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Senate

The Senate met at 2:00 p.m. and was called to order by the Honorable TIM KAINE, a Senator from the Commonwealth of Virginia.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, Dr. Barry C. Black, offered the following prayer:

Let us pray.

Shepherd of our souls, the center of our joy, we look to You today for strength and wisdom. Lord, we acknowledge that unless You guard our Nation, our efforts to find security are futile.

Today illuminate the minds of our Senators with the light of Your insights, enabling them to act decisively. As they anticipate the forces that threaten freedom in our world, lead them on the path that will bring life, liberty, and joy.

We pray in Your merciful Name.

Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Presiding Officer 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 legislative clerk read the following letter.

U.S. SENATE,
PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE,
Washington, DC, September 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 TIM KAINE, a Senator from the Commonwealth of Virginia, to perform the duties of the Chair.

PATRICK J. LEAHY,
President pro tempore.

Mr. KAINE thereupon assumed the chair as Acting President pro tempore.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The majority leader is recognized.

THE CHAPLAIN

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I just had a brief conversation with the Chaplain, who came down to wish me well on my return. He indicated he was going to do a special prayer this afternoon for the Senate in this time of crisis. I am always aware of how he looks out for us spiritually. The prayer is for Democrats, Republicans—all of us. His prayers are very heart-warming. Not only is he our chaplain, but he is a retired admiral in the U.S. Navy. He has been all over the world in that capacity. We appreciate him very much. We don't acknowledge him as often as we should. I appreciate how he is always available and so kind and thoughtful to everyone.

AUTHORIZING THE LIMITED AND SPECIFIED USE OF THE UNITED STATES ARMED FORCES AGAINST SYRIA—MOTION TO PROCEED

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I now move to consider S.J. Res. 21.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will report the joint resolution by title.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

Motion to proceed to S.J. Res. 21 to authorize limited and specified use of the United States Armed Forces against Syria.

SCHEDULE

Mr. REID. Mr. President, this evening the Senate will proceed to executive session to consider a couple of would-be judges, Caproni and Broderick, both from the Southern District of New York, at 5:30 p.m., and then there will be two rollcall votes on the confirmation of those nominations. We may only have one rollcall vote and one voice vote, but we will get both of them done today.

I just moved to proceed to the joint resolution reported last week by the Foreign Relations Committee to authorize the limited use of force against Syria. This matter demands the attention of the Senate and this country. It is this resolution the Senate will turn to. Regardless of where Senators stand on the merits of this issue, we should have this debate. I hope all Senators will support proceeding to this measure. That vote will occur sometime on Wednesday on the motion to proceed.

Under a previous order, at 11 tomorrow morning, the Senate is to have a motion to proceed to the energy efficiency bill. It is obvious we are not going to be able to do that. I will work with the Republican leader to reach a consent agreement to defer consideration of that bill to a later time.

On the Syria resolution, I intend that the Senate should have a full and open debate. I encourage Senators to come to the floor to begin that debate.

Also this week, President Obama will come to the Capitol to address the Democratic caucus. He has also extended his invitation to the Republicans. I have not heard back from the Republicans as to whether they wish to hear from the President.

President Obama will address the Nation tomorrow evening. Senior administration officials will brief all Senators in a classified session on Wednesday. There will be other meetings in the White House today with Democratic and Republican Senators. The Senate will give this matter the serious attention it deserves.

CHEMICAL WEAPONS

Mr. President, the first large-scale military use of deadly military weapons occurred almost 100 years ago when the Germans deployed chlorine gas during World War I. During that war,

● This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.

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World War I, there were 1,200,000 casualties from attacks with deadly toxins—chlorine gas, mustard gas, and other deathly and destructive chemical agents. Great Britain, Austria, Hungary, France, Germany, Italy, and the United States all suffered losses.

''This is a horrible weapon,'' wrote German Major Karl von Zinger, who reported a firsthand battlefield account of the carnage to his superior officers.

One hundred thousand soldiers died, and most of the other casualties were debilitated for life by the exposure to these deadly toxins. The effects of these killers were horrific. Those who didn't die suffered blindness, burns, blisters, and labored breathing. For those dying, it was as terrible as anyone could imagine. The great World War I era poet Wilfred Owen from Great Britain wrote that gassed soldiers cried out like men on fire as they drowned in air thick with poison. The world was horrified by the gruesomeness of these new evil weapons of war, and so, as a global community, we agreed these weapons should be banished from the battlefield forever.

Despite the success of global efforts to eliminate their use, today the Syrian Government is the second largest holder of chemical weapons in the world—only shortly behind North Korea. The well-documented use of these toxic and unsavory stockpiles by President Bashar al-Asad's regime is a certain violation of the overwhelming international consensus forged against these weapons nearly 10 decades ago. It is a clear violation of human decency. This is not the first time Asad has used chemical weapons against his own citizens. We all heard in our classified briefings that these weapons have been used a number of times, but this is the most gruesome and extensive.

This morning I watched some film in my office. The film takes about 13 minutes. It was pictures that were taken following the dropping of those horrible weapons. I will never get that out of my mind. There were little baby boys and girls dressed in colorful play clothes. Some of the boys and girls looked like teenagers. They were retching and had spasms with their arms. Of course there were older people as well. These poisons kill the kids first. Their little bodies cannot take this as well as older folks. It kills the older people also but more slowly.

The well-documented use of these unsavory stockpiles by Asad is a certain violation, I repeat, of the overwhelming international consensus forged against these weapons 10 decades past. I have talked about human decency. It is a clear violation of human decency.

The August 21 attacks killed more than 1,000 civilians—including hundreds of these children. This week we will further examine the evidence that is growing which proves the viciousness of these attacks and discuss their brutal results.

The innocent civilians who were killed by the Syrian Government during those attacks died terrible deaths. Their death was just as painful and shocking as those suffered on the battlefields of World War I. These deaths were just as terrible as those that convinced the global community to outlaw the use of such brutal tactics against soldiers, and, of course, against innocent civilians such as those Asad murdered last month.

The evidence of the Asad regime, and their using outlawed nerve agents against its own citizens, is clear and very convincing. The Syrian Government has worked to hide the gruesome evidence. They have done it a number of different ways. After the bodies had been cleared away, they sent a barrage of weaponry in there—artillery and tanks—and blasted the ground and destroyed the evidence. They couldn't destroy it; it is still there, but they did try. They worked very hard to hide these gruesome attacks by repeatedly bombing the site of these grisly and unforgettable occurrences. Without question, this brutality demands a response. The satellite imagery and amateur video shot by eyewitnesses—and I talked about that—paint a clear picture of the brutality of this awful regime.

President Obama sought approval 2 weeks ago for targeted military action—action that will hold President Asad accountable for these heinous acts. Congress has done its due diligence. Since President Obama announced he would seek congressional approval for the limited military action against Syria, the Senate has held many committee hearings and briefings as well as five classified all-Members briefings. There are more briefings and much debate to come this week—including open debate here in the Senate.

On a bipartisan basis the Senate Foreign Relations Committee passed a resolution that restricts the use of military force to 60 days, with a single 30-day extension. The resolution reflects President Obama's proposal for limited military action—including strikes of limited duration and limited scope.

The resolution plainly states there may be no U.S. military boots on the ground. America's intention, as specified in the resolution, is not to engage in an open-ended conflict or invasion. Nor is it the Commander in Chief's intention to commit ground troops to this conflict or to effect regime change. Rather, the Senate will be voting to uphold the century-long international consensus that chemical weapons have no place on the battlefield and certainly no place in attacking innocent civilians. This standard demands any government—a dictator or any other government—that has used chemical weapons to be held accountable.

Some may disagree with my conclusions. I don't expect everyone to agree with the statement I am giving here today, as is anyone's right, but this is my firm conviction.

Today, many Americans say that these atrocities are none of our business, that they are not our concern. I disagree. Anytime the powerful turn such weapons of terror and destruction against the powerless it is our business.

The weapons in question are categorically different. Chemical weapons, we know, can kill not just dozens or hundreds of people but tens of thousands of innocents in a single attack—tens of thousands. These weapons don't just pose a threat to the Syrian people or to our allies in the region; they pose a threat to every one of us, every American, and, in particular, every member of the U.S. Armed Forces.

If we allow Asad's use of chemical weapons to go unchecked and unanswered, hostile forces around the world will also assume that these terrible tactics of demons such as Asad are permissible, that they are OK. That America cannot allow. That is why the massacres in Syria are our business and our concern, both as humans and as Americans. America's willingness to stand for what is right should not end at its borders.

Our intervention on behalf of those in danger hasn't always been popular. Look back at history. There has always been part of our society that prefers isolation. Look prior to World War I. Look prior to World War II. Some prefer isolation. That is the easy thing to do. But sitting on the sidelines isn't what made the United States of America the greatest Nation in the world in years past and, yes, today, and sitting on the sidelines won't make us a better Nation tomorrow.

As America faces yet another crisis of conscience, another opportunity to intervene on behalf of humanity, my mind returns to that turning point in the world's history when the United States of America faced down an evil regime that murdered millions of innocent citizens. Millions of civilians and prisoners of war were murdered by gas in Nazi death camps—Belsen, Treblinka, Auschwitz. Never again, swore the world. Never again would we permit the use of these poisonous weapons of war.

Fourteen blocks from here, down Constitution Avenue, is the Holocaust Museum. We walk in there and see a quote on the wall from Dante's famous ''Inferno.'' Here is what it says: ''The hottest places in hell are reserved for those who, in times of great moral crisis, maintain their neutrality.'' I repeat: ''The hottest places in hell are reserved for those who, in times of great moral crisis, maintain their neutrality.'' I have thought about those words very often—and very often lately—as I have considered whether America should take action to avert further atrocities in Syria.

In Europe, in World War II, far too many were neutral. Far too many around the world were neutral. Far too many in America were neutral, and in Europe, in World War II. Six million

Jews and tens of thousands of gypsies, disabled people, gay people, and political dissidents were murdered. Never again.

Now we are faced with that choice again. Some say it is not our fight. Some say Syria is too far away. Some say it is not in our security interest. Russia, China, Britain, France, Germany, Italy, and the United States—we should all remember our history. There were 1.2 million casualties in World War I from these poisons.

We should remember our history. Rabbi Hillel, a respected and famous scholar, said more than 2,000 years ago: ''If I care only for myself, what am I? If not now, when?''

I, HARRY REID, say: If not now, when?

I believe America must set the example for the rest of the world. If America must once again lead—as we have before and we will again—to set an example for the world, so be it. This is America. It is who we are as a country. That is what we do as a country. That is where we stand as a country. That is the American tradition of which I am proud and a tradition which I have faith will continue.

We are the United States of America.

ORDER OF PROCEDURE

Mr. REID. Mr. President, there is an order outstanding. I ask unanimous consent that the order until 5 o'clock today be modified on the motion to proceed, with the other aspects of the order remaining in place.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the Senate will be in a period of debate on the motion to proceed to S.J. Res. 21 until 5 p.m., with Senators permitted to speak for up to 10 minutes each.

The Senator from Indiana.

Mr. COATS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to speak to the issues the majority leader just addressed. I don't anticipate speaking for more than 12 to 15 minutes. I know the minority leader is delayed in being able to be here. I would be happy to defer to him when he arrives or I would be happy to defer to someone coming back to speak on the business of the day.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. COATS. Mr. President, President Obama will finally make his case to the American people tomorrow, explaining why he wants to take military action against Syria. His explanation is long overdue.

I think I have a pretty good idea of what I expect he will say. First, he will explain that we have compelling evidence that it was Asad himself who used long-banned chemical weapons to murder his own people. This is not seriously contested. Neither I nor perhaps I think any of my colleagues here dispute these sad facts. It has been well documented by our intelligence sources. As a member of that committee, I have had access to those sources, and I don't doubt the conclusion of the President and others that Asad is responsible for this attack.

The President will also most likely explain that such a horrendous violation of international norms deserves a worldwide response of condemnation. Who could possibly look at those standards and those rooms full of dead children and not agree that the perpetrators have to face consequences for their crimes?

The President will also surely discuss the issue of credibility. He is likely to maintain, as he did recently in Stockholm, that it is not his own credibility at stake, nor even American credibility, but the credibility of the international community that will be harmed by inaction.

I agree with those who say the President's credibility and our Nation's credibility are linked. They are. However, with his now notorious and, I believe, ill-considered ''red line'' comment, President Obama has forced us to debate a military attack in yet another Middle Eastern country. Unfortunately, it appears that the purpose of this military attack first and foremost is perhaps to defend his own credibility. I am certain that if the President had not drawn his red line, we would not be having this discussion. In that case, Asad's use of such weapons would be roundly condemned as yet another example of his horrendous brutality, but we would be no more eager to engage militarily in his civil war than we have been as the other 100,000 Syrian people were being slaughtered by more conventional means.

Make no mistake—it is the credibility issue that has brought us to this pass, and the credibility issue is of President Obama's own making—his and his alone.

So tomorrow evening the President will need to explain to the American public exactly what will be achieved by this limited, focused attack, as described by the administration, beyond simply a token punishment for a horrendous crime in defense of his credibility. The President has said the proposed limited attack is to be a ''shot across the bow.'' His Secretary of State, Secretary Kerry, has said it is going to be unbelievably small. We need to know what the plan is, and will be, should President Asad be undeterred by this unbelievably small, shot-across-the-bow attack. What if he isn't? What then? What do we do next? The President needs to explain that.

We need to know how this escalation is likely to influence extremist radical fighters now active in Syria—extremist radical fighters. There is not a line between good guys and bad guys here. There is the infiltration of Al Qaeda, al-Nusra, and other terrorist organizations and individuals with those seeking to overturn Asad. So it is not clear just how Syria will turn out should Asad be deposed. I don't think these extremist fighters will be overly concerned with an ''unbelievably small, shot across the bow'' response by the United States.

What will Hezbollah and Hamas and Al Qaeda affiliate fighters do when this ''show of force'' is over? What is the President's plan of action if the chemical weapons fall into the hands of these anti-American jihadists? And how about the always-threatened spillover of the Syria conflict into Lebanon or Turkey or Jordan? Will an attack intended to slap Asad's wrist while defending President Obama's credibility make expansion of the conflict more likely or less likely? Most importantly, the President needs to explain to the American people more thoroughly exactly how America's national security and best interests will be served by this response.

The President, in my opinion, must also address additional concerns that are widely—almost universally—shared by the American people. We all know that taking America to war without support from the people is the surest path to disaster. I suggest this must be avoided, and the President is going to have to make his case as to how to avoid that.

Over this last week I visited with Hoosiers from across Indiana to gather their input. Through these visits, as well as calls and e-mails by the thousands, the vast majority—shockingly, the majority of Hoosiers I have heard from are opposed to U.S. military engagement in Syria. As all conscientious lawmakers, I know I have to balance the views of my constituents with my own judgment on how best to represent their interests and the interests of our country.

In this case, I must first ask myself, what do the people back home in my State know that many of the rest of us here in Washington perhaps do not, or at least have expressed?

First, the people back home know that America has been at war in far-off lands for more than a decade—12 years on. They have seen long repeated deployments of their loved ones, and they have seen the body bags come home. They are aware of sacrifices that have been made in the name of protecting our interests, but they are less aware of positive results of those sacrifices.

They see Iraq descending again into conflict as its own citizens continue to slaughter one another because of different interpretations of the Koran or different political motivations or just pure outright quests for power. They see a corrupt government there that authorizes overflights of Russian aircraft bringing modern weapons to Syria to fuel a similar conflict.

Hoosiers see an Afghanistan so deeply corrupt and ungrateful to the United States that the current regime tries to extort huge ransom payments simply

to permit us to remove equipment and personnel from that sorry country. They do not see meaningful progress toward a democratic, stable, and humane government that was to be the objective of American sacrifice of blood and treasure. They do not see how our 12 years of effort have contributed to our own national security interests.

Hoosiers look at the spiraling disaster in Egypt, where the choices have been an extremist, deeply anti-American Islamic radicalism or a brutal and undemocratic military dictatorship. both benefiting from billions of American taxpayer dollars spent on weapons or lining uniform pockets. In the meantime, fellow Christians are being killed in their churches.

Simply put, the people of Indiana do not see that American policy and action have attained meaningful results in the Middle East. Instead, they see a region of continuing and increasing violence, chaos, and disintegration. They are war weary and they are discouraged after more than a decade of wars that have not produced the desired outcomes.

What they do not see is an articulate response. They do not know what our regional strategy is in the Middle East because no one is explaining it, much less pursuing it. They cannot measure progress because they do not know the destination. And they cannot evaluate this latest proposal for a fourth military engagement in the Middle East because they cannot see how it contributes to our own security here at home.

More importantly, they worry that a focused, limited attack on Syria will end up being something else entirely because so little thought has been devoted to potential unintended consequences. Yes, they are war weary, but the American people are also war wise.

In addition to the above unanswered questions, for me, one of the most important questions is how this proposed limited strike will affect Iran's perception of our resolve and our ability to prevent that country from acquiring nuclear weapons capability. It is not so much what we do or how we do it but how Iran perceives the action we take. This may be the most significant question of all because, unlike Syria, Iran poses threats to our core national security interests.

Part of the administration's argument is that to do nothing would embolden the Iranian regime as they pursue their own weapons-of-mass-destruction programs. But I think we have to raise the question, is that really so, or is it, perhaps, the reverse? Will a limited punitive attack discourage the mullahs in Iran because of some degree of destruction—remember, unbelievably small—or will it actually encourage the Iranians because there is no followup option or broader strategic context informing our policy? If an attack is ineffective in altering Asad's behavior or fortune, will it not actually encourage Iran in pursuing its own weapons program? I have not heard the administration address this question.

Also, will a fourth military engagement in the Middle East make it harder to assemble popular and political support for action should Iran's behavior make that necessary? My constant fear here during the past several years, as I have been engaged on the Iranian issue of the pursuit of nuclear weapons, has been that our country will be too militarily, politically, and economically exhausted to confront the real strategic enemy when our core interests require it. I fear a Syria attack will make this problem even more difficult. To my knowledge, no one has yet to address this question within the administration, which President Obama, like the previous three Presidents, has declared a nuclear-weapons-capable Iran to be ''unacceptable.''

I think this is a critical question we must have to ask ourselves. For all of those who are saying: We will change the perception of Iran to the point where they will change their behavior in the pursuit of nuclear weapons by a, quote, unbelievably small shot across the bow or a military response that could lead us into further conflict in the Middle East—I think this undermines our credibility. I think the question has to be asked: Is the reverse going to happen as a consequence of all of this?

This is a deeply historic and profound moment for our Nation. It carries an importance that goes well beyond Syria or even the Middle East. This debate carries important consequences for the relationship between the executive and legislative branches of our government.

To refuse the Commander in Chief war-making authorities when he has asked for them is not a decision any of us can take lightly.

We must all balance the views of the people we represent—even when they have been nearly unanimous—with other elements, such as the abstract, unknowable geostrategic factors that could carry profound consequences not just for this year or next year, for this generation, but for many generations; and such as the compelling moral arguments that resonate with special strength in our unique Nation guided from birth by moral principles; and now even the constitutional challenges that could affect the delicate balance we have maintained for two centuries.

I will weigh all I have said before I announce how I intend to vote on the resolution before us. I will defer to the President's request to address the Nation. In my opinion, consequential actions proposed by the President need to be clarified and numerous questions need to be answered before we grant the authority to the President to engage America in yet another Middle East conflict.

With that, I yield the floor and suggest the absence of a quorum.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. NELSON. 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. NELSON. Mr. President, I wish to address the subject of Syria.

First of all, I wish to commend to anyone who is listening to my voice to view the videos the intelligence community has released. They came from social media. There are 13 videos that came from a body of in excess of 100 videos, but they show the horror of what happens to the human body with an attack by a weapon of mass destruction—in this case, chemical weapons, a gas called sarin.

It is my hope the President, when he speaks to the Nation on Tuesday, will show clips of those videos because I think very few Americans have seen the extent of those videos, even though they have been shown on some cable shows in some limited amounts. They could see the range of why, almost a century ago, in 1925, the nations of the world came together in a treaty after the use of chemical weapons in World War I. This treaty banned the use of chemical weapons anywhere, any time, including in war, because of the horrific nature their use causes. In the 1990s this was subsequently reaffirmed in a convention or some kind of conclave which the nations of the world—I believe in excess of 180 nations—signed banning the use of chemical weapons.

If you watch the videos, you will see why. You will see what happens to innocent human beings as they struggle for life before the throes of death overtake them. You will see this on the videos. Of course, parents may wish to use discretion because it is going to make a lasting impression. You will see how the body starts to shut down by the nerves being attacked.

Interestingly, for the first time in a CBS interview today, President Asad of Syria has said, has admitted, today, that Syria has chemical weapons. Up to this point that was denied. No wonder he would want to deny, because when you see what happens in the use of them and what it does to the human nervous system—and I don't wish to be graphic, because I want anybody listening to what I am saying to watch them. I hope the President will show them Tuesday night, to see how the human body convulses when it attacks the nervous system—the convulsions, the twitching, what happens to the face, the respiratory system, and all of the evidence that comes from that.

The American people need to know what we are dealing with, not only in Syria but in other nations that possess chemical weapons. This is not only sarin, which was the gas used here, but also mustard gas and a toxin called VX that directly attacks the nervous system. It does not have to be inhaled,

like mustard gas or sarin, to do its evil deed. Instead, VX can be absorbed through the skin.

If the American people understand the consequences of the use of this, they will understand why it is classified as a weapon of mass destruction, along with biological weapons of mass destruction introducing some plague among a community of innocents and, of course, the weapon of mass destruction that most everybody recognizes, the nuclear weapon.

There are three weapons of mass destruction: chemical, biological, and nuclear. This is why, in the family of civilized nations, we have said their use is so abhorrent that civilized humans say they should be banned. But they weren't. They were used extensively on August 21.

Before I give the unclassified evidence, I wish to point out that maybe there is a little opening on the occasion of the Russian Foreign Minister today, since our Secretary of State, almost in an offhanded comment a few days ago, said it would certainly be a game changer if he, Asad, would allow the international community to come in and take control of his Syrian chemical weapons. The Russian Foreign Minister today picked that up. Supposedly there is a comment by an official out of Syria who says that is worth looking into. I can't speak to the authenticity of that comment. I have heard it was said.

Whatever it is, of course, Asad is the decisionmaker and it is ultimately going to come down on him. But in the meantime, what the United States ought to do—and the Congress of the United States ought to authorize what the President of the United States has requested, that the Congress back him in giving him the authority to use a limited, short duration retaliation in degrading Asad's capability of utilizing these weapons in the future.

If Congress will give the President that authority, it may well be the additional incentive for the ultimate decisionmaker, President Asad, to do what the Russian Foreign Minister has suggested. That would be a good thing.

In the meantime, they are going to be debating this and we are going to be put to the question: Do we support the President in this time of peril?

Let us look at the facts. I think when you see the videos, clearly, most every reasonable human being is going to conclude chemical weapons were used on innocents in the Damascus suburbs on the night of August 21.

The question then, of course, is, is there a chain of custody to show in fact they came from the Syrian army? There is an unclassified body of evidence that clearly shows, to put it in the speak of the intelligence community, we have high confidence. That means it happened.

How did that happen? The assessment is the Syrian chemical weapons personnel, who are associated with the chemical weapons part of the Syrian command, were preparing chemical munitions prior to the attack. This is all unclassified. There were streams of data of human signals and geospatial intelligence that revealed regime activities that were associated with the preparations for that chemical weapons attack. Syria chemical weapons personnel, we know, were operating in the Damascus suburb from August 18 all the way through August 21. That was the suburb that was attacked. Multiple streams of intelligence indicate the Syrian army executed the rocket and artillery attack against those suburbs in the early morning hours of August 21. We have satellite detections that corroborate those attacks from a regime-controlled neighborhood to where the attacks landed. At the same time, social media reports started exploding about a chemical attack in the Damascus suburbs. Those social media reports started coming at 2:30 in the morning. Three hospitals in Damascus received approximately 3,600 patients displaying the symptoms of a nerve agent exposure, and they received them in less than 3 hours on the morning of August 21.

As I said earlier, there have been over 100 videos attributed to the attack. This has been distilled down into 13 videos, many of them showing large numbers of bodies exhibiting the physical signs of nerve agent exposure. Any Member of the Senate will have access to the classified information that shows the Syrian opposition does not have the capability to fabricate those videos or the physical symptoms verified by the medical personnel.

So when we put all of this together, with past Syrian practice and some of the small-scale attacks they have done previously, the conclusion is obvious: The Syrian regime of Bashar Asad was willing and directed the attack on August 21.

To this Senator, who has had the privilege of seeing and hearing classified information—and I have visited with President Asad three times, the last time being 6 years ago where the two of us had a sharp exchange over what was happening in Lebanon and the fact he was harboring Hamas and Hezbollah, which of course he denied—the conclusion is obvious: There is a substantial body of information that corroborates that the Syrian Government was responsible for the chemical weapons attack on August 21.

There is additional information for the Senators to see, but the question is, Are we going to agree to the President's request that we authorize him to attack? If we don't, where does that leave the President on any kind of negotiations in the future? If the President decides to go ahead and attack, we automatically give to the opponents in these countries—especially President Asad and North Korea and Iran—the obvious scenario that the American people are so divided that they won't support the President. So if he were to decide to attack—knowing it is his responsibility to provide for the national security, and he has sworn to provide for that national security—we will look so divided at that point, whatever the scenario is for the future.

What about the mindset of other people who want to do harm to the United States? Does it give additional license to North Korea if we were to do nothing? North Korea is sitting on a huge stockpile of chemical weapons, not to mention their nuclear weapons. What about Iran? We are very concerned as they continue to energize weapons material and march down the road perhaps to building a nuclear weapon. What kind of message does it send to Iran? Just game that out. If Iran had a nuclear weapon or felt free to use chemical weapons, what would that do to the interests of the United States in that region of the world, not to mention our allies in the region, of which there are many.

So it is clear to this Senator. I will admit I don't know why the President did not keep his own counsel and make the decision without saying he wanted to come to Congress, but he made that decision, and now it is up to us.

Hopefully, there may be some validity to this report coming from the Russian Foreign Minister, but we won't know that for a long while, until, as we say, the proof is in the pudding with Asad turning over control of all the chemical weapons to an international body. In the meantime, are we going to support the President? Clearly, in the interest of the national security of this country and our allies, I think that is a position we must take. I will vote yes on the resolution.

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

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Ms. MIKULSKI. 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.

Ms. MIKULSKI. Mr. President, what is the pending business before the Senate?

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senate is on the motion to proceed to S.J. Res. 21.

Ms. MIKULSKI. Which is?

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Syria resolution.

Ms. MIKULSKI. Mr. President, it is to that ominous resolution that I would like to speak.

Within a few days the Senate will be called upon to vote on whether to give the President of the United States limited authority to use military action in response to Syrian President Asad's use of chemical weapons against his own people. It is an enormous and grave decision. It is the most serious vote I can take.

When a U.S. Senator is called upon to authorize America's use of military action or military might, it calls for the

most sober reflection, the most due diligence analysis of the facts and the compelling need because once you vote to authorize the use of military might, you cannot take it back. It is one of the few votes you can't take back. We can vote on our budget this year, but there will be another vote next year. You can vote to confirm a member of the Cabinet, but they serve at the pleasure of the President. But once you vote to use military might or military action, it is irrevocable, so I take it very seriously.

I say to the men and women of our military that we owe them a tremendous debt of gratitude. I think that should not only be with yellow ribbons, but we also owe it to them to do the due diligence to choose the wisest, most prudent course.

This is what I have done as I have contemplated my vote on the Syria resolution. I went to numerous briefings before Asad used chemical weapons, and I have gone to all of the briefings since then. I participated as a member of the Intelligence Committee in a variety of meetings. I went to a classified House and Senate briefing. I have listened carefully to the President, to the Secretary of State, to the Secretary of Defense, and even had the opportunity to sit with the Vice President of the United States in the Situation Room at the White House to go over this situation and what options are available to the United States of America.

In addition to listening here in Washington, I have also listened to my Marylanders, whether at events or meetings going around the State, whether it has been grocery shopping or just being out in the Maryland community. I have also gotten thousands of e-mails and calls from Maryland constituents, and I want to thank them for their civic engagement. They overwhelmingly oppose military action in Syria. My constituents have spoken loudly and clearly. They don't want a war. They don't want boots on the ground. They don't want an all-in effort. They don't want to use or expend America's talent and treasure on another military expedition. They don't want war, and neither do I.

Yet the use of chemical weapons—a weapon of mass destruction—grim and ghoulish, mandates a response. The use of chemical weapons flies against all international law and international norms. It is an act that should have consequences or I believe it surely will happen again—in Syria, possibly in Korea, possibly used by Iran.

Since the attack, I have been waiting and hoping for a worldwide reaction because if it is serious enough for the world to be aghast, then it is serious enough for them to respond.

I have been waiting to hear from the 189 countries that are signatories to the Chemical Weapons Convention. I believe if you sign a treaty or a convention, you sign up for the responsibility that comes with that, which means stop proliferation of the weapons you signed against; stop the proliferation of chemical weapons; also, if necessary, to take action if mandated.

I am waiting to hear from the Arab League. I wanted to hear from the Arab League, beyond: Yes, we want Asad to be accountable. I don't know what that means—hold him accountable. What does that mean? Does it mean if we use missiles they will send in Arab men to defend Arab women and children? I have not quite heard that.

I have waited to hear from our allies, and there are a hearty, reliable few who have supported us. Are they going to help support the chemical weapons treaty? Are they going to help support the moderates in the opposition? Have they called for a donor conference on refugees? Hello out there.

Then there is the U.N. Security Council. By the way, I applaud the work of the U.N. weapons inspectors and the U.N.'s work on refugees, but where is the Security Council? People will say: Oh, we can't act unless the Security Council acts. Three times Asad enablers at the U.N., Russia and China, have vetoed every effort to move to a political solution—vetoed three times efforts to move to a political solution. The U.N. seems paralyzed in this effort.

In deciding my vote, I had to be sure that chemical weapons were used by the Asad regime. I was 1 of 19 Senators who voted against going to war in Iraq. I did vote after 9/11 to use lethal action against the Taliban, but when it came to the Iraq war, as a member of the Intelligence Committee I had reviewed these briefs and I did not believe Saddam Hussein had nuclear weapons so I voted no. I was right.

This time is different because, after extensive briefings and the evidence that has been outlined to members of the Intelligence Committee, I am satisfied that, indeed, chemical weapons were used in Syria and I am satisfied the Asad regime gave the order to do so.

There are those who say to me: Senator BARB, aren't you concerned about the risks and the retaliations if we take action? You bet I am. I worry about that. I worry about my own country. I worry about our own military. I worry about treasured allies such as Jordan, Israel, Turkey. But I also worry about the risk of doing nothing because, as I weigh this, I believe the risk and retaliatory possibilities are the same even if we do not act because if they do not use them in retaliation against us there is a very good chance that if we leave it unresponded to, they will use them anyway. There is no guarantee that by doing nothing the bad guys, who have chemical weapons, will do nothing. In fact, I fear that Asad, Iran, and North Korea will be further emboldened.

Last, I had to review the President's resolution that is pending before us, that came out of the Foreign Relations Committee, modified, and the President's plan. The President's plan is very straightforward, his proposal is very straightforward, a targeted limited attack. His purpose is to deter and to degrade; to deter Asad from using those weapons again and to degrade Asad's capability and capacity to use them.

I also listened to the President's promise—and I take him at his word—that any action would not be boots on the ground; that it is not an extended air campaign; that it is not another Iraq or Afghanistan; that we are not in it to try to do regime change. That must come from the Syrian opposition themselves, and I hope others help do that. It is meant to deter the use of chemical weapons and to degrade Asad's capability.

I believe the President's plan is the best response to protect U.S. security interests in the region and to show commitment to our common security interests with allies such as Turkey, Jordan, and Israel. Therefore, after great reflection and as much due diligence as I could do, I want to announce today to my colleagues, and most of all to the people of Maryland who supported me, that I will support the President's request for a targeted, limited military action against the Syrian President Bashar Asad's regime in response to the horrific, grim, and ghoulish use of chemical weapons.

Let me be clear: I have no grand hopes or illusions about what this strike will do. I do not believe this strike will stop Syria's brutal civil war. I do not believe this strike will stop Asad from being a ruthless, brutal dictator. I do not believe a strike will eliminate all of his chemical weapons. But I do believe it will deter and degrade his capability to strike again, and I do believe when you sign up for a convention to ban the use of chemical weapons, the United States of America acts in accordance with its responsibility.

Syria is one of the toughest foreign policy issues on which we have focused; there are not many good options. Yet I believe the President's plan is the best way and, as of this moment, the only way forward. He has my support.

In today's late-breaking news, I understand Russia has now said: Oh, let's put these weapons under international control. Where were the Russians during the U.N. Security Council meetings on those three other occasions? Is this another tactic for delay? Is this just another tactic to enable Asad to have more time to focus?

I remain skeptical, but I will leave that to the President to analyze the Russians' intent about what their followthrough is on that. Today is not to mandate the strike. My vote does not mandate a strike. But my vote is to say: Mr. President, you are the Commander in Chief. We can only have one at a time. You analyze the situation and if you think it is necessary to protect the security of the United States of America and to fulfill our responsibilities under the conventions we

have signed on chemical weapons, you have my support to act in what you think is the best way and in our best interests.

I look forward to additional debate with my colleagues and also further in this debate, in coming to closure, hopefully this week.

I yield the floor.

I note 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. DURBIN. 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. DURBIN. Mr. President, I rise today to discuss the situation in Syria and the historic choice facing this Congress and America. I have been deeply concerned about the situation in Syria since March of 2011, when thousands of Syrians from all backgrounds peacefully protested for a change in the politics and the economy of their country. I think many of us believed these peaceful protests would lead to the end of an autocratic Asad regime, just as other despots have fallen in other parts of the Arab world.

Yet President Bashar al-Asad, like his father before him, Hafez al-Asad, instead responded with horrific violence to suppress the aspirations of his own people. With the disturbing help of Russia, Hezbollah, and Iran, Asad has managed to hang on to power and turn his country into a humanitarian nightmare.

I met with the Russian Ambassador to the United States here in my office in Washington on this issue. I visited the refugee camps along the Turkish border. I talked with the moderate Syrian opposition in Istanbul. I discussed this situation with the Turkish President, Mr. Gul, and their Foreign Minister, Davutoglu, and met with many Chicago-area Syrian Americans.

I hoped diplomatic and economic pressure would bring an end to the mayhem and human suffering in Syria. I know the American people feel a responsibility for those overseas in need and those who are struggling to find freedom. But I also know something else about the people of my State of Illinois, and I believe of this country: They are weary of war.

Then came the August 21 chemical attack in the suburbs of Damascus in the middle of the night. At that moment an important challenge was thrown down to the international community. That is not in any way to diminish the violence that has taken place in Syria over the last several years. Over 100,000 died in that violence.

But when it comes to the use of chemical weapons, the world made a decision almost 100 years ago about their use—even in war. How did we reach this international consensus on this horrible weapon? We saw firsthand what it could do. The large-scale use of chemical weapons in World War I killed many and left many wounded and disabled.

Those who have some memory of this war—either from a history class or having spoken to someone who served there—understand what it meant. These photos can't do justice to the devastation of chemical weapons and poison gas, but this is a German gas attack on the Eastern Front in World War I. We can see that as the gas billowed, the victims were anyone who happened to be in its wake.

This is also a photograph of British troops from World War I who were subjected to the poison gas, the chemical weapon of the day, and blinded during the battle of Estaire in 1918. These photos show just a snapshot of the use of poison gases which don't reach the level of virulence of those used today. Yet maybe even more poignant are the audio recordings of the actual former World War I British soldiers maintained by the BBC for generations so the experience would not be forgotten.

This is one excerpt of British troops struggling to cope with the effects of chemical warfare:

> Propped up against a wall was a dozen men—all gassed—their colours were black, green and blue, tongues hanging out and eyes staring—one or two were dead and others beyond human aid, some were coughing up green froth from their lungs—as we advanced we passed many more men lying in the ditches and gutterways—shells were bursting all around.

This BBC report went on to say:

> My Respirator fell to pieces with the continual removal and readjustment—the gas closed my eyes and filled them with matter and I could not see. I was left lying in the trench with one other gassed man and various wounded beings and corpses and forced to lie and spit, cough and gasp the whole of the day in that trench.

Another soldier recorded by the BBC said:

> . . . the faces of our lads who lay in the open changed colour and presented a gruesome spectacle. Their faces and hands gradually assumed a blue and green color and their buttons and metal fittings on their uniform were all discoloured. Many lay there with their legs drawn up and clutching their throats.

As a result of the horrors of World War I, in 1925 the Geneva Protocol prohibited the use of chemical and biological weapons in war. It was drawn up and signed at a conference held in Geneva under the auspices of the League of Nations, the precursor of the United Nations. This happened in June of 1925, and it became a force of law in February of 1928. Syria was a signatory to this agreement.

Let me read the opening of this protocol. It is even relevant today.

> Whereas the use in war of asphyxiating, poisonous or other gases, and of all analogous liquids, materials or devices, has been justly condemned by the general opinion of the civilized world; and
>
> Whereas the prohibition of such use has been declared in Treaties to which the majority of Powers of the world are Parties; and
>
> To the end that this prohibition shall be universally accepted as a part of International Law, binding alike the conscience and the practice of nations.

What the world was saying in 1925 was clear: These chemical weapons would never, ever be accepted in the civilized world. This message was reaffirmed by the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling, and Use of Chemical Weapons, which went into effect in 1997 and to which almost every country in the world has signed—almost every country. Those who have not signed: Angola, Egypt, North Korea, South Sudan, and Syria.

While not completely taken off the world's battlefields—notably in the case of Iraq, which used poison gas against Iran and its own Kurdish people in the 1980s—the global prohibition against using chemical weapons has been largely upheld for almost a century, that is, until last month in Damascus, Syria. Syria has one of the largest stockpiles of chemical weapons in the world.

At our hearing last week, I asked General Dempsey whether the reports which we have from the French were accurate. They reported the Syrians now have almost 1,000 tons of chemical agents and hundreds of tons of the deadly gas sarin, which has been detected in the pathological investigation of those who were victims on August 21 in Damascus, Syria.

Despite all international warnings not to do so—the Syrian Government is literally a superpower when it comes to chemical weapons and has an arsenal on such a large scale—on August 21, in the desperation of war, Bashar Asad unleashed these chemical weapons in his own city on his own people.

These are horrible pictures of what happened as a result of that attack. I have seen worse. One room of children stacked like cordwood—victims of these chemical weapons. We don't believe it was the first time he has used them, and his father used them before him. But it is the largest scale we have ever seen of the use of chemical weapons by Asad in Syria.

Syria has crossed the line the civilized world said must never be crossed. Not only has the community of nations agreed that such weapons are never to be used but other regimes with weapons of mass destruction or plans for such weapons—including North Korea and Iran—are undoubtedly watching to see what the world will do now.

Now that Bashar Asad has used chemical weapons in Syria, now that the world has reported it, now that the photos are there for the world to see, and now that the pathological investigations are completed, what will the world do? Ideally there is a place to resolve it—the U.N. Security Council. But, sadly, both Russia and China have said they will veto not only any effort

to hold Asad to account, they have literally vetoed efforts to even pass resolutions condemning the use of chemical weapons without specificity in Syria.

Russia's behavior is incredible and particularly perverse given the thousands of Russian soldiers who were victims of chemical weapon attacks in World War I. In May 1915 alone, Russian soldiers on the Eastern Front suffered 9,000 casualties—1,000 of them fatalities—as a result of German chemical weapons.

Today I was in the airport in Chicago, and the news was flashing about an overture made by President Putin to try to put an end to this controversy. I, of course, salute and applaud any effort to resolve this the right way and verifiable way, and to do it with dispatch.

What I understand this proposal to be is that the Syrians will somehow destroy their cache of chemical weapons and, of course, forswear never to use them. That would be a good opportunity, but it will be a difficult outcome because investigating with a third party, such as the United Nations, verifying where these weapons are, removing them from Syria in the midst of a civil war, is particularly challenging. If there is a way to do this diplomatically, safely, and to do it in a fashion where we can be certain this type of atrocity will not occur again, we absolutely have a responsibility to pursue it.

I don't understand how Russia and China can be signatories to the 1925 Geneva Protocols and the Convention on the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons, and then turn around and protect Syria in the Security Council of the United Nations. If there is one international agency that should be involved in any major diplomatic effort to resolve this peacefully, it should be the United Nations.

We should call on Mr. Putin to step forward with the leaders in China and say they will work with the Security Council to execute any diplomatic policy that can avoid further military confrontation. Until then, make no mistake, President Putin's proposal today, and the activities we are seeing and hearing from Syria, are a direct result of President Obama's leadership. He has stepped up—even though it is an unpopular position with some in this country—and said we cannot ignore this redline created by the world when it came to chemical weapons. It is time for others to stand and join us in stopping the advancement and use of chemical weapons once and for all.

I have been listening to this Syria debate, and I cannot say how many times I have harkened back to that time 12 years ago when we debated entering the war in Iraq. It was another one of those votes that come along in the course of a congressional career that keeps you awake at night.

I was serving on the Intelligence Committee in the Senate. I sat through hour after hour of hearings about the suspected weapons of mass destruction in Iraq, but it never came together in a credible way as far as I was concerned. There was such a rush to war 12 years ago. Twenty-three of us voted no—22 Democrats and 1 Republican. I can recall the scene. It was late at night, after midnight, right here in the well of the Senate when three of us were left. It was Kent Conrad of North Dakota and, of course, from Minnesota our friend, the late Senator who served with so much distinction and spoke out so many times on issues of morals and ethics. We cast the vote no and waited in this empty Chamber.

I thought about that vote so many times. I think it was the right vote to vote no, but there comes a moment in history when we have to stand as civilized nations and say to those who are willing to ignore the rules and to break the rules that a line cannot be crossed. I hope we can get that done, and not just for the memory of Senator Wellstone and Senator Conrad, but in memory of so many who served here and faced these challenges in the past in our history. I hope we can find a diplomatic solution that will avoid any military use, but I know the reason we have reached this point in diplomacy with this Putin overture has more to do with the President being determined to stand for a matter of principle than almost anything else. We have to continue to make it clear that we find it unacceptable to use these chemical weapons. We paid a bitter price for the war in Iraq as a nation when we were misled as to weapons of mass destruction.

I have seen the evidence in briefings of this deadly attack in Damascus. I think the evidence is overwhelming and convincing. I think at this point many Americans are reluctant to even consider the use of military force. So we sat down and drew up a resolution in the Senate Foreign Relations Committee last week. There are strict limitations within this resolution about the President's authority and power. He has 60 days to execute a military strategy—if nothing else intervenes, 60 days. He can extend it 30 days, but even Congress can object to that if it wishes. He can use military weapons but only for the purposes specified. No troops on the ground. No troops in combat operations. As Senator MCCAIN said yesterday, that will be part of the law. The President has already said that is his standard as well. So for those who are worried about mission creep and where this might lead us, if, God forbid, we are faced with that possibility, this resolution strictly limits what the President can do.

It was about 8 days ago that I got a phone call I will never forget at my home in Springfield late on a Sunday night from the President himself. We talked for about half an hour. We talked about a lot of things because we go back a long way. He talked to me about his thought process and what he is taking under consideration in trying to lead the world in this response to chemical weapons.

I was one of the early supporters of this President. I believe in him. I believe in his values. I believe he has been honest with me and with the American people about the situation we face. I know the options are not good. They never are under these circumstances. But I also know that if we turn our backs on this situation, there will be some dictator in Iran or North Korea who will be emboldened to do even more—to perhaps use not just chemical weapons but even nuclear weapons. There comes a point when we have to take a stand.

I understand when the people I represent across Illinois have said to me so many times in the last week: Why is it always the United States? Why is it that we have to be involved in this so many times? Why do we have to be the policemen to the world?

Well, there is a basic answer to that. I would like to believe we have values the rest of the world looks up to. Oh, we have stumbled in our own history, and we will continue to do so, but we continue to fight for those basic values all around the world.

Secondly, if someone is in trouble in their country somewhere in the world and they have one 9–1–1 call to make, they pray to God the United States will answer because we have the best military in the world. We have responded to challenges around the world throughout history, and seldom do we leave a residual power base behind. We go in, we do the job, we come home. That is something we can't say for a lot of nations. It is an awesome responsibility.

I think the President is doing the right thing. I think his appeal to the leaders around the world and his appeal to the American people is consistent with our values as a nation.

The President doesn't come quickly to war. He is a person who understands, as I do, the heavy price that has to be paid, and he understands there are moments when a leader—a commander in chief, a person with the responsibility of protecting his nation in a dangerous world—has to step forth and lead. If the United States did not take this onerous leadership role, I doubt anyone else would have.

I take very seriously the President's promise that he won't be putting boots on the ground in Syria. I have been to too many funerals and visited too many disabled veterans to ever want to see us do that again, except when it is absolutely necessary for America's survival.

I think what we are doing this week in the Senate is a step in the right direction, and I believe it is a step that can move us toward a safer world. If we can find, because of the President's leadership, a diplomatic response that avoids further military conflict but keeps us safe from these deadly chemical weapons, we should pursue it.

Mr. President, I yield the floor, and I suggest the absence of a quorum.

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

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Connecticut.

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

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

Mr. MURPHY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to speak as in morning business.

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

GUN VIOLENCE

Mr. MURPHY. Mr. President, almost all of this week on the floor of the Senate will be dedicated to one of the most serious, if not the most serious, matters this body ever considers—that of war and peace and the question of whether we engage American military assets in conflicts across the globe. I am sure I will be back to the floor later this week to speak on that weighty matter. I appreciate the very passionate remarks of the Senator from Illinois on this subject.

Almost every week over the last several months when the Senate has been in session, I have come to the floor to talk about another subject of life-and-death consequence; that is, the growing number of individuals across this country who have been killed by guns. We are going to debate life and death on the Senate floor this week as we try to figure out what the course of American intervention may or may not be in a place on the other side of the Earth in which far too many innocent people, little babies and adults alike, are being killed. We also need to debate what we are going to do to prevent the fact that babies and teenagers and adults right here in the United States of America are being killed. So I have brought this poster down—or a variant of it—a couple of times a month every single month since about April of this year, and it shows a number. The number is a pretty simple number. It represents the number of people in the United States who have been killed by guns since December 14.

As we get further away from that date, maybe people forget what it is, but in Connecticut we will never, ever forget what that date means. December 14 is the date on which 20 little 6- and 7-year-old boys and girls were killed inside Sandy Hook Elementary School, along with 6 teachers and professionals who protected them, as well as the gunman and his mother. Twenty-eight people in all were killed that day. It has lit a spark under the American consciousness about this issue, which has frankly been lingering for far too long.

Twenty-eight people died in Newtown on December 14, but every day across this country, on average, 30 people die due to homicide from guns. So I am back here today to try to tell the stories of just a handful of the 7,907 people who have been killed at the hands of gun violence since December 14. When I started back in April, I think this number was somewhere around 4,000. It has marched upward and almost doubled since then.

This has been a really bad summer in Connecticut. For instance, in places such as New Haven and Hartford and Bridgeport, we thought we were making some real progress when it came to the number of homicides by guns. This summer, unfortunately, we saw far too many, people such as Devaante Jackson, 18 years old, who was killed on August 15 of this year in New Haven. He was killed in a driveby shooting while simply standing on a sidewalk just after 8 o'clock on the evening of August 15. A friend of Devaante's said:

> I don't understand why somebody would do this to him. He's real good. I never knew he had any problems with anybody because he always (got) along with everybody.

Another friend said:

> He wasn't a bad kid; he was just in the wrong spot at the wrong time . . . everybody should know . . . stop the violence, put the guns down.

A few days later in Hartford, at the same nightclub, in two separate incidents, two young men—Miguel Delgado, age 21, and Brian Simpe, age 19—were killed. Disputes started in the nightclub and spilled out onto the streets of Hartford—two different disputes, two different incidents, and both of these boys were killed.

Brian was 19 years old. He graduated from Manchester High School and attended Manchester Community College. He worked at ShopRite in order to make enough money to go to community college. He wanted to start his own business. He was a kid who wanted to do something great with his life. Before he headed out that night, he tweeted, ''Just another summer night out.'' Unfortunately, in places such as Hartford and New Haven and Bridgeport and Baltimore and Chicago and Los Angeles, this is just another summer night out. Too many people are being killed simply as a result of common disputes, this time happening in a nightclub in Hartford.

Domestic violence, as we know, unfortunately, often leads to tragic homicidal incidents. Janice Lesco, from Coventry, CT, died on August 24—just a few weeks ago—from a gunshot wound to the chest. Her husband, who shot her, then committed suicide. Her husband had a well-documented and decade-long history of threats and abuse. Ms. Lesco was a mother and a grandmother. She had lived in Coventry for most of her life.

Luckily, in Connecticut we have an agreement that people who have a history of domestic violence shouldn't get their hands on a gun, but they can if they walk into a gun show or if they buy their gun on the Internet. We can't simply make the decision here that if a person buys a gun online or a person buys a gun at a gun show, they should be stopped from doing so if they have a history of domestic violence.

Frankly, I was struck by this one newspaper article describing one night in New Haven. This is even earlier—on August 11, 2013. It starts by talking about Torrance Dawkins, a 22-year-old Waterbury man who was celebrating his birthday in a New Haven nightclub when he was shot and killed at about 1:30 on August 11.

The article goes on and sort of casually says that later that day New Haven police responded to more gun violence. A local rapper was putting up sheets on an upcoming concert he was going to be holding in town, and he suffered a single gunshot wound to his neck. Davon Goodwin, who was 18 years old, was later that day shot in the thigh on Hamilton Street. And just before 5 p.m. that day, police were called to an area near Dixwell Avenue and found out that Jermaine Adams, 41, had received a gunshot wound to his face. Those last three people miraculously survived. But we can see how casual gun violence can be on a summer Sunday in New Haven, CT. One young man died as a consequence of a dispute at a nightclub, and three other people luckily survived who were shot later in the day.

Every single day in this country—in the United States of America—30 people are dying due to gun violence. Almost 8,000 people have died since the tragedy in Sandy Hook, and this body has done nothing to stop it. We have had commonsense legislation before this Senate that would just say: You know what. If you have a criminal history, you should not be able to buy a gun, no matter where you buy it—at a gun show, from a gun dealer, online.

We have had commonsense bipartisan legislation on the floor saying: You know what. It should be a crime to buy a whole mess-load of guns from a gun store and then go out and intentionally sell them to criminals. We cannot get that passed either.

We even tried to just say: Let's beef up our mental health system to make sure people who have serious mental illnesses get the treatment they need so they do not resort to violence—the very few who do. That was part of the bill we could not get passed.

So I am going to continue to come down to the floor to give voices to these victims, to talk about the real people, the stories behind the dozens of people who are killed every day by guns and the 8,000 people who have been killed since Sandy Hook. We are going to make an important decision this week about whether we are going to commit military assets to the Middle East, and maybe that debate will stretch into next week and the week after. But we should not forget that while people are dying overseas, people are dying due to gun violence right here in the United States, and before it is too late—before another 8,000 people

die from guns in this country—we should do something about it.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

Mr. MENENDEZ. Mr. President, we come to this Chamber as we have many times before—to make one of the most difficult decisions we are tasked to make: the authorization of the use of American military power—this time in Syria, to respond to the horrific attack, including the use of chemical weapons, of August 21 that took the lives of 1,429 Syrians, including at least 426 children.

The world is watching, America is waiting to see what we do in this Chamber in response to the threat the world faces from those who cross the line of human decency and use chemical weapons against anyone, anywhere in the world.

The images of August 21 were sickening and, in my view, the world cannot ignore the inhumanity and horror of what Bashar al-Asad did.

As I have had to say too many times before as a Member of Congress: I do not take the responsibility to authorize military force lightly or make such decisions easily. I voted against the war in Iraq when it was popular, according to the polls, to vote for the war and strongly supported the withdrawal of U.S. troops from Afghanistan. But today I urge my colleagues to support this tightly crafted, clearly focused resolution to give the President authorization to use military force in the face of this horrific crime against humanity.

Yes, there are clearly risks to any action we authorize, but the consequences of inaction—the consequences of standing down from fully upholding the norms of international behavior—are greater and graver still: further humanitarian disaster in Syria, regional instability, the loss of American credibility around the world, an emboldened Iran and North Korea, and the disintegration of international law.

This vote will be among the most difficult any of us will be asked to make. But the American people expect us to make the hard decisions and take the hard votes. They expect us to put aside political differences and personal ideologies, forget partisanship and preconceptions, forget the polls and personal consequences.

This is a moment for a profile in courage—a moment for each of us to do what we know is right—based on what we know is in the best interest of the United States, regardless of the polls or pontifications of political pundits.

To be clear, the authorization Senator CORKER and I seek is for focused action, with a clear understanding that American troops will not be on the ground in combat.

We have worked closely to put politics aside, weigh the facts, search our consciences, and pass a resolution in committee that we believe is in the national security interest of the American people.

I have said before and will say again: This is not a declaration of war but a declaration of our values to the world.

I want to thank Senator CORKER for being a close partner in helping to tailor and focus the language of this resolution so it reflects the will of the committee, the interests of the American people, and gives the President the authority he needs to respond to Syria's use of chemical weapons against its own people.

What we know. What we know is clear, notwithstanding Asad's interview and his denials.

According to the declassified intelligence assessment, we know—with high confidence—that the Syrian Government carried out a chemical weapons attack in the Damascus suburbs on August 21.

We know that the buck stops with Asad—his interview-denials aside. We know that he controls the regime's stockpiles of chemical agents, including mustard, sarin, and VX gas, and has thousands of munitions capable of delivering them, again, under his control.

It is inconceivable—and defies all logic—that he would not know about the preparations and deployment of these horrific weapons.

We know that personnel involved in the program are carefully vetted to ensure loyalty to the regime and the security of the program.

We know that chemical weapons personnel from the Syrian Scientific Studies and Research Center, subordinate to the regime's Ministry of Defense, were operating in the Damascus suburb of 'Adra from Sunday, August 18 until early in the morning on Wednesday August 21 near an area the regime uses to mix chemical weapons including sarin.

Human intelligence, as well as signal and geospatial intelligence have shown regime activity in the preparation of chemicals prior to the attack, including the distribution and use of gas masks.

Some may still be skeptical about Asad's direct involvement, but clearly the buck stops with Asad when it comes to the use of these weapons.

Some may also be skeptical that we have not done enough to allow diplomacy to work, but the fact is we have tried diplomacy. We have gone to the UN on many occasions, and it has only bought Asad more time.

Notwithstanding Russia's belated offer today to take action, which, by the way, only be on the table today specifically because of the threat of the use of force, let us not forget it has been their intransigence that brought us to this point in the first place.

The fact is, on August 28, a week after the attack, Russia blocked a UN Security Council resolution that called ''for all necessary measures'' to be taken, and simply called for any state that used chemical weapons to be held accountable.

On the day of the attack, August 21, Russia blocked a Security Council press statement simply expressing ''concern'' that chemical weapons might have been used.

On August 6, Russia blocked another press statement welcoming the news that a UN investigations team would investigate three sites, and calling for their full and fettered access to those sites.

Russia has also vetoed a Security Council resolution enshrining the June 30 Geneva Communique brokered by Kofi Annan, vetoed a resolution calling for an end to violence in Syria, vetoed a draft resolution endorsing the Arab League's plan of action that would have condemned human rights violations.

They blocked a press statement calling for humanitarian access to the besieged city of Homs, and one calling for Syrian authorities to provide the UN with humanitarian access.

Over the course of the conflict in Syria, the United States Government, specifically the State Department, has met consistently with its close allies and partners, as well as with Syria's neighbors, to help prepare the region to detect, prevent, and respond to potential use or proliferation of chemical weapons.

As Ambassador Power acknowledged in her remarks at the Center for American Progress on September 6, the United States has regularly engaged with the Russians and Iranians to attempt to get them to use their influence to stop the Asad regime from using chemical weapons.

The same day, September 6, the United States and 10 other countries issued a joint statement condemning the Asad regime's use of chemical weapons. They were: Australia, Canada, France, Italy, Japan, the Republic of Korea, Saudi Arabia, Spain, Turkey, and Great Britain. Since then 14 other nations have also signed onto that statement: Albania, Croatia, Denmark, Estonia, Germany, Honduras, Hungary, Kosovo, Latvia, Lithuania, Morocco, Qatar, Romania, and the United Arab Emirates.

It is only the threat by the President, and this resolution, that would drive both Russia and Syria to the negotiating table.

The facts are clear. We have tried diplomacy.

Let us understand that this action is not a choice of force or diplomacy. It is about both.

It is about enforcing international norms that will, at the end of the day, leverage necessary UN action and help bring about a political solution.

For those who want to see UN Security Council action, those who want to

push Syria to sign a chemical weapons agreement and give up their weapons, this resolution is the best path to getting there.

Let me say to my colleagues who believe that the authorization of the use of military force will be nothing more than a pin-pick. This resolution will have clear and verifiable consequences.

It will help keep these weapons in check, degrade Asad's ability to deploy them, and prevent the proliferation of chemical weapons and their use by anyone, anywhere in the world.

The resolution will have clear consequences, but it is also not open-ended.

It appropriately narrows the scope, duration, and breadth of the authority granted to meet Congressional concerns, and the concerns of the American people.

It is tightly tailored to give the President ''necessary and appropriate'' authority to use military force to respond to the use of weapons of mass destruction by the Syrian government; protect the national security interests of the United States and our allies and partners; and degrade Syria's capacity to use such weapons in the future.

It has a requirement for determination that the use of military force is necessary, that appropriate diplomatic and other peaceful means to prevent the deployment and use of chemical weapons by Syria have been used, and that the United States has both a specific military plan to achieve the goal of responding to the use of weapons of mass destruction by the Syrian government and that the use of military force is consistent with the broader goals of U.S. strategy toward Syria, including achieving a negotiated settlement to the conflict, and a limitation that specifies that the resolution ''does not authorize the use of United States Armed Forces on the ground in Syria for the purposes of combat operations'' assuring there will be no ''boots on the ground.''

The authorization would end after 60 days, with the President having the ability to request and certify for another 30 days, and with Congress having an opportunity to pass a resolution of disapproval. It provides for an integrated United States Government strategy for Syria, including a comprehensive review of current and planned U.S. diplomatic, political, economic and military policy towards Syria, and requires a Report to Congress on the status of the military operations. I know my colleagues on both sides will want to offer a range of amendments.

Let me say in conclusion, history has taught us harsh lessons when it comes to the use of chemical weapons.

The images we saw of children lined on the floor on August 21 were not the first images the world has ever seen of the horrors of chemical attacks.

We saw them almost 100 years ago in World War I.

If we do not learn from and live by the lessons of the past, if we fail the test of history then we are destined and doomed to repeat it.

If we allow the use and proliferation of chemical weapons despite the world's horror at the gruesome and horrific use of mustard gas, phosgene, and chlorine at the beginning of last century, then we risk the same horrors again in this century.

Let us not fail the test of history.

Let us say to the world that we cannot allow anyone to use chemical weapons again, and that we can never allow such weapons to fall into the hands of stateless-actors and terrorists who would unleash them against America or American interests around the world.

I repeat what I said earlier: Let us understand that this action is not about force or diplomacy. It is about both. It is about enforcing international norms that will, at the end of the day, leverage necessary UN action and help bring about a political solution.

For those who want to see UN Security Council action, those who want to push Syria to sign a chemical weapons agreement and give up their weapons, this is the best path to getting there.

Make no mistake, the use of chemical weapons by the Syrian regime ultimately represents a national security threat to the United States, a global security threat we cannot ignore.

Let me read what our former colleague and respected Chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee, Senator Lugar, recently said in the press: ''We are talking about weapons of mass destruction. We are talking about chemical weapons in particular which may be the greatest threat to our country of any security risk we have—much more than any other government, or another nation—because they can be used by terrorists, by very small groups.

The use of those weapons has got to concern us to the point that we take action whenever any country crosses that line and use these weapons as we have seen in Syria.''

Senator Lugar is right. We must be concerned—deeply concerned—and that is why we must act. The danger of proliferation is too great—too much of a risk—for us to stand silent and stand down.

I urge my colleagues to put aside politics, polls, and preconceptions and do what we know, at the end of the day, is in the national security of the American people.

Again, I want to thank Senator CORKER and members of the committee for working quickly together to respond to this crisis with a well-crafted resolution that is a declaration of our values and will send a clear message that we—and the world—cannot and will not tolerate the use of chemical weapons anywhere—by anyone.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Tennessee.

Mr. CORKER. Mr. President, I would like to thank the chairman for his comments for a historical analysis of what has occurred and his comments regarding our ability to work together. I do wish to reiterate a point that the chairman made partially through his comments. I do not think any of us know at this time whether the offers that today have been made from Russia and responses that have been given from Syria, I do not think we have any idea whether there is credibility at present.

What I do know is there would be absolutely zero conversation about that had our committee not passed an authorization out on a 10-to-7 vote and if we were not taking this up this week. So I wish to commend the chairman for his leadership on this issue. I have enjoyed working with him. I have enjoyed working with him on all the issues relative to Syria and all the other things we have done in a bipartisan way.

I think it has been the tradition—I know it has been the tradition of this body, when it comes to issues beyond our shorelines, to set aside partisanship, as was mentioned a moment ago, and do things that are in the best interests of our Nation. There is nothing more important that each Member of this body will take up than the authorization for the use of military force. I sensed it the other day in our committee. I have sensed it with those whom I have talked to since. Each Member is looking at this with a sense of humility and soberness. I truly believe it is up to each Member to make this decision.

I will say the issues of Syria are something I am familiar with. I have traveled to the region, as I know the chairman and many others have. I have traveled three times this year. I wrote an op-ed in the New York Times in April regarding what our response to Syria should be. Our committee thankfully passed, on a 15-to-3 vote on May 21, with the chairman's leadership, the Syria Transition Support Act.

This was to support the vetted moderate opposition and require the administration to develop a comprehensive strategy. I know Members of this body know I support this authorization. I helped write it with the chairman. I am very comfortable with my position in supporting this and believe what we have done with this authorization we have done in the right and correct way.

I will say I have been very dismayed at the administration's lack of response after stating publicly that they were going to support the vetted moderate opposition in certain ways. I have been very frustrated at the response and the lack of support in that way. As I mentioned, I was just in the area 3 weeks ago. I visited the same refugee camp in Turkey on the Syrian border and in Jordan on the Syrian border. I saw some of the same refugees whom I saw there less than 1 year ago.

Candidly, I am dismayed we have not supported the vetted opposition in a better way. I know we have urged out of our committee that we have a much

more comprehensive strategy. I wish that bill had come to the floor. I wish the Senate had taken action. But, candidly, I also am dismayed this administration has not taken action to do something in a more comprehensive way.

No question the introduction of chemical weapons has changed the dynamic tremendously. I think the chairman was very articulate in explaining why this is important. I wish to say to everybody in this body, to me an equally important issue for our Nation is the credibility of the United States of America. I believe our President, whether you support him, whether you like him, I believe the President spoke for our Nation when he established a red line some months ago regarding the use of chemical weapons.

I believe it is very important for our Nation's credibility in the region and in the world that we have an appropriate response when we have a dictator such as Asad take the actions he has taken against international norms the way he has but especially when the Commander in Chief of our Nation has spoken the way he has about this issue. To me this is twofold. Certainly, it is about the international norms that have been spoken to eloquently by many, but to me it is also an issue of this Nation's credibility of the response as people are looking on to what we are going to do.

That is why I support this authorization. I do wish to go back over a couple points the chairman referred to relative to the substance of the authorization. I think most people know the White House sent over an authorization that to me was very broad. It did not define what we were going to do in a specific way.

I know the chairman just talked about the fact that this authorization is tailored. It is specific. Let me go over again specifically what this authorization does. It is specific purposes only: to respond to the use of weapons of mass destruction to dissuade future use, degrade ability, and to prevent transfer, no boots on the ground for combat operations.

I know there have been some discussions about that in our committee. Very emphatically, this authorization eliminates and keeps any boots on the ground for combat operations from occurring.

This has a time limit of 60 days with a 30-day extension which Congress can disapprove. It is geographically limited to Syria only, which the original authorization was not. It is against legitimate military targets only, which again the original authorization was not.

There are a series of determinations the President has to make prior to taking action with this authorization, including that it is in the core national interests of the United States and that he has a military plan to achieve the objectives.

In addition, this authorization requires a comprehensive strategy for a negotiated end to this conflict.

I wish to refer to something else the chairman mentioned; that is, the type of activity. I know there have been a number of editorial comments in papers and publications around the country referring to this as a pinprick. There have been other concerns by Members of this body as to the duration of this effort, as to how long it will be.

I have had the privilege, because of the position I serve in on the Foreign Relations Committee, to be involved in multiple phone calls and personal meetings. There was one last night that lasted at great length with the President and Vice President.

I wish to say to every person in this body, I have no belief whatsoever that if military action is taken, it is going to be a pinprick—none. The American military has incredible ability to deal with issues in a forceful way but also do so in a very short timeframe.

I do believe, based on the many meetings we have had, both with military and civilian leadership, that to characterize what is proposed as a pinprick or to characterize what is proposed as inserting ourselves into a long-term civil war, I think both of those characterizations are wrong.

Obviously, one of the dilemmas people here deal with is that we write policy and then it is up to the administration to carry that out—and no question, none of us will be involved in the direct carrying out. But it is my firm belief that there is not a thread of thinking by the administration that what they are considering is a pinprick.

On the other hand, I have not a thread of thought that they are also considering doing something that is going to involve us in a long-term civil war. Obviously, conflicts such as this are complex.

In closing, let me say this. Each Senator has to make their own decision. This is one of those things where lobbying is not something that is going to make up the minds of Senators. I think each Senator has to make up their own hearts and minds.

What I can say is we are going to have an open process. I know we have talked about the process going forward. I hope Senators will keep their amendments germane. I hope we have a sober debate about an issue that is the most important type of decision any Senator will make.

I am thrilled the President decided to come to Congress for an authorization. I know a lot of people have made many comments regarding this. Candidly, I am pleased the President has come to us for a debate. It is my hope the Senate, after hearing the facts and after having a thoughtful debate, will approve the authorization for the use of military force.

I couldn't agree more with the chairman that if people wish to see a diplomatic solution—which is the only way we are going to end this conflict—I do not think this conflict ends militarily. I believe we have learned a lot from the last two episodes we have been through.

I believe it is important for us to have this authorization because I believe it is the only thing at this point, the fact that we passed it out of committee, the fact that it is on the floor, that might possibly lead to a diplomatic settlement.

I also believe it is time for the President to lead. I know there have been a lot of statements over the last week, and the President had multiple audiences in which to speak. I understand this, and I understand reports out of these meetings can come in many ways not to be accurate.

The President is coming to the Hill tomorrow. He will be making a major speech to the United States, the citizens of our country, tomorrow night. I know many of them have lives, where all of them, most of them, get up in the mornings, go to work, they raise their families, and they haven't had the opportunity to spend as much time on these issues. That is why we are elected to do this.

I will say this. It is very important for the President of the United States to come to Congress and for the President of the United States to make his case to the American people.

He is asking for this authorization. I believe it is important for us to give him this authorization.

Again, I wish to thank the chairman for working with us to make sure we have narrowed this authorization in such a way that I think it meets the test of what the American people and what all of us wish to see happen. But I do believe now it is up to the President, over the next several days and this week, to make his case to the American people as to why the Senate should give him this authorization for the use of military force, which I hope we will do.

I thank you for the time, and I yield the floor.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

NOMINATION OF VALERIE E. CAPRONI TO BE UNITED STATES DISTRICT JUDGE FOR THE SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF NEW YORK

NOMINATION OF VERNON S. BRODERICK TO BE UNITED STATES DISTRICT JUDGE FOR THE SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF NEW YORK

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. KING). 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 Valerie E. Caproni,

of the District of Columbia, to be United States District Judge for the Southern District of New York, and Vernon S. Broderick, 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 be 30 minutes for debate equally divided in the usual form.

The Senator from New Jersey.

Mr. MENENDEZ. I ask that all time during this debate on the Executive Calendar be equally divided on both sides and any quorum call that is called be equally divided as well in terms of charging time.

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

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, today we will be voting on just 2 of the 11 district and circuit nominees left pending on the Senate floor prior to the August recess. Ten of these nominees had been reported by voice vote, and there was no good reason we could not have confirmed them then and allowed them to get to work on behalf of the American people. I hope that Senate Republicans will not seek to drag out the nominees who will be left pending on the floor after today, as they did for the nominations left pending at the end of last year. It took us until May of this year to confirm 9 of the 10 circuit and district nominations that were ready for votes last year, and it will likely take us another month or two to work our way through this new backlog.

One effect of this obstruction is that for the first time in nearly 2 years, our Federal district courts are again facing what the nonpartisan Congressional Research Service calls ''historically high'' vacancies. This could have been avoided if Senate Republicans had simply followed Senate tradition and allowed votes on the nine consensus district nominees before the recess.

The Republicans' effort to obstruct and delay the confirmations of nominees means that over the course of President Obama's administration the number of judicial vacancies nearly doubled. In January 2009, there were 53 Federal district and appellate court vacancies. Today, there are 94 Federal district and appellate court vacancies—37 of which have been designated as judicial emergency vacancies by the nonpartisan Administrative Office of the U.S. Courts. This is unacceptable. We have the nominees we need to make progress, but we do not have the consent we need from Senate Republicans.

Republicans have argued that we do not need to pick up the pace of confirming Federal judges, because we have confirmed more of President Obama's nominees than at the same point in 2005, the fifth year of George W. Bush's Presidency. The facts tell a different story. President Bush made just 5 new circuit and district nominations in 2005, compared to 43 new circuit and district nominations by President Obama this year. With more nominees to consider, it only makes sense that we have held more hearings and confirmed more judges this year than in 2005.

Today the Senate will vote on the nominations of Valerie Caproni and Vernon Broderick to fill vacancies in the Southern District of New York. Since the time of her nomination until today, the seat to which Ms. Caproni is nominated has been added to the list of judicial emergency vacancies by the nonpartisan Administrative Office of the Courts. Ms. Caproni is currently vice president and deputy general counsel for Northrop Grumman Corporation. She has served the public in various capacities, including as General Counsel of the Federal Bureau of Investigation from 2003 to 2011, as Regional Director of the Securities and Exchange Commission's Pacific Regional Office from 1998 to 2001, and as a Federal prosecutor in the U.S. Attorney's Office for the Eastern District of New York from both 1985 to 1992 and 1998 to 2001. During her tenure as a Federal prosecutor, she served as Chief of the Criminal Division, Chief of the Organized Crime & Racketeering Unit, and Chief of the Special Prosecutions Unit. Ms. Caproni also has extensive experience in private practice, having served as counsel in the New York office of Simpson, Thacher & Bartlett and as an associate at the law firm Cravath, Swaine & Moore. Following law school, Ms. Caproni clerked for the Honorable Phyllis Kravitch of the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Eleventh Circuit.

Mr. Broderick has split his career between Weil, Gotshal & Manges LLP, where he is currently a partner and was previously counsel and an associate, and the U.S. Attorney's Office for the Southern District of New York, where he was an assistant U.S. attorney. A graduate of Yale University and Harvard Law School, Mr. Broderick has extensive experience in Federal court. He has also tried 11 jury cases to verdict. Since he was appointed in 2003 by Mayor Bloomberg, Mr. Broderick has served on the Commission to Combat Police Corruption.

Both nominees have the support of their home State Senators, Senator SCHUMER and Senator GILLIBRAND. Both nominees were also unanimously rated ''well qualified'' by the nonpartisan ABA Standing Committee on the Federal Judiciary, its highest rating. They were reported by the Judiciary Committee by voice vote nearly 3 months ago.

I hope the Senate moves to confirm these nominees, but reducing Federal judicial vacancies from 94 to 92 is not enough. It is well past time for the Senate to get serious about giving our Federal courts the resources they need to provide justice for the American people. In July the Judiciary Committee's Subcommittee on Bankruptcy and the Courts held a hearing on the impact of sequestration that highlighted the damage that these senseless cuts are doing to our justice system. Tomorrow, Senator COONS will chair another hearing in that subcommittee to evaluate the judgeship needs of Federal courts across the country and hear testimony on the Coons-Leahy Federal Judgeship Act of 2013, which would implement the judicial conference's recommendations for desperately needed new judgeships. I hope that Senators from both sides of the aisle will support this bill, which is based on what judges across the Nation believe they need to administer justice effectively. Addressing the resources of a coequal branch of our government should not be politicized. We need to end sequestration and act responsibly in addressing the staffing needs of our justice system so that it can continue to serve the American people and be a model for other countries.

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, I will not support the nomination Valerie E. Caproni to be U.S. District Judge for the Southern District of New York. However, I expect that she will likely be confirmed, as will Mr. Broderick. These will be the 30th and 31st judicial confirmations this year. With today's confirmations, the Senate will have confirmed 202 lower court nominees; we have defeated 2. That is 202–2 for President Obama. That is an outstanding record. That is a success rate of 99 percent. I think we have had a pretty outstanding record this Congress.

And we have been doing that at a fast pace. During the last Congress we confirmed more judges than any Congress since the 103rd Congress, which was 1993–94.

So far this year, the first of President Obama's second term, we have already confirmed more judges than were confirmed in the entire first year of President Bush's second term.

At a similar stage in President Bush's second term, only 10 judicial nominees had been confirmed. So we are now at a 31 to 10 comparison, with President Obama clearly ahead of where President Bush was at a similar time frame.

And, as I said, we have already confirmed more nominees this year—31—than we did during the entirety of 2005, the first year of President Bush's second term, when 21 lower court judges were confirmed.

So I just wanted to set the record straight—again—before we vote on these nominations.

I also want to explain why I oppose the confirmation of Ms. Caproni. From 2003 to 2011, she served as the General Counsel of the Federal Bureau of Investigation. During that time, she was involved in the national security letters—NSL—program at the FBI. This program was the subject of a report by the Office of Inspector General—OIG—within the Department of Justice—DOJ, published in 2010.

In that report, the FBI was criticized for its role in the potential abuse by the FBI's use of national security letters. The report also detailed her office's knowledge of the use of exigent

letters to short-circuit the NSL process. The IG also found problems regarding the inaccurate reporting of NSLs.

When the Committee reported out her nomination earlier this year, I voiced my concern over the fact that I had made a request to the FBI over 6 years ago, asking for documents regarding exigent letters.

In March 2007, Chairman LEAHY and I requested copies of unclassified emails related to the use of national security letters issued by the FBI. I only received a few of these emails, and they were heavily redacted, so in 2008 I asked for the rest.

Ms. Caproni was general counsel of the FBI at the time and told me that the documents I was waiting for were on her desk, awaiting her review. Well, in 2013 as we approached her hearing, I still had not received those documents.

I asked Ms. Caproni about this in her hearing and she had no specific recollection of this request. So, I asked her again in writing. This led to a set of FOIA documents being produced, which are a poor substitute for properly answering a Committee request. It also raises further questions as to why it took 6 years and why Ms. Caproni told me years ago that she was working on responding to our request.

I subsequently followed up with the FBI with specific requests regarding Ms. Caproni's involvement in the matter. The FBI has not responded to my requests.

I also made requests from the DOJ Inspector General. While the IG did make some materials available to me, there are outstanding requests to which they have not responded.

At issue is the correspondence between Ms. Caproni and OIG about the OIG's draft report. These are not ''internal documents'' as the IG has claimed which relate to the internal deliberative process of the OIG. They are not ''internal'' communications because the Inspector General's office is supposed to be separate and independent from the FBI, and Ms. Caproni was the FBI's counsel.

They are, however, a critical component required both for oversight of the underlying program as well as to ensure that the back-and-forth between an independent IG and the agency is transparent and arms-length.

At the time we reported her nomination out of Committee, I stated that while I would not hold her nomination in Committee, I reserved my right to do so on the Senate floor. So now, even though I have consented to the vote going forward, I will not support the nomination.

Ms. Caproni received her B.A. at Tulane in 1976 and her J.D. from the University of Georgia School of Law in 1979. Upon graduation, she clerked for 1 year for the Honorable Phyllis Kravitch, United States Court of Appeals for the Eleventh Circuit. Following her clerkship, she entered private practice as a civil litigator for Cravath, Swaine & Moore focusing on defense work on behalf of large companies primarily with respect to libel, antitrust, and securities matters. She was in this position from 1980 to 1985.

In 1985 Ms. Caproni became an Assistant U.S. Attorney where she prosecuted a number of narcotics and other criminal cases. In 1989, Ms. Caproni became the General Counsel of the Urban Development Corp—now Empire State Development. There her primary responsibility was to provide legal advice to the executives and directors of the corporation, focusing on administrative law, banking and bankruptcy law, environmental and land use, real estate, and products liability. She returned to the U.S. Attorney's Office in 1992 where she prosecuted criminal cases and became part of the administration of the Criminal Division. She served as Chief of the Criminal Division from 1994 to 1998. In 1998 Ms. Caproni became the regional director of the SEC's Pacific Regional Office where she worked on enforcement of Federal securities laws.

From 2001 to 2003, she returned to private practice at Simpson Thacher & Bartlett where she worked on white collar criminal defense. After this she became General Counsel of the FBI where her primary responsibility was to provide legal advice to executive management. She served there from 2003 to 2011.

In 2011 Ms. Caproni was hired by Northrop Grumman to be vice president and deputy general counsel where she remains today. She is currently responsible for supervision of all litigation and internal investigations, specializing in civil litigation and investigations and setting strategy in cases and investigations that affect the corporation. The ABA Standing Committee on the Federal Judiciary gave her a unanimous ''Well Qualified'' rating.

Vernon S. Broderick is also nominated to be U.S. District Judge for the Southern District of New York. Mr. Broderick received his B.A. from Yale University in 1985 and his J.D. from Harvard Law School in 1988. Upon graduation, he joined Weil, Gotshal & Manges as an associate. His practice there mainly focused on civil litigation, specifically large commercial disputes that involved breach of contract, products liability, patent and bankruptcy.

In 1994, he joined the United States Attorney's Office, first in the General Crimes Unit, then in the Narcotics Unit and the Violent Gangs Unit. He was Chief of the Violent Gangs Unit from 1999–2002.

Mr. Broderick rejoined Weil, Gotshal & Manges as a Counsel in 2002 and was made a Partner in 2005. His practice focused on white collar criminal investigations and prosecutions, regulatory investigations and proceedings, and business litigation. The ABA Standing Committee on the Federal Judiciary gave him a unanimous ''Well Qualified'' rating.

Mr. MENENDEZ. In view of the fact I don't see any Members at this point, 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.

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

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

Mrs. GILLIBRAND. Mr. President, I rise to urge my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to support Valerie Caproni for U.S. district judge for New York's Southern District. I know Ms. Caproni to be a woman with impeccable credentials, incredible intellect, and the kind of fair-minded judgment we need on the Federal bench.

Ms. Caproni serves as vice president and general counsel for Northrop Grumman Corporation, where she leads all aspects of litigation. Ms. Caproni joined Northrop Grumman from her former position as general counsel to the FBI, a position Director Robert Mueller personally asked Ms. Caproni to serve in, in the wake of the horrific attacks of September 11. Ms. Caproni knows full well the task at hand for the FBI is never easy—from protecting America from terror and other attacks—a balance of defending our civil liberties and civil rights. But as she puts it:

> They always strive to do the right thing, and to maintain as a loadstar fealty to the Constitution and the rule of law.

That is what Ms. Caproni believes to her very core.

Ms. Caproni also served in the Securities and Exchange Commission, where she enforced regulatory programs in the nine-State Pacific region. She and her staff strengthened cooperation between the SEC and the U.S. Attorney's Offices to crack down on financial fraud.

Ms. Caproni also served as Chief of the Criminal Division for the U.S. Attorney's Office for the Eastern District of New York and in private practice at several top firms.

Through her breadth of experience, her talent, her intellect, and her strong character, I know Ms. Caproni will be an outstanding jurist.

I strongly believe this country needs more women such as she serving in the Federal Judiciary, an institution that I believe needs more exceptional women.

I have no doubt that having Ms. Caproni serve in the Federal Judiciary will bring us closer to achieving that goal of a Federal judiciary that reflects our Nation.

I was honored to recommend her for this position, and I urge all my colleagues to vote in support of her confirmation.

I urge my colleagues to vote in favor of another outstanding New Yorker, Vernon Broderick, to also be a U.S. district judge for the Southern District of New York.

Mr. Broderick served as an assistant U.S. attorney in the Southern District

of New York, where he helped protect New Yorkers by prosecuting cases involving organized crime, international narcotics trafficking, and violent crimes. I urge the Senate to vote in full support of Mr. Broderick's nomination.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I rise to speak about the nomination of Valerie Caproni to serve as a judge on the U.S. District Court for the Southern District of New York.

When the Senate Judiciary Committee considered Ms. Caproni's nomination on June 13 and reported her nomination out of committee, I asked to be recorded as a ''pass'' on the vote. I did so because I wanted to meet in person with Ms. Caproni to discuss matters that she worked on when she served as general counsel of the Federal Bureau of Investigation from 2003 to 2011.

During Ms. Caproni's tenure, the FBI adopted controversial new investigative policies and implemented sweeping new surveillance authorities granted by the USA PATRIOT Act.

For example, revised Attorney General's guidelines for FBI investigations and the FBI's Domestic Investigations and Operations Guide allow the FBI to conduct ''assessments'' using intrusive surveillance techniques on innocent Americans with no indication of wrongdoing or other factual predicate. And while the Justice Department's ''Guidance Regarding the Use of Race by Federal Law Enforcement Agencies'' prohibits the use of profiling by Federal law enforcement in ''traditional law enforcement activities,'' this ban does not apply to profiling based on religion and national origin, and it does not apply to national security and border security investigations.

The Justice Department's Inspector General concluded that the FBI was guilty of ''widespread and serious misuse'' of the National Security Letter authority when Ms. Caproni was general counsel. Also during Ms. Caproni's tenure, the FBI interpreted section 215 of the PATRIOT Act to permit the collection of noncontent ''metadata'' on every phone call of every American, including the numbers of both callers and the time and duration of the call.

As general counsel, Ms. Caproni would have been the final word in the FBI on the legality of these and all other Bureau activities.

As a result of my concerns about Ms. Caproni's involvement in these activities, I asked for her commitment, if confirmed, to recuse herself from matters on which she had been involved or provided legal advice while working for the FBI or on which her impartiality might reasonably be questioned.

I met in my office with Ms. Caproni on June 25, and on July 8, Ms. Caproni sent me a letter memorializing her commitment to recuse herself from such matters. I appreciated receiving this letter, and I ask unanimous consent that the letter be printed in the RECORD.

In light of our meeting and Ms. Caproni's commitments to me, I will not oppose her nomination to the district court.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

Washington, DC, July 8, 2013.

Hon. RICHARD DURBIN,
Committee on the Judiciary, U.S. Senate, Washington, DC.

DEAR SENATOR DURBIN: Thank you for the opportunity to meet with you to discuss my nomination as a judge for the United States District Court for the Southern District of New York. It was a pleasure to meet with you and your staff.

As I indicated in my Senate Judiciary Committee Questionnaire, if confirmed, I would follow the Code of Conduct for United States Judges, as well as any other applicable ethics rules or federal statutes to resolve any potential conflicts of interest. As I further stated, if I had personal or supervisory involvement in a matter while at the FBI or Northrop Grumman, I would not participate in it as a judge.

To follow up on our conversation and to be more specific, as required by 28 U.S.C. § 455, I would recuse myself from any case in which my impartiality could reasonably be questioned. I would certainly recuse myself if I were presented with a case that would require me to rule on the legality of a national security program as to which I provided legal advice while I was a government employee, unless there were controlling precedent already in place regarding such a program. If such precedent did exist, I nonetheless would consider recusal on a case-by-case basis, carefully considering any arguments and consulting with appropriate experts on judicial ethics and, if appropriate, my colleagues. In those cases in which I did not recuse, I would apply controlling law.

Please let me know if you have any other questions or matters you would like to discuss.

Very truly yours,

VALERIE CAPRONI.

Mr. DURBIN. 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.

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

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

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. President, I yield back the time.

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

The question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the nomination of Valerie E. Caproni, of the District of Columbia, to be United States District Judge for the Southern District of New York?

Mr. CARDIN. I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Louisiana (Ms. LANDRIEU) and the Senator from Virginia (Mr. WARNER) are necessarily absent.

I further announce that if present and voting, the Senator from Louisiana (Ms. LANDRIEU) would vote ''yea.''

Mr. CORNYN. The following Senator is necessarily absent: the Senator from Tennessee (Mr. ALEXANDER).

Further, if present and voting, the Senator from Tennessee (Mr. ALEXANDER) would have voted ''yea.''

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. DONNELLY). Are there any other Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote?

The result was announced—yeas 73, nays 24, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 201 Ex.]

YEAS—73

Baldwin	Gillibrand	Murray
Baucus	Graham	Nelson
Begich	Hagan	Portman
Bennet	Harkin	Pryor
Blumenthal	Hatch	Reed
Boxer	Heinrich	Reid
Brown	Heitkamp	Rockefeller
Burr	Hirono	Sanders
Cantwell	Isakson	Schatz
Cardin	Johanns	Schumer
Carper	Johnson (SD)	Sessions
Casey	Kaine	Shaheen
Chambliss	King	Stabenow
Chiesa	Klobuchar	Tester
Coats	Leahy	Thune
Collins	Levin	Toomey
Coons	Manchin	Udall (CO)
Corker	Markey	Udall (NM)
Cornyn	McCain	Vitter
Donnelly	McCaskill	Warren
Durbin	McConnell	Whitehouse
Feinstein	Menendez	Wicker
Fischer	Mikulski	Wyden
Flake	Murkowski	
Franken	Murphy	

NAYS—24

Ayotte	Enzi	Merkley
Barrasso	Grassley	Moran
Blunt	Heller	Paul
Boozman	Hoeven	Risch
Coburn	Inhofe	Roberts
Cochran	Johnson (WI)	Rubio
Crapo	Kirk	Scott
Cruz	Lee	Shelby

NOT VOTING—3

Alexander	Landrieu	Warner

The nomination was confirmed.

VOTE ON VERNON S. BRODERICK

The PRESIDING OFFICER. If there is no further debate, the question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the nomination of Vernon S. Broderick, of New York, to be United States District Judge for the Southern District of New York?

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.

The majority leader is recognized.

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that we proceed to a period of morning business with Senators allowed to speak for up to 10 minutes each.

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

SYRIA

Mr. REID. Mr. President, tomorrow the President is going to brief the Democratic caucus and the Republican caucus separately. He is going to address the Nation tomorrow night. As we all know, there are international discussions relevant to the matter in Syria.

Normally what I would do in a situation such as this is file cloture today, but I don't think that is to our benefit. I don't think we need to see how fast we can do this; we have to see how well we can do this, so I will not file cloture this evening on the Syria resolution.

I have spoken to the Republican leader. I have talked to virtually all of my Democratic Senators. We have enough votes to get cloture, but I don't think we should be counting numbers tonight. I think what we need to do is to make sure the President has the opportunity to speak to all 100 Senators and all 300 million American people before we do this.

As I have said before, when we get on this, we are going to deal with this in a manner that is dignified and move forward in a way that is expeditious, yet thorough.

I have discussed this with the President and other people in the administration. I repeat: I wish to make sure the President has a full opportunity to make his case to the Senate and the American people before we vote on this matter.

As always, I will continue to discuss this with Senator MCCONNELL, and we will see if we can reach some kind of agreement to move forward without cloture. If that doesn't work out, I will file cloture when it is appropriate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Ohio.

ORDER OF PROCEDURE

Mr. BROWN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to speak as if in morning business for up to 15 minutes. After I conclude my remarks, I ask that Senator INHOFE of Oklahoma and Senator CASEY of Pennsylvania be recognized.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there any objection? Without objection, it is so ordered.

The Senator from Ohio.

LABOR DAY

Mr. BROWN. Mr. President, most of us were in our States over Labor Day. I usually come to the floor a few days after Labor Day to talk about the importance of Labor Day and what it means to working Americans, what it has meant to our country, and what it has meant to building a strong middle class.

I would like to read a letter sent to me by Bill Ross, who is an Ohio business leader. Mr. Ross writes:

> I grew up in a first generation immigrant family in a small Ohio town.
>
> My father, who obtained only an 8th grade education (not uncommon for his generation), worked hard in an industrial job.
>
> My mother worked at home to care for our family of 5 children. When able to do so, she went to work outside the household too.
>
> We rented a home for $25 a month, ate nutritious meals at home, and all walked to school with clean clothes each day.
>
> All five children went to college, obtained post-graduate professional degrees, and pursued rewarding professional careers in law, education and business.
>
> How did that happen?
>
> Because, first and foremost, my father had a job with a living wage and health care for his family that his union protected. Because we had access to good quality public education. Because we had access to affordable state universities and student loan programs that we could later afford to repay. Because blue collar working people had a chance.
>
> I hope we can restore all that in America again.

Bill Ross's story is very much like my wife Connie's story. Bill Ross was born in Ashtabula a bit before my wife who was also born there. Bill Ross's dad carried a union card and his mother went to work when she could. My wife's father carried a utility worker's union card for more than 30 years in Ashtabula, OH. Her mother was a home care worker who worked, when she could, after the children were a little older.

My wife, as did Bill Ross, was able to go to school with minimal debt. She graduated from Kent State University in the 1970s with not much more than $1,200 in student debt.

The ability of a living wage and carrying a union card gave them a reason to celebrate Labor Day because it gave so many working families a chance.

The Presiding Officer comes from a State much like mine. He understands the importance of carrying a union card and getting a living wage gives people the kind of opportunity that people in this country deserve.

For generations hard-working Americans left their homes every morning, and some at night, to earn an honest living. They bent with swollen knees to put on steel-toed work boots to provide for loved ones. They put up with calloused hands to build a better life for their children.

Middle-class Americans and people struggling to enter the middle class labored to ensure that children have enough food and clean clothes and an adequate education to thrive.

We know steelworkers, nurses, mechanics, teachers, and plumbers are not always treated with the dignity they deserve—especially, far too often, from our elected officials.

American history is a history of struggle for working people—fighting for representation and fair wages, for access to good-paying jobs, and for the dignity every human being deserves. It is about fighting for democracy and civil rights—as we were reminded a few days ago when we marked the 50th anniversary of the March on Washington for jobs and freedom.

More than a century ago, when John Patterson Green, an Ohioan, and Cedarville native John Henderson Kyle introduced a bill to establish Labor Day as a State holiday in Ohio, they were not thinking of any one segment of the population. They were focused on the rights of all Americans who work hard and play by the rules.

Since then, we have seen how the middle class grew when we ensured that hard work is rewarded with fair pay and decent benefits.

Seventy-five years ago, President Roosevelt signed the Fair Labor Standards Act, which ultimately ensured that American workers would receive a minimum wage, reasonable work hours, and an end to child labor.

One of the authors of that bill, Senator Hugo Black, sat at this specific desk in the Senate and supported Social Security, minimum wage, and paying for overtime. He initially introduced that legislation in 1932.

President Roosevelt led us to decades of prosperity by ensuring that hard work is met with fair wages and decent working conditions. A minimum wage helped to lift millions of Americans from poverty and allowed them to join the middle class.

Today workers face new challenges. While corporate executives and Wall Street banks are earning record profits, too many families in Ohio, Indiana, Oklahoma, and across the country are still struggling. Some politicians have used the recession and the budget crisis it created as grounds for attacking worker's rights. We have seen vicious attacks on workers' rights across the country. We have seen it in North Carolina. We saw it last year in Indiana and Michigan. We have seen it over the last 3 years in Ohio.

Ohio passed one of the worst attacks on collective bargaining rights in Ohio's history, trying to convince people that public employees caused the financial crisis, not Wall Street. Workers fought back and shattered a record for signatures needed to establish a ballot initiative and energized 2 million voters who came out to overturn that wrong-headed law.

Today, because the unity of not just labor union members but the huge majority of voters in Ohio, police officers, firefighters, sanitation workers, teachers, and other public sector workers continue to have the right to bargain and work with management through collective bargaining to ensure safety and fairness on the job.

In Akron, OH, UAW workers at Meggitt do high-quality and efficient work which allows them to be competitive with workers in Mexico and has prevented operations from being outsourced and helped to attract new investment in Ohio.

In Toledo, Youngstown, Cleveland, and beyond, union autoworkers helped bring back the American auto industry. They are building the cars of the future that people want to drive. I met with business owners across Ohio over this August and the month before and the month before and the month before

that—during my 7 years in the Senate—Ohio business owners who want to pay their workers a fair wage and have joined in efforts to raise the minimum wage. They know increasing the minimum wage to $10.10 per hour will increase domestic production by nearly $33 billion over 3 years as workers spend their raises in their local businesses and communities. This economic activity would generate 140,000 new jobs over the course of 3 years.

It is no surprise that the American public is anxious about our place in an increasingly multipolar, complicated, dynamic global economy. People know that after NAFTA and CAFTA and permanent China trade relations were passed, plants closed and we lost 5 million good manufacturing jobs. Never in history has company after company implemented a business plan where they close down production in Stuebenville or Toledo or Dayton, OH, to move overseas to Wuhan or Shanghai, China, and sell the products back to the United States. That business plan led us to this.

In 1977 manufacturing was 20 percent of our GDP and financial services represented significantly less. That flipped by 2010, where manufacturing is now only about 11 percent of GDP. Between 2000 and 2010, because of wrong-headed trade agreements, because of tax policy that has given incentives to move offshore, our country lost 5 million manufacturing jobs and 60,000 plants closed down.

Since 2010 we have seen manufacturing jobs grow by more than 500,000. That is not good enough. We have to enact an agenda that includes the best trained workers, the most developed and sophisticated infrastructure, the most robust manufacturing base, and the strongest defense against currency manipulation. Until every American worker is able to rise out of poverty, we still have work to do. Labor Day, celebrated last week, shouldn't simply mark the end of summer; it should mark the beginning of a renewed commitment to fighting for American workers, American businesses, and strengthening our middle class.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Oklahoma.

SYRIA

Mr. INHOFE. Mr. President, first of all, let me thank my friend the distinguished Senator from Ohio for including me in his unanimous consent request. I will briefly speak about an amendment.

We all understand that the issue is going to come before this body to send activity into Syria. I am very much opposed to any kind of force in Syria, but if it happens, we want to be sure there is some protection there. So I have an amendment that even if my amendment passes, I will still oppose the effort of this President to send activity into Syria, and I believe it would precipitate a war.

My amendment is very simple. If the President takes military action against Syria, sequestration of our Armed Forces would be delayed for 1 year. We are talking about the fiscal year where we would take another $52 billion out of our military.

What Asad has done and continues to do is reprehensible, but the United States can't afford another war given the current state of our military. The threats from Syria and the Middle East are not emerging threats. These threats have been around for decades. We knew they were there. There is nothing new about them. Yet the readiness capabilities of our military continue to be decimated by drastic budget cuts.

Sixteen Air Force combat flying squadrons have been grounded. We finally, after 3 months, put them back in the air again, and right now we know it costs more to get them back in a state of readiness than the money we saved from grounding them for 3 months. Our naval fleet has been reduced to historically low levels, the end strength of our ground forces has been cut by more than 100,000 personnel, and hundreds of thousands of DOD civilian employees have been furloughed. Just in my State of Oklahoma, in one of my installations, 14,000 civilian employees have been furloughed.

We can't have it both ways—continuing to cut the funding of our military while still expecting to meet our national security requirements. As military readiness and capabilities decline, we accept greater risk, and, as I have always said, risk equals lives. Every time we have a hearing, we have our combatant commanders come in and talk about the risks. Risk means lives. As I have always said, risk equals lives, and allowing these cuts to continue while proposing to send our forces into harm's way is immoral and reprehensible.

Over the last week I have heard a lot from the President and his administration about how any action in Syria will be limited. I suggest there is no such thing as limited war. Once we decide to strike, we can't predict where it will end or how the situation might escalate. Let's not forget that we have troops currently on the ground in Jordan and Turkey, marines guarding our Embassies, and sailors and airmen stationed around the region. We have already heard that Iran is ordering its terrorist proxies to retaliate by attacking U.S. interests in the region, including our Embassy in Iraq. The State Department has ordered nonessential personnel to evacuate our Embassy in Lebanon. The threats to our forces are real.

I wish to read for my colleagues excerpts from a letter that was written by two ladies, Rebekah Sanderlin and Molly Blake. These are spouses of two of our servicemen. They are responding—much more eloquently than I could ever hope to—to the immense hardship our military is enduring under sequestration and to the misguided belief that a military strike on Syria can be done in isolation—that it won't affect our troops and their families.

I ask unanimous consent that the entire letter be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

AN OPEN LETTER TO CNN REPORTER BARBARA STARR

[From The Huffington Post, posted Sept. 4, 2013]

DEAR MS. STARR: We are writing to let you in on a secret. It's a big one—so get to a fresh page in your reporter notebook and have your pen poised and ready.

You told your viewers last Thursday that there was ''no question'' that the military could afford to go into Syria and that you ''don't think it's really going to affect military families at all.''

Here's some inside information for you: There is no such thing as a person-less war. Our military cannot afford for Americans to forget that wars and battles and military strikes are fought by troops, that troops are people, and that those people have families.

In our military communities this summer we couldn't even afford to pay federal employees for a five-day work week. Military families can't get doctors' appointments and can't get the counseling services needed to grapple with the problems we already have, problems largely created by almost 12 years of war. And while Congress was busy sending a warning letter to the president to ensure they get to sign off on whether or not we go to war, they managed to ignore military families when the sequester hit. Today clinic hours are being slashed—along with pretty much every other service military families need. Walking around our communities lately, it doesn't look like we can afford much of anything—and certainly not a whole new war.

And that's just taking 'afford' literally.

Figuratively, the picture is even grimmer. An entire generation of military kids have grown up with a parent they know primarily through Skype. Couples are trying to piece together marriages that have been badly fractured by more years spent apart than together. We grew hopeful that better days were coming as we watched the end of the Iraq war, and we're thrilled that the end of our involvement in Afghanistan is nigh, and yet now all of cable news is breathless and giddy with talk of war in Syria.

You boast, in your bio, that you have exclusive access to Lt. Gen. Russel Honore and you've interviewed several secretaries of defense and other important people at the CIA. You may very well have Sec. Hagel on speed dial—but that doesn't give you the right to toss around your thoughts on how military families may or may not be affected by military action. Not until you've stood in our shoes for longer than a three-minute live shot.

You see, Barbara, there's no such thing as 'no boots on the ground.' We in the military community sigh and shake our heads when we hear talk like that from the people on TV. Perhaps you consider a relatively small number of troops to be the same as zero—but we don't. We know that each of those service members is somebody's somebody.

As journalists, we like to show both sides of the story. So we would like to also voice our thanks. For your careless words have aimed a giant floodlight on the military-civilian divide. Blue Star Families Director of Research and Policy, Vivian Greentree said it best:

We hear a sense of angst in our membership and throughout the military community. How can we be in the middle of the fall out of sequestration—furloughs, program cuts, loss of mission readiness—we have families who can't get medical appointments. They are all wondering how they will manage if the situation in Syria continues to escalate. They wonder how will it affect them. Not, if it will affect them. But, how.

''That statement, in all its small-minded glory, captures the civilian-military divide more clearly than any survey ever could.''

And maybe someday we will be able to fight whole wars without using a single human . . . And Rosie the Robot will clean our kitchens while we tackle our morning commutes in flying cars. But today, in 2013, we can't have a 'surgical strike' without someone saying where to drop the bombs or where to aim those missiles. And those planes that drop the bombs? The destroyers that carry the missiles? They have pilots, captains and crews. All humans. Even the ''unmanned'' drones have human pilots, and the psychological wear and tear on them is staggering. Planes take off from airfields in foreign lands or from aircraft carriers, both of which are staffed by thousands of American somebodies, just like those destroyer ships. At every turn in a military operation you will find people. Intel analysts, linguists, flight crews, and cooks. Even war plans, regardless of whether they were, as you stated, ''on deployment anyway'' rely on thousands of people who will be pulled to a new duty, which causes reshuffling far and wide in the military community.

And this, most definitely, affects military families.

The big question is, as you said, ''will it work?'' and, as we learned from the most recent wars, it bears recalling that things don't always go as planned. But that's not the only question. Do not kid yourself, Barbara, and don't you dare kid the viewers who trust your reporting.

Sincerely,

REBEKAH SANDERLIN and MOLLY BLAKE,
Military Spouses.

Mr. INHOFE. Mr. President, I wish to quote from the letter I just submitted for the RECORD, and I ask my colleagues to listen to the quote. These are two ladies who are spouses of servicemen. They said:

There is no such thing as a person-less war. Our military cannot afford for Americans to forget that wars and battles and military strikes are fought by troops, that troops are people, and that those people have families. In our military communities this summer we couldn't even afford to pay Federal employees for a five-day work week. Military families can't get doctors' appointments and can't get counseling services needed to grapple with the problems we already have, problems largely created by almost 12 years of war. Today clinic hours are being slashed—along with pretty much every other service military families need. Walking around our communities lately, it doesn't look like we can afford much of anything—and certainly not a whole new war.

I am still quoting now these wives of our military men:

And maybe someday we will be able to fight whole wars without using a single human, but today, in 2013, we can't have a surgical strike without someone saying where to drop the bombs or where to aim those missiles. And those planes that drop the bombs? The destroyers that carry the missiles? They have pilots, captains, and crews. All humans. Even the ''unmanned'' drones have human pilots, and the psychological wear and tear on them is staggering. Planes take off from airfields in foreign lands and from aircraft carriers, both of which are staffed by thousands of American somebodies, just like those destroyer ships. At every turn in a military operation you will find people. Intel analysts, linguists, flight crews, and cooks. Even war plans . . . rely on thousands of people who will be pulled to a new duty, which causes reshuffling far and wide in the military community. And this, most definitely, affects our military families.

Again, that is a quote from two of the wives of our current servicemen. I hope all of my colleagues will read this letter. I hope they understand that the decisions we make this week about whether to go to war in Syria have a human dimension.

If we expect the brave men and women in our military to go to foreign lands and risk their lives on our behalf, we have a moral obligation to ensure that they and their families have the support and the resources that are required. Sequestration has already inflicted severe damage on our military, and we are now only a couple of weeks from another $52 billion being slashed from an already devastated military budget.

I have been clear that I don't support the President's call for military action in Syria. He still hasn't presented Congress and the American people with a plan for what he wants to accomplish, how he intends to accomplish it, or how he intends to pay for it. Will the President pay for this operation with more furloughs and by grounding more squadrons again? The CNO has already come forward and stated that if operations against Syria extend into October, he won't be able to afford it and will likely require supplemental funding from Congress.

Furthermore, the President hasn't told us how a strike in Syria fits into a broader strategy for the Middle East. What we decide to do is not just about Syria. It is bigger than that. This is about the growing threat from Iran, stability in the Middle East, and our commitment to Israel and allies and our ability to respond to other contingencies that are there.

I recall knowing what was going to happen. This is 4½ years ago, back when President Obama was first elected, his first election. I knew that when he came out with his first budget, he was going to do something devastating to the military. So I put myself into Afghanistan, knowing, with the tanks going back and forth, that I would be able to get the interest and the attention of the American people, and it worked. So in that very first budget 4½ years ago, he did away with the early fifth-generation bomber then, the F–22; did away with our future combat system—the first ground capability increase in about 50 years; did away with our lift capacity, the C–17. Then, the worst thing, which I hope doesn't turn out to create the worst problem for America, he did away with the ground-based operation in Poland. That was just the first budget. That was 4½ years ago. Since that time, in his extended budget, he has taken $487 billion out of the military, and with sequestration it will be another $½ trillion. This just can't happen.

It is not just me who is saying this. People would expect it more from me. I am the ranking member on the Senate Armed Services Committee. I have gone there and worked with these guys and noticed the problems they have. I would suggest that not just me but Admiral Winnefeld, who is the second highest military guy, the Vice Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, said:

There could be, for the first time in my career— An admiral speaking now, the second highest person in our military—

instances where we may be asked to respond to a crisis and we will have to say we cannot.

And then we go to the very top person, General Dempsey, the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, who said, ''Our military force is so degraded, so unready, it would be immoral to use force.''

I only say this because we are going to be facing this, and I would be opposed to this even with my amendment to postpone the sequestration of the military for 1 year. However, if that passes, I will still oppose this taking place. I don't think many people in America realize what has happened to our military under the Obama administration.

Well, I have just stated what has happened. This is certainly not a time when we would use force in Syria. Keep in mind that General Dempsey said it would be immoral to use force, we are so degraded, and that is exactly what we will be voting on in the next couple of days.

With that, I yield the floor.

CHIRIBIQUETE NATIONAL PARK

Mr. LEAHY. Mr President, I want to speak briefly about a recent development in Colombia of which many Senators may not be aware.

Colombia is ranked as the second most biologically diverse country in the world. The variety of plant and animal life is staggering, which reflects its similarly diverse geography—from Amazon rainforest to glacier-covered mountains, and Caribbean and Pacific coastlines.

To its credit, Colombia has an extensive system of national parks and biological reserves. I have long been convinced that as security improves in that country and long after the oil wells are depleted, its national parks and other protected areas will be among Colombia's greatest resource, attracting eco-tourists from around the world.

On August 21 President Santos took an historic leap forward by doubling the size of Chiribiquete National Park, which is home to a myriad of species including jaguars and is comprised of extraordinary rock formations and

dense jungle. Chiribiquete was already Colombia's largest park, and it has now become the size of Belgium.

There is more that needs to be done to protect Colombia's environment, particularly from the damage caused by mining and other extractive industries which has often occurred in, or adjacent to, environmentally fragile areas or indigenous reserves.

But President Santos' single stroke of the pen has done more for environmental conservation and species protection than what most heads of state do in a lifetime. I commend him for it and congratulate the Colombian people. Colombia has set an example for all of us who care about the environment and recognize that we have a responsibility to protect it for future generations.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

TRIBUTE TO JOSEPH ROBERTS

• Mr. JOHNSON of South Dakota. Mr. President, Today I wish to recognize one of my staff members who is currently battling cancer. Joseph F. Roberts has worked in my Rapid City congressional district office since September 2002. Combined with service in the Peace Corps and the U.S. Air Force, Joe has served our Nation for approximately 19 years in Federal and military service.

As a member of my staff, Joe has provided exemplary constituent service to veterans and their families, as well as servicemembers and constituents facing numerous issues. He has always approached his work with a high degree of professionalism and a genuine caring attitude. That caring attitude stems from years of therapy and counseling services in the private sector he provided to the people of western South Dakota.

His service in the U.S. Air Force has served him well in working with veterans, and he has taken particular interest with veterans who suffer from military sexual assault, Traumatic Brain Injuries, and Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder. Veterans and their families know they have a true advocate with Joe in their corner when it comes to obtaining answers and decisions on claims, searches for records and medical care issues. Joe's time in the Peace Corps brought him to Romania and Guyana where he served in a number of capacities including education and training on domestic violence, sexual abuse, substance abuse and communication, as well as working on infrastructure issues and providing psychotherapy and other counseling assistance. These experiences helped him greatly in my district office as he assisted constituents with local, State and Federal issues and problems, including a wide array of immigration and passport issues.

I have always been impressed by Joe's sense of dedication and commitment to helping people. One of the great rewards in life is helping others and whether it has been his work in the Peace Corps, his private work as a therapist and counselor, or his work in constituent service in my office, Joe has helped many people. Over the years, I have received numerous thank you notes and letters from constituents praising the work of Joe Roberts.

And he has approached his battles with cancer over the years with commitment, humor and perspective, always sharing, teaching and counseling despite the challenges of the disease.

I take this opportunity to thank Joe for his service and his work on my behalf with the people of South Dakota. I congratulate him on his many years of service to the people of South Dakota and to his country and commend him for a job well done.•

RECOGNIZING THE ORPHEUM THEATER CENTER

• Mr. JOHNSON of South Dakota. Mr. President, today I wish to honor the Orpheum Theater Center in Sioux Falls, SD on its centennial anniversary. Since 1913, the Orpheum Theater has established itself as a place of excellence in the arts.

On a breezy Thursday evening in October, exactly 100 years ago today, the Orpheum Theater opened its doors and charged patrons an unheard of price of $5 per seat. The opening night performances stunned the audience with a broad spectrum of entertainment including the Orpheum Concert Orchestra, two comedy acts, and headlines from around the world via a state-of-the-art newsreel.

Over the past 100 years, the Orpheum Theater has changed owners several times and has undergone many renovations, most recently in 2009. Thanks to its dedicated staff and exceptional volunteers the Orpheum Theater has consistently provided a superb place to experience performing arts and annually 100,000 people visit this world-class venue.

South Dakotans have congregated at the Orpheum Theater for elegant performances by entertainers both from within our community and around the world. I congratulate the Orpheum Theater Center on reaching this milestone, and wish it continued success. Encore!•

U.S. AIR FORCE ACADEMY CHAPEL DEDICATION

• Mr. BENNET. Mr. President, today I wish to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the dedication of the Cadet Chapel at the U.S. Air Force Academy. In the half century since its founding, the Cadet Chapel has become a National Historic Landmark and the most popular manmade attraction in Colorado. Each year more than 750,000 visitors explore this iconic and unique building.

Today, the Cadet Chapel is a multifaith house of worship specifically designed to provide multiple distinct worship areas under a single roof, meeting the spiritual needs of the Academy's cadets. The chapel's aluminum, glass and steel structure features 17 spires that soar 150 feet toward the Colorado sky.

Annually, over 4,000 cadets are provided 850 religious worship and educational opportunities to practice their personal faith. The chapel also provides religious rites and observances such as baptisms and dedications, weddings, funerals and memorial services. Most worship services are open to the general public and thousands of visitors each year attend worship.

The Cadet Chapel fosters outstanding civic involvement by partnering with the local community to host four annual free concerts with over 2000 attendees. The U.S. Air Force Academy Cadet Chapel is truly unique. Its iconic architectural structure serves as a symbol of the Academy and is recognized worldwide. Most important, the Cadet Chapel enables the free exercise of religion for cadets in this unique campus setting and aids the Chaplain Corps at the Air Force Academy to inspire men and women to become leaders of character through spiritual formation.

In the 50 years since the Cadet Chapel was dedicated our Nation has sent Air Force Academy graduates to serve in the skies and jungles of Vietnam and the deserts of Iraq. Those that once bowed their head beneath the spires of the Chapel served our country in the former Yugoslavia and in the mountains of Afghanistan, and they continue to serve the cause of freedom around the globe today. We thank them for their service, and we congratulate the Air Force on the 50th anniversary of the dedication of the Air Force Academy's Cadet Chapel.•

MESSAGE FROM THE HOUSE

At 2:04 p.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Mr. Novotny, one of its reading clerks, announced that the House has passed the following bills, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate:

H.R. 367. An act to amend chapter 8 of title 5, United States Code, to provide that major rules of the executive branch shall have no force or effect unless a joint resolution of approval is enacted into law.

H.R. 1582. An act to protect consumers by prohibiting the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency from promulgating as final certain energy-related rules that are estimated to cost more than $1billion and will cause significant adverse effects to the economy.

H.R. 1897. An act to promote freedom and democracy in Vietnam.

H.R. 2009. An act to prohibit the Secretary of the Treasury from enforcing the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act and the Health Care and Education Reconciliation Act of 2010.

H.R. 2879. An act to provide limitations on bonuses for Federal employees during sequestration, to provide for investigative leave requirements for members of the Senior Executive Service, to establish certain

procedures for conducting in-person or telephonic interactions by Executive branch employees with individuals, and for other purposes.

The message also announced that pursuant to section 803(a) of the Congressional Recognition for Excellence in Arts Education Act (2 U.S.C. 803(a)), and the order of the House of January 3, 2013, the Speaker appoints the following Member on the part of the House of Representatives to the Congressional Award Board: Mr. Hudson of North Carolina.

MESSAGE FROM THE HOUSE RECEIVED DURING ADJOURNMENT

Under the authority of the order of the Senate of January 3, 2013, the Secretary of the Senate, on August 2, 2013, during the adjournment of the Senate, received a message from the House of Representatives announcing that the House has agreed to the following concurrent resolution, without amendment:

S. Con. Res. 22. Concurrent resolution providing for a conditional adjournment or recess of the Senate and an adjournment of the House of Representatives.

The message also announced that the House agrees to the amendment of the Senate to the bill (H. R. 1344) to amend title 49, United States Code, to direct the Assistant Secretary of Homeland Security (Transportation Security Administration) to provide expedited air passenger screening to severely injured or disabled members of the Armed Forces and severely injured or disabled veterans, and for other purposes.

ENROLLED BILLS SIGNED

Under the authority of the order of the Senate of January 3, 2013, the Secretary of the Senate, on August 2, 2013, during the adjournment of the Senate, received a message from the House of Representatives announcing that the Speaker has signed the following enrolled bills:

H.R. 267. An act to improve hydropower, and for other purposes.

H.R. 678. An act to authorize all Bureau of Reclamation conduit facilities for hydropower development under Federal Reclamation law, and for other purposes.

H.R. 1171. An act to amend title 40, United States Code, to improve veterans service organizations access to Federal surplus personal property.

H.R. 1344. An act to amend title 49, United States Code, to direct the Assistant Secretary of Homeland Security (Transportation Security Administration) to provide expedited air passenger screening to severely injured or disabled members of the Armed Forces and severely injured or disabled veterans, and for other purposes.

H.R. 2576. An act to amend title 49, United States Code, to modify requirements relating to the availability of pipeline safety regulatory documents, and for other purposes.

Under the authority of the order of the Senate of January 3, 2013, the enrolled bills were subsequently signed on August 6, 2013, during the adjournment of the Senate, by the Acting President pro tempore (Mr. LEVIN).

MEASURES REFERRED

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

H.R. 367. An act to amend chapter 8 of title 5, United States Code, to provide that major rules of the executive branch shall have no force or effect unless a joint resolution of approval is enacted into law; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

H.R. 1582. An act to protect consumers by prohibiting the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency from promulgating as final certain energy-related rules that are estimated to cost more than $1 billion and will cause significant adverse effects to the economy; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

H.R. 1897. An act to promote freedom and democracy in Vietnam; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

H.R. 2879. An act to provide limitations on bonuses for Federal employees during sequestration, to provide for investigative leave requirements for members of the Senior Executive Service, to establish certain procedures for conducting in-person or telephonic interactions by Executive branch employees with individuals, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EXECUTIVE AND OTHER COMMUNICATIONS

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

EC–2609. A communication from the Program Manager, Health Resources and Services Administration, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''National Practitioner Data Bank and Privacy Act; Exempt Records System; Technical Correction'' (RIN0906–AA97) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on August 8, 2013; to the Committee on Finance.

EC–2610. 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 ''Appeals Settlement Guideline—New Qualified Plug-In Electric Drive Motor Vehicle Credit (Revision)'' (UIL: 30D.00–00) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on August 12, 2013; to the Committee on Finance.

EC–2611. 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 ''2013 Section 43 Inflation Adjustment'' (Notice 2013–50) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on August 12, 2013; to the Committee on Finance.

EC–2612. 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 ''Branded Prescription Drug Fee; Guidance for 2014 Fee Year'' (Notice 2013–51) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on August 12, 2013; to the Committee on Finance.

EC–2613. 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 ''Update of Weighted Average Interest Rates, Yield Curves, and Segment Rates'' (Notice 2013–52) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on August 12, 2013; to the Committee on Finance.

EC–2614. 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 ''Deadline to Submit Opinion and Advisory Letter Applications for Defined Benefit Mass Submitter Plans is Extended to January 31, 2014'' (Announcement 2013–37) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on August 8, 2013; to the Committee on Finance.

EC–2615. 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 ''Certain Transfers of Property to Regulated Investment Companies (RICs) and Real Estate Investment Trusts'' (RIN1545–BI84) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on August 8, 2013; to the Committee on Finance.

EC–2616. 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 ''Reimbursed Entertainment Expenses'' (RIN1545–BI83) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on August 8, 2013; to the Committee on Finance.

EC–2617. 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 ''Applicable Federal Rates—September 2013'' (Rev. Rul. 2013–18) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on August 22, 2013; to the Committee on Finance.

EC–2618. 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 ''Regulations Pertaining to the Disclosure of Return Information to Carry Out Eligibility Requirements for Health Insurance Affordability Programs'' (RIN1545–BK87) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on August 22, 2013; to the Committee on Finance.

EC–2619. 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 ''Uniform Late S Election Relief Revenue Procedure'' (Rev. Proc. 2013–30) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on August 22, 2013; to the Committee on Finance.

EC–2620. 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 ''Requirement of a Section 4959 Excise Tax Return and Time for Filing the Return'' (RIN1545–BL58) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on August 22, 2013; to the Committee on Finance.

EC–2621. A communication from the Regulations Coordinator, Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Medicare Program; Prospective Payment System and Consolidated Billing for Skilled Nursing Facilities for FY 2014'' (RIN0938–AR65) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the

Senate on August 5, 2013; to the Committee on Finance.

EC–2622. A communication from the Regulations Coordinator, Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Medicare Program; Inpatient Rehabilitation Facility Prospective Payment System for Federal Fiscal Year 2014'' (RIN0938–AR66) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on August 5, 2013; to the Committee on Finance.

EC–2623. A communication from the Regulations Coordinator, Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Medicare Program; FY 2014 Hospice Wage Index and Payment Rate Update; Hospice Quality Reporting Requirements; and Updates on Payment Reform'' (RIN0938–AR64) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on August 5, 2013; to the Committee on Finance.

EC–2624. A communication from the Regulations Coordinator, Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Medicare Program; Hospital Inpatient Prospective Payment Systems for Acute Care Hospitals and Long Term Care Hospital Prospective Payment System and Fiscal Year 2014 Rates; Quality Reporting Requirements for Specific Providers; Hospital Conditions of Participation; Payment Policies Related to Patient Status'' (RIN0938–AR53) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on August 5, 2013; to the Committee on Finance.

EC–2625. A communication from the President of the United States, transmitting, a legislative proposal regarding Authorization for the Use of United States Armed Forces in connection with the conflict in Syria, received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on August 31, 2013; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC–2626. A communication from the Director, Office of Management and Budget, Executive Office of the President, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled ''OMB Sequestration Update Report to the President and Congress for Fiscal Year 2014''; to the Committees on the Budget; and Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–2627. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Disapproval of State Implementation Plans; State of Utah; Interstate Transport of Pollution for the 2006 PM2.5 NAAQS'' (FRL No. 9844–9) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on August 6, 2013; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–2628. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Approval and Promulgation of State Implementation Plans: Alaska; Fairbanks Carbon Monoxide Limited Maintenance Plan and State Implementation Plan Revision'' (FRL No. 9844–8) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on August 6, 2013; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–2629. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Partial Disapproval of State Implementation Plan; Arizona; Regional Haze Requirements'' (FRL No. 9843–7) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on August 6, 2013; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–2630. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Approval and Promulgation of Air Quality Implementation Plans; Pennsylvania; Update of the Motor Vehicle Emissions Budgets for the Lancaster 1997 8-Hour Ozone Maintenance Area'' (FRL No. 9841–8) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on August 6, 2013; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–2631. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Approval and Promulgation of Air Quality Implementation Plans; Texas; Victoria County 1997 8-Hour Ozone Section 110 (a) (1) Maintenance Plan'' (FRL No. 9842–6) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on August 6, 2013; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–2632. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Significant New Use Rules on Certain Chemical Substances'' (FRL No. 9393–4) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on August 6, 2013; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–2633. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Disapproval of State Implementation Plan; Infrastructure Requirements for the 1997 8-Hour Ozone National Ambient Air Quality Standard; Montana'' (FRL No. 9843–2) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on August 6, 2013; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–2634. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Approval and Promulgation of Implementation Plans; Tennessee; Infrastructure Requirements for the 2008 Lead National Ambient Air Quality Standards'' (FRL No. 9845–2) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on August 6, 2013; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–2635. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Oil and Natural Gas Sector: Reconsideration of Certain Provisions of New Source Performance Standards'' (FRL No. 9844–4) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on August 6, 2013; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–2636. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Approval and Promulgation of Air Quality Implementation Plans; State of Wyoming; Revised General Conformity Requirements and an Associated Revision'' (FRL No. 9846–8) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on August 15, 2013; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–2637. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Revisions to California State Implementation Plan, Antelope Valley Air Quality Management District and Ventura County Air Pollution Control District'' (FRL No. 9845–5) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on August 15, 2013; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–2638. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Approval and Disapproval of Air Quality State Implementation Plans; Arizona; Regional Haze and Interstate Transport Requirements'' (FRL No. 9845–5) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on August 15, 2013; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–2639. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Amendment to Standards and Practices for All Appropriate Inquiries'' (FRL No. 9845–9) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on August 15, 2013; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–2640. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Regulation of Fuels and Fuel Additives: 2013 Renewable Fuel Standards'' (FRL No. 9834–5) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on August 15, 2013; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–2641. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Electronic Reporting of Toxics Release Inventory Data'' (FRL No. 9835–5) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on August 15, 2013; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–2642. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Approval and Promulgation of Air Quality Implementation Plans; Nevada; Regional Haze Federal Implementation Plan; Extension of BART Compliance Date for Reid Gardner Generating Station'' (FRL No. 9843–8) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on August 22, 2013; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–2643. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Approval and Promulgation of Implementation Plans; State of Iowa'' (FRL No. 9900–39–Region 7) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on August 22, 2013; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–2644. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Approval and Promulgation of Air Quality Implementation Plans; Ohio; Redesignation of the Ohio Portions of the Parkersburg-Marietta and Wheeling Areas to Attainment of the 1997 Annual Fine Particulate Matter Standard'' (FRL No. 9900–28–Region 5)

received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on August 22, 2013; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–2645. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Approval and Promulgation of Air Quality Implementation Plans; Wisconsin; Disapproval of PM2.5 Permitting Requirements; Correction'' (FRL No. 9900–30 – Region 5) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on August 22, 2013; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–2646. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Greenhouse Gas Reporting Program: Final Amendments and Confidentiality Determinations for Subpart I'' (FRL No. 9845–6) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on August 22, 2013; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–2647. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Heavy-Duty Engine and Vehicle and Nonroad Technical Amendments'' (FRL No. 9900–11–OAR) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on August 27, 2013; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–2648. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Virginia: Final Authorization of State Hazardous Waste Management Program Revisions'' (FRL No. 9900–47–Region 3) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on August 28, 2013; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–2649. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Approval and Promulgation of Air Quality Implementation Plans; Connecticut; NOx Emission Trading Orders as Single Source SIP Revisions'' (FRL No. 9900–63–Region 1) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on August 29, 2013; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–2650. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Determination of Attainment for the West Central Pinal Nonattainment Area for the 2006 Fine Particle Standard; Arizona; Determination Regarding Applicability of Clean Air Act Requirements'' (FRL No. 9900–58–Region 9) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on August 29, 2013; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–2651. A communication from the Division Chief of Regulatory Affairs, Bureau of Land Management, Department of the Interior, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Minerals Management: Adjustment of Cost Recovery Fees'' (RIN1004–AE32) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on August 16, 2013; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–2652. A communication from the Division Chief of Regulatory Affairs, Bureau of Land Management, Department of the Interior, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Application Procedures, Execution and Filing of Forms: Correction of State Office Address for Filings and Recordings, Including Proper Offices for Recording of Mining Claims; New Mexico/Oklahoma/Texas/Kansas'' (RIN1004–AE33) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on August 02, 2013; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–2653. A communication from the Deputy Secretary, Bureau of Land Management, Department of the Interior, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Commercial Filming and Similar Projects and Still Photography Activities'' (RIN1004–AD30) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on August 27, 2013; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–2654. A communication from the Director, Office of the Secretary, Department of the Interior, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Freedom of Information Act Regulations'' (RIN1093–AA15) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on August 15, 2013; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–2655. A communication from the Chief of the Endangered Species Listing Branch, Fish and Wildlife Service, Department of the Interior, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Endangered and Threatened Wildlife and Plants; Determination of Endangered Status for Sphaeralcea gierischii (Gierish Mallow) Throughout Its Range'' (RIN1018–AY58) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on August 8, 2013; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–2656. A communication from the Chief of the Endangered Species Listing Branch, Fish and Wildlife Service, Department of the Interior, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Endangered and Threatened Wildlife and Plants; Designation of Critical Habitat for Sphaeralcea gierischii (Gierish Mallow)'' (RIN1018–AZ46) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on August 8, 2013; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–2657. A communication from the Chief of the Branch of Listing, Fish and Wildlife Service, Department of the Interior, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Endangered and Threatened Wildlife and Plants; Endangered Species Status for Diamond Darter'' (RIN1018–AY12) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on August 8, 2013; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–2658. A communication from the Acting Chief of the Branch of Recovery and State Grant, Fish and Wildlife Service, Department of the Interior, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Endangered and Threatened Wildlife and Plants; Establishment of a Nonessential Experimental Population of Topeka Shiner (Notropis topeka) in Northern Missouri'' (RIN1018–AY45) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on August 8, 2013; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–2659. A communication from the Acting Chief of the Branch of Recovery and State Grant, Fish and Wildlife Service, Department of the Interior, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Endangered and Threatened Wildlife and Plants; Reclassification of Acmispon dendroideus var. traskiae (=Lotus d. subsp. traskiae) and Castilleja grisea as Threatened Throughtout Their Ranges'' (RIN1018–AY04) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on August 8, 2013; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–2660. A communication from the Director of Congressional Affairs, Nuclear Reactor Regulation, Nuclear Regulatory Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Guidance for Assessment of Flooding Hazards Due to Dam Failure'' (JLD–ISG–2013–01) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on August 8, 2013; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–2661. A communication from the Director of Congressional Affairs, Office of the General Counsel, Nuclear Regulatory Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Guidance for Assessment of Flooding Hazards Due to Dam Failure'' (JLD–ISG–2013–01) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on August 16, 2013; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–2662. A communication from the Director of Congressional Affairs, Office of Administration, Nuclear Regulatory Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''The Rulemaking Process'' (Management Directive 6.3) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on August 20, 2013; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–2663. A communication from the Chairman, Nuclear Regulatory Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled ''Report to Congress on Abnormal Occurrences: Fiscal Year (FY) 2012 Revision 1''; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–2664. A communication from the Assistant Secretary of the Army (Civil Works), transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of the Secretary of the Army's recommendation to increase the authorized total project cost of the Corpus Christi Ship Chanel, Texas, Deep-Draft Navigation and Ecosystem Restoration Project; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–2665. A communication from the Acting Senior Procurement Executive, Office of Acquisition Policy, General Services Administration, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Federal Acquisition Regulation; Federal Acquisition Circular 2005–69; Introduction'' (FAC 2005–69) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on August 1, 2013; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–2666. A communication from the Acting Senior Procurement Executive, Office of Acquisition Policy, General Services Administration, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Federal Acquisition Regulation; Iran Threat Reduction'' (RIN9000–AM44) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on August 1, 2013; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–2667. A communication from the Acting Senior Procurement Executive, Office of Acquisition Policy, General Services Administration, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Federal Acquisition Regulation; Definition of Contingency Operation'' (RIN9000–AM48) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on August 1, 2013; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–2668. A communication from the Acting Senior Procurement Executive, Office of Acquisition Policy, General Services Administration, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Federal Acquisition Regulation; Documenting Contractor

Performance'' (RIN9000–AM09) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on August 1, 2013; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–2669. A communication from the Acting Senior Procurement Executive, Office of Acquisition Policy, General Services Administration, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Federal Acquisition Regulation; Least Developed Countries that are Designated Countries'' (RIN9000–AM62) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on August 1, 2013; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–2670. A communication from the Acting Senior Procurement Executive, Office of Acquisition Policy, General Services Administration, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Federal Acquisition Regulation; Update to Biobased Reporting Requirements'' (RIN9000–AM63) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on August 1, 2013; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–2671. A communication from the Acting Senior Procurement Executive, Office of Acquisition Policy, General Services Administration, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Federal Acquisition Regulation; Federal Acquisition Circular 2005–69, Technical Amendments'' (FAC 2005–69) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on August 1, 2013; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–2672. A communication from the Acting Senior Procurement Executive, Office of Acquisition Policy, General Services Administration, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Federal Acquisition Regulation; Federal Acquisition Circular 2005–69, Small Entity Compliance Guide'' (FAC2005–69) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on August 1, 2013; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–2673. A communication from the Associate Attorney General Counsel for General Law, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to a vacancy in the position of Assistant Secretary, U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement, received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on August 20, 2013; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–2674. A communication from the General Counsel, Executive Office of the President, Office of Management and Budget, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to a vacancy in the position of Intellectual Property Enforcement Coordinator, Office of Management and Budget, received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on August 27, 2013; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–2675. A communication from the Acting Director, Office of Personnel Management, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Pay Under the General Schedule and Recruitment, Relocation, and Retention Incentives'' (RIN3206–AM13) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on August 29, 2013; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–2676. A communication from the Chairman of the Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report on D.C. Act 20–112, ''Vending Regulation Temporary Amendment Act of 2013''; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–2677. A communication from the Chairman of the Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report on D.C. Act 20–119, ''Telehealth Reimbursement Act of 2013''; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–2678. A communication from the Chairman of the Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report on D.C. Act 20–118, ''Workers' Compensation Statute of Limitations Temporary Amendment Act of 2013''; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–2679. A communication from the Chairman of the Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report on D.C. Act 20–121, ''Closing of a Public Street and Alley and Elimination of Building Restriction Lines in and abutting Squares 5641 and N–5641, S.O. 07–2117, Act of 2013''; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–2680. A communication from the Chairman of the Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report on D.C. Act 20–122, ''Delta Sigma Theta Way Designation Act of 2013''; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–2681. A communication from the Chairman of the Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report on D.C. Act 20–123, ''Atlas Court Alley Designation Act of 2013''; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–2682. A communication from the Chairman of the Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report on D.C. Act 20–134, ''Board of Elections Petition Circulation Requirements Amendment Act of 2013''; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–2683. A communication from the Chairman of the Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report on D.C. Act 20–135, ''Dimitar Peshev Plaza Designation Act of 2013''; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–2684. A communication from the Chairman of the Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report on D.C. Act 20–136, ''Capitol Hill Business Improvement District Amendment Act of 2013''; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–2685. A communication from the District of Columbia Auditor, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled, ''District of Columbia Agencies' Compliance with Fiscal Year 2013 Small Business Enterprise Expenditure Goals through the 2nd Quarter of Fiscal Year 2013''; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–2686. A communication from the Acting Chairman of the National Transportation Safety Board, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Board's Fiscal Year 2012 Annual Report on The Notification and Federal Employee Antidiscrimination and Retaliation Act of 2002; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–2687. A communication from the Executive Director for Operations, Nuclear Regulatory Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Uniform Resource Locator (URL) for the Commission's commercial activities inventory; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–2688. A communication from the Acting Secretary of Labor, Department of Labor, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Department's fiscal year 2012 annual report relative to the Notification and Federal Employee Antidiscrimination and Retaliation Act of 2002; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–2689. A communication from the Chairman of the Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report on D.C. Act 20–120, ''Testing Integrity Act of 2013''; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES DURING ADJOURNMENT

Under the authority of the order of the Senate of August 1, 2013, the following reports of committees were submitted on September 4, 2013:

By Mr. SANDERS, from the Committee on Veterans' Affairs, without amendment:

S. 572. A bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to clarify the conditions under which certain persons may be treated as adjudicated mentally incompetent for certain purposes (Rept. No. 113–86).

S. 893. A bill to provide for an increase, effective December 1, 2013, in the rates of compensation for veterans with service-connected disabilities and the rates of dependency and indemnity compensation for the survivors of certain disabled veterans, and for other purposes (Rept. No. 113–87).

By Ms. STABENOW, from the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry:

Report to accompany S. 954, An original bill to reauthorize agricultural programs through 2018 (Rept. No. 113–88).

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. THUNE (for himself, Mr. ENZI, Mr. BARRASSO, Mr. ALEXANDER, Mr. RUBIO, Mr. ISAKSON, Mr. SCOTT, and Mr. MCCONNELL):

S. 1487. A bill to limit the availability of tax credits and reductions in cost-sharing under the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act to individuals who receive health insurance coverage pursuant to the provisions of a Taft-Hartley plan; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. COATS (for himself, Mr. MCCONNELL, Mr. ALEXANDER, Mr. BOOZMAN, Mr. COBURN, Mr. FLAKE, Mr. JOHANNS, Mr. BLUNT, Mr. ISAKSON, and Ms. AYOTTE):

S. 1488. A bill to delay the application of the individual health insurance mandate, to delay the application of the employer health insurance mandate, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Finance.

SUBMISSION OF CONCURRENT AND SENATE RESOLUTIONS

The following concurrent resolutions and Senate resolutions were read, and referred (or acted upon), as indicated:

By Mr. NELSON:

S. Res. 218. A resolution honoring the legacy of A. Philip Randolph and saluting his efforts on behalf of the people of the United States to form ''a more perfect union''; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. CARDIN:

S. Res. 219. A resolution calling for Syrian President Bashar al-Assad and others to be tried before the International Criminal Court for committing war crimes and crimes against humanity; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

By Mr. REID (for himself and Mr. MCCONNELL):

S. Res. 220. A resolution to authorize representation by the Senate Legal Counsel in the case of Wade v. Miller, et al.; considered and agreed to.

ADDITIONAL COSPONSORS

S. 54

At the request of Mr. LEAHY, the name of the Senator from Massachusetts (Mr. MARKEY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 54, a bill to increase public safety by punishing and deterring firearms trafficking.

S. 119

At the request of Mrs. BOXER, the names of the Senator from Vermont (Mr. SANDERS) and the Senator from Massachusetts (Mr. MARKEY) were added as cosponsors of S. 119, a bill to prohibit the application of certain restrictive eligibility requirements to foreign nongovernmental organizations with respect to the provision of assistance under part I of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961.

S. 122

At the request of Mr. CHAMBLISS, the name of the Senator from Kansas (Mr. ROBERTS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 122, a bill to promote freedom, fairness, and economic opportunity by repealing the income tax and other taxes, abolishing the Internal Revenue Service, and enacting a national sales tax to be administered primarily by the States.

S. 123

At the request of Mrs. GILLIBRAND, the name of the Senator from Massachusetts (Mr. MARKEY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 123, a bill to modernize voter registration, promote access to voting for individuals with disabilities, protect the ability of individuals to exercise the right to vote in elections for Federal office, and for other purposes.

S. 264

At the request of Ms. STABENOW, the name of the Senator from Massachusetts (Mr. MARKEY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 264, a bill to expand access to community mental health centers and improve the quality of mental health care for all Americans.

S. 314

At the request of Ms. STABENOW, her name was added as a cosponsor of S. 314, a bill to amend the Public Health Service Act to improve the health of children and help better understand and enhance awareness about unexpected sudden death in early life.

At the request of Mrs. HAGAN, her name was added as a cosponsor of S. 314, supra.

S. 346

At the request of Mr. TESTER, the name of the Senator from Georgia (Mr. CHAMBLISS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 346, a bill to amend title 10, United States Code, to permit veterans who have a service-connected, permanent disability rated as total to travel on military aircraft in the same manner and to the same extent as retired members of the Armed Forces entitled to such travel.

S. 367

At the request of Mr. CARDIN, the name of the Senator from North Carolina (Mrs. HAGAN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 367, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to repeal the Medicare outpatient rehabilitation therapy caps.

S. 373

At the request of Mrs. SHAHEEN, the name of the Senator from Colorado (Mr. UDALL) was added as a cosponsor of S. 373, a bill to amend titles 10, 32, 37, and 38 of the United States Code, to add a definition of spouse for purposes of military personnel policies and military and veteran benefits that recognizes new State definitions of spouse.

S. 375

At the request of Mr. TESTER, the name of the Senator from Indiana (Mr. DONNELLY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 375, a bill to require Senate candidates to file designations, statements, and reports in electronic form.

S. 381

At the request of Mr. BROWN, the names of the Senator from Georgia (Mr. CHAMBLISS) and the Senator from Arkansas (Mr. PRYOR) were added as cosponsors of S. 381, a bill to award a Congressional Gold Medal to the World War II members of the ''Doolittle Tokyo Raiders'', for outstanding heroism, valor, skill, and service to the United States in conducting the bombings of Tokyo.

S. 398

At the request of Ms. COLLINS, the names of the Senator from North Carolina (Mrs. HAGAN) and the Senator from Hawaii (Ms. HIRONO) were added as cosponsors of S. 398, a bill to establish the Commission to Study the Potential Creation of a National Women's History Museum, and for other purposes.

S. 411

At the request of Mr. CRAPO, the names of the Senator from Mississippi (Mr. WICKER) and the Senator from Montana (Mr. TESTER) were added as cosponsors of S. 411, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to extend and modify the railroad track maintenance credit.

S. 412

At the request of Ms. LANDRIEU, the name of the Senator from Massachusetts (Mr. MARKEY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 412, a bill to authorize certain major medical facility leases for the Department of Veterans Affairs, and for other purposes.

S. 569

At the request of Mr. BROWN, the names of the Senator from Alaska (Mr. BEGICH) and the Senator from Michigan (Ms. STABENOW) were added as cosponsors of S. 569, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to count a period of receipt of outpatient observation services in a hospital toward satisfying the 3-day inpatient hospital requirement for coverage of skilled nursing facility services under Medicare.

S. 623

At the request of Mr. CARDIN, the name of the Senator from Massachusetts (Mr. MARKEY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 623, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to ensure the continued access of Medicare beneficiaries to diagnostic imaging services.

S. 641

At the request of Mr. WYDEN, the name of the Senator from Alaska (Mr. BEGICH) was added as a cosponsor of S. 641, a bill to amend the Public Health Service Act to increase the number of permanent faculty in palliative care at accredited allopathic and osteopathic medical schools, nursing schools, and other programs, to promote education in palliative care and hospice, and to support the development of faculty careers in academic palliative medicine.

S. 653

At the request of Mr. BLUNT, the name of the Senator from Kansas (Mr. MORAN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 653, a bill to provide for the establishment of the Special Envoy to Promote Religious Freedom of Religious Minorities in the Near East and South Central Asia.

S. 709

At the request of Ms. STABENOW, the name of the Senator from North Carolina (Mrs. HAGAN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 709, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to increase diagnosis of Alzheimer's disease and related dementias, leading to better care and outcomes for Americans living with Alzheimer's disease and related dementias.

S. 734

At the request of Mr. NELSON, the name of the Senator from Massachusetts (Mr. MARKEY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 734, a bill to amend title 10, United States Code, to repeal the requirement for reduction of survivor annuities under the Survivor Benefit Plan by veterans' dependency and indemnity compensation.

S. 783

At the request of Mr. WYDEN, the name of the Senator from Minnesota (Ms. KLOBUCHAR) was added as a cosponsor of S. 783, a bill to amend the Helium Act to improve helium stewardship, and for other purposes.

S. 896

At the request of Mr. BEGICH, the name of the Senator from Oregon (Mr. MERKLEY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 896, a bill to amend title II of the Social Security Act to repeal the Government pension offset and windfall elimination provisions.

S. 917

At the request of Mr. CARDIN, the name of the Senator from Virginia (Mr. WARNER) was added as a cosponsor of 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.

S. 955

At the request of Mr. THUNE, the name of the Senator from Georgia (Mr. ISAKSON) was added as a cosponsor of S. 955, a bill to amend the Public Health Service Act to provide liability protections for volunteer practitioners at health centers under section 330 of such Act.

S. 1007

At the request of Mr. KING, the name of the Senator from Oregon (Mr. MERKLEY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1007, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to include biomass heating appliances for tax credits available for energy-efficient building property and energy property.

S. 1012

At the request of Mr. BLUNT, the name of the Senator from Alaska (Ms. MURKOWSKI) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1012, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to improve operations of recovery auditors under the Medicare integrity program, to increase transparency and accuracy in audits conducted by contractors, and for other purposes.

S. 1053

At the request of Mr. WYDEN, the name of the Senator from Maryland (Mr. CARDIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1053, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to strengthen and protect Medicare hospice programs.

S. 1064

At the request of Mr. BROWN, the name of the Senator from Hawaii (Ms. HIRONO) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1064, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to provide for treatment of clinical psychologists as physicians for purposes of furnishing clinical psychologist services under the Medicare program.

S. 1069

At the request of Mrs. GILLIBRAND, the names of the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. MENENDEZ) and the Senator from Vermont (Mr. SANDERS) were added as cosponsors of S. 1069, a bill to prohibit discrimination in adoption or foster care placements based on the sexual orientation, gender identity, or marital status of any prospective adoptive or foster parent, or the sexual orientation or gender identity of the child involved.

S. 1114

At the request of Mr. BROWN, the name of the Senator from Maine (Mr. KING) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1114, a bill to provide for identification of misaligned currency, require action to correct the misalignment, and for other purposes.

S. 1130

At the request of Mr. MERKLEY, the name of the Senator from New York (Mr. SCHUMER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1130, a bill to require the Attorney General to disclose each decision, order, or opinion of a Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Court that includes significant legal interpretation of section 501 or 702 of the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act of 1978 unless such disclosure is not in the national security interest of the United States and for other purposes.

S. 1149

At the request of Mr. NELSON, the name of the Senator from Massachusetts (Mr. MARKEY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1149, a bill to reauthorize the ban on undetectable firearms, and to extend the ban to undetectable firearm receivers and undetectable ammunition magazines.

S. 1204

At the request of Mr. COBURN, the name of the Senator from Wyoming (Mr. ENZI) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1204, a bill to amend the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act to protect rights of conscience with regard to requirements for coverage of specific items and services, to amend the Public Health Service Act to prohibit certain abortion-related discrimination in governmental activities, and for other purposes.

S. 1217

At the request of Mr. CORKER, the name of the Senator from Georgia (Mr. CHAMBLISS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1217, a bill to provide secondary mortgage market reform, and for other purposes.

S. 1226

At the request of Mr. BROWN, the name of the Senator from Illinois (Mr. DURBIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1226, a bill to promote industry growth and competitiveness and to improve worker training, retention, and advancement, and for other purposes.

S. 1228

At the request of Mr. WYDEN, the name of the Senator from Wyoming (Mr. ENZI) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1228, a bill to establish a program to provide incentive payments to participating Medicare beneficiaries who voluntarily establish and maintain better health.

S. 1271

At the request of Mr. RUBIO, the name of the Senator from Illinois (Mr. KIRK) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1271, a bill to direct the President to establish guidelines for the United States foreign assistance programs, and for other purposes.

S. 1292

At the request of Mr. CRUZ, the names of the Senator from Alabama (Mr. SESSIONS) and the Senator from Idaho (Mr. CRAPO) were added as cosponsors of S. 1292, a bill to prohibit the funding of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act.

S. 1300

At the request of Mr. FLAKE, the name of the Senator from New Mexico (Mr. HEINRICH) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1300, a bill to amend the Healthy Forests Restoration Act of 2003 to provide for the conduct of stewardship end result contracting projects.

S. 1302

At the request of Mr. HARKIN, the names of the Senator from Florida (Mr. NELSON) and the Senator from South Dakota (Mr. JOHNSON) were added as cosponsors of S. 1302, a bill to amend the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974 and the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to provide for cooperative and small employer charity pension plans.

S. 1310

At the request of Mr. PORTMAN, the name of the Senator from South Dakota (Mr. THUNE) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1310, a bill to require Senate confirmation of Inspector General of the Bureau of Consumer Financial Protection, and for other purposes.

S. 1320

At the request of Mr. DONNELLY, the name of the Senator from Colorado (Mr. BENNET) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1320, a bill to establish a tiered hiring preference for members of the reserve components of the armed forces.

S. 1406

At the request of Ms. AYOTTE, the name of the Senator from Louisiana (Ms. LANDRIEU) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1406, a bill to amend the Horse Protection Act to designate additional unlawful acts under the Act, strengthen penalties for violations of the Act, improve Department of Agriculture enforcement of the Act, and for other purposes.

S. 1423

At the request of Mr. UDALL of Colorado, the name of the Senator from Colorado (Mr. BENNET) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1423, a bill to amend the Energy Employees Occupational Illness Compensation Program Act of 2000 to strengthen the quality control measures in place for part B lung disease claims and to establish the Advisory Board on Toxic Substances and Worker Health for the contractor employee compensation program under subtitle E of such Act.

S. 1455

At the request of Mr. COBURN, the names of the Senator from Arizona (Mr. FLAKE), the Senator from Wisconsin (Mr. JOHNSON), the Senator from Missouri (Mr. BLUNT) and the Senator from New Hampshire (Ms. AYOTTE) were added as cosponsors of S. 1455, a bill to condition the provision of premium and cost-sharing subsidies under the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act upon a certification that a program to verify household income is operational.

S. 1456

At the request of Ms. AYOTTE, the names of the Senator from Nebraska (Mr. JOHANNS) and the Senator from New York (Mrs. GILLIBRAND) were added as cosponsors of S. 1456, a bill to award the Congressional Gold Medal to Shimon Peres.

S.J. RES. 2

At the request of Mr. VITTER, the name of the Senator from South Carolina (Mr. SCOTT) was added as a cosponsor of S.J. Res. 2, a joint resolution proposing an amendment to the Constitution of the United States relative to limiting the number of terms that a Member of Congress may serve.

S.J. RES. 19

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.J. Res. 19, a joint resolution proposing an amendment to the Constitution of the United States relating to contributions and expenditures intended to affect elections.

S. RES. 213

At the request of Mr. MENENDEZ, the name of the Senator from South Carolina (Mr. GRAHAM) was added as a cosponsor of S. Res. 213, a resolution expressing support for the free and peaceful exercise of representative democracy in Venezuela and condemning violence and intimidation against the country's political opposition.

SUBMITTED RESOLUTIONS

SENATE RESOLUTION 218—HONORING THE LEGACY OF A. PHILIP RANDOLPH AND SALUTING HIS EFFORTS ON BEHALF OF THE PEOPLE OF THE UNITED STATES TO FORM ''A MORE PERFECT UNION''

Mr. NELSON submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on the Judiciary:

S. RES. 218

Whereas A. Philip Randolph was born on April 15, 1889, and grew up in Jacksonville, Florida;

Whereas Mr. Randolph attended the Cookman Institute, one of the first high schools for African Americans in the United States, located in Jacksonville, Florida, and graduated valedictorian of his class in 1907;

Whereas Mr. Randolph was an inspirational person who demonstrated an unyielding struggle for human rights on behalf of marginalized groups in society;

Whereas Mr. Randolph was active in both the civil rights movement and the labor movement in the United States;

Whereas Mr. Randolph was a tireless and highly effective advocate for African-American rights during the 1930s and 1940s, focusing particularly on employment rights;

Whereas Mr. Randolph led the effort to organize the porters of the Pullman Company, one of the largest railroad car companies in the United States at that time;

Whereas Mr. Randolph founded the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters, an organization that advanced the rights of African-American workers to dignity, respect, and a decent livelihood;

Whereas Mr. Randolph urged President Franklin Roosevelt to end employment discrimination against African Americans in the Federal Government;

Whereas, after the urging of Mr. Randolph, President Roosevelt issued Executive Order 8802 (6 Fed. Reg. 3109) on June 25, 1941, declaring that ''there shall be no discrimination in the employment of workers in defense industries and in government because of race, creed, color, or national origin'' and established the Fair Employment Practices Commission to oversee that order;

Whereas Mr. Randolph urged President Harry Truman to end segregation in the Armed Forces of the United States;

Whereas, after the urging of Mr. Randolph, President Truman issued Executive Order 9981 (13 Fed. Reg. 4313) on July 26, 1948, declaring that ''[T]here shall be equality of treatment and opportunity for all persons in the armed services without regard to race, color, religion or national origin. This policy shall be put into effect as rapidly as possible, having due regard to the time required to effectuate any necessary changes without impairing efficiency or morale.'' and closed the segregated Marine Corps boot camp at Montford Point in Jacksonville, North Carolina;

Whereas Mr. Randolph was actively involved in the planning and organization of many civil rights efforts, including the prayer pilgrimage for freedom in 1957, the marches for school integration in 1958 and 1959, and the March on Washington in 1963;

Whereas Mr. Randolph was the first speaker of the day at the March on Washington on August 28, 1963, during which Dr. Martin Luther King delivered his famous ''I Have a Dream'' speech;

Whereas the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (Public Law 88–352; 78 Stat. 241), the Voting Rights Act of 1965 (Public Law 89–110; 79 Stat. 437), and the Civil Rights Act of 1968 (Public Law 90–284; 82 Stat. 73) are the fruits of the seeds that Mr. Randolph and others like him sowed many years before;

Whereas Mr. Randolph helped to found the Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights;

Whereas Amtrak named one of its luxury sleeping cars, the Superliner II Deluxe Sleeper 32503, the ''A. Philip Randolph'' in honor of Mr. Randolph;

Whereas a bust in the likeness of Mr. Randolph stands in Union Station in Washington, DC, as a tribute to his work on behalf of African-American rail workers;

Whereas, in 1964, Mr. Randolph was awarded the Presidential Medal of Freedom by President Lyndon Johnson;

Whereas the civil rights revolution was launched, in no small part, based on the efforts of Mr. Randolph and the work of statesmen like him; and

Whereas, upon the celebration of the 50th anniversary of the March on Washington in 2013, it is fitting to honor the work of Mr. Randolph and his commitment to a better United States: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate honors the legacy of A. Philip Randolph and salutes his efforts on behalf of the people of the United States to form ''a more perfect union''.

SENATE RESOLUTION 219—CALLING FOR SYRIAN PRESIDENT BASHAR AL-ASSAD AND OTHERS TO BE TRIED BEFORE THE INTERNATIONAL CRIMINAL COURT FOR COMMITTING WAR CRIMES AND CRIMES AGAINST HUMANITY

Mr. CARDIN submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations:

S. RES. 219

Whereas the United States intelligence community assessed with high confidence that the Government of Syria carried out a chemical weapons attack in the Damascus suburbs on August 21, 2013, killing 1,429 Syrians;

Whereas the United Nations estimates that, since the uprising in Syria began in March 2011, more than 100,000 people, mainly civilians, have been killed;

Whereas Syria and neighboring countries are facing a growing humanitarian crisis, with 2,000,000 Syrians having fled the country, and millions more being displaced internally;

Whereas, under the command of President Bashar al-Assad, Syrian government forces and shabiha forces have been accused of gross human rights violations, including heavy shelling of civilian areas, widespread pillaging and the burning of homes, denial of basic human needs such as food, water, and medical care, mass torture and arrests, unlawful detention, and brutal execution-style killings;

Whereas terrorist groups operating in Syria have reportedly engaged in kidnapping for ransom, violence, summary executions, torture, and other gross human rights violations against civilians;

Whereas the United States has implemented a series of sanctions through five Executive orders pertaining to the situation in Syria;

Whereas the United Nations Human Rights Council has held four special sessions, issued four reports of the Independent International Commission of Inquiry on the Syrian Arab Republic, and adopted seven resolutions devoted to the situation in Syria;

Whereas the United Nations Security Council has adopted three resolutions authorizing an advance team to monitor the ceasefire in Syria and a short-lived United Nations Supervision Mission in Syria (UNSMIS);

Whereas the United Nations General Assembly has adopted five resolutions regarding human rights and the situation in Syria;

Whereas the situation in Syria continues to deteriorate despite such actions by the international community;

Whereas United Nations Security Council Resolution 1540 (2004) prohibits all United Nations member states, including Syria, from providing any form of support to non-state actors that attempt to develop, acquire, possess, transfer, or use chemical weapons or other weapons of mass destruction, and it reaffirms that weapon of mass destruction proliferation ''constitutes a threat to international peace and security'';

Whereas, on February 22, 2012, the United Nations Independent International Commission of Inquiry on the Syrian Arab Republic found in its second report that, after further review, ''a reliable body of evidence exists that, consistent with other verified circumstances, provides reasonable grounds to believe that particular individuals, including commanding officers and officials at the highest levels of Government, bear responsibility for crimes against humanity and other gross human rights violations'';

Whereas, on February 5, 2013, the United Nations Independent International Commission of Inquiry on the Syrian Arab Republic found in its report that Syrian forces and affiliated militia committed crimes against humanity, war crimes, and gross violations of international human rights and that anti-government forces committed war crimes;

Whereas the February 5, 2013, United Nations Independent International Commission of Inquiry on the Syrian Arab Republic found that government forces, affiliated militia, and anti-government forces have violated the rights of children and that government forces and affiliated militia have committed widespread sexual violence;

Whereas the report recommends that the United Nations Security Council ''take appropriate action and commit to human rights and the rule of law by means of referral to justice, possibly to the International Criminal Court, bearing in mind that, in the context of the Syrian Arab Republic, only the Security Council is competent to refer the situation to the Court'';

Whereas the United Nations conducted an investigation into the alleged August 21, 2013, chemical weapons attack in the Damascus suburbs;

Whereas the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights has repeatedly called on the United Nations Security Council to consider referring the situation of Syria to the International Criminal Court; and

Whereas the International Criminal Court is an independent body whose mission is to investigate and prosecute individuals for crimes within its jurisdiction, including crimes against humanity, war crimes, and genocide: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) strongly condemns the ongoing violence, the use of chemical weapons, and the systematic gross human rights violations carried out by Syrian government forces under direction of President Bashar al-Assad as well as abuses committed by other groups involved in the civil war in Syria;

(2) expresses its support for the people of Syria seeking peaceful democratic change; and

(3) calls on the United Nations Security Council, based on evidence that war crimes and crimes against humanity have been perpetrated in Syria, to refer the situation of Syria to the International Criminal Court.

SENATE RESOLUTION 220—TO AUTHORIZE REPRESENTATION BY THE SENATE LEGAL COUNSEL IN THE CASE OF WADE V. MILLER, ET AL

Mr. REID (for himself and Mr. MCCONNELL) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 220

Whereas, ninety-five current and former Senators are named as defendants in the case of Wade v. Miller, et al., No. 13–708, now pending in the United States District Court for the District of Columbia;

Whereas, pursuant to sections 703(a) and 704(a)(1) of the Ethics in Government Act of 1978, 2 U.S.C. §§288b(a) and 288c(a)(1), the Senate may direct its counsel to defend current and former Members of the Senate in civil actions relating to their official responsibilities: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate Legal Counsel is authorized to represent the ninety-five current and former Senators named as defendants in the case of Wade v. Miller, et al.

AMENDMENTS SUBMITTED AND PROPOSED

SA 1849. Mr. PAUL submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the joint resolution S.J. Res. 21, to authorize the limited and specified use of the United States Armed Forces against Syria; which was ordered to lie on the table.

TEXT OF AMENDMENTS

SA 1849. Mr. PAUL submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the joint resolution S.J. Res. 21, to authorize the limited and specified use of the United States Armed Forces against Syria; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. ____. TERMINATION OF THE PRESIDENT'S AUTHORITY TO USE FORCE AGAINST THE GOVERNMENT OF SYRIA.

Notwithstanding any other provision of law, the authority to use force resides in Congress, and the President does not have authority to carry out the military action set forth in this resolution absent passage of the resolution.

NOTICES OF HEARINGS

COMMITTEE ON INDIAN AFFAIRS

Ms. CANTWELL. Mr. President, I would like to announce that the Committee on Indian Affairs will meet during the session of the Senate on September 10, 2013, in room SD–628 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building, at 2:30 p.m., to conduct a legislative hearing to receive testimony on the following bills: S. 1448, to provide for equitable compensation to the Spokane Tribe of Indians of the Spokane Reservation for the use of tribal land for the production of hydropower by the Grand Coulee Dam, and for other purposes; S. 1219, to authorize the Pechanga Band of Luiseno Mission Indians Water Rights Settlement, and for other purposes; and S. 1447, to make technical corrections to certain Native American water rights settlements in the State of New Mexico, and for other purposes.

Those wishing additional information may contact the Indian Affairs Committee at (202) 224–2251.

COMMITTEE ON INDIAN AFFAIRS

Ms. CANTWELL. Mr. President, I would like to announce that the Committee on Indian Affairs will meet during the session of the Senate on September 10, 2013, in room SD–628 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building, at 2:30 p.m., to conduct a business meeting to authorize expenditures by the Committee through February of 2015.

Those wishing additional information may contact the Indian Affairs Committee at (202) 224–2251.

COMMITTEE ON HEALTH, EDUCATION, LABOR, AND PENSIONS

Mr. HARKIN. Mr. President, I wish to announce that the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions will meet in open session on Thursday, September 12, 2013, at 10 a.m. in room 430 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building to conduct a hearing entitled ''Dental Crisis in America: The Need to Address Cost''

For further information regarding this meeting, please contact Sophie Kasimow of the committee staff on (202) 224–5480.

COMMITTEE ON RULES AND ADMINISTRATION

Mr. SCHUMER, Mr. President, I wish to announce that the Committee on Rules and Administration will meet at 10 a.m., on Tuesday, September 10, 2013, to consider the nominations of Ann Miller Ravel and Lee E. Goodman to be members of the Federal Election Commission and to consider an original resolution authorizing expenditures by the Senate Committee on Rules and Administration for the remainder of the 113th Congress.

For further information regarding this meeting, please contact Adam Topper at the Rules and Administration Committee at 202–224–6352,

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

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

AUTHORIZING SENATE LEGAL COUNSEL

Mr. CASEY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the consideration of S. Res. 220 which was submitted earlier today.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the resolution by title.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 220) to authorize representation by the Senate Legal Counsel in the case of Wade v. Miller, et al.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the resolution.

Mr. CASEY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent the resolution be agreed to, the preamble be agreed to, and the motions to reconsider be laid upon the table, with no intervening action or debate.

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

The resolution (S. Res. 220) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

(The resolution, with its preamble, is printed in today's RECORD under ''Submitted Resolutions.'')

ORDERS FOR TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 10, 2011

Mr. CASEY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that when the Senate completes its business today, it adjourn until 10 a.m. on Tuesday, September 10, 2013; that following the prayer and pledge, the morning hour be deemed expired, the Journal of proceedings be approved to date, 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 11 a.m., with the time equally divided and controlled between the two leaders or their designees, with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each; further, that at 11 a.m. the Senate resume consideration of the motion to proceed to S. J. Res. 21, and the time until noon be equally divided and controlled between the two leaders or their designees, with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10

minutes each; finally, that the Senate recess from 12 p.m. until 2:15 to allow for the weekly caucus meetings.

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

ADJOURNMENT UNTIL 10 A.M. TOMORROW

Mr. CASEY. Mr. President, if there is no further business to come before the Senate, I ask unanimous consent that it adjourn under the previous order.

There being no objection, the Senate, at 6:59 p.m., adjourned until Tuesday, September 10, 2013, at 10 a.m.

CONFIRMATIONS

Executive nominations confirmed by the Senate September 9, 2013:

THE JUDICIARY

VALERIE E. CAPRONI, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, TO BE UNITED STATES DISTRICT JUDGE FOR THE SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF NEW YORK.

VERNON S. BRODERICK, OF NEW YORK, TO BE UNITED STATES DISTRICT JUDGE FOR THE SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF NEW YORK.