young people who are excited about studying and working in the STEM fields. STEM graduates are critical to a thriving national economy, but at present, our education system is not producing nearly enough STEM graduates to meet the private sector's need for highly skilled employees. I'm pleased to see that there are contests like the Team America Rocketry Challenge that are encouraging students to explore STEM fields through fun, hands-on projects, and I'm proud of the students from my district who took on this challenge. I hope that this will be only the first of their accomplishments in the fields of science, technology, engineering and math.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. ANN M. KUSTER

OF NEW HAMPSHIRE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 9, 2013

Ms. KUSTER. Mr. Speaker, on May 6, 2013, I was unavoidably detained and missed the following rollcall votes: number 129 for H.R. 588, number 130 for H.R. 291, and number 131 for H.R. 507. Had I been present, I would have voted "aye" on all three rollcall votes.

CELEBRATING THE CENTENNIAL ANNIVERSARY OF BOY SCOUT TROOP 7

HON. KENNY MARCHANT

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 9, 2013

Mr. MARCHANT. Mr. Speaker, I am proud to recognize the 100th Anniversary of Boy Scout Troop 7 of Grapevine, Texas. This troop has a rich history of developing boys into responsible young men.

Boy Scout Troop 7 was founded in 1913, only three years with WIlliam D. Boyce founded Scouting in the United States. The origin of Troop 7 began when the Mayor of Grapevine, Benjamin Richard Wall, traveled to New York to learn about scouting. He returned home to Grapevine with the number 7 Boy Scout Unit Charter, one of the first charters west of the Mississippi River. Mayor Wall was actively involved with the troop from its founding until 1954.

In 1923, Troop 7 was chartered in Arlington, Texas, but it moved back to Grapevine in 1931 whereupon it was chartered to the Grapevine Business Men's League. In 1932, the group's charter transferred to the Grapevine City Council under Mayor Ernest E. Lowe as the Scoutmaster. In 1939, the Grapevine Lions club assumed the troop's charter. The Lions Club till this day continues to support Troop 7 by collaborating with the scouts at Grapevine festival events. The St. Lawrence Episcopal Church hosted the troop charter from 1976–1978. The charter lapsed in 1979 which broke the long tenure for Troop 7. St Francis Catholic Church in Grapevine became the chartering organization in 1980 and continues as such today.

As of today, Troop 7 is led by Scoutmaster Don Blan, who is an Eagle Scout. Troop 7 has over 50 scouts who actively assist community organizations such as Bluebonnet Hills during its Memorial Day service, schools, municipalities, and other organizations that benefit from Eagle Scout projects.

Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the 24th Congressional District of Texas, I ask all my distinguished colleagues to join me in congratulating Boy Scout Troop 7 on its 100th Anniversary.

WORKING FAMILIES FLEXIBILITY ACT OF 2013

SPEECH OF

HON. YVETTE D. CLARKE

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 8, 2013

Ms. CLARKE. Mr. Speaker, today, I rise in opposition to H.R. 1406, The Working Families Flexibility Act. This bill is a sham! It does not offer working families flexibility, nor does it protect employee rights. But what it does is strip employees of their rights by eliminating the Federal Labor Standards Act statute guaranteeing overtime pay for time worked over 40 hours per week.

It shifts control of overtime from a monetarily incentivized program for the employee to an employer-controlled one incentivized by cheaper labor and less need to hire more workers. This bill also contains no avenue for employees to file grievances if requests for time off are denied or not responded to.

Under H.R. 1406, after the employee makes a request to use compensatory time, the employer's only responsibility is to permit the employee "to use such time within a reasonable period after making the request if the use of the compensatory time does not unduly disrupt the operations of the employer." There is no responsibility on the part of the employer to respond in a timely manner or accommodate an employee request.

H.R. 1406 turns back years of hard won victories for American workers and their families by undermining the Federal Labor Standards Act and giving the employer virtually complete control over when the overtime is used.

The AFL-CIO, the Communication Workers of America, the National Partnership for Women & Families, and numerous other organizations oppose this bill. However, imagine my surprise when I received an e-mail from the U.S. Women's Chamber of Commerce also urging me to oppose this bill!

As a rule, Chambers of Commerce usually support "pro-employer" bills. However, in this case, the U.S. Women's Chamber of Commerce wrote, "all employers want as low a payroll expenditure as possible but there is a reason to be concerned that employers incentivized by H.R. 1406 would reward those employees who agree to "comp time" in lieu of overtime payments. Employers incentivized by a reduced payroll might well give "comp time" employees the preferred shifts, the needed hours, and the promotions. There is no protection in H.R. 1406 against this kind of employer behavior."

Make no mistake about it—H.R. 1406 hurts American workers and their families. This bill is just another Republican attempt to destroy the American worker. So I ask my colleagues to join me in opposing H.R. 1406.

HONORING OUR NATION'S TEACHERS FOR THEIR COMMITMENT TO EXCELLENCE

HON. PETER J. ROSKAM

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 9, 2013

Mr. ROSKAM. Mr. Speaker, today I rise for National Teacher Appreciation Day. I would like to thank Ms. Lillian Anderson who gave me my first exposure to government with a 4th grade class history project on the State of Illinois at Ben Franklin School in Glen Ellyn. I still have the folder with the assignment featured in my district office to remind me of why I entered public service. Unfortunately, Ms. Anderson passed away a few years ago but I am reminded of her invaluable contributions to the community every time I am back home.

We often take our teachers for granted. We drop our children off at school or send them to the bus stop and pick them up at the end of the day, but the job of our nation's teachers is hardly 9–5. It starts well before the children arrive and continues long after they leave.

We forget that the job involves countless hours of preparation; weekends spent shopping for supplies, and most importantly working with our students to help them become the next generation of authors, doctors, young professionals, and yes, even teachers.

I encourage everyone to take time at their next parent teacher conference or other interaction with you children's teacher to take a moment and thank them for all the hard work they are doing to prepare the next generation.

THE 100TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE CONSOLIDATION OF WINSTON-SALEM, NC

HON. MELVIN L. WATT

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 9, 2013

Mr. WATT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the residents of Winston-Salem, North Carolina, part of which is located in my congressional district, as they celebrate the 100th anniversary of the consolidation of the Town of Salem and the City of Winston. Winston and Salem consolidated on May 9, 1913 and the city is now hosting a four day celebration (May 9–13, 2013) to celebrate this historic consolidation.

Today, Winston-Salem has approximately 229,000 residents, is the fourth largest city in North Carolina and is the county seat of Forsyth County. Winston-Salem is a city with a focus on education and healthcare. It is the home of Winston-Salem State University, Salem College, Wake Forest University, the North Carolina School of the Arts, Forsyth Technical Community College, Wake Forest Baptist Medical Center and Forsyth County Hospital. Winston-Salem is also a city with a focus on the arts. Along with the University of North Carolina School of the Arts, it is home to the Reynolda House Museum of American Art, the Southeastern Center for Contemporary Art and the National Black Theatre Festival.

I wish all the best to Mayor Allen Joines and to the residents of Winston-Salem as they celebrate "Winston-Salem Centennial 1913–2013."

THE STORY OF OUR TIME

HON. JIM McDERMOTT

OF WASHINGTON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 9, 2013

Mr. McDERMOTT. Mr. Speaker, in light of ongoing budget discussions and damaging sequestration cuts to programs that help our most vulnerable populations, it is time to end the austerity debate. I urge all of my colleagues to read and consider Paul Krugman's New York Times Opinion piece, "The Story of Our Time."

Those of us who have spent years arguing against premature fiscal austerity have just had a good two weeks. Academic studies that supposedly justified austerity have lost credibility; hard-liners in the European Commission and elsewhere have softened their rhetoric. The tone of the conversation has definitely changed.

My sense, however, is that many people still don't understand what this is all about. So this seems like a good time to offer a sort of refresher on the nature of our economic woes, and why this remains a very bad time for spending cuts.

Let's start with what may be the most crucial thing to understand: the economy is not like an individual family.

Families earn what they can, and spend as much as they think prudent; spending and earning opportunities are two different things. In the economy as a whole, however, income and spending are interdependent: my spending is your income, and your spending is my income. If both of us slash spending at the same time, both of our incomes will fall too.

And that's what happened after the financial crisis of 2008. Many people suddenly cut spending, either because they chose to or because their creditors forced them to; meanwhile, not many people were able or willing to spend more. The result was a plunge in incomes that also caused a plunge in employment, creating the depression that persists to this day.

Why did spending plunge? Mainly because of a burst housing bubble and an overhang of private-sector debt—but if you ask me, people talk too much about what went wrong during the boom years and not enough about what we should be doing now. For no matter how lurid the excesses of the past, there's no good reason that we should pay for them with year after year of mass unemployment.

So what could we do to reduce unemployment? The answer is, this is a time for above-normal government spending, to sustain the economy until the private sector is willing to spend again. The crucial point is that under current conditions, the government is not, repeat not, in competition with the private sector. Government spending doesn't divert resources away from private uses; it puts unemployed resources to work. Government borrowing doesn't crowd out private investment; it mobilizes funds that would otherwise go unused.

Now, just to be clear, this is not a case for more government spending and larger budget deficits under all circumstances—and the claim that people like me always want bigger deficits is just false. For the economy isn't always like this—in fact, situations like the one we're in are fairly rare. By all means let's try to reduce deficits and bring down government indebtedness once normal conditions return and the economy is no longer depressed. But right now we're still dealing with the aftermath of a once-in-three-generations financial crisis. This is no time for austerity.

O.K., I've just given you a story, but why should you believe it? There are, after all, people who insist that the real problem is on the economy's supply side: that workers lack the skills they need, or that unemployment insurance has destroyed the incentive to work, or that the looming menace of universal health care is preventing hiring, or whatever. How do we know that they're wrong?

Well, I could go on at length on this topic, but just look at the predictions the two sides in this debate have made. People like me predicted right from the start that large budget deficits would have little effect on interest rates, that large-scale ''money printing'' by the Fed (not a good description of actual Fed policy, but never mind) wouldn't be inflationary, that austerity policies would lead to terrible economic downturns. The other side jeered, insisting that interest rates would skyrocket and that austerity would actually lead to economic expansion. Ask bond traders, or the suffering populations of Spain, Portugal and so on, how it actually turned out.

Is the story really that simple, and would it really be that easy to end the scourge of unemployment? Yes—but powerful people don't want to believe it. Some of them have a visceral sense that suffering is good, that we must pay a price for past sins (even if the sinners then and the sufferers now are very different groups of people). Some of them see the crisis as an opportunity to dismantle the social safety net. And just about everyone in the policy elite takes cues from a wealthy minority that isn't actually feeling much pain.

What has happened now, however, is that the drive for austerity has lost its intellectual fig leaf, and stands exposed as the expression of prejudice, opportunism and class interest it always was. And maybe, just maybe, that sudden exposure will give us a chance to start doing something about the depression we're in.

CELEBRATING NATIONAL TRAVEL AND TOURISM WEEK

HON. SAM FARR

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 9, 2013

Mr. FARR. Mr. Speaker, I rise along with my colleague Rep. JO BONNER to celebrate National Travel and Tourism Week.

From California's Central Coast to Alabama's Gulf Coast and every single Congressional district in between, travel and tourism plays an important economic role in all of our local communities. This week is National Travel and Tourism Week, a celebration of the $2 trillion economic engine that helps drive our nation's economy. As the co-chairs of the bipartisan Congressional Travel and Tourism caucus, we would like to take this moment to raise awareness for America's number one export and to explain how the ''Travel Effect'' benefits everyone.

The Travel Effect is simple: It is the economic benefit that every single community feels thanks to travel. Supporting over 14.6 million American jobs, the travel industry is a top 10 employer in 48 states and the District of Columbia. Today, one in every eight jobs depends upon travel.

Contributing more than $129 billion to the federal, state and local tax base, the Travel Effect means that Americans pay fewer taxes. Without those added revenues, the average household would pay over $1,000 in additional taxes. At 2.8% of our nation's GDP and growing at a rate faster than all other industries, travel will play an important role in driving down deficits for years to come.

Thanks to our efforts here in Washington, the United States is now promoting the entire country as a premier travel destination to the world. Brand USA, the nation's Destination Marking Organization created by Congress, will help bring in 81 million visitors to the United States by 2016, a 36 percent increase equivalent to 21 million more travelers as compared with 2010. This influx of new visitors will help create over a half a million new jobs in communities all across the country.

And you do not have to live in a coastal district or near a major tourist destination to feel the Travel Effect. Historic sites, museums in your community and other local destinations all play a role in building our travel economy. In other words, travel is right in your own backyard!

During this year's National Travel and Tourism Week, we call on all members to support the travel industry. While the Travel Effect is great now, its potential is even greater. If we recognize that potential in all of our communities, then the Travel Effect will continue to benefit every town across the United States.

RECOGNIZING THE 90TH BIRTHDAY OF MR. BERT BERKLEY

HON. EMANUEL CLEAVER

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 9, 2013

Mr. CLEAVER. Mr. Speaker, I proudly rise today in recognition of the 90th birthday of Mr. Bert Berkley, Chairman of the Board, and former President of the Tension Envelope Corporation. Tension is a prestigious family-owned business in Missouri's Fifth Congressional District, which I am honored to represent. Bert and his late wife, Joan, have three children and seven grandchildren.

Mr. Berkley was born May 8, 1923, son of E.B. Berkowitz and grandson of William Berkowitz, who founded the forerunner of Tension Envelope in Kansas City, Missouri in 1886, Berkowitz and Company. The company specialized in popular advertising novelties and business stationery. In 1894, the company put into operation the first envelope machine west of the Mississippi River.

In 1937, the company acquired another pioneer in the U.S. envelope industry, the Tension Envelope Company of Brooklyn, New York, with all sales operations consolidated under the widely recognized name of Tension Envelope Corporation. In 1962, Bert Berkley, took over his grandfather's company as President and CEO of Tension. In 1967, Bert was named Chairman of the Board.

During his time as President and CEO, the Tension Envelope Company opened a plant and established a sales organization in Los Angeles, California. In addition, a satellite of their Kansas City plant was opened in Marysville, Kansas, furthering their production and manufacturing capabilities. In 1981, Bill Berkley, Bert's son, joined the company and helped his father open yet another manufacturing facility in St. Clair, Pennsylvania, creating a satellite location for the already established South Hackensack plant and a nationwide presence for the Tension Envelope Company. In 1988, Bill Berkley went on to become President and CEO of the company, while Bert remained in his role as Chairman of the Board, overseeing international expansion of the company to Australia, Taiwan, and China.

Today, Tension Envelope Corporation is one of the nation's leading manufacturers of envelope products, selling directly to companies and organizations across the United States. With its headquarters in Kansas City, Missouri, the heart of Missouri's Fifth Congressional District, Tension produces over eleven billion envelopes a year with plants, distribution, and service offices stretching from coast to coast.

Not only has Mr. Berkley revolutionized an industry with his ingenuity, he is also a dedicated philanthropist. He has a long history of participation in local, regional, and national civic and advisory councils. He even co-authored a book, Giving Back, on the subject of volunteering, sharing with the community, and involvement with charitable endeavors.

Considering the tremendous contributions of Tension Envelope Corporation to Missouri's Fifth Congressional District and surrounding areas, it is an honor and a privilege to recognize Mr. Bert Berkley in celebration of his ninetieth birthday. My wife, Dianne, and I have had the pleasure of knowing the Berkley family for many years and we are better people

for it. Mr. Speaker, please join me in celebrating Mr. Bert Berkley and expressing our gratitude to his incredible dedication to both the industry and our community.

RECOGNIZING THE PIERCE COUNTY LIBRARY SYSTEM'S COMMITMENT AND SERVICE TO THE SOUTH PUGET SOUND REGION OF WASHINGTON STATE

HON. DEREK KILMER

OF WASHINGTON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 9, 2013

Mr. KILMER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the employees and leadership of the Pierce County Library System, recipients of the 2013 National Medal for Museum and Library Science. This is the highest honor that our nation bestows upon libraries and museums. The library system has served Pierce County with steadfast dedication for over 60 years. This award is well-deserved.

The Pierce County Library System operates 18 libraries, and serves the county's diverse readership of over 555,000 residents. The library system has seen a continuous rise in the number of residents that rely on the accessibility of the library and its ancillary services.

For five consecutive years the Pierce County Library System has faced major budget reductions. Despite this, the Pierce County Library System has found innovative solutions to continue providing excellent services to the community.

Mr. Speaker, the library system's pioneering research informed their decision to implement one of Washington State's first non–Dewey Decimal systems. It was an immediate success—in the first four hours, 780 visitors checked out 1,566 items.

The library system's flagship Early Literacy Program has produced outstanding results in the community. Library staff continue to work with many partners, including the Pierce County Health Department and Child Care Aware of Tacoma/Pierce County, in developing successful curriculum and services to provide caregivers and parents with tools and training to help children prepare for school. Early learning is vital to eliminating the preparation gap and ensuring that every child has the building blocks and resources they need to achieve in school and in life.

As I close, I can say with confidence that our community is a better place thanks to the careful thought, innovation, and dedication of the Pierce County Library System. I am pleased to recognize the service of the dedicated employees and leadership of the Pierce County Library System today in the United States Congress.

HONORING ANGELA KREPS

HON. SAM GRAVES

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 9, 2013

Mr. GRAVES of Missouri. Mr. Speaker, I proudly pause to recognize a special member of my staff. After more than six years of service, Angela Kreps will be leaving her post in my Kansas City District Office.

Angela began working in my campaign office, then joined the District staff in 2005. She has filled many roles in the office including caseworker, staff assistant, and field representative.

Most recently serving as a caseworker, Angela is known for her patience and kindness in dealing with constituents. Whether it is listening to a veteran's retelling of war stories, helping a bride-to-be get her passport renewed, or assisting a single-mother in dealing with the IRS, Angela's experience and listening ear can put constituents at ease.

I have received many letters of thanks for the outstanding constituent service Angela has provided. Her professionalism and dedication to serving my constituents was a great example of how government should work. While I am losing a valuable member of my team, I am excited for Angela to begin the next chapter of her career.

Mr. Speaker, I proudly ask you to join me in thanking Angela Kreps for her many years of service to the people of the Sixth Congressional District. I know Angela's colleagues, family and friends join with me in thanking her for her commitment to others and wishing her best of luck in all her endeavors and many years of success to come.

COMMEMORATING THE 80TH BIRTHDAY OF LONG-TIME PUBLIC SERVANT, CONGRESSMAN SID MORRISON

HON. DOC HASTINGS

OF WASHINGTON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 9, 2013

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I rise today, May 13, to commemorate the 80th birthday of Congressman Sid Morrison, who for more than 50 years and counting has served our nation and the great state of Washington as a public servant. Sid's career has represented results-oriented government, bipartisanship and service to all with integrity and honor.

His service began in 1966 when he was elected as a Washington state legislator, serving in the House until 1974, when he was elected to the Washington State Senate and served until 1980. During his time as a Washington legislator, he developed a reputation for taking on tough issues and reaching past politics to find bipartisan answers.

In 1980, at the age of 47, he was elected to this great body and served in the U.S. Congress for 12 years, from 1981 to 1993. As a Member of the House, Sid worked on many issues including energy, water, forestry, agricultural markets and immigration. As a leader in Congress, he worked to ensure reliable energy supplies to support the energy needs of the nation, science and space research, advanced technology and providing the nation with a strong defense. Sid's congressional service also saw him as an advocate for civil rights, small businesses, people in need of organ donations, and the wide variety of needs of every citizen seeking help with the federal bureaucracy.

Throughout his many endeavors since serving in Congress, Sid has been actively involved in federal policies to make Washington and our nation better for all citizens.

He was appointed as Washington State Secretary of Transportation in 1993 and served until 2001. In that post, Sid spearheaded work for safer roads, new ferries to make Washington the nation's largest fleet, the rebirth of freight and passenger rail, transit expansion and airport improvements.

During the last 10 years, Sid has worked on special projects for Washington governors and continues to serve on many public boards. He has been a leading voice on behalf of public power and consumer–owned utility service in Washington state through his work as the chair of the Energy Northwest Executive Board. He also serves in the water, agriculture and education arenas including: on the Yakima Basin Storage Alliance, Board Chair; on the State Fair Park Board; and the Central Washington University Board of Trustees Chair.

Despite all the above, he is officially retired, but don't tell Sid that, as many of us seem to be moving in slow motion next to him.

I have personal and professional respect and admiration for Sid. As he celebrates his 80th birthday, I wish him happiness and good health and my best wishes.

IN TRIBUTE TO DR. MARTHA McLEOD

HON. JOE COURTNEY

OF CONNECTICUT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 9, 2013

Mr. COURTNEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Dr. Martha McLeod and to celebrate her distinguished career in advance of her upcoming retirement as president of Asnuntuck Community College in Enfield, Connecticut.

Under Dr. McLeod's leadership, Asnuntuck Community College has maintained a strong commitment to eastern Connecticut's students. Through the school's professional programs such as manufacturing technology and allied health, students have developed skills that have matched the needs of local employers. Asnuntuck's transfer programs have prepared students to continue their education at Connecticut's world class four year universities and colleges. Dr. McLeod's administrative and leadership expertise have guided many students to rewarding careers in growing fields throughout the state.

Throughout her career, Dr. McLeod has advanced opportunities and the quality of education in Native American communities across the country. She was the founding president of Bay Mills Community College, a tribal college, in the upper peninsula of Michigan. Dr. McLeod has also applied her expertise at the national level, by serving as an evaluator for tribal programs for the Department of Education and the Department of Labor. Dr. McLeod has also served on the President's advisory board for the White House Initiative on Tribal Colleges and Universities.

Highly engaged in the local business community and committed to economic growth, Dr. McLeod is an active member of Rotary International and serves on the Board of the North Central Connecticut Chamber of Commerce (NCCCC). She also serves on the Economic

Development Commission for the city of Enfield and has previously served on as Chairperson for Enfield's 10 Year Plan of Conservation and Economic Development. She has worked with the Connecticut Department of Labor and the Connecticut Director of Economic Development, to work with incoming European businesses to identify needed workforce skills and provide appropriate preparation and training to potential employees.

During her long career, Dr. McLeod has empowered students across Connecticut and the nation through her many contributions to education and economic development. I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring the career of Dr. Martha McLeod.

THE BENEFITS OF TRAVEL AND TOURISM CELEBRATING NATIONAL TRAVEL AND TOURISM WEEK

HON. JO BONNER

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 9, 2013

Mr. BONNER. Mr. Speaker, from California's Central Coast to Alabama's Gulf Coast and every single Congressional district in between, travel and tourism plays an important economic role in all of our local communities. This week is National Travel and Tourism Week, a celebration of the $2 trillion economic engine that helps drive our nation's economy. As the co-chairs of the bipartisan Congressional Travel and Tourism caucus, we would like to take this moment to raise awareness for America's number one export and to explain how the "Travel Effect" benefits everyone.

The Travel Effect is simple: It is the economic benefit that every single community feels thanks to travel. Supporting over 14.6 million American jobs, the travel industry is a top 10 employer in 48 states and the District of Columbia. Today, one in every eight jobs depends upon travel.

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Thanks to our efforts here in Washington, the United States is now promoting the entire country as a premier travel destination to the world. Brand USA, the nation's Destination Marking Organization created by Congress, will help bring in 81 million visitors to the United States by 2016, a 36 percent increase equivalent to 21 million more travelers as compared with 2010. This influx of new visitors will help create over a half a million new jobs in communities all across the country.

And you do not have to live in a coastal district or near a major tourist destination to feel the Travel Effect. Historic sites, museums in your community and other local destinations all play a role in building our travel economy. In other words, travel is right in your own backyard!

During this year's National Travel and Tourism Week, we call on all members to support the travel industry. While the Travel Effect is great now, its potential is even greater. If we recognize that potential in all of our communities, then the Travel Effect will continue to benefit every town across the United States.

CONGRATULATIONS TO SANDRA KELLER HAAS

HON. MIKE KELLY

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 9, 2013

Mr. KELLY of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Sandra Keller Haas, who has been a member of the National Society Daughters of the American Revolution for 27 years, giving back to her community and to our veterans across the world.

As a member of the Kushkushkee Trail Chapter of the Pennsylvania State Society Daughters of the American Revolution (PSSDAR), she has served as a chapter officer and as the Chairman of the Daughters of the American Revolution Service to Veterans Committee. This committee has a long and proud history of serving our country's veterans and making sure they are never forgotten.

Mrs. Haas is a precious constant in so many veterans' lives as she volunteers her time at the Pittsburgh Veterans Hospital. She organizes toiletry and clothing drives, delivering goods and spending hours with the veterans, thanking them for their service to America.

Mrs. Haas also supports the troops currently serving in our military, including her work spearheading a coupon-clipping initiative for an Army base in Okinawa, Japan. Under Mrs. Haas' leadership, the ladies of the Kushkushkee Trail Chapter clip coupons and send them to the base where they are placed in the commissary and can be used past their expiration date. She has collected and sent almost 150 pounds of coupons for our troops and their families to use. What one might see as a small gesture of clipping coupons, it tells our troops and families immensely that they are not forgotten back home.

Mrs. Haas is a Pennsylvania native, born in Eastern, PA. She has been married for 54 years to Jim Haas, a retired U.S. Army officer, and is the mother of two and grandmother of four. She worked as a Home Economics teacher and dietician for years, working with students around every community to where her family was deployed. Outside of her work with veterans and troops, she has volunteered at the local food bank and loves spending time with her family.

I applaud Mrs. Haas for her extraordinary dedication to our troops and to our veterans. Her work with the Kushkushkee Trail Chapter of the PSSDAR demonstrates an outstanding dedication and love of country. I thank her for her extraordinary contributions to the community and thank her for the positive impact she has had on one of our most treasured national assets, our veterans.

A TRIBUTE TO BURBANK FIRE DEPARTMENT'S 100TH ANNIVERSARY

HON. ADAM B. SCHIFF

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 9, 2013

Mr. SCHIFF. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the Burbank Fire Department upon its 100th Anniversary. For a century, the Burbank Fire Department has been an integral part of the community, keeping the residents of Burbank safe and well informed about fire prevention.

The Burbank Fire Department started as a small group of volunteers defending the population of 500 from the devastating effects of fire in the community. After multiple fires caused damage to the area, the Burbank Board of Trustees established the Burbank Fire Department in 1913.

Over the years, the Burbank Fire Department has expanded their services to fit the various needs of the community. In 1974 the department started a paramedic program and has been an Emergency Medical Services (EMS) provider ever since. Burbank Fire Paramedics established field treatment protocols in 1993 and these protocols are now used across Los Angeles County as the EMS standard for clinically effective and safe field care. The department's EMS program has been recognized as one of the best in the State of California.

As a part of the Verdugo Fire Communications Center, established in 1979 by the cities of Burbank, Glendale, and Pasadena, the Burbank Fire Department makes optimum use of fire services available in the area and increases the effectiveness of the cities' fire defense system. The Verdugo Fire Communications Center is still owned by the three original cities, but it also provides services as needed to the Bob Hope Airport, Alhambra, Arcadia, Monrovia, Montebello, Monterey Park, San Gabriel, San Marino, Sierra Madre, and South Pasadena.

Today, the Burbank Fire Department is a full service fire agency with six fire stations, a training center, and seven divisions: Fire Prevention Bureau, Fire Suppression, Emergency Medical Services, Emergency Management, Fire Apparatus & Equipment, Training & Safety, and Administration. The department responds to 9200 incidents a year and serves approximately 108,000 people over a 17.14 square mile area. I am honored to recognize the men and women of the Burbank Fire Department for their commitment to keeping our community safe and ask all Members to join me in congratulating the Burbank Fire Department upon its 100th Anniversary.

HONORING OUR NATION'S NURSES FOR THEIR TIRELESS EFFORTS IN DELIVERING QUALITY CARE

HON. PETER J. ROSKAM

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 9, 2013

Mr. ROSKAM. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to highlight the crucial work of nurses in America.

Few individuals touch the lives of others in the manner in which nurses commit to aiding

their patients. This is one of the many reasons that we honor and celebrate our nation's nurses during this week of National Nurses Week

Unique from almost any other profession, nurses join us in some of life's most exciting milestones as well as some of its most challenging seasons. Nurses share in the joyous moment of a newborn's cries to assisting our grandparents as they transition into their golden years. Nurses help clean up our children's first schoolyard scrapes and tumbles just as they help our Nation's homeless when they fall off their feet.

This commitment to patient care dates back to Florence Nightingale. The archetype of modern nursing, Nightingale demonstrated both commitment and compassion to the fallen soldiers of the British Crimean War. It was this paradigm that helped reduce the death rate of the Crimean War by two-thirds.

As a result of this patient-centric model of aid, patient advocacy and hospital administration have both adapted into what we are familiar with and thankful for today. That is why Nursing Appreciation Week is celebrated during the week of May 12, Nightingale's birthday.

There are more nurses than any other workers in the health profession. However, when nursing staffs decrease, individual patient attention decreases as well. This can lead to medical complications and increased hospital stay increase. It is not only a single nurse that encourages patient recovery; it is a team of nurses that play a pivotal role in patient wellness.

In the upcoming years while the American healthcare system undergoes substantial changes, we will depend on nurses more than ever when seeking healthcare. Nurses will serve alongside their colleagues in discovering the next steps in innovative care models as we transition to the next chapter in patient care.

I would encourage all of my fellow members to remember this week next time they visit a hospital or take their child to the doctor; remember to thank your nurse as well.

HONORING OUR WWII MERCHANT MARINERS ACT OF 2013

HON. JANICE HAHN

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 9, 2013

Ms. HAHN. Mr. Speaker, during World War II, millions of Americans in uniform fought bravely to secure freedom and peace throughout the world. We made sure to honor their sacrifices by ensuring we took care of them at home, through initiatives such as the G.I. Bill and other services meant to support our veterans. However, many of those who made the ultimate sacrifice during the war were not actually part of the U.S. military.

During the war, U.S. Merchant Mariners were responsible for transporting troops and delivering supplies for the military. Even though they were mainly used as an auxiliary fleet, hundreds of ships and thousands of men were lost to enemy submarines and aircraft, including dangerous missions ferrying supplies to western Europe and even Russia. Though the role of non-uniformed merchant sailors in World War II may have faded, it was one of the most critical roles played during the early part of the war.

Unfortunately, those who served this nation so valiantly during that time, have never been eligible for the tuition subsidies, home loan guarantees or other provisions of the G.I. Bill that helped millions of veterans go to college, secure a home and transition seamlessly into civilian life. The fact that we are not providing similar benefits to those who have risked their lives for this country is simply unfathomable.

That's why I am introducing the ''Honoring Our WWII Merchant Marine Act for 2013.'' This bill would provide a $1,000 monthly benefit to the nearly 10,000 surviving World War II Mariners. By providing this modest benefit, we will finally be giving our brave merchant mariners the recognition they rightfully deserve.

TRIBUTE TO MIKE RAAHAUGE

HON. KEN CALVERT

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 9, 2013

Mr. CALVERT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor and pay tribute to a dear friend of mine, Mike Raahauge. Mike passed away on May 6, 2013 after a long battle with esophageal cancer. He was a pillar of the community in Corona and will be deeply missed.

The story of Mike's shooting range, Raahauge's Shooting Enterprises, began with his father, Linc, who had operated a pheasant hunting facility in Dixon, California in the 1950s. While on a family trip to Disneyland, Linc got lost and ended up on Highway 71. He believed the area would be ideal for pheasant farming, and in 1971 Mike helped his father move the facility to southern California after signing a lease with the Orange County Water District.

Mike's father had always wanted to move south because the region had a larger population. The family's first hunting facility, which hunted pheasants and ducks, opened on Bluff Street in Norco, California. Target traps were set on the balcony of the clubhouse and alongside a dirt road which overlooked the basin below with views of the Santa Ana River. The range was eventually moved to River Road in Corona. Throughout the years, the Raahauges offered chukar, quail and other upland game hunting. After his father's death in 1989, Mike, his wife Elaine, and their son Pat continued to operate the range as a family business.

Today, about 2,000 men, women and children annually come to Raahauge's to take the hunter safety course required to obtain a hunting license. Mike said of the program, ''Of everything I do here, that's the most important . . . It makes it a safer world. There are guns in our society. People need to know how to handle them safely. We're giving them a safe way to deal with guns.''

About 1.5 million rounds are fired by shotguns in sporting clays at the property in a year, and ten police agencies including Anaheim, Fullerton and Buena Park practice at the pistol range. It is also home to many shooting groups such as Shooting Sports Alliance, The Cowboys, LUHT Steel Challenge, Gen X and Running Gun, The Appleseed Project, SoCal Top Guns Youth Shooting, NRA Shooting Programs and Firearms Training Associates. The ranch also hosts events for local wildlife and conservation organizations such as the Cowboys, who turn the ranch into the Old West twice each year to compete with old cowboy guns. In 1982, Mike worked together with gun manufacturers to create the Hands On Shooting Sports Fair, which began that year and still occurs every first weekend in June in Corona.

Carolyn Morse, the office manager for Raahauge's, said that Mike's success came from his desire to get boys and girls and women involved in what was traditionally seen as a male-dominated sport. In fact, the most prominent girl to pick. up the sport at the range was Mike's daughter, Cindy, who competed as part of the 2000 U.S. Olympic team in Sydney. Mike said his time spent in Australia watching his daughter take fifth place in women's skeet shooting was the ''highlight of my life.'' Cindy was trained by 1984 Olympic Bronze Medalist Dan Carlisle, who lives in Houston but still makes frequent appearances at the range to give private lessons. Michael Reagan, son of President Ronald Reagan, also took shooting lessons at the range.

Mike is survived by Elaine, his wife and partner of 48 years; his son, Pat, who has three sons and two daughters; and his daughter, Cindy Shenberger, who lives in North Carolina with her husband, Kevin, and their two daughters.

Mike was a great American patriot who will always be remembered for his incredible work ethic, generosity, contributions to the community and love of family. His dedication to her family, work, and community are a testament to a life lived well and a legacy that will continue. I extend my condolences to Mike's family and friends; although Mike may be gone, the light and goodness he brought to the world remain and will never be forgotten.

INTRODUCTION OF THE CONSTRUCTION QUALITY ASSURANCE ACT

HON. CAROLYN B. MALONEY

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 9, 2013

Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York. Mr. Speaker, as we look for ways to ensure government dollars are used efficiently, Congress should reform the procurement process to limit bid shopping on federal construction contracts. Restoring equitable safeguards in the low bid system will assure that agency practice will conform to the highest standards adhered to by industry professionals and contractor associations, and will reflect best practices followed by a great many other public procurement systems nationally and internationally.

That is why I am introducing the Construction Quality Assurance Act, legislation that would require prime bidders on low-bid projects valued at $1 million or more to list each subcontractor on work categories of $100,000 or more with their bid submissions. Substitutions of listed subcontractors after contracts are awarded would be allowed only in exceptional circumstances and only with the consent of the contracting officer.

The bill would impose financial penalties for improper substitution of listed subcontractors.

It would also apply to subcontractors. Both prime contractors and subcontractors would be subject to debarment or ineligibility determinations in cases where there are two infractions of the prohibitions over any three-year period.

I urge my colleagues to pass this bill and ensure integrity in the federal procurement system.

Daily Digest

Senate

Chamber Action

Routine Proceedings, pages S3285–S3353

Measures Introduced: Nineteen bills and five resolutions were introduced, as follows: S. 911–929, S.J. Res. 15, and S. Res. 135–138. **Page S3326**

Measures Passed:

Congressional Gold Medal: Senate passed H.R. 360, to award posthumously a Congressional Gold Medal to Addie Mae Collins, Denise McNair, Carole Robertson, and Cynthia Wesley to commemorate the lives they lost 50 years ago in the bombing of the Sixteenth Street Baptist Church, where these 4 little Black girls' ultimate sacrifice served as a catalyst for the Civil Rights Movement. **Pages S3351–52**

Korean War Anniversary and Congratulating President Park Geun-Hye: Senate agreed to S. Res. 136, recognizing the 60th Anniversary of the Korean War Armistice and the Mutual Defense Treaty of 1953, and congratulating Park Geun-Hye on her election to the Presidency of the Republic of Korea. **Page S3352**

Older Americans Month: Senate agreed to S. Res. 137, designating May 2013 as "Older Americans Month". **Page S3352**

National Charter Schools Week: Senate agreed to S. Res. 138, congratulating the students, parents, teachers, and administrators of charter schools across the United States for their ongoing contributions to education, and supporting the ideals and goals of the 14th annual National Charter Schools Week, to be celebrated the week of May 5 through May 11, 2013. **Page S3352**

Measures Considered:

Water Resources Development Act—Agreement: Senate continued consideration of S. 601, to provide for the conservation and development of water and related resources, to authorize the Secretary of the Army to construct various projects for improvements to rivers and harbors of the United States, taking action on the following amendments proposed thereto: **Pages S3294–S3304, S3308–19**

Adopted:

Boxer (for Blunt/Nelson) Amendment No. 800, to provide for the consideration of resilient construction techniques in certain studies relating to extreme weather events. **Page S3310**

Boxer (for Sessions) Modified Amendment No. 811, to require the Tennessee Valley Authority to grant certain use restrictions. **Page S3310**

Boxer (for Coburn/McCain) Amendment No. 823, to ensure environmental infrastructure activities are not exempt from review by the Infrastructure Deauthorization Commission. **Page S3310**

Boxer (for Warner/Kane) Amendment No. 873, to include a provision relating to Four Mile Run, city of Alexandria and Arlington County, Virginia. **Page S3310**

A motion was entered to close further debate on the bill, and, in accordance with the provisions of Rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, and pursuant to the unanimous-consent agreement of Thursday, May 9, 2013, a vote on cloture will occur at 12 p.m., on Tuesday, May 14, 2013. **Page S3319**

A unanimous-consent agreement was reached providing that the following amendment be the next amendment in order to the bill: Inhofe Amendment No. 797; and that no second-degree amendments be in order to the amendment prior to votes on or in relation to the amendment. **Page S3310**

A unanimous-consent agreement was reached providing that the filing deadline for all first-degree amendments to the bill be 4 p.m., on Monday, May 13, 2013. **Page S3352**

Appointments:

Commission to Eliminate Child Abuse and Neglect Fatalities: The Chair, on behalf of the Republican Leader, pursuant to Public Law 112–275, appointed the following individual to be a member of the Commission to Eliminate Child Abuse and Neglect Fatalities: Dr. Wade F. Horn of Maryland. **Page S3352**

Tavenner Nomination—Agreement: A unanimous-consent-time agreement was reached providing that at a time to be determined by the Majority Leader, in consultation with the Republican Leader, Senate begin consideration of the nomination of

Marilyn B. Tavenner, of Virginia, to be Administrator of the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services; that there be one hour for debate equally divided in the usual form; that upon the use or yielding back of time, Senate vote, without intervening action or debate, on confirmation of the nomination; and that no further motions be in order to the nomination. **Page S3313**

Orrick Nomination—Agreement: A unanimous-consent-time agreement was reached providing that at a time to be determined by the Majority Leader, in consultation with the Republican Leader, Senate begin consideration of the nomination of William H. Orrick III, of the District of Columbia, to be United States District Judge for the Northern District of California; that there be one hour for debate, equally divided in the usual form; that upon the use or yielding back of time, Senate vote, without intervening action or debate, on confirmation of the nomination; that no further motions be in order to the nomination. **Page S3351**

Moniz Nomination—Agreement: A unanimous-consent-time agreement was reached providing that at a time to be determined by the Majority Leader, in consultation with the Republican Leader, Senate begin consideration of the nomination of Ernest J. Moniz, of Massachusetts, to be Secretary of Energy; that there be three hours for debate, equally divided in the usual form; that upon the use or yielding back of time, Senate vote, without intervening action or debate, on confirmation of the nomination; that no further motions be in order to the nomination. **Page S3351**

Nominations Confirmed: Senate confirmed the following nominations:

Shelly Deckert Dick, of Louisiana, to be United States District Judge for the Middle District of Louisiana. **Pages S3305–08, S3353**

By a unanimous vote of 97 yeas (Vote No. EX. 118), Nelson Stephen Roman, of New York, to be United States District Judge for the Southern District of New York. **Pages S3305–08, S3353**

Nominations Received: Senate received the following nominations:

Madeline Hughes Haikala, of Alabama, to be United States District Judge for the Northern District of Alabama.

Gregory Howard Woods, of New York, to be United States District Judge for the Southern District of New York.

Thomas Edgar Wheeler, of the District of Columbia, to be a Member of the Federal Communications Commission for the remainder of the term expiring June 30, 2013.

Thomas Edgar Wheeler, of the District of Columbia, to be a Member of the Federal Communications Commission for a term of five years from July 1, 2013.

Penny Pritzker, of Illinois, to be Secretary of Commerce.

Joseph W. Nega, of Illinois, to be a Judge of the United States Tax Court for a term of fifteen years.

Michael B. Thornton, of Virginia, to be a Judge of the United States Tax Court for a term of fifteen years.

Rose Eilene Gottemoeller, of Virginia, to be Under Secretary of State for Arms Control and International Security.

Davita Vance-Cooks, of Virginia, to be Public Printer.

Mark D. Gearan, of New York, to be a Member of the Board of Directors of the Corporation for National and Community Service for a term expiring December 1, 2015. **Page S3353**

Messages from the House: **Page S3324**

Measures Referred: **Page S3325**

Executive Communications: **Pages S3325–26**

Additional Cosponsors: **Pages S3326–29**

Statements on Introduced Bills/Resolutions: **Pages S3329–44**

Additional Statements: **Pages S3323–24**

Amendments Submitted: **Pages S3344–51**

Notices of Hearings/Meetings: **Page S3351**

Authorities for Committees to Meet: **Page S3351**

Record Votes: One record vote was taken today. (Total—118) **Page S3308**

Adjournment: Senate convened at 9:30 a.m. and adjourned at 5:50 p.m., until 2 p.m. on Monday, May 13, 2013. (For Senate's program, see the remarks of the Majority Leader in today's Record on page S3352.)

Committee Meetings

(Committees not listed did not meet)

APPROPRIATIONS: DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Committee on Appropriations: Subcommittee on Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies concluded a hearing to examine proposed budget estimates for fiscal year 2014 for the Department of Agriculture, after receiving testimony from Thomas J. Vilsack, Secretary, and Phyllis K. Fong, Inspector General, both of the Department of Agriculture.

APPROPRIATIONS: DEPARTMENTS OF DEFENSE AND NAVY

Committee on Appropriations: Subcommittee on Military Construction and Veterans Affairs, and Related Agencies concluded a hearing to examine proposed budget estimates for fiscal year 2014 for the Departments of Defense and Navy, after receiving testimony from Robert F. Hale, Under Secretary (Comptroller), John Conger, Acting Deputy Under Secretary for Installations and Environment, Roger M. Natsuhara, Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary of Navy for Energy, Installations and Environment, Major General James Kessler, Commander, Marine Corps Installations Command, and Assistant Deputy Commandant for Installations and Logistics (Facilities), and Rear Admiral Kevin Slates, Director, Chief of Naval Operations, Energy and Environmental Readiness Division (OPNAV N45), all of the Department of Defense.

DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION REQUEST AND FUTURE YEARS DEFENSE PROGRAM

Committee on Armed Services: Subcommittee on Strategic Forces concluded a hearing to examine ballistic missile defense policies and programs in review of the Defense Authorization Request for fiscal year 2014 and the Future Years Defense Program, after receiving testimony from Madelyn R. Creedon, Assistant Secretary for Global Strategic Affairs, J. Michael Gilmore, Director, Operational Test and Evaluation, Lieutenant General Richard P. Formica, USA, Commander, Army Space and Missile Defense Command, Army Forces Strategic Command, and Commander, Joint Functional Component Command for Integrated Missile Defense, and Vice Admiral James D. Syring, USN, Director, Missile Defense Agency, all of the Department of Defense; and Cristina T. Chaplain, Director, Acquisition and Sourcing Management, Government Accountability Office.

PHARMACEUTICAL COMPOUNDING

Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions: Committee concluded a hearing to examine pharmaceutical compounding, focusing on a proposed legislative solution, after receiving testimony from Janet Woodcock, Director, Center for Drug Evaluation and Research, Food and Drug Administration, Department of Health and Human Services; Carmen Catizone, National Association of Boards of Pharmacy, Mount Prospect, Illinois; Allan Coukell, The Pew Charitable Trusts, Washington, D.C.; David G. Miller, International Academy of Compounding Pharmacists, Missouri City, Texas; and Kasey Thompson, American Society of Health-System Pharmacists, Bethesda, Maryland.

BUSINESS MEETING

Committee on the Judiciary: Committee began consideration of S. 744, to provide for comprehensive immigration reform, but did not complete action thereon.

Committee recessed subject to the call.

VETERANS BILLS

Committee on Veterans' Affairs: Committee concluded a hearing to examine S. 49, to amend title 38, United States Code, to ensure that veterans in each of the 48 contiguous States are able to receive services in at least one full-service Department of Veterans Affairs medical center in the State or receive comparable services provided by contract in the State, S. 62, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to allow taxpayers to designate overpayments of tax as contributions and to make additional contributions to the Homeless Veterans Assistance Fund, S. 131, to amend title 38, United States Code, to improve the reproductive assistance provided by the Department of Veterans Affairs to severely wounded, ill, or injured veterans and their spouses, S. 229, to designate the medical center of the Department of Veterans Affairs located at 3900 Woodland Avenue in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, as the "Corporal Michael J. Crescenz Department of Veterans Affairs Medical Center", S. 287, to amend title 38, United States Code, to expand the definition of homeless veteran for purposes of benefits under the laws administered by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs, S. 325, to amend title 38, United States Code, to increase the maximum age for children eligible for medical care under the CHAMPVA program, S. 412, to authorize certain major medical facility leases for the Department of Veterans Affairs, S. 422, to amend the Department of Veterans Affairs Health Care Programs Enhancement Act of 2001 and title 38, United States Code, to require the provision of chiropractic care and services to veterans at all Department of Veterans Affairs medical centers and to expand access to such care and services, S. 455, to amend title 38, United States Code, to authorize the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to transport individuals to and from facilities of the Department of Veterans Affairs in connection with rehabilitation, counseling, examination, treatment, and care, S. 522, to require the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to award grants to establish, or expand upon, master's degree or doctoral degree programs in orthotics and prosthetics, S. 529, to amend title 38, United States Code, to modify the commencement date of the period of service at Camp Lejeune, North Carolina, for eligibility for hospital care and medical services in connection with exposure to contaminated water, S. 543, to require the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to reorganize the

Veterans Integrated Service Networks of the Veterans Health Administration, S. 633, to amend title 38, United States Code, to provide for coverage under the beneficiary travel program of the Department of Veterans Affairs of certain disabled veterans for travel in connection with certain special disabilities rehabilitation, S. 800, to require the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to ensure that the South Texas Department of Veterans Affairs Health Care Center at Harlingen, located in Harlingen, Texas, includes a full-service inpatient health care facility of the Department of Veterans Affairs, to redesignate such center, S. 825, to amend title 38, United States Code, to improve the provision of services for homeless veterans, S. 832, to require the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to carry out pilot programs on furnishing case management services and assisted living to children of Vietnam veterans and certain Korea service veterans born with spina bifida and children of women Vietnam veterans born with certain birth defects, S. 845, to amend title 38, United States Code, to improve the Department of Veterans Affairs Health Professionals Educational Assistance Program, S. 851, to amend title 38, United States Code, to extend to all veterans with a serious service-connected injury eligibility to participate in the family caregiver services program, S. 852, to improve health care furnished by the Department of Veterans Affairs by increasing access to complementary and alternative medicine and other approaches to wellness and preventive care, and S. 877, to require the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to allow public access to research of the Department, after receiving testimony from Senator Landrieu; Robert L. Jesse, Principal Deputy Under Secretary for Health, and Susan Blauert, Deputy Assistant General Counsel, both of the Department of Veterans Affairs; Richard F. Weidman, Vietnam Veterans of America, Silver Spring, Maryland; Wayne B. Jonas, Sameuli Institute, Alexandria, Virginia; Heather L. Ansley, VetsFirst, and Matt Gornick, National Coalition for Homeless Veterans, both of Washington, D.C.; and Thomas G. Bowman, Spring Hill, Florida.

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: 47 public bills, H.R. 1900–1947; and 3 resolutions, H.J. Res. 43; and H. Res. 210–211 were introduced. **Pages H2566–70**

Additional Cosponsors: **Pages H2570–71**

Reports Filed: There were no reports filed today.

Chaplain: The prayer was offered by the guest chaplain, Sister Jacquelyn Gusdane, SND, Notre Dame-Cathedral Latin School, Chardon, Ohio. **Page H2537**

Journal: The House agreed to the Speaker's approval of the Journal by a yea-and-nay vote of 264 yeas to 140 nays with 1 answering "present", Roll No. 143. **Pages H2553–54**

Full Faith and Credit Act: The House passed H.R. 807, to require that the Government prioritize all obligations on the debt held by the public in the event that the debt limit is reached, by a yea-and-nay vote of 221 yeas to 207 nays, Roll No. 142. **Pages H2539–53**

Rejected the Maffei motion to recommit the bill to the Committee on Ways and Means with instructions to report the same back to the House forthwith with an amendment, by a recorded vote of 200 ayes to 227 noes, Roll No. 141. **Pages H2551–53**

Pursuant to the rule, the amendment in the nature of a substitute recommended by the Committee on Ways and Means now printed in the bill shall be considered as adopted. **Page H2539**

Agreed to:

Camp amendment (printed in H. Rept. 113–52) that clarifies the prohibition on compensation for Members of Congress and clarifies language to require that the Secretary report to Congress anytime the new authority is used (by a yea-and-nay vote of 340 yeas to 84 nays, Roll No. 140). **Pages H2546–51**

H. Res. 202, the rule providing for consideration of H.R. 807, was agreed to yesterday, May 8th.

Meeting Hour: Agreed that when the House adjourns today, it adjourn to meet at 2 p.m. on Monday, May 13th and that the order of the House of January 3, 2013 regarding morning hour debate not apply on that day. **Page H2557**

Senate Message: Message received from the Senate today appears on pages H2554.

Senate Referral: S. 622 was held at the desk.

Page H2554

Quorum Calls—Votes: Three yea-and-nay votes and one recorded vote developed during the proceedings of today and appear on pages H2550–51, H2552–53, H2553 and H2553–54. There were no quorum calls.

Adjournment: The House met at 9 a.m. and adjourned at 1:32 p.m.

Committee Meetings

APPROPRIATIONS—AIR FORCE BUDGET

Committee on Appropriations: Subcommittee on Defense held a hearing on the Air Force Budget. Testimony was heard from Michael B. Donley, Secretary, United States Air Force; and General Mark A. Welsh III, Chief of Staff, USAF.

ATOMIC ENERGY DEFENSE ACTIVITIES AND NUCLEAR FORCES PROGRAMS—FY2014 BUDGET REQUEST

Committee on Armed Services: Subcommittee on Strategic Forces held a hearing on Fiscal Year 2014 Budget Request for Atomic Energy Defense Activities and Nuclear Forces Programs. Testimony was heard from Madelyn Creedon, Assistant Secretary of Defense for Global Strategic Affairs, Office of the Secretary of Defense; J. Michael Gilmore, Director, Operational Test and Evaluation, Office of the Secretary of Defense; and Vice Admiral James D. Syring, USN, Director, Missile Defense Agency.

AMERICAN ENERGY SECURITY AND INNOVATION

Committee on Energy and Commerce: Subcommittee on Energy and Power held a hearing entitled ''American Energy Security and Innovation: Grid Reliability Challenges in a Shifting Energy Resource Landscape''. Testimony was heard from public witnesses.

RESOLVING INTERNATIONAL PARENTAL CHILD ABDUCTIONS

Committee on Foreign Affairs: Subcommittee on Africa, Global Health, Global Human Rights, and International Organizations held a hearing entitled ''Resolving International Parental Child Abductions to Non-Hague Convention Countries''. Testimony was heard from Susan Jacobs, Special Advisor for Children's Issues, Bureau of Consular Affairs, Department of State; and public witnesses.

BOSTON BOMBINGS: A FIRST LOOK

Committee on Homeland Security: Full Committee held a hearing entitled ''The Boston Bombings: A First Look''. Testimony was heard from Joseph I. Lieberman, former Senator, Connecticut; Edward F. Davis III, Commissioner, Boston Police Department; Kurt N. Schwartz, Undersecretary, Executive Office of Public Safety and Security, Massachusetts; and public witnesses.

LEGISLATIVE MEASURES

Committee on Natural Resources: Subcommittee on Public Lands and Environmental Regulation held a hearing on the following: H.R. 1825, to direct Federal public land management officials to exercise their authority under existing law to facilitate use of and access to Federal public lands for fishing, sport hunting, and recreational shooting, and for other purposes; H.R. 586, the ''Denali National Park Improvement Act''; H.R. 995, the ''Organ Mountains National Monument Establishment Act''; and H.R. 1411, the ''California Coastal National Monument Expansion Act of 2013''. Testimony was heard from Representative Benishek; Representative Young (AK); Representative Huffman; Carl Rountree, Director, National Landscape Conservation System, Bureau of Land Management, Department of the Interior; and public witnesses.

FEDERAL GOVERNMENT APPROACHES TO ISSUING BIOMETRIC IDS

Committee on Oversight and Government Reform: Subcommittee on Government Operations held a hearing entitled ''Federal Government Approaches to Issuing Biometric IDs''. Testimony was heard from Stephen Sadler, Assistant Administrator, Office of Intelligence and Analysis, TSA; Stephen A. Lord, Director, Forensic Audits and Investigations, GAO.

PROCESSING FEDERAL WORKER PENSION CLAIMS

Committee on Oversight and Government Reform: Subcommittee on Federal Workforce, U.S. Postal Service, and the Census held a hearing entitled ''Is OPM Processing Federal Worker Pension Claims on Time?''. Testimony was heard from Patrick McFarland, Inspector General, Office of Personnel Management; Kenneth Zawodny, Associate Director, Retirement Services, Office of Personnel Management; Valerie C. Melvin, Director, Information Management and Technology Resource Issues, GAO.

EXOPLANET DISCOVERIES: HAVE WE FOUND OTHER EARTHS?

Committee on Science, Space, and Technology: Subcommittee on Space; and Subcommittee on Research held a joint hearing entitled ''Exoplanet Discoveries: Have We Found Other Earths?''. Testimony was heard from John M. Grunsfeld, M.D., Associate Administrator, Science Mission Directorate, NASA,

James Ulvestad, M.D., Director, Division of Astronomical Sciences, National Science Foundation; and public witnesses.

HEALTH INSURANCE FEE: IMPACT ON SMALL BUSINESSES

Committee on Small Business: Subcommittee on Health and Technology held a hearing entitled ''The Health Insurance Fee: Impact on Small Businesses''. Testimony was heard from public witnesses.

BALANCING SAFETY WITH OPPORTUNITY FOR FOSTER YOUTH

Committee on Ways and Means: Subcommittee on Human Resources held a hearing entitled ''Letting Kids Be Kids: Balancing Safety with Opportunity for Foster Youth''. Testimony was heard from Nancy Detert, State Senator, Florida; David Wilkins, Secretary, Department of Children and Families, Florida; Tanya Wilkins, Advocate for Foster Care and Adoption, Governor's Office of Adoption and Child Protection, Florida; and public witnesses.

Joint Meetings

No joint committee meetings were held.

COMMITTEE MEETINGS FOR FRIDAY, MAY 10, 2013

(Committee meetings are open unless otherwise indicated)

Senate

No meetings/hearings scheduled.

House

No hearings are scheduled.

Next Meeting of the SENATE

2 p.m., Monday, May 13

Senate Chamber

Program for Monday: Senate will be in a period of morning business until 5 p.m. The filing deadline for first-degree amendments to S. 601, Water Resources Development Act, is at 4 p.m.

Next Meeting of the HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

2 p.m., Monday, May 13

House Chamber

Program for Monday: The House will meet in pro forma session.

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