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Senate

The Senate met at 10 a.m. and was called to order by the President pro tempore (Mr. LEAHY).

PRAYER

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

Let us pray.

Eternal God, the fountain of every blessing, tune our hearts to pray with power. Bless today the work of our lawmakers, empowering them to accomplish Your purposes on Earth, guided by Your wisdom and courage. Lord, inspire them to act justly, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with You as You give them the gifts of increasing awareness and openness of heart. Teach them to bring harmony from discord and hope from despair.

We pray in Your eternal Name. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The President pro tempore led the Pledge of Allegiance, as follows:

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

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. The majority leader is recognized.

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

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I move to proceed to Calendar No. 166, S.J. Res. 21.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

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

SCHEDULE

Mr. REID. Mr. President, following my and Senator MCCONNELL's remarks, there will be a period of morning business until 11 a.m. this morning. At 11 a.m. we will resume consideration of the motion to proceed to the Syria resolution. The time until noon will be divided and controlled between the two leaders or their designees. The Senate will recess from noon until 2:15 p.m. to allow for our caucus meetings.

The leader and I have talked this morning—and prior to this morning—with regard to the energy efficiency bill. We automatically go to that bill at 11 a.m. We are trying to work out a way we can go to that bill. Senators SHAHEEN and PORTMAN have worked for more than a year to come up with a bill. We have not done an energy bill in a long time, so there is a desire on both sides to move forward on this.

Senator SHAHEEN and Senator PORTMAN have bipartisan amendments they want to offer to their bill, and I have expressed to the Republican leader that we need to move to that when we finish the Syria issue. I would like permission to move to that bill at the appropriate time. Once we get on the bill and we get the CR from the House, for example, I told the Republican leader—and everyone who wants to hear—that we don't have to finish the energy efficiency bill all at one time. We want to have an amendment process, and we will do that. I don't want to file cloture on the motion to proceed again, so we have instructed our staffs to try to come up with something before 11 a.m. that we can agree on.

I repeat. There will be amendments offered, and we will have adequate time to work on this. We may not be able to do it all at one time, but we will do it and finish this legislation.

SYRIA

Mr. President, we are engaged in a very important debate. The Syria debate is one that cannot be taken lightly, and I don't believe anyone has taken it lightly. The discussion and bipartisan resolution under consideration is simply too important to be rushed through the Senate or given short shrift. So it is right and proper that the President be given an opportunity to meet with Senators from both parties, as he will today. He will meet with us at 12:30 p.m. When he finishes with us, it is my understanding he will report to Senator MCCONNELL's conference.

In addition to that, he is going to address the Nation tonight. He is going to speak directly to the American people about the potential for limited military action to Syria. He will do that at 9 p.m. tonight.

As I said last night, it is appropriate to allow other conversations to go on. We now have—as a result of some work done by other countries—France, Russia, and we understand Syria is involved in this as well. This is aimed at avoiding military action. We will have to see if this works out.

It is very important to understand that the only reason Russia is seeking an alternative to military action is that President Obama has made it plain and clear that the United States will act, if we must. Our credible threat of force has made these diplomatic discussions with Syria possible, and the United States should not withdraw from the direction we are taking as a country.

If there is a realistic chance—and I certainly hope there is—to secure Syria's chemical weapons without further atrocities of the Asad regime, we should not turn our backs on that chance. But for such a solution to be plausible, the Asad regime must act quickly and prove that their offer is real and not merely a ploy to delay military action or action by the body of the Senate.

Any agreement must also assure that chemical weapons in the hands of Syria can be secured and done in an open process, even in the midst of this ongoing war we have in Syria. Any agreement must ensure that Syria is unable to transfer its dangerous chemical

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

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weapons to the hands of terrorists in that area. Such an attempt would be met with a rapid and robust response from the United States.

I am pleased the administration is considering this offer. I am pleased other countries are involved in addition to Russia. It is my understanding that France is heavily involved, as of a few hours ago, and I think that is the right direction at this time. We will move forward but under the general criteria I have suggested and outlined.

The Senate should give these international discussions time to play out but not unlimited time. That is why, although there is support to move forward and debate this bipartisan resolution reported by Senators MENENDEZ and CORKER—they did a terrific job for the committee last week—I didn't rush to file cloture, as I indicated last night, on the motion to proceed. We don't need to prove how quickly we can do this but how well we can do this.

The Syrian regime should fully understand that the United States is watching very closely. The Asad regime should be warned our country will not tolerate this breach of human decency and long-held international consensus against the use of chemical weapons.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT AGREEMENT—S. 1392

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order with respect to S. 1392, which is the energy efficiency legislation, be modified so that the motion to proceed be agreed to at a time to be determined by me with the concurrence of the Republican leader—not consultation with him but concurrence with him.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. MARKEY). Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Republican leader is recognized.

SYRIA

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, first, I would like to welcome the President to the Capitol today. Members on both sides of the aisle are eager to hear from him and to share their own thoughts. We look forward to a spirited and constructive exchange.

It is often said that of all the questions we face as lawmakers, none is more serious or indeed more difficult than the question of whether to commit ourselves to military action. That is why it is so important for us to have this debate, to lay out the arguments for and against military action in Syria, to let the public know where we stand on this issue and why.

If debates such as this are always challenging, in some ways this one has been even more difficult, not because of some political calculus—though cynics will always suspect that—no, this debate has been made more difficult because even those of us who truly want to support the Commander in Chief have struggled to understand the purpose of the mission.

Over the past several days I have spoken with a lot of people—a lot of Kentuckians—and most of them are not exactly clear about the mission or shy about saying so. What I have told them is that I understand their concerns, and I share them. I also appreciate the war weariness out there, but then I tell them there are other potential concerns we cannot ignore either. Chief among them is the fact that the credibility of the Commander in Chief matters, and related to that is the fact that we cannot afford, as a country, to withdraw from the world stage. So no one should be faulted for being skeptical about this proposal, regardless of what party they are in, or for being dumbfounded—literally dumbfounded—at the ham-handed manner in which the White House announced it.

There is absolutely no reason to signal to the enemy when, how, and for how long we plan to strike them—none. As I have said before, we don't send out a save-the-date card to the enemy. Yet there are other important considerations to keep in mind as well that go beyond the wisdom or the marketing of the proposal.

I have spent a lot of time weighing all of these things. I thought a lot about America's obligations and the irreplaceable role I have always believed, and still believe, America plays in the world. I have also thought a lot about the context, about this President's vision and his record and what it says about whether we should be confident in his ability to bring about a favorable outcome in Syria because how we got to this point says a lot about where we may be headed. That is why, before announcing my vote, I think it is important to look back at some of the President's other decisions on matters of foreign policy and national security and then turn back to what he is proposing now in Syria because, in the end, these things simply cannot be separated.

It is not exactly a State secret that I am no fan of this President's foreign policy. On the deepest level I think it comes down to a fundamentally different view of America's role in the world. Unlike the President, I have always been a firm and unapologetic believer in the idea that America isn't just another Nation among many; that we are, indeed, exceptional. As I have said, I believe we have a duty as a superpower, without imperialistic aims, to help maintain an international order and balance of power that we and other allies have worked very hard to achieve over the years.

The President, on the other hand, has always been a very reluctant Commander in Chief. We saw that in the rhetoric of his famous Cairo speech and in speeches he gave in other foreign capitals in the early days of his administration. The tone, and the policies that followed, were meant to project a humbler, more withdrawn America. Frankly, I am hard pressed to see any good that came from any of that.

Any list would have to start with the arbitrary deadlines for military withdrawal and the triumphant declaration that Guantanamo would be closed within a year, without any plan of what to do with its detainees. There were the executive orders that ended the CIA's detention and interrogation programs.

We all saw the so-called ''reset'' with Russia and how the President's stated commitment to a world without nuclear weapons led him to hastily sign an arms treaty with Russia that did nothing to substantially reduce its nuclear stockpile or its tactical nuclear weapons. We saw the President announce a strategic pivot to the Asia-Pacific region, without any real plan to fund it, and an effort to end the capture, interrogation, and detention of terrorists, as well as the return of the old idea that terrorism should be treated as a law enforcement matter. After a decade-long counterinsurgency in Afghanistan, we have seen the President's failure to invest in the kind of strategic modernization that is needed to make this pivot to Asia meaningful. Specifically, his failure to make the kind of investments that are needed to maintain our dominance in the Asia-Pacific theater in the kind of naval, air, and Marine Corps forces that we will need in the years ahead could have tragic consequences down the road.

His domestic agenda has also obviously had serious implications for our global standing. While borrowing trillions and wasting taxpayer dollars here at home, the President has imposed a policy of austerity at the Pentagon that threatens to undermine our stabilizing presence around the globe. Of course, we have seen how eager the President is to declare an end to the war on terror. Unfortunately, the world hasn't cooperated. It hasn't cooperated with the President's vision or his hopes. Far from responding favorably to this gentler approach, it has become arguably more dangerous. We have learned the hard way that being nice to our enemies doesn't make them like us or clear a path to peace.

I understand the President ran for office on an antiwar platform, that his rise to political power was marked by his determination to get us out of Afghanistan and Iraq, and to declare an end to the war on terror. I know he would rather focus on his domestic agenda. But the ongoing threat from Al Qaeda and its affiliates and the turmoil unleashed by uprisings in north Africa and the broader Middle East, not to mention the rise of Chinese military power, make it clear to me, at least, that this is not the time for America to shrink from the world stage.

The world is a dangerous place. In the wake of the Arab spring, large parts of the Sinai, of Libya, of Syria, are now basically ungoverned. We have seen prison breaks in Iraq, Pakistan, Libya, and the release of hundreds of prisoners in Egypt. Terrorists have also escaped from prisons in Yemen, a

country that is no more ready to detain the terrorists at Guantanamo now than they were back in 2009. And the flow of foreign fighters into Syria suggests that the civil war there will last for years, regardless of whether Asad is still in power.

Yes, the President deserves praise for weakening Al Qaeda's senior leadership. But the threat we face from Al Qaeda affiliates is very real. These terrorists are adaptable. They are versatile, lethal, resilient, and they aren't going away. Pockets of these terrorists extend from north Africa to the Persian Gulf and it is time he faced up to it.

It is time to face up to something else as well: International order is not maintained by some global police force which only exists in a liberal fantasy. International order is maintained—its backbone is American military might, which brings me back to Syria.

For 2 years now Syria has been mired in a ferocious civil war with more than 100,000 killed with conventional arms. That is according to U.N. estimates. This tragic situation has prompted many to look to the United States for help. So 1 year ago President Obama made a declaration: If Asad used or started moving chemical weapons, he would do something about it.

Well, as we all know, on August 21 of this year, that redline was crossed. The President's delayed response was to call for a show of force for targeted, limited strikes against the regime. We have been told the purpose of these strikes is to deter and degrade Asad's regime's ability to use chemical weapons. So let's take a closer look at these aims.

First, no one disputes that the atrocities committed in Syria in recent weeks are unspeakable. No one disputes that those responsible for these crimes against the innocent should be held to account. We were absolutely right, of course, to condemn these crimes. But let's be very clear about something: These attacks, monstrous as they are, were not a direct attack against the United States or one of its treaty allies. And just so there is no confusion, let me assure everyone that if a weapon of mass destruction were used against the United States or one of our allies, Congress would react immediately with an authorization for the use of force in support of an overwhelming response. I would introduce the resolution myself. So no leader in North Korea or Iran or any other enemy of the United States should take any solace if the United States were not to respond to these attacks with an action against Syria. We will never—never—tolerate the use of chemical weapons against the United States or any of its treaty allies.

Second, in the course of administration hearings and briefings over the past several days, Secretary of State Kerry has revealed that Asad has used chemical weapons repeatedly—repeatedly—over the last year. So there is a further question here about why the administration didn't respond on those occasions.

Third, Asad, as I have indicated, has killed tens of thousands of people with conventional weapons. Is there any reason to believe he won't continue if the President's strikes are as limited as we are told they would be?

Fourth, what if, in degrading Asad's control of those weapons, we make it easier for other extremist elements such as those associated with the al-Nusra Front and Al Qaeda to actually get hold of them themselves or what if, by weakening the Syrian military, we end up tilting the military balance toward a fractured opposition that is in no position to govern or control anything right now?

I think the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, General Dempsey, put this particular best when he recently suggested in a letter to Congress that the issue here isn't about choosing between two sides in Syria, it is about choosing one among many sides; and that, in his estimation, even if we were to choose sides, the side we chose wouldn't be in a position to promote their own interests or ours. That is the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs.

Then there is the question of how Asad himself will react to U.S. action in Syria. If Asad views an air campaign as preparation for regime change, then he may lose all constraint in the use of his arsenal, chemical or otherwise, and lose any incentive whatsoever to move to the negotiating table. It is very clear that the unintended consequences of this strike could very well be a new cycle of escalation, which then drags us into a larger war that we are all seeking to avoid. Some have even suggested that the humanitarian crisis surrounding the Syrian civil war could actually be made worse as a result of even targeted U.S. strikes.

In the end, then, the President's proposal seems fundamentally flawed since, if it is too narrow, it may not deter Asad's further use of chemical weapons. But if it is too broad, it risks jeopardizing the security of these same stockpiles, potentially putting them into the hands of extremists.

That is why I think we are compelled in this case to apply a more traditional standard on whether to proceed with a use of force, one that asks a simple question: Does Asad's use of chemical weapons pose a threat to the vital national security interests of the United States? And the answer to that question is fairly obvious; even the President himself says it doesn't.

One could argue, as I have suggested, that there is an important national security concern at play, that we have a very strong interest in preserving the credibility of our Commander in Chief, regardless of the party in power, and in giving him the political support that reinforces that credibility. This is an issue I take very seriously. It is the main reason I have wanted to take my time in making a final decision. But, ultimately, I have concluded that being credible on Syria requires presenting a credible response and having a credible strategy. For all of the reasons I have indicated, this proposal doesn't pass muster.

Indeed, if, through this limited strike, the President's credibility is not restored because Asad uses chemical weapons again, what then? And new targets aimed at toppling the regime which end up jeopardizing control of these same chemical weapons stashes—allowing them to fall into the hands of Al Qaeda and others intent on using them against the United States or our allies. Where would the cycle of escalation end?

Last night we learned about a Russian diplomatic gambit to forestall U.S. military action through a proposal to secure and eventually destroy the Syrian chemical weapons stockpile. This morning there are initial reports that suggest Syria is supportive of them. Let me remind everyone that even if this is agreed to, it is a still a long way off to reaching an agreement at the United Nations, to Syria gaining entry to the chemical weapons convention, and to eventually securing and destroying the stockpile. As we have seen in my own State of Kentucky where we have been working for 30 years to finally destroy a stockpile of chemical weapons, destroying chemical weapons is extremely challenging and requires a great deal of attention to detail and safety. Nonetheless, this proposal is obviously worth exploring.

But, more broadly—and this is my larger point—this one punitive strike we are debating could not make up for the President's performance over the last 5 years. The only way—the only way—for him to achieve the credibility he seeks is by embracing the kind of serious, integrated, national security plan that matches strategy to resources, capabilities to commitments, and which shows our allies around the world that the United States is fully engaged and ready to act at a moment's notice in all the major areas of concern around the globe, whether it is the Mediterranean, the Persian Gulf, or in the South China Sea, and, just as importantly, that he is willing to invest in that strategy for the long term.

In Syria, a limited strike would not resolve the civil war there, nor will it remove Asad from power. There appears to be no broader strategy to train, advise, and assist a vetted opposition group on a meaningful scale, as we did during the Cold War. What is needed in Syria is what is needed almost everywhere else in the world from America right now: a clear strategy and a President determined to carry it out.

When it comes to Syria, our partners in the Middle East—countries such as Turkey, Jordan, Saudi Arabia, and Israel—all of them face real consequences from instability, refugee

flows, and the growth of terrorist networks. Responding to this crisis requires a regional strategy and leadership. What we have gotten instead is an administration that seems more interested in telling us what the mission is not—more interested in telling us what the mission is not—rather than what it is. We have gotten the same timid, reluctant leadership that I have seen from the President for nearly 5 years.

As I have said, this decision was not easy. When the President of the United States asks you to take a question like this seriously, you do so. Because just as our credibility in Syria is tied up with our credibility in places such as Iran and North Korea, so too is the credibility of the Commander in Chief tied up, to a large extent, with America's credibility in general. There is no doubt about that. So let me repeat: I will stand shoulder to shoulder with this President or any other in any case where our vital national security interests are threatened, our treaty allies are attacked, or we face an imminent threat.

As for Israel, very few people, if anyone, expect that Syria would test its readiness to respond on its own, which just goes to show you the importance of credibility on the world stage. As Prime Minister Netanyahu put it last week, the enemies of Israel have very good reason not to test its might. But the Prime Minister should know nonetheless that America stands with him.

I have never been an isolationist, and a vote against this resolution should not be confused by anyone as a turn in that direction. But just as the most committed isolationist could be convinced of the need for intervention under the right circumstances when confronted with a threat, so too do the internationalists among us believe that all interventions are not created equal. And this proposal just does not stand up.

So I will be voting against this resolution. A vital national security risk is clearly not at play, there are too many unanswered questions about our long-term strategy in Syria, including the fact that this proposal is utterly detached from a wider strategy to end the civil war there, and on the specific question of deterring the use of chemical weapons, the President's proposal appears to be based actually on a contradiction: either we will strike targets that threaten the stability of the regime—something the President says he does not intend to do—or we will execute a strike so narrow as to be a mere demonstration.

It is not enough, as General Dempsey has noted, to simply alter the balance of military power without carefully considering what is needed to preserve a functioning state after the fact. We cannot ignore the unintended consequences of our actions.

But we also cannot ignore our broader obligations in the world. I firmly believe the international system that was constructed on the ashes of World War II rests upon the stability provided by the American military, and by our commitments to our allies. It is a necessary role that only we can continue to fulfill in the decades to come. And especially in times like this, the United States cannot afford to withdraw from the world stage. My record reflects that belief and that commitment regardless of which party has controlled the White House. We either choose to be dominant in the world or we resign ourselves and our allies to the mercy of our enemies. We either defend our freedoms and our civilization or it crumbles.

So as we shift our military focus to the Asia Pacific, we cannot ignore our commitments to the Middle East, to stability in the Persian Gulf, to an enduring presence in Afghanistan, to hunting down the terrorists who would threaten the United States and its people. And when the Commander in Chief sets his mind to action, the world should think he believes in it. When the Commander in Chief sets his mind to an action, the world should think he believes in it. Frankly, the President did not exactly inspire confidence when he distanced himself from his own redlines in Stockholm last week.

It is long past time the President drops the pose of the reluctant warrior and lead. You cannot build an effective foreign policy on the vilification of your predecessor alone. At some point, you have to take responsibility for your own actions and see the world the way it is, not the way you would like it to be.

If you wish to engage countries that have been hostile, so be it. But be a realist, know the limits of rhetoric, and prepare for the worst.

For too long this President has put his faith in the power of his own rhetoric to change the minds of America's enemies. For too long he has been more interested in showing the world that America is somehow different now than it has been in the past; it is humbler; it is not interested in meddling in the affairs of others or in shaping events.

But in his eagerness to turn the page, he has blinded himself to worrisome trends and developments from Tunisia to Damascus to Tehran and in countless places in between.

A year ago this month four Americans were senselessly murdered on sovereign U.S. territory in Benghazi. Last month the President ordered the closing of more than two dozen diplomatic posts stretching from west Africa to the Bay of Bengal. As I have indicated, and as the decision to close these embassies clearly shows, the terrorist threat continues to be real. Expressions of anti-Americanism are rampant throughout Africa and the Middle East, even more so perhaps than when the President first took office.

So the President's new approach has clearly come with a cost. And for the sake of our own security and that of our allies, it is time he recognized it. Because if America does not meet its international commitments, who will? That is one question that those on the left who are comfortable with a weakened America cannot answer, because the answer is too frightening. No one will. That is the answer.

If this episode has shown us anything, it is that the time has come for the President to finally acknowledge that there is no substitute for American might. It is time for America to lead again, this time from the front. But we need strategic vision, in the Middle East and in many other places around the world, to do it.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will be in a period of morning business until 11 a.m., with the time equally divided and controlled between the two leaders or their designees, and with Senators permitted to speak for up to 10 minutes each.

The Senator from Illinois.

PRESIDENTIAL LEADERSHIP

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I listened carefully to the statement made by the Republican Senate leader. He is a member of the loyal opposition and it is no surprise that he is critical of the policies of President Barack Obama. That is the nature of the debate, the American debate, which takes place on the floor of this Chamber on a regular basis. But in fairness to this President, there are some things that were not mentioned.

This President, under his leadership, has brought the war in Iraq to a close. This President is bringing the war in Afghanistan to a close. This President, with the best military minds and the best military talent in the world, has made Osama bin Laden a piece of history. He was captured and killed. The man who, sadly, led an attack on the United States that cost almost 3,000 innocent lives has been dispatched because of the leadership of this President and the wonderful abilities and talents and resources of the United States military.

So to stand here and criticize this President as some reluctant warrior is unfair. Yes, I would say in some instances I want a President to be a reluctant warrior, to think twice before America is engaged in a war, to think twice before this country commits its troops to a foreign theater. Certainly, as of this moment, having lost more than 5,000 brave Americans in Iraq and Afghanistan, we know the terrible price that is paid by the men and women who so bravely represent this country. And I would like every President to think twice before committing

those troops to battle. Reluctant? Yes. But wise? Yes, I want a wise warrior too.

I listened to the Senator from Kentucky criticize the President because he is, quote, telegraphing his punches when it comes to what is going to happen in Syria. Well, you cannot have it both ways. This President could make a unilateral decision and attack without even consulting Congress and thereby maintain the element of surprise or he could do as this President has done and follow what he considers to be our constitutional requirement of a national debate before we engage in military action.

So I would say to the Senator from Kentucky, do not criticize the President for letting us know what he might do when he turns this over to Congress to debate. It is something most of us in Congress should welcome.

I also take exception to this notion that we have somehow abandoned our commitment to the world—this notion that what we hope to do in the Pacific is unreachable, or the closing of embassies because of danger is problematic or that there is austerity in the Department of Defense.

It is hard to reconcile those statements from the Republican side of the aisle with the fact that repeatedly we have asked for a conference committee on the budget to work out our budget differences when it comes to funding the Department of Defense and our Nation's national defense and time and again the Republicans have objected—objected to even sitting down and trying to work out differences so we can restore some of the funds cut through sequestration.

You cannot have it both ways. Do not criticize the President for not spending enough money when it comes to our Nation's defense and then stand by the sequestration which continues to cut even more from that same Department and many others.

As for the war on terror, what the President has said is there comes a moment, and we have reached it, where we cannot always be on a war footing. It causes a nation to make decisions which in the long haul may not stand the test of time and history. The President has said, yes, there is a war on terrorism, but we have to resume our leadership in this world with the view of a stable nation, not always thinking about the wartime status we face.

I listened to the Senator from Kentucky, who talks about saving money and cutting budgets, trying to hang on to that relic of times gone by at Guantanamo, where we are spending so much money—hundreds of thousands of dollars for each prisoner to be kept at Guantanamo—when we know full well that at least half of them should be released—carefully released—and should not be maintained at Guantanamo.

Today, we have hundreds of convicted terrorists safely incarcerated in the Federal penitentiaries of America, including one in Illinois in Marion, and the people in the nearby community would not even know it because they are safely incarcerated.

Let me say a word too about this issue of Syria. You cannot, on the one hand, criticize this President for stepping up and saying we need to take action, if necessary, to stop the use of chemical weapons and then, on the other hand, say he is a reluctant warrior and that he does not support it. How in the world do you reconcile those two points of view?

The President has shown leadership. What he has asked is for the Congress to follow. What I heard from the Republican Senator from Kentucky is he is not interested in following that leadership.

Let me also add, this Putin overture, that we find some peaceful way to resolve this—I hope it turns out to be true and something that works. And if it does, give credit where it is due. This President stepped up and said we have to challenge the use of chemical weapons in Syria. Even if it does not affect the United States directly or its allies directly, we have to stand up to them. And if this Putin overture leads to some containment or destruction of those chemical weapons, give the President credit for it. Do not criticize him for not leading. He has shown more leadership on this issue than, frankly, many politicians of either party wanted to face.

I think when it comes to a credible strategy, this President has one.

It is a strategy which is ending two wars, which has put an end to the leader of that terrible terrorist attack on the United States on 9/11. It is a strategy which has improved the image of the United States since this President has come to power over the last several years. It is a strategy we can build on in the future. But we need to make certain that what we do is done with an eye toward the reality of this world in which we live. It is a dangerous world. It is one where the United States may be called on to lead at times when we do not want to lead. We cannot be isolationist. The United States has a responsibility in this world. That responsibility has to be used very carefully. This President understands that.

I hope that at the end of the day we can, in fact, see a peaceful resolution of the chemical weapons issue in Syria. I hope we can find a way to harken back to Ronald Reagan where we can trust that will happen but verify it as well. That would be the right ending. I think the President has taken the right position.

I would like to add something. When it comes to the nation of Israel, our closest and best ally in the Middle East, they understand what we are trying to do with chemical weapons in Syria. They have made it clear through their friends in the United States and other ways that they support it without fear of retaliation by Syria. They are ready, according to Prime Minister Netanyahu, for whatever Syria chooses to do. We should not be any less forceful or less committed when it comes to ending the threat of chemical weapons and other weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New Hampshire.

Mrs. SHAHEEN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that I be permitted to speak for up to 10 minutes and that following my remarks Senator PORTMAN be permitted to speak for up to 10 minutes in morning business.

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

SYRIA

Mrs. SHAHEEN. Mr. President, I know that—and what we have heard this morning—what is rightfully at the forefront of all of our minds this week is the debate about whether to authorize the use of force in Syria. This is a very serious matter, as we all know. It raises a number of geopolitical and national security issues.

The decision to undertake military action is not one to be taken lightly. I am very aware that people are war-weary, that they are concerned about the consequences of the use of military force. Consequently, I believe we should pursue every possible diplomatic solution prior to engaging in military action.

I welcome the possibility of international cooperation to secure and destroy Syria's chemical weapons stockpile. I hope that Russia is being serious and that they will take real, legitimate actions to quickly follow through on what they have raised with their effort to try to encourage Asad to give up his chemical weapons to international control. I am working with some of my colleagues on the Senate Foreign Relations Committee on an amendment to the resolution that would incorporate this new development and pressure the Syrians to ensure that we see credible concrete steps in any possible effort to place their chemical weapons under international inspection. I look forward to hearing from the President today and this evening, and I look forward to the debate later this week as we consider the situation in Syria.

ENERGY SAVINGS AND INDUSTRIAL COMPETITIVENESS ACT

Mrs. SHAHEEN. Mr. President, I wish to take a few minutes this morning to talk about legislation that was previously scheduled to be debated on the Senate floor this week—the Energy Savings and Industrial Competitiveness Act, also known as Shaheen-Portman. I know the Presiding Officer has been very involved in energy issues for all of his time in public life, and I do appreciate the work he did as a Member of the House. I know he is following this debate very closely. I appreciate that.

This bill is one Senator ROB PORTMAN and I have been working on for 3 years.

I appreciate that he has come to the floor today to talk about it as well. We have had 3 years of meetings, negotiations, and broad stakeholder outreach in an effort to craft the most effective piece of energy legislation, with the greatest possible chance of passing both Chambers of Congress and being signed into law.

Shaheen-Portman is a bipartisan effort that reflects an affordable approach to boost the use of energy efficiency technologies. It will help create private sector jobs, save businesses and consumers money, reduce pollution, and make our country more energy independent. It will have a swift and measurable benefit on our economy and our environment. In the last few weeks we saw a study from experts at the American Council for an Energy Efficient Economy which found that this legislation has the potential to create 136,000 domestic jobs by 2025, all while saving consumers billions of dollars and reducing pollution.

Efficiency is the cheapest and fastest approach to reduce our energy use. Energy savings techniques and technologies lower costs and free up capital that allows businesses to expand and our economy to grow. Perhaps equally important, energy efficiency has emerged as an excellent example of a bipartisan and affordable opportunity to immediately grow our economy and improve energy security. In addition to being affordable, efficiency is widely supported because its benefits are not confined to a certain fuel source or a particular region of the country. It is clearly one of the policy areas where we really can come to a common agreement.

It is no wonder that energy efficiency legislation—Shaheen-Portman—enjoys such large and diverse support. It has received more than 250 endorsements from a wide range of businesses, environmental groups, think tanks, and trade associations, from the U.S. Chamber of Commerce and the National Association of Manufacturers to the Natural Resources Defense Council.

I am hopeful the Senate will return to Shaheen-Portman when we have finished debating the serious issue of Syria. I appreciate the commitment of our leadership on both sides of the aisle in the Senate to do so. I recognize this will be the first time a major energy bill has reached the Senate floor since 2007; therefore, it only makes sense for us to have a robust energy debate that allows for amendments from both sides of the aisle to be considered. I look forward to working with my colleagues to find an agreement on the way forward.

I thank my good friend Senator PORTMAN for his partnership in bringing this bill to the floor. I also thank the majority and minority leaders as well as Chairman WYDEN and Ranking Member MURKOWSKI for all of their support as we have gone through this process and hopefully will bring this bill to the floor in the next couple of weeks.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Ohio.

SYRIA

Mr. PORTMAN. Mr. President, we rise at a time of great debate here in this Chamber and in this country about what the appropriate response should be by the United States to the horrific use of chemical weapons by the Government of Syria. That is a debate which will unfold over the next days here. We will see, as the situation continues to develop, what actually comes to the floor.

But the President of the United States has asked for our input here in the Senate. Today we are focused on really the most important question an elected representative is asked to respond to; that is, whether to commit America to military combat. To that end, we have all spent time looking over intelligence reports. We have participated in classified intelligence briefings. I have also had the opportunity to meet with top members of the administration. From the information I have received, I do believe the Government of Syria used chemical weapons against its own people.

I believe an international response is appropriate, but I do not believe the administration's proposal of a U.S. military strike is the right answer. There is no guarantee it will prevent Asad's use of chemical weapons. I do not believe it will end the senseless bloodshed in Syria. I do not believe it will bring stability to the region that is so critical to our national security. I do not believe it will enhance Israel's security. I do not believe, most fundamentally, that it is nested in a broader strategic plan for the region.

The situation we face in Syria today is partly the result of a failed foreign policy. It is time for a change of course. We need a comprehensive long-term strategy first, not a strike and then the promise of a strategy, which is what the administration has proposed. ''Strike first, strategy later'' is a recipe for disaster. If the current resolution comes to the floor as a result, the current resolution being considered, I would not be able to support it.

ENERGY SAVINGS AND INDUSTRIAL COMPETITIVENESS ACT

Mr. PORTMAN. America must also look to its interests here at home. Senator SHAHEEN just talked about that. Without a doubt, the ongoing chaos in Syria has served to remind us once again of the volatility and the instability that has plagued the Middle East for many years. It should also serve as a wake-up call.

As a country, we have for way too long been dependent on dangerous and volatile parts of the world for our foreign energy needs, particularly foreign oil. We have seen the impact in the price of oil, even in the last couple of weeks. We certainly have seen it in our economy, the roller coaster we have seen with energy prices up and down. As a result, the need for American energy independence is not just a matter of the economy or economic security or energy security, it is also a matter of national security.

Given these realities, it is incumbent upon us now more than ever to pursue a true ''all of the above'' domestic energy strategy. We have to find ways to produce more energy here at home. Just as important, we have to figure out how to use less by wasting less. We will save money, we will save energy, we will make our economy more competitive and create more jobs, and, yes, we will reduce our dependence on foreign oil.

The piece of legislation on which I joined with the senior Senator from New Hampshire, which we introduced just before we left for the August recess, takes important steps toward that goal of reducing the amount of energy we waste in this country. Senator SHAHEEN just talked about it. It is called the Energy Savings and Industrial Competitiveness Act. It was meant to be on the floor today. We were supposed to be debating it. It is absolutely critical that we are debating Syria instead, but I do hope we can take up this legislation after the discussions about what we do with regard to the situation in Syria.

This bill, the energy security bill, is bipartisan. It is bicameral in the sense that there is support in the House and the Senate for it. It is, as Senator SHAHEEN said, a bill that reduces our energy waste and moves us toward energy independence. According to the recent study she talked about, it is estimated to aid in the creation of 136,000 new jobs, saving consumers over $13 billion a year by the year 2030. That is why it is no surprise that it is supported by such a broad group, as Senator SHAHEEN talked about. That support, by the way, is one big reason it passed the Energy Committee with a strong bipartisan vote of 19 to 3.

Simply put, the legislation we proposed makes good environmental sense, it makes good energy sense, and it makes good economic sense too. It is a rare example around here of bipartisanship, which ought to be encouraged in a number of areas, but certainly this is one where we can find common ground.

I want to thank the majority leader this morning, and the minority leader, for working out a unanimous consent agreement that allows us to move forward on this commonsense approach in the coming days. In that debate, we will talk more about the legislation, how it helps manufacturers on the global stage, and how the savings companies will accrue from energy efficiency will lead to better paying jobs. We will talk about how our legislation helps to train the next generation of workers in the skills they need to compete in the growing energy efficiency field. We will talk about how it makes

the Federal Government practice what it preaches, to reduce the waste in the largest user of energy in the world, which is our Federal Government. We will describe how our bill accomplishes these goals with no new mandates, no mandates on the private sector, no new spending, entirely offset. And again, it is a commonsense approach that is bipartisan. I look forward to that discussion. I look forward to seeing the Energy Savings and Industrial Competitiveness Act become law so this Nation can take a big step toward achieving the true goal of an ''all of the above'' energy strategy and indeed make us less dependent on those dangerous and volatile parts of the world.

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

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

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. REID. I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Morning business is closed.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to executive session to consider Calendar No. 191, the nomination be confirmed, the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table, with no intervening action or debate; that no further motions be in order to the nomination; that any related statements be printed in the RECORD; that the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action and the Senate then resume legislative session.

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

The nomination considered and confirmed is as follows:

TENNESSEE VALLEY AUTHORITY

Marilyn A. Brown, of Georgia, to be a Member of the Board of Directors of the Tennessee Valley Authority for a term expiring May 18, 2017.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will resume consideration of the motion to proceed to S.J. Res. 21.

Under the previous order, the time until 12 noon will be equally divided and controlled between the two leaders or their designees, with Senators permitted to speak for up to 10 minutes each.

Mr. REID. I ask unanimous consent that the time during the quorum calls, which I will suggest in just a few seconds, be equally divided between the majority and the minority.

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

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

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

Mr. CASEY. Mr. President, this week we have a very difficult set of questions to answer relating to Syria and the ongoing crisis there. But in particular we have a question to answer as it relates to what the United States should do. I rise this morning to express strong support for this authorization to degrade Bashar al-Asad's chemical weapons capability and deter the future use of these horrific weapons. I made this determination based upon the evidence and the national security interests of the United States, both our national security interests today as well as in the future.

The resolution that is before the Senate right now does not allow for the deployment of U.S. combat troops on the ground in Syria. I will not support—nor do I think there will be much support in this Chamber—any measure that would involve U.S. boots on the ground in Syria and this resolution specifically speaks to this concern. I am quoting, in part, the resolution:

> The authority granted in section 2(a) does not authorize the use of the United States Armed Forces on the ground in Syria for the purpose of combat operations.

It is important we make that point.

As we have all seen, especially in the last few days, the situation in Syria is in flux, especially in the last 24 hours. The Russian Government put forth a proposal yesterday which would have international monitors take control of Syria's chemical weapons in order to avert a U.S. military strike. I am open to this diplomatic discussion—however not without caution and not without skepticism. Diplomatic solutions are always a preferred path and military strikes should always be the last resort.

I think prior to this proposal we were at this point of a last resort. But the only reason this proposal is on the table is because of the credible threat of force that is being debated in Washington—but even more significantly being debated across the country. The authorization itself should still go forward because it will keep the pressure on the Syrian regime for a diplomatic solution.

Let's take a couple of minutes on our own national security interests. In March of 2011, as reported by the U.S. State Department, multiple news sources, including CNN, reported—and I will submit for the RECORD a report from CNN—that the Syrian Government authorities had arrested 15 schoolchildren in the city of Daraa for spray-painting antigovernment slogans. These young people were reportedly tortured while in custody and authorities resorted to force when their parents and others in the community called for their release. Within 1 week the police had killed 55 demonstrators in connection with the early efforts to provide opposition to the Asad regime. The regime committed countless atrocities during the next 2 years of this conflict, culminating in the unspeakable use—the indiscriminate use of chemical weapons on August 21.

I submit for the RECORD a report from CNN, dated March 1, 2012, and ask it be printed in the RECORD.

This report is March of 2012, but it looks back in a retrospective fashion on what happened in those early days of the opposition coming together in 2011. I will read a pertinent part, part of what CNN said about what happened when these schoolchildren were demonstrating against the regime. They talked in this report about the young people, as I mentioned, not just protesting but spray-painting their beliefs against the regime. At the time, not a lot of people around the world were focused on what was happening in Syria. Let me quote in pertinent part what at one point one of the citizens on the street was saying, that the people in Daraa:

> . . . didn't want to go against the regime. People thought that this [leader, Mr. Asad] was better than his dad. Nobody wanted to go face-to-face with him.

But then of course it was young people, in this case even schoolchildren, who led the way to take him on. I submit this for the record because this opposition started on the streets of Syria, in this case in Daraa, starting with young people, but it of course continued from there. We know that the regime itself has the largest chemical stockpile in the region, one of the largest in the world. We know Mr. Asad used these weapons against his own people, not only on August 21 but on multiple occasions prior to that in a much more limited way. We also know he has the capacity, the will, and unfortunately the track record to use these weapons against innocent civilians.

We also should remember we have troops and other military and diplomatic personnel in the region, in the Middle East. Even Syria's acquisition—even Syria's very acquisition of chemical weapons threatens our national security. In 2003, the Congress of the United States—some people have forgotten about this—the Congress of the

United States in 2003 passed the Syria Accountability and Lebanese Sovereignty Restoration Act of that year. This act explicitly states that Congress found—the U.S. Congress made a finding that ''Syria's acquisition''—and I am underlining that word ''acquisition''—''of weapons of mass destruction threatens the security of the Middle East and the national security interests of the United States.''

This Congress 10 years ago made a determination that the acquisition of chemical weapons was a threat to our national security. We are in a different world now. Syria not only acquired them but has now used them multiple times on its own people, the most recent being the horrific scenes that we all saw in some of the videos that are now part of the public record. So there is clear and convincing evidence of the direct involvement of the Asad regime, the forces of the Asad regime and senior officials, in the planning, execution, aftermath, and attempts to cover up the August 21 attack. This is graphically evident in the 13 authenticated videos released by the Senate Intelligence Committee compiled by the Open Source Center showing the results of chemical weapons use in the Damascus suburbs on August 21. These videos were shown to the Intelligence Committee on Thursday and played on CNN on Saturday. So many Americans have seen them. If anyone would like more information about those, go to my Web site and I am certain many others as well.

It is clear that the regime violated international law as it relates to chemical weapons. We know the regime committed a barrage of terror across the country with the sole aim of remaining in power. We have to ask ourselves, when a dictator or terrorist organization uses chemical weapons in violation of international law, should that regime or terrorist organization pay a price? I argue that they must pay a price.

We simply can't condemn this crime against humanity; it is in the national security interest of the United States for the administration to have the authorization to act. The regime in Iran, the terrorist organization Hezbollah, and the regime in North Korea are watching very closely, so it is imperative that we take steps to address this threat.

Let me talk about the regime in Iran and Hezbollah. What happens in Syria is of great consequence to our security interest as it relates to that regime in Hezbollah. When I say ''that regime,'' I am speaking about the Iran regime. Their support for Hezbollah, through Syria, has resulted in constant plotting against the United States and its allies. The Asad regime in Syria is the conduit of this relationship between Hezbollah and the Iranian regime itself.

I support this authorization of targeted and strategic military action in order to hold the Syrian regime accountable and because it will diminish the ability of Iran and Hezbollah to conduct acts of terror. It will also protect American lives if we hold them accountable, as well as, of course, the Syrian people. Indeed, other than Al Qaeda, Hezbollah has killed more Americans than any other terrorist organization in the world, including 241 marines in 1983. Hezbollah has consistently partnered with Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps to bolster Asad's campaign of repression and violence in Syria, which has further destabilized the region. The regime in Iran has provided funds, weapons, logistical support, tactical advice, and fighters to the Syrian Government forces. Just this year Iran's support to Asad has increased, with reported daily resupply flights to Syria.

The Syrian regime possesses a stockpile of chemical weapons that we cannot allow to fall into the hands of terrorists. Iran and Hezbollah—I think some people in Washington missed this—are not on the sidelines; they are already on the battlefield. I would argue that Iran and Hezbollah are on two battlefields. Certainly, they are on the battlefield in Syria but also the daily battlefield of terrorist acts plotting against the United States and other countries as well.

Failure to bring action and failure to hold Syria accountable after such a horrific crime will only serve to embolden the Iranian regime, to embolden the terrorist organization Hezbollah and others, to expand terror across the world. Iran's status as the world's leading state sponsor of terrorism is well established, and its proxies have perpetuated attacks against the United States, Israel, and our allies.

Emboldened by Iran's support, Hezbollah has conducted terrorist attacks since its inception in the early 1980s—including Western targets. Hezbollah has become more aggressive in the last few years and has executed attacks not only in the Middle East but on two other continents—South Asia and Europe. Just 2 years ago a plot was uncovered to blow up a restaurant in Georgetown—right here in Washington, DC—to kill the Saudi Ambassador to the United States, along with U.S. officials and average citizens who are American. When the Iranian-backed attacker was questioned, he referred to the potential killing of Americans as ''no big deal.''

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to have printed in the RECORD the report by the Department of Justice entitled ''Two Men Charged in Alleged Plot to Assassinate Saudi Arabian Ambassador to the United States.''

The list goes on. We know that in June of 1996 there was the bombing of Khobar Towers in Saudi Arabia where 19 U.S. Air Force personnel were killed. That is another example of an Iran-backed terrorist activity. It goes back, as I mentioned, to 1983 when 241 marines were killed by a truck bombing in Beirut. There are also new reports on evidence that strongly suggests that an Iran-backed plot was underway to kill a U.S. Ambassador in 2011. Hezbollah has consistently partnered with Iran to do just that.

The national security interest of the United States is even more significant than that. It is not simply the green light it would send to Iran and Hezbollah as it relates to terrorism. If we don't take the right action here, it would send a message and green light to Iran as it relates to their nuclear program. We know the Iranian regime is intent on developing nuclear weapons capability. I support a variety of measures to prevent Iran from acquiring that capability. Condemnation only of Syria would embolden Iran and undermine our efforts to prevent the Iranian regime from developing and possessing a nuclear weapon.

Every Member of Congress will have to weigh the consequence of giving the green light to the use of chemical weapons and contemplate what it will mean for enemies, such as the Iranian regime and Hezbollah, who plot against the United States every day. I am like a lot of Members of Congress in that after receiving several intelligence briefings, I have more confidence than ever before that we have a significant national security imperative to authorize the President to act as it relates to Syria. I have no doubt that Mr. Asad used the chemical weapons against his people and it is evident that he crossed more than one redline. So I support this limited and proportional scope of authorization for the use of force.

By the way, this authorization would probably be the most limited authorization in recent American history.

I believe Congress must stand united on this issue, and we have to make sure we not only hold the regime accountable but make sure we are doing everything possible to send the right message.

I have two more points before I conclude. One of the best rationales for the reason we are taking the steps I hope we will take was set forth in an op-ed printed in the New York Times last weekend by Nicholas Kristof, and it is dated September 7, 2013. The op-ed is entitled ''Pulling the Curtain Back on Syria,'' and I ask unanimous consent to have this op-ed printed in the RECORD.

I think one of the most important lines in here—and, of course, I will not read the entire op-ed—is what Mr. Kristof wrote:

> In other words, while there are many injustices around the world, from Darfur to eastern Congo, take it from one who has covered most of them: Syria is today the world capital of human suffering.

There are few journalists—there are few Americans—who have more credibility on the issue of what is happening to children and vulnerable populations around the world than Nicholas Kristof. For him to say the world capital of human suffering is in Syria is a powerful and compelling statement.

That brings me back to where I started. I started walking through the early days of this opposition to a repressive regime against Mr. Asad, and the people who led the way and made a case against his regime in large measure were the children or young people. One of the harrowing and very disturbing elements of this entire crisis—this war that has raged on for more than 2 years now—is the impact it has had on children.

I received a report today that came from Save the Children. They have enormous credibility not only on children's issues worldwide, but there are Save the Children personnel on the ground in Syria.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the document entitled ''Briefing note: The children crisis in Syria'' be printed in the RECORD as well.

That documents in great detail the human suffering of children and the impact this has had on millions of Syrian children. But, of course, maybe the most graphic and disturbing example of that was the footage that virtually every American has had an opportunity to view which shows the hundreds and hundreds of children who were killed instantly in this horrific chemical weapons attack. By one estimate, more than 400—maybe as many as 426—children were killed.

When we confront this issue, we cannot simply say: Oh, this is just another horrific situation around the world. When we consider what this regime did to schoolchildren—arrested them and by many accounts tortured them from the beginning of this opposition all the way through to the attack on August 21—and what will continue to happen to children in Syria and in places around the world, we are summoned by our conscience to act in some fashion and hold this regime accountable.

I want to be open to this possibility that maybe there is a breakthrough, that we can remove this terrible threat from Syria and wipe out the chemical weapons threat by giving total and complete control of chemical weapons to an international force, but the burden of proof is on Syria and the Russian Federation. They have to deliver very specifically in a very short timeframe if they expect us to agree to this. We should be hopeful and consider this opportunity, but at the same time we cannot divorce ourselves from the reality of what happened, the consequence of not acting, and also the long-term and short-term national security interests of the United States, which I think are overwhelming and compelling in this instance.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate recess.

From CNN.com, Mar. 1, 2012]

DARAA: THE SPARK THAT LIT THE SYRIAN FLAME

(By Joe Sterling)

Syria is burning—scorched for nearly a year by tenacious political resistance, a merciless security crackdown and cries for democracy.

The spark that lit the flame began about a year ago in the southern city of Daraa after the arrests of at least 15 children for painting anti-government graffiti on the walls of a school.

The community's blunt outrage over the children's arrests and mistreatment, the government's humiliating and violent reactions to their worries, and the people's refusal to be cowed by security forces emboldened and helped spread the Syrian opposition.

FATE OF NEIGHBORHOOD UNCERTAIN

Daraa soon became a rallying cry across the country for what began as a rural and provincial-driven uprising.

Syrians compare the dramatic dynamics in the rural city to the moment Tunisian street vendor Mohamed Bouazizi torched himself in December 2010. Bouazizi's act and death spawned demonstrations that led to the grassroots ouster of Tunisian President Zine El Abidine Ben Ali and fueled other protests across the Arab world.

Mohamed Masalmeh—a Halifax, Nova Scotia-based Syrian activist whose family hails from Daraa—said Daraa residents broke the people's ''wall of fear'' by defying what he and others call a police state and taking to the street.

''What people did in Daraa was unheard of,'' he said.

Omar Almuqdad, a journalist from Daraa now living in Turkey, said, ''They started protesting day after day.''

''It was the flame of the revolution.''

A SLOW BURN INTO A FIRESTORM

Discontent in Syria has slow-burned for decades.

A clampdown on a Muslim Brotherhood uprising by the current president's predecessor and father—President Hafez Assad—killed thousands in Hama in 1982.

When Bashar al-Assad took the presidency after his father died in 2000, he gave lip service to reforms.

But activists who emerged from the so-called Damascus Spring after the death of Hafez and those in 2005 who urged reforming what they said was an ''authoritarian, totalitarian and cliquish regime'' found themselves in trouble with the authorities.

There was sectarian and ethnic unrest in the last decade, too, with a Druze uprising flaring in 2000 and a Kurdish rebellion erupting in 2004.

When the Arab Spring unfolded last year, Syrians imbibed the contagious revolutionary fervor spreading across the Middle East.

But the anger smoldered under the surface because of the Goliath-sized, all-seeing and all-knowing security and spying apparatus.

Protests popped up in Syria as video images of public defiance in Egypt, Libya and Tunisia swept the world—small outpourings seen by observers as tests to build a Syrian nerve to take to the streets.

And then—Daraa.

Remote Daraa sits just a few miles from the Jordanian border. It has had its economic struggles, such as drought and drops in subsidies and salaries. Nevertheless, it had been a reliable bastion of support for the regime and its Baath party.

Tribal and predominantly Sunni, Daraa is like many small towns. People know one another and the relationships are close in the city and in the nearby villages and towns.

When the schoolchildren were arrested in late February 2011, they were accused of scrawling graffiti on a school that said ''the people want to topple the regime.'' Masalmeh, the activist, said security went to a school, interrogated students and rounded up suspects.

It wasn't as if this vandalism was rare. Such graffiti was becoming so common in the region that ID was needed to buy spray cans.

But these arrests struck a chord. Residents found out their boys were being beaten and tortured in prison.

The families of the boys approached authorities and asked for their sons' release. Activists and observers say authorities shunned and insulted the people. One official reportedly said: ''Forget your children. If you really want your children, you should make more children. If you don't know how to make more children, we'll show you how to do it.''

''At some point, the insult is so far below the belt. People do respond to it. They just don't bow down anymore,'' Amnesty International's Neil Sammonds said.

PROTESTS GROW

On March 16, a female-led sit-in in Damascus demanded the release of prisoners unfairly jailed. Some of the participants were Daraans, with strong ties back to their home province, and part of the educated, urbanite youth living in Damascus.

''Police dragged protesters by the hair and beat them,'' said Mohja Kahf, a novelist, professor and activist in Arkansas with contacts across Syria. ''This built on the gathering outrage over the Daraa children who are prisoners.''

A day later, a sit-in in Daraa, with some detained. The next day, on March 18, a protest against the arrests of the children, according to The Human Rights Watch.

''Security forces opened fire, killing at least four protesters and within days, the protests grew into rallies that gathered thousands of people,'' the group said.

Activists regard these as the first deaths in the Syrian uprising.

People began rallying in other cities across Syria that day—Jassem, Da'el, Sanamein and Inkhil. Kahf said the government responded with live fire only in Daraa.

But the more people demonstrated in Daraa, the tougher security forces cracked down. And as the crackdown worsened, the more resolute the protesters became.

The people in Daraa ''didn't want to go against the regime,'' Masalmeh said. ''People thought this guy—Bashar—was better than his dad. Nobody wanted to go face-to-face with him.

''It's not like they fought with arms at that moment,'' he said. ''They were just defiant. 'All that we want is our children.' ''

The youths were eventually freed, but YouTube videos and demonstrations were already spreading.

Al-Assad addressed the Daraa unrest in a March 30 speech before lawmakers, blaming the unrest on sedition. ''They started in the governorate (province) of Daraa,'' al-Assad said, adding ''the conspirators took their plan to other governorates.''

''That speech had a catastrophic impact,'' the International Crisis Group's Peter Harling said. ''People who wanted to support the regime at the time were shocked by the speech.''

The dismissiveness of al-Assad and the lawmakers who applauded his words awakened many Syrian people, says the Human Rights Watch's Nadim Houry. Two days later, weekly anti-government protests began across Syria.

Calls for reforms soon morphed into calls for the removal of the al-Assad regime.

''Courage is contagious,'' Houry said.

The government launched a full-scale siege on Daraa April 25, with other towns such as Homs to follow.

Mass arrests unfolded and tales of torture spread across the country. The protest movement grew and solidified into an opposition.

Paul Salem, director of the Carnegie Middle East Center, points out ''it's conceivable

that if the events didn't happen in Daraa,'' the uprising ''might not have occurred.''

But the deep-seated political and economic reasons underlining Syrian discontent was an omen. Protest in Syria was ''going to happen'' at some point, Salem said.

So, out of Daraa, a spark. And a year later, the uprisings blaze on.

''The impact of small events on history can be huge,'' Salem said.

The following is an official release from the Department of Justice on the alleged plot.

TWO MEN CHARGED IN ALLEGED PLOT TO ASSASSINATE SAUDI ARABIAN AMBASSADOR TO THE UNITED STATES

WASHINGTON.—Two individuals have been charged in New York for their alleged participation in a plot directed by elements of the Iranian government to murder the Saudi Ambassador to the United States with explosives while the Ambassador was in the United States.

The charges were announced by Attorney General Eric Holder; FBI Director Robert S. Mueller; Lisa Monaco, Assistant Attorney General for National Security; and Preet Bharara, U.S. Attorney for the Southern District of New York.

A criminal complaint filed today in the Southern District of New York charges Manssor Arbabsiar, a 56-year-old naturalized U.S. citizen holding both Iranian and U.S. passports, and Gholam Shakuri, an Iran-based member of Iran's Qods Force, which is a special operations unit of the Iranian Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) that is said to sponsor and promote terrorist activities abroad.

Both defendants are charged with conspiracy to murder a foreign official; conspiracy to engage in foreign travel and use of interstate and foreign commerce facilities in the commission of murder-for-hire; conspiracy to use a weapon of mass destruction (explosives); and conspiracy to commit an act of international terrorism transcending national boundaries. Arbabsiar is further charged with an additional count of foreign travel and use of interstate and foreign commerce facilities in the commission of murder-for-hire.

Shakuri remains at large. Arbabsiar was arrested on Sept. 29, 2011, at New York's John F. Kennedy International Airport and will make his initial appearance today before in federal court in Manhattan. He faces a maximum potential sentence of life in prison if convicted of all the charges.

''The criminal complaint unsealed today exposes a deadly plot directed by factions of the Iranian government to assassinate a foreign Ambassador on U.S. soil with explosives,'' said Attorney General Holder. ''Through the diligent and coordinated efforts of our law enforcement and intelligence agencies, we were able to disrupt this plot before anyone was harmed. We will continue to investigate this matter vigorously and bring those who have violated any laws to justice.''

''The investigation leading to today's charges illustrates both the challenges and complexities of the international threat environment, and our increased ability today to bring together the intelligence and law enforcement resources necessary to better identify and disrupt those threats, regardless of their origin,'' said FBI Director Mueller.

''The disruption of this plot is a significant milestone that stems from months of hard work by our law enforcement and intelligence professionals,'' said Assistant Attorney General Monaco. ''I applaud the many agents, analysts and prosecutors who helped bring about today's case.''

''As alleged, these defendants were part of a well-funded and pernicious plot that had, as its first priority, the assassination of the Saudi Ambassador to the United States, without care or concern for the mass casualties that would result from their planned attack,'' said U.S. Attorney Bharara. ''Today's charges should make crystal clear that we will not let other countries use our soil as their battleground.''

THE ALLEGED PLOT

The criminal complaint alleges that, from the spring of 2011 to October 2011, Arbabsiar and his Iran-based co-conspirators, including Shakuri of the Qods Force, have been plotting the murder of the Saudi Ambassador to the United States. In furtherance of this conspiracy, Arbabsiar allegedly met on a number of occasions in Mexico with a DEA confidential source (CS–1) who has posed as an associate of a violent international drug trafficking cartel. According to the complaint, Arbabsiar arranged to hire CS–1 and CS–1's purported accomplices to murder the Ambassador, and Shakuri and other Iran-based co-conspirators were aware of and approved the plan. With Shakuri's approval, Arbabsiar has allegedly caused approximately $100,000 to be wired into a bank account in the United States as a down payment to CS–1 for the anticipated killing of the Ambassador, which was to take place in the United States.

According to the criminal complaint, the IRCG is an arm of the Iranian military that is composed of a number of branches, one of which is the Qods Force. The Qods Force conducts sensitive covert operations abroad, including terrorist attacks, assassinations and kidnappings, and is believed to sponsor attacks against Coalition Forces in Iraq. In October 2007, the U.S. Treasury Department designated the Qods Force for providing material support to the Taliban and other terrorist organizations.

The complaint alleges that Arbabsiar met with CS–1 in Mexico on May 24, 2011, where Arbabsiar inquired as to CS–1's knowledge with respect to explosives and explained that he was interested in, among other things, attacking an embassy of Saudi Arabia. In response, CS–1 allegedly indicated that he was knowledgeable with respect to C–4 explosives. In June and July 2011, the complaint alleges, Arbabsiar returned to Mexico and held additional meetings with CS–1, where Arbabsiar explained that his associates in Iran had discussed a number of violent missions for CS–1 and his associates to perform, including the murder of the Ambassador.

$1.5 MILLION FEE FOR ALLEGED ASSASSINATION

In a July 14, 2011, meeting in Mexico, CS–1 allegedly told Arbabsiar that he would need to use four men to carry out the Ambassador's murder and that his price for carrying out the murder was $1.5 million. Arbabsiar allegedly agreed and stated that the murder of the Ambassador should be handled first, before the execution of other attacks. Arbabsiar also allegedly indicated he and his associates had $100,000 in Iran to pay CS–1 as a first payment toward the assassination and discussed the manner in which that payment would be made.

During the same meeting, Arbabsiar allegedly described to CS–1 his cousin in Iran, who he said had requested that Arbabsiar find someone to carry out the Ambassador's assassination. According to the complaint, Arbabsiar indicated that his cousin was a ''big general'' in the Iranian military; that he focuses on matters outside Iran and that he had taken certain unspecified actions related to a bombing in Iraq.

In a July 17, 2011 meeting in Mexico, CS–1 noted to Arbabsiar that one of his workers had already traveled to Washington, D.C., to surveill the Ambassador. CS–1 also raised the possibility of innocent bystander casualties. The complaint alleges that Arbabsiar made it clear that the assassination needed to go forward, despite mass casualties, telling CS–1, ''They want that guy [the Ambassador] done [killed], if the hundred go with him f**k 'em.'' CS–1 and Arbabsiar allegedly discussed bombing a restaurant in the United States that the Ambassador frequented. When CS–1 noted that others could be killed in the attack, including U.S. senators who dine at the restaurant, Arbabsiar allegedly dismissed these concerns as ''no big deal.''

On Aug. 1, and Aug. 9, 2011, with Shakuri's approval, Arbabsiar allegedly caused two overseas wire transfers totaling approximately $100,000 to be sent to an FBI undercover account as a down payment for CS–1 to carry out the assassination. Later, Arbabsiar allegedly explained to CS–1 that he would provide the remainder of the $1.5 million after the assassination. On Sept. 20, 2011, CS–1 allegedly told Arbabsiar that the operation was ready and requested that Arbabsiar either pay one half of the agreed upon price ($1.5 million) for the murder or that Arbabsiar personally travel to Mexico as collateral for the final payment of the fee. According to the complaint, Arbabsiar agreed to travel to Mexico to guarantee final payment for the murder.

ARREST AND ALLEGED CONFESSION

On or about Sept. 28, 2011, Arbabsiar flew to Mexico. Arbabsiar was refused entry into Mexico by Mexican authorities and, according to Mexican law and international agreements; he was placed on a return flight destined for his last point of departure. On Sept. 29, 2011, Arbabsiar was arrested by federal agents during a flight layover at JFK International Airport in New York. Several hours after his arrest, Arbabsiar was advised of his Miranda rights and he agreed to waive those rights and speak with law enforcement agents. During a series of Mirandized interviews, Arbabsiar allegedly confessed to his participation in the murder plot.

According to the complaint, Arbabsiar also admitted to agents that, in connection with this plot, he was recruited, funded and directed by men he understood to be senior officials in Iran's Qods Force. He allegedly said these Iranian officials were aware of and approved of the use of CS–1 in connection with the plot; as well as payments to CS–1; the means by which the Ambassador would be killed in the United States and the casualties that would likely result.

Arbabsiar allegedly told agents that his cousin, who he had long understood to be a senior member of the Qods Force, had approached him in the early spring of 2011 about recruiting narco-traffickers to kidnap the Ambassador. Arbabsiar told agents that he then met with the CS–1 in Mexico and discussed assassinating the Ambassador. According to the complaint, Arbabsiar said that, afterwards, he met several times in Iran with Shakuri and another senior Qods Force official, where he explained that the plan was to blow up a restaurant in the United States frequented by the Ambassador and that numerous bystanders could be killed, according to the complaint. The plan was allegedly approved by these officials.

In October 2011, according to the complaint, Arbabsiar made phone calls at the direction of law enforcement to Shakuri in Iran that were monitored. During these phone calls, Shakuri allegedly confirmed that Arbabsiar should move forward with the plot to murder the Ambassador and that he should accomplish the task as quickly as possible, stating on Oct. 5, 2011, ''[j]ust do it quickly, it's late . . .'' The complaint alleges that Shakuri also told Arbabsiar that he

would consult with his superiors about whether they would be willing to pay CS–1 additional money.

This investigation is being conducted by the FBI Houston Division and DEA Houston Division, with assistance from the FBI New York Joint Terrorism Task Force. The prosecution is being handled by Assistant U.S. Attorneys Glen Kopp and Edward Kim, of the Terrorism and International Narcotics Unit of the U.S. Attorney's Office for the Southern District of New York, with assistance from the Counterterrorism Section of the Justice Department's National Security Division, The Office of International Affairs of the Justice Department's Criminal Division and the U.S. State Department provided substantial assistance. We thank the government of Mexico for its close coordination and collaboration in this matter, and for its role in ensuring that the defendant was safely apprehended.

The charges contained in a criminal complaint are mere allegations and defendants are presumed innocent unless and until proven guilty.

[From the New York Times, Sept. 7, 2013]

PULLING THE CURTAIN BACK ON SYRIA

(By Nicholas D. Kristof)

When I was a law student in 1982, I escaped torts by backpacking through Syria and taking a public bus to Hama, where the government had suppressed a rebellion by massacring some 20,000 people.

The center of Hama was pulverized into a vast field of rubble interspersed with bits of clothing, yet on the fringe of it stood, astonishingly, a tourism office. The two Syrian officials inside, thrilled to see an apparent tourist, weighed me down with leaflets about sightseeing in Hama and its ancient water wheels. After a bit of small talk, I pointed out the window at the moonscape and asked what had happened.

They peered out at the endless gravel pit.

''Huh?'' one said nervously. ''I don't see anything.''

It feels to me a bit as if much of the world is reacting the same way today. The scale of the slaughter may be five times that of 1982, but few are interested in facing up to what is unfolding today out our window in Hama, Homs, Damascus and Aleppo.

As one woman tweeted to me: ''We simply cannot stop every injustice in the world by using military weapons.''

Fair enough. But let's be clear that this is not ''every injustice'': On top of the 100,000-plus already killed in Syria, another 5,000 are being slaughtered monthly, according to the United Nations. Remember the Boston Massacre of 1770 from our history books, in which five people were killed? Syria loses that many people every 45 minutes on average, around the clock.

The rate of killing is accelerating. In the first year, 2011, there were fewer than 5,000 deaths. As of July 2012, there were still ''only'' 10,000, and the number has since soared tenfold.

A year ago, by United Nations calculations, there were 230,000 Syrian refugees. Now there are two million.

In other words, while there are many injustices around the world, from Darfur to Eastern Congo, take it from one who has covered most of them: Syria is today the world capital of human suffering.

Skeptics are right about the drawbacks of getting involved, including the risk of retaliation. Yet let's acknowledge that the alternative is, in effect, to acquiesce as the slaughter in Syria reaches perhaps the hundreds of thousands or more.

But what about the United Nations? How about a multilateral solution involving the Arab League? How about peace talks? What about an International Criminal Court prosecution?

All this sounds fine in theory, but Russia blocks progress in the United Nations. We've tried multilateral approaches, and Syrian leaders won't negotiate a peace deal as long as they feel they're winning on the ground. One risk of bringing in the International Criminal Court is that President Bashar al-Assad would be more wary of stepping down. The United Nations can't stop the killing in Syria any more than in Darfur or Kosovo. As President Assad himself noted in 2009, ''There is no substitute for the United States.''

So while neither intervention nor paralysis is appealing, that's pretty much the menu. That's why I favor a limited cruise missile strike against Syrian military targets (as well as the arming of moderate rebels). As I see it, there are several benefits: Such a strike may well deter Syria's army from using chemical weapons again, probably can degrade the ability of the army to use chemical munitions and bomb civilian areas, can reinforce the global norm against chemical weapons, and—a more remote prospect—may slightly increase the pressure on the Assad regime to work out a peace deal.

If you're thinking, ''Those are incremental, speculative and highly uncertain gains,'' well, you're right. Syria will be bloody whatever we do.

Mine is a minority view. After the Afghanistan and Iraq wars, the West is bone weary and has little interest in atrocities unfolding in Syria or anywhere else. Opposition to missile strikes is one of the few issues that ordinary Democrats and Republicans agree on.

''So we're bombing Syria because Syria is bombing Syria?'' Sarah Palin wrote, in a rare comment that liberals might endorse. Her suggestion: ''Let Allah sort it out.''

More broadly, pollsters are detecting a rise in isolationism. The proportion of Americans who say that ''the U.S. should mind its own business internationally'' has been at a historic high in recent years.

A Pew survey this year asked voters to rate 19 government expenses, and the top two choices for budget cuts were ''aid to the world's needy'' and the State Department. (In fact, 0.5 percent of the budget goes to the world's needy, and, until recently, the military had more musicians in its bands than the State Department had diplomats.)

When history looks back on this moment, will it view those who opposed intervening as champions of peace? Or, when the textbooks count the dead children, and the international norms broken with impunity, will our descendants puzzle that we took pride in retreating into passivity during this slaughter?

Isn't this a bit like the idealists who embraced the Kellogg-Briand Pact that banned war 85 years ago? Sure, that made people feel good. But it may also have encouraged the appeasement that ultimately cost lives in World War II.

O.K., so I've just added fuel to the battle for analogies. For now, the one that has caught on is Iraq in 2003. But considering that no one is contemplating boots on the ground, a more relevant analogy in Iraq may be the 1998 Operation Desert Fox bombing of Iraqi military sites by President Bill Clinton. It lasted a few days, and some say it was a factor in leading Iraq to give up W.M.D. programs; others disagree.

That murkiness is not surprising. To me, the lessons of history in this area are complex and conflicting, offering no neat formula to reach peace or alleviate war. In most cases, diplomacy works best. But not always. When Yugoslavia was collapsing into civil war in the early 1990s, early efforts at multilateral diplomacy delayed firm action and led to a higher body count.

Some military interventions, as in Sierra Leone, Bosnia and Kosovo, have worked well. Others, such as Iraq in 2003, worked very badly. Still others, such as Libya, had mixed results. Afghanistan and Somalia were promising at first but then evolved badly.

So, having said that analogies aren't necessarily helpful, let me leave you with a final provocation.

If we were fighting against an incomparably harsher dictator using chemical weapons on our own neighborhoods, and dropping napalm-like substances on our children's schools, would we regard other countries as ''pro-peace'' if they sat on the fence as our dead piled up?

BRIEFING NOTE: THE CHILDREN CRISIS IN SYRIA

The crisis in Syria is a humanitarian tragedy of a scale that is almost impossible to imagine. The recent chemical attack in Al Ghouta adds to an already too bleak picture; even before the recent massacre, Syria was the most dangerous place to be a civilian.[i]

The lack of humanitarian access, and hence of witnesses, makes the human price hard to quantify, but our teams in the region responding to this humanitarian crisis report increasingly dire conditions and the daily arrival of thousands of exhausted and terrified refugees. These data indicate the scale of the crisis:

Altogether at least 100,000 people have been killed[ii], including more than 7,000 children[iii] of whom 1,700 are under the age of 10.[iv] The fighting continues to take the lives of an average of 5,000 people each month.[v]

The UN estimates that today one third of Syrians have been forced to abandon their homes.[vi] Two million are refugees and another 4.5 million are internally displaced. Children account for more than half of those displaced.[vii]

The UN estimates that 8.8 million (including 6.8 million in Syria itself[viii]) are urgently in need of assistance across the region, predicting 10 million by end 2013.[ix]

At least four million Syrians—half of them children—are in need of emergency food assistance.[x]

In Northern governorates, 80% of school facilities have ceased to function,[xi] with as many as 3,900 schools damaged or destroyed by the conflict throughout the country.[xii]

Medical supplies are severely lacking throughout the country and the World Health Organization has warned that disease outbreaks are ''inevitable'' in the midst of summer heat, with deteriorating access to water and sanitation.[xiii]

In addition to pervasive insecurity, bureaucratic restrictions imposed by the Government severely limit aid agencies' ability to reach all civilians in need: between January and July 2013 only 20 UN convoys crossed the conflict lines into opposition-controlled areas.[xiv] The UN estimates that 6.8 million—one in every three Syrians—are trapped in conflict areas and in need of assistance.[xv] However, a recent NGO assessment in northern Syria puts the figure much higher, finding that 10.5 million people in these districts alone are not getting enough essential supplies.[xvi] Despite the huge efforts of humanitarian agencies, the volume of aid crossing Syria's borders and conflict lines is still not enough and millions are still receiving no assistance. Children are dying as a result.[xvii]

With price inflation—with basics such as wheat and flour up as much as 100%[xviii]—the lack of food is reported by Syrian parents as the second biggest source of stress, after insecurity.[xix] Our teams have heard testimonies of mothers forced to feed their infants with water mixed with sugar due to a

lack of baby milk. Other reports testify to the bleak living conditions of those internally displaced in Northern Syria, who have so little resources that they are forced to eat herbs and collect stagnant rainwater to drink and wash.[xx]

For the sake of the millions of children facing a future of fear and hunger, safe and unimpeded humanitarian access is needed to all areas of Syria by the most effective routes possible. Save the Children calls on governments to:

Build consensus across the international community, including in the UN Security Council, to demand all parties to the conflict fulfill their obligation to allow humanitarian aid—including UN aid—to all areas where children need it, across conflict lines and across Syria's borders;

Increase funding. Overall the UN is calling for over $5 billion to meet needs inside Syria and among refugees in neighboring countries. Only 41%[xxi] of the appeal is funded. Governments must increase support for humanitarian operations throughout Syria by any possible channel, as well as scale up support for refugees and host communities in neighboring countries.

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RECESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate stands in recess until 2:15 p.m.

Thereupon, the Senate, at 11:58 a.m., recessed until 2:15 p.m. and reassembled when called to order by the Presiding Officer (Ms. BALDWIN).

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from California.

Mrs. BOXER. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the time until 5 p.m. be equally divided and controlled between the two leaders or their designees, with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

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

Mrs. BOXER. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent to speak for up to 20 minutes at this time.

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

Mrs. BOXER. Madam President, today there are hopeful signs that the international community will act to secure Syria's chemical weapons which have caused so much pain and so much suffering, including the suffering of little infants and children. A peaceful resolution to the Assad regime's use of these lethal, outlawed weapons would certainly be the best outcome. I commend the resolve of President Obama, without which we wouldn't be looking at a potential diplomatic solution.

I wish to lay out for the record why we must act in response to the use of chemical weapons. Of course, I prefer it to be done through the international community. But I wish to be clear: There are certain norms, there are certain rules, there are certain laws that must be respected and obeyed; otherwise, we lose our humanity, and this is an example.

Famous leaders throughout history have called war various things. They have called war a contagion. They have called war hell. They have called war a scourge, murder, a crime, despicable. But even in the chaos and in the darkness of war, there are rules. There are red lines. There are boundaries. There are limits. There are norms and there are laws. That is why in our Nation, as difficult and as painful as it has been, we have held our servicemembers accountable when they acted outside those norms. We did it just last month with the conviction of a soldier for war crimes committed in Afghanistan.

The use of chemical weapons is way outside international laws, rules, boundaries, limits, and norms, and has been so since the end of World War I, when the world uniformly condemned them. We know—we know without a shadow of a doubt—that they have been used by Syria in a big way, and it is time for all Members of Congress and, frankly, all members of civilized society to look into our hearts, to look into our souls, and to look into our consciences. The painful way to do it is to look at the shocking acts committed against innocent, men, women, and children in Syria. Look at those videos, as difficult as it might be, of children and their families dying horrible, ghastly deaths, writhing in pain, gasping for air, foaming at the mouth as the gas attacks their nervous systems.

Do we have a conscience? I pray we do. Albert Einstein once said: ''The world is a dangerous place not because of those who do evil, but because of those who look on and do nothing.''

Let me repeat it. ''The world is a dangerous place not because of those who do evil, but because of those who look on and do nothing.''

Doing nothing can sometimes be an attractive alternative. I understand it. But each of us who looks at these videos, who reads about what happened, each of us must ask ourselves, as human beings, as citizens of our great Nation: Can we respond to these atrocities by doing nothing? Can we sit back and do nothing in the face of Syria's use of chemical weapons on its own people, its own children?

When the President said he had a red line on this, he wasn't speaking for himself alone; he was speaking for the world that disavowed these weapons. I have to say that, to me, the Senate has a red line on this. Anyone who voted for the Syria Accountability Act in 2003, be it in the House or Senate, drew a red line, because in it, we condemned and we decried the development of chemical weapons by the Assad regime, and we tied that program to our own national security. There is no way our national security is unaffected when these weapons are used and no one is held accountable.

Did we mean it when we voted for the Syria Accountability Act? Did we mean it when we passed the Chemical Weapons Convention in 1997, which I was proud to vote for. Did we mean it? Words are good, but tyrants do not heed words. History is replete with tyrants who stood in the face of the worst condemnation and annihilated people. If we stand by and do nothing, what message do we send to those who have these weapons?

I mentioned the ratification of the Chemical Weapons Convention in 1997, and I will tell my colleagues, as we look at the world—and there is a lot to complain about and be ashamed of and worry about—one of the good things is that since we passed the Chemical Weapons Convention and ratified it, 80 percent of the chemical weapons of the world have been destroyed.

I think we should listen again to colleagues who spoke during the Senate debate on the Chemical Weapons Convention. Here is what JOE BIDEN, our Vice President, said:

> Norms are created so that we have standards for civilized conduct by which to judge others. Without them, we leave the rogue countries to behave as free actors.

Our own PAT LEAHY said:

> We will advise and consent so the President can ratify this treaty. I truly believe we will. It will show the moral leadership that the Senate should show and the United States should show. We will act as the conscience of this Nation, and we will advise and consent to this treaty. We will show the moral leadership because we began this by saying we would act unilaterally, if need be, renouncing our own use of chemical weapons with or without a treaty. That was true leadership.

So we hear the words ''morality'' and ''conscience'' and ''leadership.'' These shouldn't be just words. We should show that courage. Here are words from John Warner, our former colleague. He said:

> I first learned of chemical weapons at the knee of my father who was a surgeon in the trenches in World War I. He described to me in vivid detail how he cared for the helpless victims of that weapon . . . we cannot turn back now from that leadership role.

Sixteen years later, in this very Chamber where I stood and proudly cast my vote for the Chemical Weapons Convention, we are facing a clear violation of law and humanity.

How do we react? If we do nothing, what is the signal to Assad? What is the signal to Kim Jong Un in North Korea, who has what has been described as a massive array of chemical weapons in an area where we have 28,000 American troops keeping the peace. The message we send if we do nothing is not a good one. It will send a message that says we don't mean what we say; We don't stand behind the laws we pass or the conventions we ratify. These chemical weapons kill people like cockroaches. When we read history, we know these weapons were used on the Iranians by Saddam Hussein and one Iraqi military official called these weapons an ''annihilation insecticide.''

That is what they have been called. These weapons cause excruciating death. That is why a monster such as Hitler chose them to wipe out millions of those he considered subhuman. We all know the history. He didn't use them on troops; he used them on those groups that he considered subhuman. Yet, while the rest of the world was eliminating chemical weapons, Syria was stockpiling precursor chemicals and building one of the largest chemical weapons arsenals in the world.

A Syrian Foreign Ministry spokesman said in 2012 that Syria reserved the right to use these weapons against external forces. His statement already is a violation of international law. He said: We reserve the right to use these weapons against external forces. But he went on to say—and we have his name: ''Any stock of WMD or unconventional weapons that the Syrian Army possesses will never, never be used against the Syrian people or civilians during this crisis, under any circumstances.'' Remarkably, Syria violated its own red line.

Chris Miller is a U.S. Army veteran and he is an expert in the area of chemical and biological weapons. Here is what he wrote in ''The Guardian.'' He said we must: ''jealously guard what progress has been made in working toward a more peaceful world.''

He added:

> The steady worldwide reduction of chemical weapons is a prime example of that progress—one that we cannot allow to be eroded so easily.

I can't underscore this enough. In a world full of challenges and disappointments and for people such as the Presiding Officer and me who believe so much that we can have a peaceful world, this is one of the few areas we can point to—where 80 percent of the world's arsenal of chemical weapons has been destroyed. If we turn our back on this tyrant and on this use, clearly, the chemical weapons will go right back into production. They will be marketing chemical weapons, and we know what will happen when they get into certain hands. We should not ignore history or we are doomed to repeat it.

The British soldier and poet Wilfred Owen wrote this in an effort to depict the horrors of chemical warfare in World War I. This is what he said: ''If you could hear, at every jolt, the blood / Come gargling from the froth-corrupted lungs.''

He saw it firsthand in World War I, where 90,000 troops were killed by these heinous weapons, including 6,000 French, British, Canadian, and Belgian troops killed by German forces in one battle alone. Nations flocked to sign the Geneva Protocol after World War I. Syria joined them, and now more than 1,000 Syrian civilians lay dead due to Assad's decision to bring back these horrors.

How will we react?

Our former colleague and respected national security leader Dick Lugar says chemical weapons ''may be the greatest threat to our country of any security risk that we have, much more than any other government, for example, or another Nation because they can be used by terrorists, by very small groups''—Dick Lugar, who played such a great role in securing nuclear weapons after the Cold War; Dick Lugar, who understands what could happen if we turn our back now.

I respectfully say to my colleagues: Don't look away. Don't rationalize inaction. We cannot stay silent. If we fail to act in the face of such a brazen violation of international norms, in the face of an assault on conscience, then outlawing these weapons becomes meaningless and we put the security of all of us at risk. If we fail to act, we make it more likely that these weapons will be used again in Syria and elsewhere. If we fail to act, we send a terrible message to brutal regimes such as North Korea and Iran, which are seeking to develop nuclear weapons. In the case of North Korea, they have what has been described by Secretary Hagel as a massive amount of chemical weapons. If we fail to act, we make it more likely that these horrific weapons could be used against our allies such as Israel and our troops. That is for sure. If we fail to act, we make it more likely that chemical weapons will fall into the hands of terrorists and others who would do us harm. If we fail to act, we send a message that the civilized world will permit the use of these ghastly and inhumane weapons, not just on the battlefield but against children and families sleeping in their beds.

I ask my colleagues and the American people, do not look away. It is easier to look away.

We had a chance to see some of the videos, Madam President, as you know, during our luncheon meeting. We cannot sit by and do nothing in the face of such horror. We cannot.

So here is the thing: We have a chance now—because of President Obama's resolve, because of the resolve of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, because of the resolve of many people inside government and outside government, we have the resolve to do something. And the best something would be an international response.

I am proud of our President for making sure this alternative was in Vladimir Putin's mind when they met. And

I am glad Secretary Kerry said: Look, there is an alternative. Let them hand over their weapons. Let's dismantle them and do it right and verify it and hold them accountable, and we get past this. That is the route I believe we all want to see happen. We want to see the world stand up against this inhumanity, but let's not be naive about it. When you are dealing with tyrants, you have to enforce that kind of a plan.

I am hopeful today but not sanguine. I am hopeful that the United Nations will take this as an opportunity to stand firm, to say that the outlawing of chemical weapons meant something in reality, not just on paper. And when we said people should not die like cockroaches, we meant it. So I am hopeful we will have a small pause here and we will give diplomacy a chance to work between the nations, and I praise our leadership in the Obama administration and France's leadership and British leadership. I hope the Russians meant it when they said: Let's try to resolve this in a way that will result in the absolute destruction of the chemical weapons Syria has. I hope they mean it.

We cannot walk away from an inhumane act that caused innocent children to die in unspeakable ways because, I will tell you, if we walk away, then I think the message is that there are no limits on gross violations of international norms, there are no limits on gross violations of international laws, and there are no limits on violations of human decency.

I am very pleased the President took this to the Congress. I think it was right. But I want to be clear: The President, as our Commander in Chief, has the authority—if he believes there is an imminent threat or danger to us, he has the authority to act. And I think Richard Lugar is sending us a very powerful message when he says one of our greatest national security threats—he said even greater than a threat posed by any nation—is the possibility that a small terrorist group could get their hands on these weapons. I will tell you, Madam President, that is an unacceptable situation, and I know the President worries about this every day, and every night when he goes to sleep, it is on his mind. One way to make sure the chance of that happening is lessened greatly is to make sure one of the largest caches of these weapons is controlled internationally and then destroyed. That will, in fact, mean we will have a more peaceful world.

There is a civil war going on in Syria. No one wants to get in the middle of it—least of all those of us who voted against the Iraq war because we saw what would happen. And years and years and years later, unfortunately, we were proven right. I was proud to vote no on that war. I think I have a little credibility here for not wanting to go to war, for making sure the intelligence is right, for making sure there is a limited mission, for making sure this is well thought out.

I would say in closing that the best ending to this crisis is for the international community to take hold of this—together, all of us—and work to see that these weapons of mass destruction are first accounted for, then controlled, and then destroyed. If we can do that, then the horrifying deaths we have witnessed and we have seen on tape today and the American people have been witnessing—at least there will be something good that could come out of this because otherwise, if there is no action, their deaths will not mean anything, they will be forgotten.

So we need to keep a credible plan before us, which means we want to see international rules apply, we want to see the international community take hold of this and have a good outcome. But I will tell you this—and I believe this with every fiber of my being—such a gross violation of humanity cannot go unanswered.

Thank you very much.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

Mrs. BOXER. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that time during all the quorum calls be charged equally to both sides.

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

Mrs. BOXER. I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

Mr. SANDERS. Madam President, I wanted to use this opportunity to say a few words about the issue that is on everybody's minds; that is, Syria. I want to tell you that approximately 95 percent of the thousands of e-mails and phone calls my office has received are against U.S. military intervention in the bloody and chaotic civil war in Syria.

The truth is the numbers in Vermont may be higher than the national average in terms of opposition to this war. But there is probably no State in this country where U.S. military intervention in this bloody and complicated civil war in Syria is being supported. It is an interesting phenomenon.

We have a very divided Nation politically, but on this issue it appears the vast majority of Democrats, Republicans, Independents, the vast majority of progressives—I am a progressive—conservatives, moderates, have all come together to express deep concern about the United States being involved in the third military intervention in the Middle East in 12 years.

Let me tell you why I believe the American people feel so strongly against military involvement in Syria. Clearly, it has much to do with the fact that the United States has already been at war for 12 years. There are kids in this country who are halfway through primary school who have never known an America that has not been at war.

What the American people also understand is these wars have been enormously costly in many ways. Not only have these wars in Iraq and Afghanistan cost us the lives of some 4,600 brave American men and women who fought in Iraq and Afghanistan, but as chairman of the Veterans Affairs' Committee I can tell you that today we have tens of thousands of veterans from Iraq and Afghanistan who are dealing with traumatic brain injury, who are dealing with post-traumatic stress disorder, problems they are going to be carrying with them for the rest of their lives.

The human cost of those wars has been enormous. But it is not only the human cost, it is the financial cost as well. Today, at a time when working families are struggling to keep their heads above water economically, we are throwing thousands and thousands of little kids who desperately need preschool education off of Head Start. We should be expanding Head Start. But because of sequestration we are throwing them off of Head Start. We are denying nutrition programs, the Meals on Wheels Programs, that go to some of the most vulnerable and fragile seniors in this country. We are throwing them off basic nutrition programs.

We are forcing massive cuts through furloughs on tens of thousands of Federal employees, including members of the Vermont National Guard. At the end of the day, by the time we take care of the last servicemember who served in Iraq and Afghanistan, those wars will have cost us at least $3 trillion.

But it is not only the human cost of those wars that troubles the American people. It is not only the financial cost of these wars that troubles the American people. It is the deep sense that exists across the political spectrum that foreign policy and going to war are a lot more complicated and unpredictable and have unintended consequences, far more so than many of our leaders in past years have believed.

Afghanistan is a small country that in 2001 virtually had no army when the United States invaded it; no army against the most powerful military force in the history of the world.

What is the problem? Twelve years later we are still in Afghanistan. All of us remember President George W. Bush standing on an aircraft carrier telling us that in Iraq the mission was accomplished. Mission accomplished.

Well, it didn't turn out quite that way. Thousands of deaths later for

American servicemembers, tens of thousands of deaths later for the people of Iraq, peace and democracy in that country has not yet been accomplished. It is a lot more complicated than people thought it would be.

Today people worry what are the long-term implications and what are the unforeseen consequences of the United States being involved in a horrendous, bloody, and complicated war in Syria. All of us know Asad is a ruthless dictator who has exploited his people terribly and used chemical weapons against them. But not every American knows that some 20 to 25 percent of the opposition to Asad turns out to be Islamic fundamentalists, some of them affiliated with Al Qaeda.

What are the long-term implications and unintended consequences of being involved in a war in that area? I know the President has been very clear about saying he is talking about strikes that are very targeted, very minimal. But once you break the egg, once you get involved, we have to bear and will bear a certain amount of responsibility for what happens during the war and even after the war if Asad is overthrown.

This is why the American people are extremely concerned about the United States unilaterally going into Syria without the support of the international community and without the support of the United Nations.

Having said all of that, in my mind there is another reason, a deeper reason, as to why there is so much opposition to the President's proposal and the proposal that came out of the Foreign Relations Committee, which was more open-ended and spoke about regime change. That has everything to do with the fact that the favorability rating of the Congress is today somewhere between 8 and 15 percent.

The vast majority of the American people don't know. They don't care who controls the Senate, whether it is the Democrats. They don't know who controls the House, the Republicans. By and large, the American people have given up believing that the Congress and the White House are listening to their needs, which are very serious at this moment, or are interested or capable of responding to their needs.

What the American people are saying, and they are saying it very loudly, is we have a Congress and a White House which continues to ignore the enormous crises facing the middle class and working families of our country. What they are saying is: Yes, Mr. President, we agree with you, what Asad is doing in Syria is unspeakable; that he is gassing his own kids is beyond belief. We understand that. We want the international community to address that.

But what they are also saying is: Mr. President, Members of Congress, think about our children, the kids in West Virginia, the kids in California, the kids in Detroit, the kids in Vermont. What about our kids? What kind of future are they going to have in an economy in which the middle class continues to disappear and poverty remains at an almost all-time high for the last 60 years?

Today real unemployment in this country is not 7.4 percent, the official unemployment rate. Real unemployment is close to 14 percent.

Youth unemployment is a tragedy. Kids are graduating high school, going out and looking for jobs, and they want to get a sense of independence. There are no jobs for them. Youth unemployment in this country is close to 20 percent.

For minorities, the number is considerably higher. Black youth unemployment in this country is close to 40 percent. Parents are worried that their kids are graduating from high school and there are no jobs available to them.

Before I came to Washington the other day, I talked to a physician in the State of Vermont who said: Bernie, do you know what. In Vermont, beautiful Vermont, rural Vermont, we are facing a heroin epidemic. Kids are shooting up heroin in Vermont, not to mention the rest of the country, because they don't see much of a future facing them.

Parents are worried that their kids are graduating college, often deeply in debt, and that either they can't find a job or the jobs they do obtain often do not require a college degree. The fact is most of the new jobs being created in this country are part-time jobs with minimal benefits, and they are often low-wage jobs.

What the Department of Labor is telling us is that, in fact, most of the new jobs we see coming down the pike for our kids do not require a college degree. They are low-wage jobs.

The people are saying from one end of this country, yes, we are concerned about Syria, but we are also concerned about Los Angeles, Detroit, and St. Johnsbury, VT. Please, Mr. President, create jobs for the working families of this country. What they are begging the Congress to do is to address the needs our people face.

What they understand, and I think this has a lot to do with why there is so much opposition to getting involved in this war in Syria, is that the Congress has virtually done nothing to improve the economy for working families, and they worry very much that if all of our time, energy, and resources are devoted to Syria, we are never going to address the serious problems facing the working families of this country.

Tens of millions of our fellow Americans today are working longer hours for lower wages, and many of them are earning wages that are simply too low to support a family. We have been happy to hear in Michigan, for example, the automobile industry is doing better; more people are being hired. That is the good news.

Do you know what the bad news is. The new jobs in the automobile industry are barely more than 50 percent in pay of what the old jobs were. All over this country the new jobs that are being created are not paying what the jobs in this country used to pay. We have millions of people working for a disgracefully low minimum wage of $7.25 an hour.

People are saying: Mr. President, Members of Congress, yes, we are worried about Syria, but why don't you work to make sure every person who has a job in this country can earn a wage which enables him or her to take care of their family?

The media doesn't pay a lot of attention to it, Congress doesn't pay a lot of attention, but the American people also understand it is not only high unemployment and low wages, something else is going on in this country. They know that while the middle class is disappearing and 46 million Americans are living in poverty, they understand the people on top today, the people whose lobbyists surround this institution, the people who make huge campaign contributions to the political parties, are doing very well. They are doing extraordinarily well. Corporate profits are at an all-time high. The people on Wall Street, whose greed, recklessness, and illegal behavior caused the worst economic downturn since the Great Depression, well, guess what. They are doing phenomenally well. They are making record-breaking profits. The rich are doing well and corporate America is doing well. They are making all kinds of campaign contributions.

The American people are looking around and saying, What are you doing for us? What are you doing to protect the seniors and their Social Security? What are you doing to protect the children of this country, to make sure they get a decent education? What are you doing to make sure the United States joins the rest of the industrialized world so all of our people have health care as a right?

One of the reasons I think there is so much lack of support for this war is the American people feel it is high time for us to pay attention to their needs.

We have recently heard, and the news is being updated almost momentarily, that Russia, for whatever reasons, has decided finally to play a positive role in this crisis. They are urging Syria to allow the international community to take possession of their chemical weapons. We believe that France right now is prepared to go to the Security Council with a resolution similar to what the Russians are talking about.

I can't tell you how honest the Russians are being in this effort, what their ulterior plans may be. But I think now is the opportunity to work with Russia, to work with China, to work with the Security Council and the United Nations. It would be an extraordinary victory, in my view, for the people of Syria, who are going through horror after horror right now,

for the entire world, and for the future of the world, if we could take those terrible chemical weapons out of Asad's hands and destroy them. I would hope very much the President and our Secretary of State will be working with the international community to make that happen.

Let me conclude. I think we are in a very interesting and, in fact, momentous moment in the history of the United States of America. The people are coming together to say we have enormous crises in our own country and if we don't get our act together, we are going to see the decline of a once-great Nation. We are going to see, for the first time in the modern history of our country, our children having a lower standard of living than we do.

I would hope the lesson we learned of this entire episode is the American people do not want us unilaterally getting involved in another war in the Middle East. I would hope also the lesson we learned is the American people are saying very loudly and clearly this country faces enormous crises: economically, global warming, health care, education, income and wealth inequality, and they want us to start addressing those needs. I hope that out of this very difficult moment the silver lining is we learn something from what the American people want and we begin to do what they say.

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

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

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. UDALL of New Mexico. 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. UDALL of New Mexico. Mr. President, I rise today to speak about the very serious vote before us—the vote to authorize force against Syria. Let's be clear: This is a vote to authorize an act of war. The American people are watching. They know what this is—a dilemma with no easy answers. They know it could spiral out of control. It has happened before and it could happen again.

The use of chemical weapons is an outrage. What happened in Syria was despicable. The horror is clear. The world cannot look away. This crime is a crime against humanity. It demands an international response—strong and unequivocal. On this we can all agree. However, what should that response be?

The President has presented a plan for military strikes on the Syrian regime—an attack that has been presented to the American people as limited in scope but with very great consequences. So we are confronted with urgent appeals to strike, but I believe there are strong reasons not to do so.

First, we should pursue all diplomatic and economic options to pressure both Asad and his backers to change course. We have not yet done that to the fullest extent.

We all know the Russian Government is aiding and abetting the criminal regime in Syria, supplying military support, providing diplomatic cover, and preventing an international response to this atrocity. The world is rightly outraged. That outrage should be loud and clear, and the full force of international condemnation must be exerted, not just against Asad.

As of this week there are signs Russia may be getting the message. If their proposal to help secure Syria's chemical weapons is sincere, then we should welcome this opportunity. We should work with the international community to make this a reality. The inability to use chemical weapons in this conflict will restore the international norm we seek to uphold and prevent a recurrence of the horrors we have seen.

If Russia aims to be a responsible world power and not a rogue nation, they will seek solutions, not obstruction. They are a signatory to the Chemical Weapons Convention. Let's hold their feet to the fire to do what is right. The President's mandate is stronger with congressional approval, and the mandate of the United States is stronger with international support. I would urge Ambassador Power and Secretary Kerry to keep up the pressure on Russia. Make the forceful case to the Security Council. Continue to share the evidence with the people of the world.

This situation will not be solved with Tomahawk cruise missiles fired into Syria. It will require a concerted international effort to push Asad and the various rebels to pursue a political solution. For us to go it alone, to take unilateral action, will put us on shaky ground legally and strategically.

Second, the proposal to use military force could embroil the United States in a complex Middle Eastern civil war. There is a cancer in Syria, from Asad to Al Qaeda. The civil war is a twilight zone comprised of multiple players internationally, regionally, and within Syria. Many of the rebels do not share our values. Some—we don't know how many—are enemies of the United States and our allies. Many of these rebel groups have also committed terrible atrocities. Tilting the balance too far in their favor is not in our Nation's interest and will not leave Syria safer for innocent civilians.

These strikes have been presented as limited and targeted, but last week there were reports about expanding military targets, of regime change. Even the resolution we are considering today includes veiled language—the language that could make it the policy of the United States to tilt the momentum in the civil war and endorse the policy of arming the Syrian rebels—a policy I and others believe is very dangerous—about whom we know too little.

Third, there is a real risk that even limited U.S. military involvement may make Asad feel more desperate, putting our allies—Israel, Turkey, and Jordan—at risk of attack. This could spark a regional war, creating a situation on the ground where Asad may be more, not less, inclined to use chemical weapons.

As with so many elements here, the question occurs, what then? Here is the reality. There is no simple solution, and the American people know this. I understand there is a natural instinct to want to retaliate, to strike out. No one can forget the horrific images, the terrible suffering of the victims. But we need a clear strategy that will not mire the United States in a bloody and uncertain civil war. I remain unconvinced that we have such a strategy in place.

The Iraq war, which I voted against, began as an international effort to kick Saddam Hussein out of Kuwait. There followed years of a no-fly zone and airstrikes to prevent Saddam from threatening his neighbors or reconstituting his arsenal of chemical weapons. As we all know, these limited military actions led to one of the biggest blunders in U.S. history.

Americans are understandably skeptical after the fiasco of Iraq. They want to know if we are going down the same path in Syria, into a civil war that is more complex and potentially damaging to the United States and its interests. Limited attack or broader, there is no easy way out of the quicksand. Have we not learned at least that after 12 years of war?

I have listened to the administration's arguments closely, as well as the opinions of New Mexicans. The American people do not believe a limited strike will deter Asad; they fear this strike will just lead us further toward direct involvement. They rightly ask, for what purpose and to what end? Public officials should not always let polls be their guide before making important decisions for our country, but I agree with the majority of Americans and New Mexicans—we must exhaust our political, diplomatic, and economic options first. This is not a lack of resolve. America has the greatest military on Earth. No one should doubt that we will defend our interests and our allies. But a military strike in Syria is the wrong response in the wrong place at the wrong time.

I come to the floor not to push my colleagues one way or another. Each of us must make up his or her own mind. I come here simply to explain my reasons for voting no on this authorization for the use of military force in Syria.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. 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, make no mistake about it, the resolution before us, in my judgment, is one of the most difficult decisions a Member of the Senate will ever have to make. The authorization of force is an awesome responsibility that each of us has. None of us wants to see American troops in harm's way. None of us wants to see the need for the use of military force. This is a difficult judgment for us to make.

The Constitution envisions that both the President and Congress are involved in the deploying of U.S. military. Certainly the President, as Commander in Chief, and the Congress, under the War Powers Act, have a responsibility to authorize the use of force. Today in this country Americans are tired of war. We have been involved in Iraq and Afghanistan for way too long. We thought these campaigns would be short campaigns. They turned out to be very long. There has been a tremendous loss in human life and fiscal resources as a result of the wars in which the United States has participated. But the public also understands that we have a responsibility to use our military to protect the national interests of the people of this country. They understand that America's military strength keeps the people in this country safe, and they expect that the President and the Congress will use that military force in order to protect the national security of the people of this country.

What is in our national security interest and why would the President come to Congress asking us to consider the use of military force in the current circumstances in Syria? People understand, they recognize that if we are about to be attacked, there is a need to use force.

The United States plays a unique role in the international community, for we understand that standing up for basic internationally recognized human rights is a responsibility we all have. I supported President Clinton when he asked for the authorization of force for the United States, along with the international community, to be involved in restoring order in the republics of the former Yugoslavia, where there was ethnic cleansing in Bosnia and Kosovo. But for the leadership of the United States additional communities would have been destroyed and people would have lost their lives. We stood up because it was in the interests of the United States to stand up for the enforcement of basic internationally established human rights.

Let's evaluate what is happening in Syria today and understand that although what is happening there may be far from our shores, the impact very much could be felt here in the United States. I serve on the Senate Foreign Relations Committee. We were called back into session last week because of the President's request for the Congress to act on his request for the use of force. We held hearings that were open to the public, and we held classified hearings in order to better understand what had happened in Syria.

I think it is now clear beyond any doubt that the Asad regime in Syria used chemical weapons. The evidence is clear. It was not the first occasion they used chemical weapons. They had used chemical weapons in the past but not to the magnitude they did on August 21 of this year which resulted in more than 1,400 deaths, many of whom were children. The videos of that image are now available publicly. People can see the horrific act that was imposed upon the people of Syria by its President, President Asad.

The action of Syria on August 21 violated international norm. Since chemical weapons were used in World War I, the international community has come together and said: Even in war we will not permit the use of chemical weapons. It is so horrific, so indiscriminate in its killing and in its maiming that as an international community we will stand and say: No, you cannot use chemical weapons.

The evidence is clear that President Asad of Syria used chemical weapons in a mass way and killed over 1,400 people. That action requires the response of the international community, for if it goes unchallenged it is more likely President Asad will continue to use chemical weapons. He just considers it one of the weapons in his toolbox, and he will call it out more and more if it goes unchallenged by the international community.

The people of Syria are not the only ones at risk. These chemical weapons could easily be used against American allies in that region. It could be used against Turkey. It could be used against Jordan. It could be used against Israel.

If the use of weapons of mass destruction in Syria goes unchallenged and if President Asad can get away with the use of chemical weapons, what message does that send to the regime in Iran and its ambition to become a nuclear weapons state and perhaps use nuclear weapons? What message does it send to the Government of North Korea, which is openly testing the use of nuclear weapons?

We have a direct interest in preventing the use of weapons of mass destruction, and we have to work with the international community to say this will not go unchallenged. We not only have a moral imperative—and we do have a moral imperative—but we also have an issue of our national security interest. If these weapons of mass destruction get in the hands of terrorist organizations and groups, it threatens the security of Americans and it threatens the security of our allies. We have a responsibility to protect the national security of the people of this country.

I have engaged many people in Maryland who have talked to me about their concerns about the use of the American military in Syria. They recall what happened when the Congress authorized the use of force in Iraq where there was evidence of chemical weapons, and then we went in and found no chemical weapons. There were statements made about how this would be a limited operation. Our troops were there for a decade. So there is obviously concern about the information being made available to us and what is being asked of the Congress of the United States.

When force was authorized against Iraq and that resolution was pending on the floor, I served in the other body, in the House of Representatives. I had a chance to see firsthand the information about Iraq and its risk factors to the interest of the United States. Some may recall that the popular sentiment was for America to authorize the use of force—for Congress to authorize the use of force. I voted no on that resolution because I was convinced America did not have a national security interest to use military force. So I will explain the difference between the circumstances in Iraq over a decade ago and what we are facing today in Syria.

The original justification for the United States entering its combat troops in Iraq was that Iraq was deeply involved with the then-government of Afghanistan and the attack on our country on September 11. I looked for that information, and I saw no information between the Iraqi Government and the attack on our government. Yet those statements were made and it was used as justification for the use of military force.

Here the justification is the use by Syria of chemical weapons, and that has been established. I believe the international community has now understood the evidence is clear that the Asad regime used chemical weapons in contravention to international norm.

When we were authorizing the Iraq use of force, there were no restrictions on the U.S. military. As everyone knows, we used ground troops. We used hundreds of thousands of ground troops in our campaign in Iraq. American lives were put directly at risk, and it put America directly in harm's way.

The request made by the President of the United States for military action in Syria does not include—and, in fact, the resolution that has come out of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee makes it clear that there will be no ground combat troops from the United States of America. We will not be drawn into a ground war.

The Iraqi resolution that was approved over a decade ago had no time limit on that authorization. As we saw with that authorization and with the Afghanistan authorization, those campaigns went for over a decade, with American troops at risk.

The authorization that has come out of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee contains a 60-day limitation on the authorization of the use of force. It can be extended once for an additional

30 days. This is a limited campaign. It is very clear this authorization is restricted to the specific objective to degrade and deter the use of chemical weapons by the Syrian regime and to prevent the transfer of chemical weapons to terrorist organizations.

The Senate Foreign Relations Committee recommended resolution is limited. It is limited to that mission. It is limited in the type of military operation—no ground troops. It is limited in time and is not to exceed 60 to 90 days. It is limited to the fact that use of force should be the last option—not the first but the last option.

I have said many times on the floor of the House, and now on the floor of the Senate, that the use of military should be the last resort. There are other options that need to be explored first. So the resolution that has come out of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee requires the President to pursue diplomatic ways to resolve the issue before he can use force. He must certify to Congress that he has done that before he can use force.

Mr. President, you understand this directly because you raised some of these issues. We now have an opportunity that we hope will work. We now have the attention of Russia and Syria since they know America is serious about reacting to Syria's use of chemical weapons. They know we will not stand by.

They have now acknowledged that chemical weapons in great numbers exist in Syria. And, quite frankly, I think they have acknowledged the use of chemical weapons in Syria. Of course, the videos speak for themselves and the physical evidence is overwhelming.

Now the suggestion is they will turn over those chemical weapons to the international community. If that is done, we have achieved our objective in the resolution that is before us. The resolution before us is to degrade and deter the use of chemical weapons by Syria. If they turn their chemical weapons over to the international community, we have achieved our objective. However, any such plan must be verifiable, enforceable, and timely.

Excuse me if I seem a little bit suspicious of the suggestions made by Russia and Syria. I want to make sure they are verifiable, they are enforceable, and that they are timely. We anticipated a diplomatic effort when the Senate Foreign Relations Committee recommended this resolution to the floor of the Senate.

There are many Members of the Senate, including the Presiding Officer, who are looking at ways we can come together to support the President's effort to stand up against the use of chemical weapons. I hope we will be able to come together with language in this resolution that will allow the Syrian Government to turn over its chemical weapons in a timely and enforceable way so military force will not be necessary.

Make no mistake about it, but for the leadership of President Obama and their fear of the use of American military force, we would never be at this opportunity right now where we have a viable diplomatic channel we can pursue. I wanted to acknowledge that we anticipated diplomacy would be used, as it always should be, before the use of our military. We hope our military will not be necessary, but we have to react to the use of chemical weapons.

Let me explain some of what we don't want to see happen. Earlier I referenced the hearings we had in the Senate Foreign Relations Committee. I congratulate Senator MENENDEZ and Senator CORKER, the chairman and ranking Republican on our committee. We had a very open hearing, we had access to classified information, and then we had an open discussion in our committee where all views were heard.

We tried to recommend a resolution we thought was responsible for the Congress to weigh in on. It was not the resolution the President submitted to us. It was one that was much more limited to the authorization we thought was appropriate. I think it has served its purpose from the point of view of putting Syria on notice that the United States is prepared to join the international community to say: Chemical weapons will not be allowed to be used. We also made it clear we will not be drawn into a civil war.

President Asad has done some horrible things in that country. In my view, he has lost the legitimacy of leading the country, but it is up to the Syrians to solve their civil conflict. American troops will not be drawn into the civil problems within Syria itself. They are going to have to resolve that issue.

As the United States has said, and as the international community has said, there needs to be a political solution to the future of Syria. Yes, there are some good people in the opposition and there are some people we are concerned about in the opposition. At the end of the day, it is up to the Syrians, through a political process, to determine their own government. What we should expect is a government that will respect the human rights of all the people of Syria and will respect the right of Syrians to determine who their leader should be. All ethnic communities should be able to live in peace in Syria, and that is our objective, to get to that political solution. We will not be drawn into a broader conflict.

As I said earlier, the people I have talked to in Maryland don't want war. The people I have talked to in this Nation do not want the United States drawn into another war, and neither do I.

One more point about the response to the use of chemical weapons. Yes, our first priority is to make sure these chemical weapons aren't used again. The best way to do that is to get control of the weapons and make sure they are not used and, hopefully, destroyed.

President Asad needs to be held accountable. He has committed war crimes. He has committed crimes against humanity. He needs to be held accountable for the criminal actions he has perpetrated on the people of Syria. As we know, over 100,000 have lost their lives, many of whom were civilians who were put in harm's way by the Syrian Government against international norms. I encourage my colleagues to join me in the effort of calling on an international tribunal to take President Asad, in this case, and establish the international justice so that he is held accountable for his actions.

One last point about the resolution before us. It is important to work with the international community. I hope we will find more countries standing up for the importance of international participation regarding condemning the use of chemical weapons. One of the hopes we have in this new opportunity for a diplomatic solution is for the United Nations to assume its appropriate role. The United Nations Security Council will have an opportunity as early as today to pass an enforceable resolution condemning what happened in Syria and accepting the offer to take control of all of its chemical weapons and do it in a way that is enforceable and in a way that accomplishes its goal. I hope the United Nations Security Council will act. I hope the international community will join us. United States leadership is needed, and President Obama is providing it. But the key point is we must respond to the use of chemical weapons.

I think this debate is strengthening our country. I understand there are different views. I urge my colleagues to come together to support a resolution that puts America on record supporting President Obama in saying we will not permit the use of chemical weapons to go unchallenged, that our objective is to make sure the world is safer, and we are prepared to work with the international community in order to achieve those objectives.

With that, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. WARREN). Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. MANCHIN. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent the time until 7 p.m. be equally divided and controlled between the two leaders or their designees, with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. MANCHIN. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent to enter into a colloquy with my dear friend Senator

HEITKAMP of North Dakota so we can talk about the serious situation we have before us.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from West Virginia is recognized.

Mr. MANCHIN. I thank the Chair.

(The remarks of Mr. MANCHIN and Ms. HEITKAMP pertaining to the introduction of S.J. Res. 22 are located in today's RECORD under ''Statements on Introduced Bills and Joint Resolutions.'')

Mr. MANCHIN. I thank the Senator and note the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Ms. BALDWIN. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

Ms. BALDWIN. Madam President, I come to speak to the important debate we are having about the most sobering issue I face as a Senator, as a Wisconsinite, and as an American—the issue of military action by the United States.

Let me start by saying that the Asad regime's use of chemical weapons against the Syrian people is morally reprehensible and a serious violation of longstanding international law. The various treaties and conventions addressing these issues have been ratified by most of the world's nations. There is a reason why almost the entire world has gathered under the Chemical Weapons Convention to ban these weapons. It is because chemical weapons are truly barbaric in nature. They are a global threat, and they therefore require a global response.

The President has made the right choice to seek congressional authorization for any potential military action in Syria. The gravity of these issues before us is significant and they deserve a full debate. President Obama should be praised for understanding and appreciating that fact. We must demand that all Presidents—not just this President—come to Congress to get approval before taking military action in another country in instances where we are not facing an imminent threat. I have made that case with both Democratic and Republican Presidents.

I strongly believe our response to this situation must not be a unilateral military action. This is not America's responsibility alone, and it is not in our interest to set the precedent that it is our responsibility alone.

Syria violated international laws and should be held accountable by the international community. America must not act alone. The use of chemical weapons is a global atrocity that demands a global response, and that is why I oppose going to war in Syria and I oppose authorizing military involvement in Syria's civil war—not for 1 day, not for 60 days, not for a decade. I do not believe we should involve ourselves militarily in the middle of a brutal years-long civil war. That would not strengthen America's national security. But the answer is not to do nothing. The answer, rather, is to create a situation where these violations of humanitarian norms and crimes against humanity can be dealt with effectively by the U.N. and other international institutions.

We must continue to focus on building a global coalition to support the encouraging developments in the past few days and to resolve this crisis without the use of unilateral military engagement in Syria. By working through the United Nations and its institutions, we strengthen international frameworks that can help resolve the conflict in Syria and build a safer and stronger international community moving forward.

I firmly believe that the recent potential for progress in today's U.N. discussions is a testament to American democracy. By President Obama fulfilling his constitutional duties to come to Congress and by our serious debate here on Capitol Hill, I believe America has helped drive a more constructive international debate and engagement on Asad's regime's atrocities. We must now give the opportunity of a path forward without military involvement in Syria a chance to succeed.

Madam President, I yield back my time and suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

CLIMATE CHANGE

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. Madam President, we are back from the August recess, and I am here now for the 42nd time to try to awaken this body to the threat of climate change. Today I have come to talk about some of what went on during the recess while we were away in my home State of Rhode Island and around the globe.

Here is some of what happened in Rhode Island.

On August 14, Nancy Sutley, Chair of the White House Council on Environmental Quality, joined me in Rhode Island to deliver a clear message. As she said: ''Climate change poses a very real threat to public health, both now and in the future.''

Warmer temperatures in the Northeast mean harmful ozone can form very quickly. That leads to the bad air days we hear about on the news, when children with asthma and other vulnerable citizens are urged to stay indoors, often on what appear to be beautiful, sunny, summer days. Nancy Sutley and I heard from Nick Friend, a 15-year-old from East Providence, and Kenyatta Richards, an 8-year-old from Warwick, about the six Rhode Island bad air days we have had already this year that threatened Nick's and Kenyatta's health, and thousands more children.

In Narragansett, a lovely Rhode Island beach town, I visited two sites that sustained significant damage during Hurricane Sandy to see how that town is using recovery aid to repair roads and public housing. People in Narragansett realize rebuilding is not enough; that we need to start adapting for future storms.

The oceans are warming, undeniably, and as they warm they expand. So sea levels rise, leading to more erosion and flooding. Tide gauges in Newport show an average sea level increase of nearly 10 inches since 1930. So storm surges such as the damaging surge last year from Hurricane Sandy will batter our shores further inland, and we have to adapt to that.

In Westerly, RI, town officials and the University of Rhode Island's Coastal Resources Center held an informational meeting about the effects of sea level rise on the town's coastal wetlands, planning for 1, 3, and 5 feet of coastal sea level rise, so Westerly can create a communitywide adaptation plan.

Cranston, RI, was hit hard by the floods of 2010. In August, during this recess, demolition crews began tearing down homes in a neighborhood near the Pawtuxet River to buffer the surrounding homes to protect against future flooding. Cranston also announced a series of climate change workshops to increase awareness about the threats facing city residents and to help them plan ahead. So that is some of what happened in Rhode Island.

Nationally, in August the Rim Fire burned in California near Yosemite National Park, the third largest wildfire on record in California. No one can say climate change caused this fire. Wildfires have been happening forever. But hotter, drier years make for worse wildfire seasons. Spring and summer temperatures are edging up, snow is melting earlier, wildfire season is lengthening, and the intensity of the wildfire season is increasing, as State and Federal fire and forest managers forewarned our bicameral task force in a hearing just before the recess.

During August, nearly all of New Mexico experienced drought, with the majority of that State in severe, extreme or exceptional drought. In late August, the Bureau of Reclamation announced the first reduction of outflows from Lake Powell since the reservoir was filled in the early 1960s. Tens of millions of people who rely on the Colorado River for water will be affected.

Reports are that a late August heat wave in the Midwest caused school closures in Minnesota, and students were released early from schools in Colorado, Illinois, Iowa, Nebraska, North Dakota, and South Dakota. Again, it is the loaded dice phenomenon. We can't

assign specific blame for this heat wave to climate change, but on a planet with hotter summers, we can expect worse and more frequent heat waves. So that is nationally.

Globally, NOAA announced that July 2013 was the sixth warmest July on record.

I was traveling in Asia during the recess with Senator JOHN MCCAIN immediately following record-setting heat. In mid-August temperatures passed 105 degrees Fahrenheit in Shanghai, China, the hottest temperature measured in the city since records began to be kept about 140 years ago. The temperature in Shimanto, Japan, hit 105 degrees Fahrenheit, the hottest ever recorded in that Nation.

South Korea's President Park talked with us about climate change and its importance in Northeast Asia. While we were there in South Korea, the Ministry of Trade, Industry, and Energy had warned of power shortages due to high temperatures, and we met with public officials in rooms with air-conditioners shut off to save power.

Senator MCCAIN and I heard from China's leading climate official, Vice Chairman Xie, about China's plan to invest almost $475 billion on clean energy and emissions-reducing projects through 2015—nearly $500 billion between now and 2015 and about seven regional cap-and-trade programs that will eventually include other large cities such as Shanghai, Beijing, and Tianjin. For my colleagues who say China must act first on climate change: They are acting, and we should not look to them for an excuse to delay action here at home.

Indeed, a report recently by the Pew Charitable Trusts described China as—let me quote this—China: ''The epicenter of clean energy finance, attracting $65.1 billion in investment . . . it garnered 25 percent of all solar energy investment . . . 37 percent of all wind energy investment . . . and 47 percent of the investment in the 'other renewable energy category.' ''

That is what the Pew Report said about China.

The report compared that to the ''disappointing U.S. performance in the worldwide race for clean energy jobs, manufacturing, and market share.'' That is not a race we want to lose. Yet we are exhibiting disappointing performance against China.

August was also a month for the usual climate denial. One of our Senate colleagues reportedly self-declared that he was a global warming denier and said he believes evidence points to the Earth entering a mini ice age.

One California Representative told constituents: ''Just so you know, global warming is a total fraud.''

A conservative Representative from Iowa told his constituents:

> [Climate change] is not science. It's more of a religion than science.

A Representative from Florida said: ''Our climate will continue to change because of the way God formed the Earth.''

August even brought a climate denier opinion piece to my home State ''Providence Journal:'' ''Climate science is in turmoil,'' the piece said, ''because global surface temperatures have been flat for 16 years.''

Rhode Island's PolitiFact unit quickly determined that this claim ''cherry-picked numbers and leaves out important details that would give a very different impression.''

In truth, there have been steps in the upward march of global surface temperature before. My skeptical colleagues should read about these steps and what may cause them in mainstream news outlets, which explain that while these pauses do happen, they have not and do not herald the end of climate change. Setting aside surface temperature for a moment, we continue to see warming, rising, and acidifying oceans.

The recess brought the latest issue, for instance, of ''National Geographic,'' whose cover story is ''Rising Seas.'' Let me read two excerpts:

> A profoundly altered planet is what our fossil-fuel-driven civilization is creating, a planet where Sandy-scale flooding will become more common and more destructive for the world's coastal cities. By releasing carbon dioxide and other heat-trapping gases into the atmosphere, we have warmed the Earth by more than a full degree Fahrenheit over the past century and raised sea level by about eight inches. Even if we stopped burning all fossil fuels tomorrow, the existing greenhouse gases would continue to warm the Earth for centuries. We have irreversibly committed future generations to a hotter world and rising seas.

Here, focusing on a specific location:

> Among the most vulnerable cities is Miami. I cannot envision southeastern Florida having many people at the end of this century, says Hal Wanless, chairman of the department of geological sciences at the University of Miami. We're sitting in his basement office, looking at maps of Florida on his computer. At each click of the mouse, the years pass, the ocean rises, and the peninsula shrinks. Freshwater wetlands and mangrove swamps collapse—a death spiral that has already started on the southern tip of the peninsula. With seas four feet higher than they are today—a distinct possibility by 2100—about two-thirds of southeastern Florida is inundated. The Florida Keys have almost vanished. Miami is an island.

That is from that extremist publication National Geographic.

August also brought news that the IPCC will announce that it is now more certain than ever that human activity is the main cause of recent climate change. Let me be very clear about this: There is a broad and strong scientific consensus that climate change is ongoing and that human actions are a cause. It is a consensus of a breadth and strength that it is disgraceful and stupid for us to ignore it. That consensus should come as no surprise because the science behind it—behind the proposition that carbon dioxide in the atmosphere warms the Earth—dates back to the Civil War. It ain't news. We have known it for more than a century. Even the contrarian scientists brought in by the deniers to testify in Congress agree that carbon dioxide is a greenhouse gas that warms the Earth.

The science is credible. The danger is credible. Now it is about time for Congress to become credible. It is time to wake up. It is time to do our duty here in Congress to our country and to our fellow man. It is time for us to get serious and protect Americans from the looming harms of climate change.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. REID. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate now 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.

16TH STREET CHURCH BOMBING

Mr. LEAHY. Madam President, two weeks ago, thousands of people gathered on the National Mall in front of the Lincoln Memorial to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the March on Washington, where Martin Luther King, Jr. gave his historic ''I Have a Dream'' speech. That remarkable moment in this Nation's history was a peaceful day of unity and we rightfully remember the inspiring words of Dr. King.

We are reminded this week of just how quickly that hope and positive signs of progress were challenged by a stunning act of violence. Just a few days after Dr. King inspired a nation with his dream for his four children, four other children in Birmingham were killed at their church because of the color of their skin. On September 15, 1963, a bomb was planted by members of the Ku Klux Klan at the 16th Street Baptist Church in Birmingham, Alabama. Addie Mae Collins, 14, Denise McNair, 11, Carole Robertson, 14, and Cynthia Wesley, 14, were innocent victims of racial hatred. The inhumanity of those who conspired and killed children in a church may seem unimaginable in our Nation today, but, as Colbert King of the Washington Post noted recently, ''Before al-Qaeda, there was the Ku Klux Klan.''

We celebrate the significant strides we have made with determined efforts in forging a more just and equal America since the KKK's reign of terror, and yet we cannot forget that these events occurred just days after the March on Washington. It occurred in the lifetime of 88 of 100 members of this Senate body. It is our recent history, not ancient history.

The tragic deaths of those four little girls, along with the other shining examples of bravery, patriotism and resolve during the Civil Rights movement, catalyzed passage of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Voting Rights Act of 1965. These laws helped to transform our Nation and ensure that our most basic promises to our citizens are more than just words on a page, honored only in their breach.

The inspiring possibilities described so eloquently by Dr. King, and the depravity and horror of the Birmingham church bombing just weeks later, reveal an important lesson about our history. The path to progress in our Democracy is winding, and sometimes very, very difficult. We know from our shared experience that we cannot be the Nation that we strive to be by setting the dial on autopilot and assuming that all will be well. There are so many reminders of the winding path to progress, and recently we experienced a considerable detour.

Three months ago, a narrow majority of the Supreme Court held that the coverage provision of Section 5 of the Voting Rights Act was unconstitutional. Section 5, often called the ''heart of the Voting Rights Act,'' provided a remedy for unconstitutional discrimination in voting by requiring jurisdictions with the worst histories of discrimination to ''preclear'' all voting changes before they could take effect. The remedy is both necessary and important because it stops the discriminatory voting practice before our fellow Americans' rights are violated. By striking down the coverage provision for Section 5, the Supreme Court's ruling leaves this vital protection unenforceable.

While certain barriers to participation have been eliminated, we continue to see discriminatory voting measures such as arbitrary registration rules, polling-place manipulation, voter purges, challenges or other devices to deny access to the ballot, as well as vote dilution tactics. Since the Court's recent decision in Shelby County, several states have already decided to impose new barriers to voting, thereby reversing the gains that we have made through the last five decades.

These include measures taken by Texas, North Carolina, and Florida to undermine their citizens' right to vote and to participate in our democracy. But on this day, when we reflect on the contributions of our children to the cause of liberty, perhaps no story is more worth retelling than the story of the Prairie View A&M students. It is a story that bridges the past with both the present and the future. Students from that historically black university have been fighting for their voting rights for more than four decades now, and if not for the Voting Rights Act, many of these students would have been denied their fundamental right to vote.

The history is well-documented in a recent Houston Chronicle article by Renée Lee. I ask unanimous consent that it be printed in the RECORD. In the 1970s, the Justice Department filed an action against Waller County and its state officials for using a questionnaire to deny Prairie View students the right to vote. In 1992, 19 students were indicted for improperly voting, which ultimately led to a U.S. Supreme Court ruling that authorized college students to register and vote in communities where they live while at school.

In 2004, the NAACP and four Prairie View students filed a federal case after the county district attorney tried to enforce residency requirements that would keep students from voting. A Section 5 enforcement suit was filed by civil rights organizations around the same time after county officials shortened the early voting period at the campus in violation of Section 5. This effort to narrow student participation came at a time when a student leader sought elective office. Testimony about this recent chapter at Prairie View A&M was submitted to Congress in support of the 2006 Reauthorization of the Voting Rights Act. It was compelling evidence that voting discrimination persists in that community and that even a Supreme Court ruling was not sufficient protection.

Two years after the reauthorization of Section 5, in 2008, nearly 1,000 Prairie View students marched in protest for the lack of an early voting place on campus. The county had reduced the number of early voting polling sites from six to one, requiring students to walk miles to the nearest polling location. If you did not know the long and tortured history of the schemes to block Prairie View A&M voters from their constitutionally protected rights, moving a polling place may seem like merely a matter of administrative convenience, but in voting, both history and context matter. The Justice Department under Attorney General Michael Mukasey ultimately entered into a consent decree with Waller County that required officials to restore three polling sites. And now, the students from this historically black university are once again fighting to exercise their fundamental right to vote by demanding an accessible polling place. The Prairie View A&M story illustrates that sometimes discrimination starts early, and that some officials are surprisingly persistent in their efforts to erect barriers in the path of our youngest voters. The Voting Rights Act stands as a guardian against these schemes to discourage young voter participation.

But now, following the Shelby County ruling, and with a college leader seeking elective office in Elizabeth City, North Carolina, local officials have borrowed the Prairie View A&M disenfranchisement playbook. There, a party chairman challenged the eligibility of Montravius King from standing for office by claiming that Mr. King did not meet the residency requirement because he lived in a dorm. The premise of this challenge is flatly contradicted by Supreme Court precedent and the decades of advocacy over Prairie View A&M students' voter access. Nevertheless, North Carolina local officials were initially able to disqualify Mr. King's candidacy. There were also indications that some in Elizabeth City, North Carolina intended to employ new voter challenge procedures in the state to prevent students from the historically black college from voting. It is perhaps no wonder, then, that part of the officials' plan also involved removing the polling place from the campus. Last week, local election board reversed itself only after a huge public outcry, but these events reveal that some things have changed and some, unfortunately, have not. I ask unanimous consent to have printed in the RECORD an article from the Washington Post by Mary Curtis, which documents the efforts by North Carolina's state officials to infringe on the fundamental right to vote.

When President Johnson signed the Voting Rights Act into law in 1965, he declared that: ''Through this act, and its enforcement, an important instrument of freedom passes into the hands of millions of our citizens.'' We must remain vigilant and protect the rights of all Americans to exercise this fundamental right.

The recent Supreme Court decision placed the burden on Congress to respond with a legislative fix. It is therefore our duty and constitutional obligation to not waver from the path of greater political inclusion that we have set for ourselves and the Nation through our bipartisan support of the Voting Rights Act.

We must restore the vital protections that were weakened by the Supreme Court's ruling. We must provide additional remedies for states and counties, anywhere in the Nation, that not only have a history of discriminating against their voters, but continue to do so. We must extend the reach of these protections to states that commit serious voting rights violations in the future. We must amend the existing provisions of the Act to make those protections more effective. And we must provide greater transparency for changes to voting procedures so that voters are made aware of these changes. These are the kinds of bipartisan solutions that we should all be able to agree on.

As we continue the fight to combat discrimination, we should remember the words of Dr. King. We should remember the aspirations of students like Montravius King. We should remember the contributions of the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee and Congressional leader JOHN LEWIS. And we should remember that those four girls who died in the 16th Street Baptist Church Bombing, and who are being posthumously honored today with Congressional Gold Medals, were part of a movement that helped make America better, stronger and

more just. The way to truly honor them is not by words alone but through our actions and leadership. While we commemorate the sacrifice of these four girls, our work does not end with this commemoration. Our work is ahead of us and we must act together in a bipartisan manner to protect the fundamental right to vote for all Americans. All of our children are depending on it.

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

[From the Washington Post, Aug. 29, 2013]

PAST IS PRESENT AS NORTH CAROLINA HONORS 1963 MARCH AND BATTLES VOTING LAWS

(By Mary C. Curtis)

CHARLOTTE.—In North Carolina, commemorations of the 50th anniversary of the March on Washington and Martin Luther King's dream credited past struggles while a current battle over voting laws took center stage.

In an uptown Charlotte park Wednesday, the crowd used the examples of civil rights pioneers in a continuation of the Moral Monday protests against conservative laws from the Republican-controlled state legislature. Similar gatherings were planned in each of the state's 13 congressional districts. While many issues, including education and health care spending, were reflected in comments and emblazoned on signs, the new state voter-ID bill was a unifying cause.

Later Wednesday evening, several Democratic and Republican legislators took questions from their Mecklenburg County constituents in a raucous forum called, ironically as it turned out, ''Solving It Together.'' At the top of the list in hundreds of questions submitted beforehand—voter-ID laws.

The new laws have already garnered national publicity, and not the kind North Carolina likes. At the state CEO Forum in Raleigh last week, former secretary of state Colin Powell criticized the voting legislation, saying, ''These kinds of actions do not build on the base.'' He made those remarks after GOP Gov. Pat McCrory, who had signed the bill into law, addressed the group, though McCrory later said he left before the retired general spoke.

Besides requiring photo ID, the bill shortens early voting by a week, ends preregistration for 16- and 17-year-olds, eliminates same-day voter registration, Sunday voting and straight-ticket voting, prohibits university students from using their college IDs and increases the number of poll watchers who can challenge a voter's eligibility, among other provisions. It is currently being challenged in court and Sen. Kay Hagan (D–N.C.) has asked Attorney General Eric Holder to take action as the Justice Department has in Texas.

Actions of GOP-controlled elections boards in North Carolina have also been grabbing headlines, from the closing of a polling place at Appalachian State University to the ruling that a student at historically black Elizabeth City State University cannot run for city council using his college address to establish residency.

At Charlotte's Marshall Park, a program of speakers and singers, as well as the sunny weather, duplicated the mood of the 1963 Washington march. Under a voter registration tent, a pledge card from the state NAACP urged attendees to be part of the ''Forward Together, Not One Step Back'' movement voter empowerment effort. The Rev. William Barber, head of the state NAACP, was on the program.

Amy Gollinger, a physician from Davidson, N.C., held a sign reading ''Protect every American's Right to Vote,'' which she alternated with ones that said ''Protect women's rights'' and ''Why deny Medicaid to struggling families?'' referencing McCrory's decision to refuse federal Medicaid funds. She said Wednesday was a ''perfect time'' to protest. ''Even though we've come far since 1963, our state legislature has shown we have much further to go, '' she said. ''It's unbelievable we've gone from one of the most progressive states to one of the most regressive. I hope it empowers voters to get out and make a change.''

Sitting next to Gollinger with a sign reading ''Stop the attacks on public education!'' James Davidson of Charlotte said, ''I'm here for Martin Luther King,'' and called proposals from the legislature ''going back to Jim Crow.'' He said he hoped new laws would spur citizens to action. ''They went to sleep and didn't get out to vote,'' he said.

At the Mecklenburg legislators' forum at Central Piedmont Community College, the crowd in the packed auditorium loudly registered its approval, disapproval or disbelief as representatives of the state House and Senate explained actions on voting, education and the back-and-forth over attempts to change control of Charlotte Douglas International Airport from the city to a state authority to a commission.

In heavily Democratic Charlotte, audience sentiment at the forum, sponsored in part by local media outlets, was loudly skeptical of the Republican-led changes.

Voting rights led the discussion, with one questioner at the microphone asking for data on the fraud that is given as reason for the photo-ID law (the answer came in anecdotal examples) and another quoting former president Bill Clinton's words at the Washington commemoration of the 1963 march, ''A great democracy does not make it harder to vote than to buy an assault weapon.''

From somewhere in the crowd came the tweet that there was much more debate onstage than in the North Carolina General Assembly, where GOP super-majorities were accused of rushing through bills.

It seemed less Old South vs. New South than voter voices vs. ALEC (the American Legislative Exchange Council), with one question comparing North Carolina's bills to model legislation from the conservative nonprofit. State Rep. Bill Brawley, a Republican and active ALEC member, said he believed in the organization's goals of limited government, free market capitalism and federalism; Rep. Ruth Samuelson, a Charlotte Republican, said she has attended one of the group's meetings. All of the legislators said they serve their constituents, not any organization.

State Sen. Dan Clodfelter, a Charlotte Democrat, said he remembered a time when ''we weren't afraid in this state to be different from the states around us,'' when ideas ''didn't come out of anybody's playbook.''

After the forum, voters lingered to continue the contact with officials some thought had not been listening closely enough during the legislative session. Clodfelter was wistful as he spoke of the times North Carolina passed pioneering laws, such as the Racial Justice Act, which allowed death-row inmates to appeal their sentences and have them converted to life in prison without parole if they could prove racial bias in their cases. (It was repealed this year.) ''Now we're known for the wrong kind of things,'' he said. When one of his Republican colleagues noted that the Democrat had Wednesday's crowd on his side, Clodfelter said he answered, ''You made them that way.''

State Sen. Jeff Tarte, a Republican who had managed to be conciliatory in his conservatism during the panel, insisted he ''loved'' the night's verbal battles. ''It's what the American system is all about,'' he said, though since his party passed its legislative agenda, it was easy for him to be magnanimous.

Samuelson sat on the edge of the stage as the crowd filtered out. She defended her support of the voting bill, and noted a New York Times editorial ''The Decline of North Carolina'' that criticized the general Assembly's actions and caused quite a stir in this image-conscious state. She said studies have found that ''after this bill,'' it's easier to vote in North Carolina than New York.

When asked what she thought of congressman and civil rights veteran John Lewis's attack on voter-ID laws, particularly on the date marking the 50th anniversary of his appearance with other civil rights leaders at the 1963 March on Washington, she said, ''I appreciate the sacrifices they made, I appreciate the emotion around this issue,'' then added, ''I'm trying to protect the integrity of their vote. . . . They worked hard for that vote; I want to make sure it doesn't get stolen.''

State Sen. Malcolm Graham, a Charlotte Democrat, had said onstage that in North Carolina you're more likely to get struck by lightning than be affected by voter fraud. He said that when his daughter returned to historically black Winston-Salem State University this year, she and other students were greeted with stories that a county board of elections chair wanted to eliminate the school's early voting site. ''Our national brand as a state has been tarnished,'' he said.

After the forum, Graham said he believed the passion would extend past Wednesday night. ''This thing has legs,'' he said. The test, he said, would be the tough reelection Hagan faces in 2014. ''That's the line in the sand the Democrats have to draw.''

[From the Houston Chronicle, Aug. 1, 2013]

PRAIRIE VIEW A&M STUDENT FIGHTS FOR VOTING POLL SITE ON CAMPUS

(By Renée C. Lee)

A Prairie View A&M University student leader is calling on officials to add a campus polling place to remedy what she and a civil rights leader described as decades of voter suppression.

Priscilla Barbour, president of the Student Government Association at the historically black university, sent a letter to Texas Secretary of State John Steen and Waller County Registrar Robyn German last week requesting that action be taken by Oct. 1. Barbour says students' voting rights are being violated because the nearest polling location is more than a mile away.

The Oct. 1 first deadline, she said, would allow time to make students aware of the new polling place before the November elections.

Barbour, a senior, hopes her request will end a battle that former Prairie View students have failed to win over the years.

''We've always had problems,'' said Barbour, who is active with the Texas League of Young Voters. ''Voting is supposed to be something that's convenient, something you have the right to do without walking a great distance or standing in line.''

The political science major said students were forced during last year's general election to wait in a long line to vote at the polling location at the local community center.

The city of Prairie View accommodates students by placing a polling location on campus, but Waller County officials have refused to do the same, she said.

German, the county's new registrar, could not be reached for comment Wednesday.

Steen's spokeswoman, Alicia Pierce, said Steen was drafting a letter to German.

''We don't generally determine polling locations,'' Pierce said. ''That decision is made at the county level, but the secretary is willing to meet with Miss Barbour. We'll be glad to work with her.''

Gary Bledsoe, president of the NAACP state chapter, said Waller County has a history of voter intimidation and suppression of black voters.

REPEATED COMPLAINTS

The lack of polling places on campus, lost voter registration applications and problems with ballot boxes are among the many voting issues that have come up time and again in the county, he said.

''Students are entitled to a voting poll on campus,'' Bledsoe said. ''They have been fighting for one for many years. It's a righteous request.''

Barbour's action follows a recent U.S. Supreme Court ruling that struck down a key provision in the Voting Rights Act. The law protects minority voters from discrimination at the polls and, until June, required nine states with a discriminatory history, including Texas, to get federal approval before making changes to election laws.

The ruling gave Texas and other states the green light to push through voter ID laws, which civil rights leaders say will inhibit minority voting.

Prairie View has been at the center of voting right issues as far back as the 1970s, when the U.S. attorney general filed action against Waller County and state officials for the use a questionnaire that denied Prairie View students the right to vote.

In 1992, 19 students were indicted for improperly voting, which led to a Supreme Court ruling that authorized students to register and vote in communities where they live.

The NAACP and four students filed a federal lawsuit in 2004 after the county district attorney tried to enforce residency requirements that would keep students from voting. Another suit was filed around the same time after county officials shortened the early voting period at the campus without Justice Department approval.

The district attorney rescinded his action as part of a settlement and county officials added an extra early voting day on campus after being questioned by the Justice Department.

PREVIOUS PROTEST

In 2008, nearly 1,000 Prairie View students marched in protest of the lack of an early voting place on campus. The county, citing budget concerns, reduced the number of early voting polling sites from six to one, requiring students to walk miles to the polling location. The Justice Department instructed county officials to add three polling sites.

Barbour said she was a apprehensive about sending her letters but figured she had nothing to lose.

''Even if nothing's accomplished, now the tone is set,'' she said. ''I'm not the first to tackle the issue and I'm sure I won't be the last. This gives students a chance to be knowledgeable and take a stand.''

TRIBUTE TO ANDREW WHITEFORD

Mr. LEAHY. Madam President, I am proud to recognize Andrew Whiteford of Richmond, VT, owner of Andy's Dandys, maker of all-natural dog treats.

Marcelle and I had the pleasure of meeting Andrew and his mother Lucie Whiteford at the bicentennial celebration for Richmond's Old Round Church, and we were so impressed with him. Andrew was born with Down syndrome, and his family started Andy's Dandys as a means for Andrew to have meaningful employment and to provide jobs for other young adults with special needs. His work is in line with the best of Vermont's spirit of service to others, and for that I ask that the article by Lynn Monty from the August 22, 2013, edition of the Burlington Free Press be printed in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD.

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

[From the Burlington Free Press, Aug. 22, 2013]

RICHMOND BAKERY COOKS UP JOB-TRAINING PROGRAM AND SUCCESSFUL BUSINESS

A mother's creative approach to helping her son transition to adulthood, and all-natural dog treats, are the recipe for success at Andy's Dandys.

Lucie Whiteford launched the Richmond bakery to help her son Andrew (Andy) Whiteford, 21, who was born with Down syndrome, find meaningful employment after high school graduation.

The business was inspired by her boy's affection for his rescued hound named Rosie and his love for reading recipes and baking.

''I hope for him to be fulfilled, happy, healthy, as independent as he wants to be, and to continue to be in a social environment surrounded by people who understand him and love him,'' Whiteford said of her son.

This Bridge Street bakery is on a mission to illustrate employability, while producing a high-quality Vermont product. The original goal of supporting Whiteford in his growth from high school to adult work life has evolved to serving other young adults with special needs, and teaching them real work-based skills that they can take with them in their job search for future employment.

''The mission of Andy's Dandys is to employ and train people to be employable,'' business partner Lesha Rasco said. She is Whiteford's special educator at Mount Mansfield Union High School where he will graduate next year.

''It's the revenue stream that makes the mission part possible,'' Rasco said. ''In the future we hope that it will build.''

Rasco designs and implements individualized work training programs at Andy's Dandys for other young adults with special needs. She has been an instrumental part of Whiteford's growth and of developing his business.

The business has grown organically, Rasco said. ''Lucie has been buying things and paying herself back.''

BAKER, DECORATER, DELIVERER

Andrew Whiteford bakes and decorates Andy's Dandy treats and also makes deliveries and works to promote the business at trade shows and seasonal events.

Andy actually goes by Andrew.

''His name is Andrew. We don't call him Andy,'' Lucie Whiteford said.

''Call me Andy,'' Andrew Whiteford said with a smile.

''He is yanking my chain,'' Lucie Whiteford said. ''The business was named Andy's Dandys because we wanted some link to Andrew, because this was for him, and because it has a nice ring to it. Should we decide to one day make something other than pet treats, we won't have to change the name.''

On a recent morning, a baker's apron was folded in half, and tied around his waist, not around his neck, just the way he requested. Andrew Whiteford was just as meticulous about dipping each one of the many freshly baked molasses dog bones into bright orange yogurt frosting, as he was about donning his apron.

''There are all kinds of colors, like blue, orange, and sometimes brown,'' he said. ''I want to sell these in Las Vegas and on a Hawaii beach someday. I am not joking. It's true.''

PRESERVATIVE FREE TREATS

Joking or not, Andy's Dandys has taken off.

The business started in 2008. Andrew Whiteford began by selling the treats in school and at Saint Michaels's College, where his father Tim Whiteford is an associate professor of education.

By fall of that year a few hundred of the colorful dog treats sold from a couple Chittenden County convenience stores. Overall, 8,500 treats sold that year.

The bakery uses human-grade ingredients and the treats are preservative-free.

Today, the bakery turns out thousands of treats each week, which sell at about 95 stores in Vermont, New Hampshire, upstate New York, and Maine. Thirty-two thousand treats sold in 2012.

''This year we are pacing about 20 percent ahead of where we were last year, and last year was a 100 percent increase over 2011,'' Lucie Whiteford said.

CUSTOM SHAPED FOR YOUR BUSINESS

The bakery has started offering custom-shaped treats that reflect a business' name or product. For example, a flying pig dog treat for the Northfield Savings Bank instead of the standard milk-bone biscuit, she said.

''It's about offering customers a Vermont-made product to demonstrate support for a small Vermont business such as ours,'' she said. ''They gave us a shot, and I understand that customers really love them.''

Lucie Whiteford came on staff full-time last month after leaving her position as an account executive at Fox 44 TV. She hopes to begin drawing a salary as the new quarter starts in September.

''It's profitable now which is why I was able to leave my job to do this full time,'' she said. ''Now that I can work on this business full time, I expect to be able to double sales again in a year's time.''

THE BIGGEST REWARD

More than revenues, Lucie Whiteford's biggest reward is watching her son succeed in adulthood. She said raising a child with a disability has been enlightening and rewarding.

''We celebrate what most people consider mundane accomplishments, such as learning to speak well enough to be understood, learning to button a shirt or tie a shoe,'' she said.

Andrew Whiteford has always pushed himself to achieve goals singing a solo at the senior recital, snowboarding down a black diamond trail, and teaching himself how to dip dog treats with two hands at once, his mother said.

''He continues to exceed our expectations, reminding us that we should be mindful about not setting the bar low just because he has a disability,'' she said. ''As a family we have all grown so much in terms of learning patience, patience and more patience.''

Andrew Whiteford has come into his own in the past few years, his sister Marie Johnson said. ''He has a definite interest in this business now,'' she said. ''He has developed a sense of ownership.''

Their mother agreed. ''Andrew turned a corner this summer. He decided he wanted to

come here and work with me. It was what it was all for, and me sticking with it, and having it be a part of our lives, and having it become the thing he has decided to do it, I couldn't be happier,'' she said.

Andy's Dandys manufactures and packages the treats at the Bridge Street shop, and will be opening a retail store at that location in mid-September.

CORRECTION

This story has been updated to reflect the following correction: Lucie Whiteford launched the Richmond bakery Andy's Dandys. Her name was misspelled in two instances in a previous version of this story.

TRIBUTE TO MARK WOODS

Mr. McCONNELL. Madam President, I rise today to congratulate my good friend Mr. Mark Woods. Mark is currently the superintendent of one of the Commonwealth of Kentucky's most important preserves of natural beauty, the Cumberland Gap National Historic Park, a post he's held for 16 years. The Cumberland Gap National Historic Park sits at the border of Kentucky, Tennessee, and Virginia, although of course, the most breathtaking parts are within the Bluegrass State.

Kentuckians will be sorry to see Mark go due to his recent and much deserved promotion: Later this month, Mark will assume his new duties as superintendent of the Blue Ridge Parkway. The Blue Ridge Parkway runs for over 450 miles through Virginia and North Carolina along the Blue Ridge Mountains. It is the most visited attraction of the entire U.S. National Park Service—more than Yellowstone, Yosemite, or the Grand Canyon.

Mark is a 33-year veteran of the National Park Service and has worked in parks in South Carolina, Tennessee, and Georgia as well as Kentucky. I am sure his family is very proud of him for this career accomplishment. Although I will miss working with Mark in Kentucky, I am pleased that citizens everywhere can still benefit from his knowledge and experience when they visit our national parks.

I know my colleagues join me in congratulating Mr. Mark Woods for this opportunity and thanking him for his dedication to the National Park Service. Mr. Woods's career and accomplishments to date were recently profiled in a newspaper article. I ask unanimous consent that said article be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the article was ordered to appear as follows:

[From the Asheville Citizen-Times, Aug. 7, 2013]

SC NATIVE NAMED NEW PARKWAY SUPERINTENDENT

(By Karen Chávez)

ASHEVILLE.—A 33-year National Park Service veteran with Southern Appalachian roots has been chosen as the new superintendent of the Blue Ridge Parkway.

Mark Woods, 53, now superintendent at Cumberland Gap National Historic Park, which sits in Kentucky, Virginia and Tennessee, will take over leadership of the busiest national park site in the country September 22 at parkway headquarters in Asheville.

''Mark has got some great experience,'' said Bill Reynolds, National Park Service spokesman in Atlanta. ''He spent most of his career in the Southeast.''

Woods, who was raised in Greenville, S.C., received a bachelor's degree in sociology from Lander University in Greenwood, S.C., in 1982. He is married and has three children.

He began working as an interpretive ranger for the National Park Service in 1980 at parks including Ninety Six National Historic Site (Ninety Six, S.C.), Kings Mountain National Military Park (Blacksburg, S.C.), Andrew Johnson National Historic Site (Greeneville, Tenn.), and Cumberland Island National Seashore (St. Mary's, Ga.)

Woods will replace Phil Francis, who retired as superintendent of the parkway in April. Monika Mayr, deputy superintendent since 2009, has been acting superintendent since April, and had applied for the position.

The parkway has not had a female superintendent in its 78 years.

Mayr, a 30-year park service veteran, said she has known Woods for many years and thinks he will be a good fit.

''He's a very good leader,'' she said. ''He has always wanted to work at the parkway because he loves the resources here and he knows the staff is really good.''

Woods also gets a hearty endorsement from Francis, who oversaw the parkway for eight years and still lives in Asheville.

''I've known him over 20 years. He's well respected,'' Francis said.

''He's a very able leader of Cumberland Gap. It's not as big as the parkway, but he's already had to deal with some of the same issues on a different scale. Sequestration cuts happened at all national parks, so he's had to make those same kinds of decisions.''

The federal sequester forced all national parks to reduce their budgets by 5 percent for the remainder of the year, starting in March.

Woods will inherit the aftermath of the nearly $800,000 budget cut, which was accomplished through facility closures, cuts to seasonal and permanent staff, cutbacks on visitor services such as ranger programs and a decrease in the mowing operation and maintenance of the parkway's scenic overlooks.

He must also contend with a $450 million deferred maintenance backlog, which has been growing for more than a decade.

''Mark has a tremendous background in working with gateway communities,'' Reynolds said. ''He also has background in facility design and construction, viewshed protection, wilderness management and general management planning. A broad range of excellent knowledge and experience has made him well suited for this job.''

SIMILAR PARKS ON DIFFERENT SCALES

Woods has been superintendent of Cumberland Gap, known as the gateway to the western frontier, since 1997.

''Cumberland Gap is the first doorway to the West, the path that Daniel Boone and the pioneers used to access the West,'' said Carol Borneman, supervisory park ranger at Cumberland.

The park and the parkway have some similarities. Much like the parkway, Cumberland Gap sits in the Appalachian Mountains, and is steeped in Southern Appalachian history and culture.

Cumberland Gap was authorized by Congress in 1940 to preserve the natural gap through the mountain that pioneers used to reach the western frontier centuries ago. It contains 24,000 acres with nearly 85 miles of forested hiking trails. For 50 years, a major highway passed through the Gap.

But in one of the largest restoration projects undertaken by the National Park Service, Borneman said, a highway tunnel was built through the Gap in 1996, the old highway was ripped out and the Gap restored to its Daniel Boone days as a walking path. From one overlook in the park, Borneman said, the Smokies can be seen on a clear day.

The culture, history and views drew 860,000 visitors in 2012.

Things will likely seem a little more crowded for Woods when he gets to the Blue Ridge Parkway. The most visited of the more than 400 units of the National Park Service, including such popular parks as Yellowstone, Yosemite, the Grand Canyon and the Great Smoky Mountains national parks, the parkway had 15.2 million visitors in 2012.

The parkway stretches 469 miles from Shenandoah National Park in Virginia through the Blue Ridge Mountains, ending in Cherokee, and contains 81,000 acres of land and 1,200 miles of boundary.

Established in 1935 as a scenic motor road, cars and traffic continue to be one of its biggest issues. October is generally the busiest month on the parkway, and Woods will arrive just in time for the heavy fall foliage traffic.

He will also face a major closure in one of the parkway's most popular areas in the height of summer tourist season. A 20-mile stretch just north of Asheville, through the Craggy Gardens area to Mount Mitchell State Park, has been closed to traffic since July 12 due to slope failure, presumably from the excessive spring and summer rain, staff say.

Crews are now working on a temporary fix to open the roadway by Labor Day for the fall leaf-peeping traffic, then will close again while the road is permanently fixed.

Borneman said Cumberland Gap is sad to see Woods leave.

''He is an incredible superintendent, so in tune to park resources, and such a proponent of working with local communities,'' she said. ''The parkway is lucky to be getting him.''

ARIEL RIOS REFLECTING POOL

Mrs. BOXER. Madam President, I would like to recognize Ariel Rios, a man who made the ultimate sacrifice while protecting our country and who is being honored today at a special dedication ceremony here in Washington, DC.

On September 10, the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives—ATF—is honoring Special Agent Ariel Rios, who gave his life in the line of duty, by dedicating the Ariel Rios Reflecting Pool at the ATF Headquarters in Washington, DC.

On December 2, 1982, while conducting an undercover operation in support of an investigation into illegal drug and firearms violations, Agent Rios was shot and killed. At the time of his death, Agent Rios was 28 years old and had worked for ATF for 4 years. His killers were sentenced to life in prison, plus 50 years. Agent Rios was survived by his wife Elsie and their young children Eileen and Francisco.

Naming the reflecting pool at the ATF Headquarters, which is located at 99 New York Avenue NE, in honor of Agent Rios brings him home to his ATF family. This memorial will forever provide ATF employees with a place to honor and reflect on the life of an agent who made the ultimate sacrifice.

This dedication also provides an opportunity for us to honor all the brave men and women who wear the badge and put their lives on the line every day to protect this great Nation.

THE MISSING CHILDREN'S ASSISTANCE ACT

Mr. GRASSLEY. Madam President, I am pleased to be an original cosponsor of the Missing Children's Assistance Reauthorization Act of 2013.

This bill will reauthorize the efforts of the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children. This legislation will ensure that NCMEC will continue to be able to receive reports of missing children for law enforcement, provide DNA analysis to locate missing children, partner with the FBI and Department of Justice to combat child sex trafficking, fight child pornography. NCMEC also should be allowed to continue to perform its role as the congressionally-authorized national clearinghouse to assist missing and exploited children, working with agents from the FBI, Secret Service, Marshals Service, Immigration and Customs Enforcement, the Postal Inspection Service, and the Naval Criminal Investigative Services.

There is a greater need than ever before for transparency and accountability when taxpayer moneys are granted to private, nonprofit, and other governmental agencies. I am pleased that the bill contains the accountability measures that I demand for all grants that are awarded by the Department of Justice. These include two audits of NCMEC use of these funds over the life of the reauthorization, penalties for misuse of funds, prohibition on receipt of funds by an organization that holds offshore accounts to avoid taxes, limitations on conference expenditures, and prohibition of the use of taxpayer funds to lobby for grant funding. These provisions will ensure that taxpayers can have confidence that their money will be used properly and for public purposes.

NCMEC performs important services to combat terrible crimes against vulnerable victims. With the inclusion of transparency and accountability safeguards, I look forward to the enactment of this legislation in advance of the expiration of the current authorization.

TRIBUTE TO NICK GEALE

Mr. ALEXANDER. Madam President, I am pleased today to praise the service of Nick Geale, who was until July the director of oversight and investigations on the minority staff of the Senate Health, Education, Labor and Pensions—HELP—Committee, of which I am ranking member. In July, Nick was confirmed by this body as a member of the National Mediation Board, where he will surely continue his hard work, thoughtful deliberation, and fair application of the law on behalf of workers and employers in the railroad and airline industries.

Nick joined the HELP Committee in 2009 under the previous ranking member, Senator MIKE ENZI of Wyoming, for whom he first served as oversight and investigations counsel before becoming director of oversight and investigations. I was fortunate that he agreed to stay when I became the Ranking Member and appreciate his service. In his role here, Nick investigated waste, fraud, and abuse in government programs and agencies, often working with agency inspectors general and the Government Accountability Office in that capacity. He also led the HELP Committee's investigations into the implementation of Federal programs and to ensure proper enforcement of Federal laws. He thoroughly evaluated and advised the HELP Committee on the President's nominees and assisted the HELP Committee's staff in policy matters and hearings.

Nick came to the HELP Committee from the U.S. Department of Labor, where he served as an attorney to the Solicitor and then as counsel to the Deputy Secretary under the leadership of Secretary Elaine L. Chao. In both those roles, he assisted the agency in implementing labor policies for the more than 180 laws under its jurisdiction and helped manage the Department's 15,000 employees. Nick also has a distinguished academic background. He graduated cum laude from Claremont McKenna College in 1996 and received a J.D. from Georgetown University Law Center in 1999.

Maybe more important than noting his worthy accomplishments in public service is to note his character and his attitude toward his work, the taxpayers he served, and the colleagues he worked alongside. Nick worked hard to ensure that every taxpayer is treated fairly. With his practical experience in labor and employment matters, litigation, and alternative dispute resolution, Nick has been an eloquent and effective help to the committee. His dedication and friendship to those he worked with, on both sides of the aisle, is a testament to the character he has and will continue to have as he transitions to this next phase of his career.

I thank him for the passionate service on behalf of the HELP Committee, the U.S. Senate, and the American taxpayer. I wish him the best in his service on the National Mediation Board.

WORLD WAR II VETERANS VISIT

Mr. UDALL of Colorado. Madam President, today I wish to pay tribute to the outstanding military service of a group of incredible Coloradans. At critical times in our Nation's history, these veterans each played a role in defending the world from tyranny, truly earning their reputation as guardians of peace and democracy through their service and sacrifice. Now, thanks to Honor Flight, these combat veterans came to Washington, DC, to visit the national memorials built to honor those who served and those who fell. They have also come to share their experiences with later generations and to pay tribute to those who gave their lives. I am proud to welcome them here, and I join with all Coloradans in thanking them for all they have done for us.

I also want to thank the volunteers from Honor Flight of Northern Colorado who made this trip possible. These volunteers are great Coloradans in their own right, and their mission to bring our veterans to Washington, DC, is truly commendable.

I wish to publicly recognize the veterans who visited our Nation's Capital, many seeing for the first time the memorials built as a tribute to their selfless service. Today, I honor these Colorado veterans on their visit to Washington, DC, and I join them in paying tribute to those who made the ultimate sacrifice in defense of liberty.

Veterans from World War II include: Donald Benson, Joe Blossom, Hobert Bodkins, Robert Beuker, George Carlson, Wayne Clausen, Maurice Dragoo, Homer Dye, Karl Easterly, James English, George Flaig, Stuart Gordon, Dale Gruber, Frank Gunter, Vern Hammond, Robert Henderson, Otto Hindman, Lawrence Jackson, John Jobson, Elvin Kahl, Doward Kilmer, Thomas Kokjer, Edward Kooper, Raymond Kusmirek, Ralph Leckler, George Lichter, Lyle Lukas, Alfred Marez, Richard Marquart, Maregito Martinez, LeRoy Marx, Hugh McGinty, Damon McMahan, Robert Minnick, Allen Oakley, Gerald Oakley, Vernon Rand, Gerald Rennels, Carol Rhoades, Elmer Rose, Donald Smith, Walter Sparrow, George Stager, Clarence Streit, Richard Tedesco, Sr., Rueben Ulrich, Howard Walter, Raymond Yost, Robert Yost, Thomas Youree, and Joseph Zito.

Veterans from the Korean War include: Charles Adams, Joseph Beaulieu, David Beldus, John Bevins, James Blue, William Cecil, Thomas Clements, Clifford Closson, Donald Dalton, Stanley Davies, Jerry Delcamp, Leonard Dickey Jr., Robert Eddy, Dale Erickson, Ann Evans, Lemuel Evans, Frank Faucett, Byron Foster, Kent Foutz, Jerry Galpern, Wayne Gibb, Thomas Gordon, Oscar Haake, Doyle Hall, William Harte, William Hitchcock, Claire Hoffman, Raymond Horton, Carl Houkom, Bennett Houston, Eugene Johnson, Richard Kekar, Marvin Kembel, Ralph Knoll, Tom Mandis, George Mason, Alvin Mosch, Doyle Myers, Richard Oversteg, David Owen, Johnnie Prock, Duane Purcell, Herbert Reimer, John Rinne, John Rust, Jr., Darrel Schafer, Leonard Schmitz, Virgil Scott, Robert Scott, Herbert Shevins, Wayne Small, Frank Stiver, Robert Stoll, Bernard Streit, Ernest Stumpf, Walter Sutton, Norman Swanson, Arthur Trevarton, Junior Weisshaar, Raymond Williams, George Wilson and Harry Wisell.

Veterans from other conflicts include: Jerol Arguello, Zachary

Dinsmore, William Frank, Allen Laible, Dennis Lee, Lonnie Sebold, Allan Silk, Saxton Wiley and Salvador Velasquez.

Our Nation asked a great deal of these individuals—to leave their families to fight in unknown lands and put their lives on the line. Each one of these brave Coloradans bravely answered the call. They served our country with courage, and in return, let us ensure they are shown the honor and appreciation they deserve. Please join me in thanking these Colorado veterans and the volunteers of Honor Flight of Northern Colorado for their tremendous service.

RECOGNIZING THE SUMMIT PROJECT

Mr. KING. Madam President, I wish to commend the Summit Project and its leader Maj. David Cote for their meaningful effort to sustain and honor the memories of Maine's veterans who have fallen since September 11, 2001. Founded on Memorial Day, 2013, the Summit Project aims to carry stone memorials representing each of those heroes up mountains in Maine beginning on Memorial Day, 2014, and continuing annually. This thoughtful endeavor is already helping Gold Star families heal and will undoubtedly preserve the memory of their loved ones as the years pass.

Maine servicemembers and their families have made monumental sacrifices during the conflicts in Afghanistan and Iraq. To date, 68 Mainers or members of the Armed Forces with ties to Maine have made the ultimate sacrifice during the wars in those countries. I am profoundly grateful for the service of these brave Americans and for the service of their fellow soldiers, sailors, airmen, and marines who continue to protect our freedom on battlefields far from home.

Preserving a living memory of our fallen heroes is especially important in my home State of Maine. As Major Cote writes on the Summit Project's Web site, ''Mainers are veterans. Maine's patriotism and commitment to service in our Armed Forces is nothing short of extraordinary.''

The Department of Veterans Affairs reports that 130,196 veterans live in our State, which means that nearly one in every ten Mainers is a veteran. These distinguished citizens, their families, and their friends know that, to paraphrase the words of President Kennedy, ''A nation reveals itself not only by the men and women that it produces, but also by the men and women it honors, the men and women it remembers.'' The Summit Project reveals the character of Maine: a character notable for its integrity, service to others, honor, and loyalty.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

RIDE OF THE BROTHERHOOD

• Mr. VITTER. Madam President, today I wish to honor a very special organization, Ride of the Brotherhood. Established earlier this year by Air Force veteran and Louisiana native Ed Lewis, Ride of the Brotherhood, seeks to raise funds for our Nation's veterans and children's charities. In March 2015, the organization will hold its first major event called ''The Return'' to honor the 50-year anniversary of those who bravely served in Southeast Asia during the Vietnam War.

On March 8, 1965, American troops landed on China Beach and marched to Da Nang Air Force Base to secure the air base, freeing South Vietnamese troops fighting against the Viet Cong. Those 3,500 Marines were the first combat troops dispatched to support the Saigon government's efforts to defeat the Communist insurgency.

To mark this occasion, 10 Vietnam veterans will travel on motorcycles from Louisiana to California, fly to Vietnam, and ride along the coast stopping at important locations to pay respects to those lost during the war. On March 8, 2013, the 50-year anniversary, the group intends to be at China Beach before traveling to Da Nang. Upon their return, they will ride cross-country from California to the Vietnam Memorial here in Washington, DC, before returning to New Orleans for a ''Welcome Home'' celebration.

''The Return'' will provide closure for those veterans making the trip, and for some, their only opportunity to see the great memorials dedicated to their service. Because the entire journey will be documented, family, friends, and many others will have an opportunity to witness the experiences of the men who fought in Vietnam, Laos, Cambodia, and Thailand. In addition, the trip will highlight the positive relations that now exist between the United States and the Vietnamese people.

I am humbled to have the opportunity to express my appreciation to Mr. Ed Lewis for his service to our country and I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring these great Americans and thanking them for their devotion to our Nation.•

REPORT RELATIVE TO THE CONTINUATION OF THE NATIONAL EMERGENCY WITH RESPECT TO THE TERRORIST ATTACKS ON THE UNITED STATES OF SEPTEMBER 11, 2001—PM 17

The PRESIDING OFFICER laid before the Senate the following message from the President of the United States, together with an accompanying report; which was referred to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs:

To the Congress of the United States:

Section 202(d) of the National Emergencies Act, 50 U.S.C. 1622(d), provides for the automatic termination of a national emergency unless, within 90 days prior to the anniversary date of its declaration, the President publishes in the *Federal Register* and transmits to the Congress a notice stating that the emergency is to continue in effect beyond the anniversary date. Consistent with this provision, I have sent to the *Federal Register* the enclosed notice, stating that the emergency declared in Proclamation 7463 with respect to the terrorist attacks on the United States of September 11, 2001, is to continue in effect for an additional year.

The terrorist threat that led to the declaration on September 14, 2001, of a national emergency continues. For this reason, I have determined that it is necessary to continue in effect after September 14, 2013, the national emergency with respect to the terrorist threat.

BARACK OBAMA.

THE WHITE HOUSE, *September 10, 2013.*

MESSAGE FROM THE HOUSE

At 2:16 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. 2052. An act to direct the Secretary of Commerce, in coordination with the heads of other relevant Federal departments and agencies, to conduct an interagency review of and report to Congress on ways to increase the global competitiveness of the United States in attracting foreign direct investment.

H.R. 2844. An act to amend the Communications Act of 1934 to consolidate the reporting obligations of the Federal Communications Commission in order to improve congressional oversight and reduce reporting burdens.

MEASURES REFERRED

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

H.R. 2052. An act to direct the Secretary of Commerce, in coordination with the heads of other relevant Federal departments and agencies, to conduct an interagency review of and report to Congress on ways to increase the global competitiveness of the United States in attracting foreign direct investment; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

H.R. 2844. An act to amend the Communications Act of 1934 to consolidate the reporting obligations of the Federal Communications Commission in order to improve congressional oversight and reduce reporting burdens; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

MEASURES DISCHARGED

The following measure was discharged from the Committee on Finance and referred as indicated:

S. 1427. A bill to amend title 11 of the United States Code to clarify the rule allowing discharge as a nonpriority claim of governmental claims arising from the disposition of farm assets under chapter 12 bankruptcies; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

The following reports of committees were submitted:

By Ms. LANDRIEU, from the Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship, with an amendment:

S. 289. A bill to extend the low-interest refinancing provisions under the Local Development Business Loan Program of the Small Business Administration (Rept. No. 113–89).

S. 511. A bill to amend the Small Business Investment Act of 1958 to enhance the Small Business Investment Company Program, and for other purposes (Rept. No. 113–90).

By Ms. LANDRIEU, from the Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship, with amendments:

S. 537. A bill to require the Small Business Administration to make information relating to lenders making covered loans publicly available, and for other purposes (Rept. No. 113–91).

By Mr. WYDEN, from the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources, with amendments and an amendment to the title:

S. 28. A bill to provide for the conveyance of a small parcel of National Forest System land in the Uinta-Wasatch-Cache National Forest in Utah to Brigham Young University, and for other purposes (Rept. No. 113–92).

By Mr. WYDEN, from the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources, without amendment:

S. 155. A bill to designate a mountain in the State of Alaska as Denali (Rept. No. 113–93).

By Mr. WYDEN, from the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources, with amendments:

S. 159. A bill to designate the Wovoka Wilderness and provide for certain land conveyances in Lyon County, Nevada, and for other purposes (Rept. No. 113–94).

By Mr. WYDEN, from the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources, with an amendment:

S. 255. A bill to withdraw certain Federal land and interests in that land from location, entry, and patent under the mining laws and disposition under the mineral and geothermal leasing laws (Rept. No. 113–95).

By Mr. WYDEN, from the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources, with amendments:

S. 285. A bill to designate the Valles Caldera National Preserve as a unit of the National Park System, and for other purposes (Rept. No. 113–96).

By Mr. WYDEN, from the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources, with an amendment in the nature of a substitute:

S. 327. A bill to authorize the Secretary of Agriculture and the Secretary of the Interior to enter into cooperative agreements with State foresters authorizing State foresters to provide certain forest, rangeland, and watershed restoration and protection services (Rept. No. 113–97).

S. 340. A bill to provide for the settlement of certain claims under the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act, and for other purposes (Rept. No. 113–98).

By Mr. WYDEN, from the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources, with amendments:

S. 341. A bill to designate certain lands in San Miguel, Ouray, and San Juan Counties, Colorado, as wilderness, and for other purposes (Rept. No. 113–99).

By Mr. WYDEN, from the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources, with an amendment in the nature of a substitute:

S. 353. A bill to designate certain land in the State of Oregon as wilderness, to make additional wild and scenic river designations in the State of Oregon, and for other purposes (Rept. No. 113–100).

By Mr. WYDEN, from the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources, with amendments:

S. 360. A bill to amend the Public Lands Corps Act of 1993 to expand the authorization of the Secretaries of Agriculture, Commerce, and the Interior to provide service opportunities for young Americans; help restore the nation's natural, cultural, historic, archaeological, recreational and scenic resources; train a new generation of public land managers and enthusiasts; and promote the value of public service (Rept. No. 113–101).

By Mr. WYDEN, from the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources, with an amendment in the nature of a substitute:

S. 486. A bill to authorize pedestrian and motorized vehicular access in Cape Hatteras National Seashore Recreational Area, and for other purposes (Rept. No. 113–102).

By Mr. MENENDEZ, from the Committee on Foreign Relations, with an amendment in the nature of a substitute:

S. 718. A bill to create jobs in the United States by increasing United States exports to Africa by at least 200 percent in real dollar value within 10 years, and for other purposes (Rept. No. 113–103).

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. ALEXANDER (for himself and Mr. ROBERTS):

S. 1489. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to require the Secretary of the Treasury to notify the taxpayer each time the taxpayer's information is accessed by the Internal Revenue Service; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. FLAKE (for himself, Ms. AYOTTE, Mr. SCOTT, Mr. MCCONNELL, Mr. BURR, Mr. CHAMBLISS, and Mr. COBURN):

S. 1490. A bill to delay the application of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act; to the Committee on Finance.

By Ms. LANDRIEU (for herself, Mr. WYDEN, and Ms. MURKOWSKI):

S. 1491. A bill to amend the Energy Independence and Security Act of 2007 to improve United States-Israel energy cooperation, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

By Ms. HIRONO (for herself and Mr. SCHATZ):

S. 1492. A bill for the relief of Vichai Sae Tung (also known as Chai Chaowasaree); to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. CARDIN (for himself and Ms. MIKULSKI):

S. 1493. A bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to encourage the use of dispensing techniques that foster efficiency and reduce wasteful dispensing of outpatient prescription drugs in long-term care facilities; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. MANCHIN (for himself and Ms. HEITKAMP):

S.J. Res. 22. A joint resolution to promote a diplomatic solution in Syria, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

SUBMISSION OF CONCURRENT AND SENATE RESOLUTIONS

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

By Ms. MIKULSKI:

S. Res. 221. A resolution designating the week of October 7 through October 13, 2013, as ''Naturopathic Medicine Week'' to recognize the value of naturopathic medicine in providing safe, effective, and affordable health care; considered and agreed to.

ADDITIONAL COSPONSORS

S. 119

At the request of Mrs. BOXER, the name of the Senator from Maryland (Mr. CARDIN) was added as a cosponsor 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. 150

At the request of Mrs. FEINSTEIN, the name of the Senator from Massachusetts (Mr. MARKEY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 150, a bill to regulate assault weapons, to ensure that the right to keep and bear arms is not unlimited, and for other purposes.

S. 168

At the request of Mr. HARKIN, the name of the Senator from Hawaii (Mr. SCHATZ) was added as a cosponsor of S. 168, a bill to amend the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938 to prohibit discrimination in the payment of wages on account of sex, race, or national origin, and for other purposes.

S. 209

At the request of Mr. PAUL, the name of the Senator from Alaska (Ms. MURKOWSKI) was added as a cosponsor of S. 209, a bill to require a full audit of the Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System and the Federal reserve banks by the Comptroller General of the United States, and for other purposes.

S. 313

At the request of Mr. CASEY, the names of the Senator from Alaska (Mr. BEGICH), the Senator from Indiana (Mr. DONNELLY), the Senator from California (Mrs. FEINSTEIN), the Senator from Massachusetts (Mr. MARKEY), the Senator from Arkansas (Mr. PRYOR) and the Senator from Hawaii (Mr. SCHATZ) were added as cosponsors of S. 313, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to provide for the tax treatment of ABLE accounts established under State programs for the care of family members with disabilities, and for other purposes.

S. 322

At the request of Mrs. MURRAY, the name of the Senator from Hawaii (Mr. SCHATZ) was added as a cosponsor of S. 322, a bill to set the United States on track to ensure children are ready to learn when they begin kindergarten.

S. 325

At the request of Mr. TESTER, the name of the Senator from New Mexico

(Mr. HEINRICH) was added as a cosponsor of S. 325, a bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to increase the maximum age for children eligible for medical care under the CHAMPVA program, and for other purposes.

S. 357

At the request of Mr. CARDIN, the name of the Senator from Ohio (Mr. PORTMAN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 357, a bill to encourage, enhance, and integrate Blue Alert plans throughout the United States in order to disseminate information when a law enforcement officer is seriously injured or killed in the line of duty.

S. 381

At the request of Mr. BROWN, the name of the Senator from New Mexico (Mr. HEINRICH) was added as a cosponsor 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. 403

At the request of Mr. CASEY, the names of the Senator from Washington (Ms. CANTWELL) and the Senator from South Dakota (Mr. JOHNSON) were added as cosponsors of S. 403, a bill to amend the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 to address and take action to prevent bullying and harassment of students.

S. 501

At the request of Mr. SCHUMER, the name of the Senator from Indiana (Mr. DONNELLY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 501, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to extend and increase the exclusion for benefits provided to volunteer firefighters and emergency medical responders.

S. 541

At the request of Ms. LANDRIEU, the name of the Senator from Massachusetts (Mr. MARKEY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 541, a bill to prevent human health threats posed by the consumption of equines raised in the United States.

S. 602

At the request of Mr. TESTER, the name of the Senator from New Mexico (Mr. HEINRICH) was added as a cosponsor of S. 602, a bill to amend the Public Health Service Act to provide for the participation of physical therapists in the National Health Service Corps Loan Repayment Program, and for other purposes.

S. 623

At the request of Mr. CARDIN, the names of the Senator from North Carolina (Mr. BURR), the Senator from Kansas (Mr. MORAN) and the Senator from Michigan (Ms. STABENOW) were added as cosponsors 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. 635

At the request of Mr. BROWN, the name of the Senator from New Hampshire (Ms. AYOTTE) was added as a cosponsor of S. 635, a bill to amend the Gramm-Leach-Bliley Act to provide an exception to the annual written privacy notice requirement.

S. 669

At the request of Mr. PRYOR, the name of the Senator from New York (Mrs. GILLIBRAND) was added as a cosponsor of S. 669, a bill to make permanent the Internal Revenue Service Free File program.

S. 727

At the request of Mr. MORAN, the name of the Senator from New Hampshire (Ms. AYOTTE) was added as a cosponsor of S. 727, a bill to improve the examination of depository institutions, and for other purposes.

S. 822

At the request of Mr. LEAHY, the name of the Senator from Delaware (Mr. COONS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 822, a bill to protect crime victims' rights, to eliminate the substantial backlog of DNA samples collected from crime scenes and convicted offenders, to improve and expand the DNA testing capacity of Federal, State, and local crime laboratories, to increase research and development of new DNA testing technologies, to develop new training programs regarding the collection and use of DNA evidence, to provide post conviction testing of DNA evidence to exonerate the innocent, to improve the performance of counsel in State capital cases, and for other purposes.

S. 833

At the request of Mrs. MURRAY, the name of the Senator from Vermont (Mr. SANDERS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 833, a bill to amend subtitle B of title VII of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act to provide education for homeless children and youths, and for other purposes.

S. 915

At the request of Mr. WYDEN, the name of the Senator from New York (Mrs. GILLIBRAND) was added as a cosponsor of S. 915, a bill to amend the Higher Education Act of 1965 to update reporting requirements for institutions of higher education and provide for more accurate and complete data on student retention, graduation, and earnings outcomes at all levels of postsecondary enrollment.

S. 933

At the request of Mr. LEAHY, the name of the Senator from Oregon (Mr. MERKLEY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 933, a bill to amend title I of the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968 to extend the authorization of the Bulletproof Vest Partnership Grant Program through fiscal year 2018.

S. 942

At the request of Mr. CASEY, the name of the Senator from Massachusetts (Ms. WARREN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 942, a bill to eliminate discrimination and promote women's health and economic security by ensuring reasonable workplace accommodations for workers whose ability to perform the functions of a job are limited by pregnancy, childbirth, or a related medical condition.

S. 1158

At the request of Mr. WARNER, the names of the Senator from Louisiana (Ms. LANDRIEU), the Senator from Rhode Island (Mr. REED) and the Senator from Michigan (Mr. LEVIN) were added as cosponsors of S. 1158, a bill to require the Secretary of the Treasury to mint coins commemorating the 100th anniversary of the establishment of the National Park Service, and for other purposes.

S. 1181

At the request of Mr. JOHANNS, his name was added as a cosponsor of S. 1181, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to exempt certain stock of real estate investment trusts from the tax on foreign investments in United States real property interests, and for other purposes.

S. 1183

At the request of Mr. THUNE, the name of the Senator from Alaska (Ms. MURKOWSKI) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1183, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to repeal the estate and generation-skipping transfer taxes, and for other purposes.

S. 1208

At the request of Mr. TESTER, the name of the Senator from Missouri (Mr. BLUNT) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1208, a bill to require meaningful disclosures of the terms of rental-purchase agreements, including disclosures of all costs to consumers under such agreements, to provide certain substantive rights to consumers under such agreements, and for other purposes.

S. 1251

At the request of Mr. REED, the names of the Senator from California (Mrs. FEINSTEIN) and the Senator from Colorado (Mr. BENNET) were added as cosponsors of S. 1251, a bill to establish programs with respect to childhood, adolescent, and young adult cancer.

S. 1306

At the request of Mr. REED, the name of the Senator from Colorado (Mr. BENNET) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1306, a bill to amend the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 in order to improve environmental literacy to better prepare students for postsecondary education and careers, and for other purposes.

S. 1369

At the request of Mr. BROWN, the names of the Senator from North Carolina (Mrs. HAGAN) and the Senator from Iowa (Mr. HARKIN) were added as cosponsors of S. 1369, a bill to provide additional flexibility to the Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System to establish capital standards that are properly tailored to the unique characteristics of the business of insurance, and for other purposes.

S. 1441

At the request of Mr. BENNET, the name of the Senator from Wyoming (Mr. ENZI) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1441, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to facilitate water leasing and water transfers to promote conservation and efficiency.

S. 1455

At the request of Mr. COBURN, the names of the Senator from Georgia (Mr. ISAKSON) and the Senator from Kentucky (Mr. MCCONNELL) 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 name of the Senator from Delaware (Mr. COONS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1456, a bill to award the Congressional Gold Medal to Shimon Peres.

S. 1487

At the request of Mr. THUNE, the names of the Senator from Georgia (Mr. CHAMBLISS) and the Senator from Oklahoma (Mr. COBURN) were added as cosponsors of 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.

S. 1488

At the request of Mr. COATS, the names of the Senator from North Carolina (Mr. BURR), the Senator from Georgia (Mr. CHAMBLISS) and the Senator from Maine (Ms. COLLINS) were added as cosponsors of 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.

S.J. RES. 15

At the request of Mr. CARDIN, the names of the Senator from New Hampshire (Mrs. SHAHEEN) and the Senator from Massachusetts (Mr. MARKEY) were added as cosponsors of S.J. Res. 15, a joint resolution removing the deadline for the ratification of the equal rights amendment.

S. RES. 75

At the request of Mr. KIRK, the name of the Senator from New Hampshire (Mrs. SHAHEEN) was added as a cosponsor of S. Res. 75, a resolution condemning the Government of Iran for its state-sponsored persecution of its Baha'i minority and its continued violation of the International Covenants on Human Rights.

S. RES. 128

At the request of Mr. HARKIN, the names of the Senator from Wisconsin (Ms. BALDWIN), the Senator from Illinois (Mr. DURBIN) and the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. BLUMENTHAL) were added as cosponsors of S. Res. 128, a resolution expressing the sense of the Senate that supporting seniors and individuals with disabilities is an important responsibility of the United States, and that a comprehensive approach to expanding and supporting a strong home care workforce and making long-term services and supports affordable and accessible in communities is necessary to uphold the right of seniors and individuals with disabilities in the United States to a dignified quality of life.

STATEMENTS ON INTRODUCED BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

By Ms. LANDRIEU (for herself, Mr. WYDEN, and Ms. MURKOWSKI):

S. 1491. A bill to amend the Energy Independence and Security Act of 2007 to improve United States-Israel energy cooperation, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

Ms. LANDRIEU. Mr. President, I come to the floor today to speak for a few minutes about an exciting new area of collaboration between the United States and Israel, our critical ally and friend in the Middle East. Especially given the current state of affairs in the Middle East, the United States' clear and unyielding support for Israel is more important now than ever before. For the past few years, I have been a leader in the effort to enhance US-Israel collaboration on energy development, which is why I am excited today to introduce a bill that will expand this critical relationship, along with Chairman WYDEN and Ranking Member MURKOWSKI.

In December 2010, Israel made the largest natural gas discovery in the world in the past decade off its coast in the Mediterranean. The discovery, known as the Leviathan field, is estimated at 16 trillion cubic feet of natural gas, bringing Israel's total natural gas reserves to an estimated 30 trillion cubic feet. This will likely be able to satisfy Israel's domestic gas demand with enough left over to export for years to come—in fact, it is estimated that if only half of this natural gas was produced, Israel would have 100 years of its natural gas needs met.

Not only is the Leviathan discovery a game changer for Israel, both economically and geopolitically, but it is also an incredible chance for the U.S. to share our energy expertise to support a critical ally while creating economic opportunities here at home. The Gulf Coast, which provides one third of all domestically produced oil in the nation, arguably has the most advanced offshore energy industry in the world; Israel, until very recently has had almost none. With limited domestic production capacity, a non-existent regulatory framework, and a lack of related academic programs, Israel can greatly benefit from collaboration with the U.S., and we are uniquely qualified to lead this effort to help Israel successfully develop this natural resource. As Israel is a leader in the research and development, hi-tech and startup spaces, enhanced collaboration between the two countries can be mutually beneficial.

The United States-Israel Energy Cooperation Enhancement Bill recognizes the important relationship and potential for further collaboration between the United States and Israel on energy development, including natural gas and alternative fuels, and seeks to bolster that relationship by encouraging increased cooperation in the academic, business, governmental, and other sectors.

The bill first recognizes energy collaboration with Israel as a strategic interest of the United States and officially encourages collaboration between the U.S. National Science Foundation and the Israel Science Foundation. It then further encourages cooperation between both countries' academic communities in energy innovation technology, technology transfer, and analysis of the geopolitical implications of new natural resource development. It also urges business development engagement in the private sectors and regular engagement between the two countries' relevant agencies, departments and ministries to share best practices.

Additionally, the United States-Israel Energy Cooperation Enhancement Bill expands two already existing joint grant making programs, the Binational Industrial Research and Development Program, BIRD, and the Binational Science Foundation, BSF. Under the bill, these two programs would now include projects focused on natural gas, which are expected given Israel's recent discoveries, as well as entrepreneurial development and the advanced hi-tech sector. The legislation also reauthorizes the BIRD and BSF programs through fiscal year 2024.

Finally, the bill allows for the authorization of a United States-Israel Offshore Technology Center to further academic and technology research and development collaboration. This is the direct result of numerous conversations, meetings, and visits I have had over the past few years, and I am especially excited about the potential of this type of formal academic collaboration. Israeli universities have some of the world's leading engineering departments, but have no petroleum engineering faculty. Imagine the synergy if we could combine Israeli engineering expertise with our universities, who have the leading petroleum engineering departments in the world.

This bill builds off of my previous efforts to enhance collaboration between the United States and Israel on energy development and exploration. For several years, I have been working to strengthen the relationship between our two countries and to help our domestic energy industry. In October 2011, with the help of the Department

of Commerce and the Southwest Louisiana Economic Development Alliance, I organized the first ever oil and gas trade mission to Israel and brought 12 Louisiana oil and gas companies to the region. The mission was such a success that the Department of Commerce and I ran another trip in October 2012 that brought 15 American companies and universities. Additionally, in June of 2012, I hosted a delegation of 10 high-ranking Israeli officials in Washington and Louisiana to meet with US industry experts and federal officials, including then Secretary of the Interior Ken Salazar. The delegation also attended the Central Gulf of Mexico oil and gas lease sale in New Orleans and visited Port Fourchon and the Liquified Natural Gas, LNG, facility in Cameron Parish. By seeing our work first-hand and learning about the US regulatory framework, they left with a keener understanding of our industry.

The United States-Israel Energy Cooperation Enhancement Bill will continue to advance this important goal. Through energy collaboration, academic cooperation, and continued government dialogue, we will create jobs for our domestic oil and gas industry and support a critical ally in the Middle East in its quest for energy independence and security. I thank my colleagues Chairman WYDEN and Ranking Member MURKOWSKI for their leadership on this issue and for cosponsoring the bill, and I urge my colleagues to support this important piece of legislation.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent the text of the bill be printed in the RECORD.

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

S. 1491

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

SECTION 1. UNITED STATES-ISRAEL ENERGY COOPERATION.

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

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

(2) in paragraph (4)—

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

''(A) many'';

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

(C) by adding at the end the following:

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

(3) in paragraph (6)—

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

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

(4) in paragraph (7)—

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

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

(5) by adding at the end the following:

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

''(C) best practice sharing;

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

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

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

''(G) coastal protection and restoration;

''(H) academic outreach and engagement;

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

''(J) regulatory consultations;

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

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

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

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

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

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

(3) by adding at the end the following:

''(H) natural gas energy, including natural gas projects conducted by or in conjunction with the United States-Israel Binational Science Foundation;

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

''(J) conventional and unconventional oil and gas technologies.''.

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

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

(1) by striking subsection (d);

(2) by redesignating subsection (c) as subsection (e); and

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

''(c) INTERNATIONAL PARTNERSHIPS.—

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

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

''(3) ANNUAL REPORTS.—The Secretary may submit to the appropriate committees of Congress an annual report that describes—

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

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

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

(e) TERMINATION.—Subsection (e) of section 917 of the Energy Independence and Security Act of 2007 (42 U.S.C. 17337) (as redesignated by subsection (d)(2)) is amended by striking ''the date that is 7 years after the date of enactment of this Act'' and inserting ''September 30, 2024''.

By Mr. MANCHIN (for himself and Ms. HEITKAMP):

S.J. Res. 22. A joint resolution to promote a diplomatic solution in Syria, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

Mr. MANCHIN. Mr. President, approximately 9 days ago most of us were on call and being briefed by the administration on what was evolving and how desperate and dire the situation was. At the time it was being proposed as an imminent strike that had to be done for the defense of this Nation, and we listened to that.

Immediately after that conversation we had with many Senators and Secretary Kerry, my dear friend Senator HEITKAMP called me and said: I would hope we have another option. We were looking for an option. The only thing we had before us was a vote to either support an imminent strike or not support a strike. It has been proposed if we don't show the strength of this great country of ours that it could weaken our standing in the world and our intentions might not be taken seriously the next time and also weaken the Presidency, which none of us want to do, no matter what side of the fence you might be on.

So we kept looking and talking. I canceled all my appointments in West

Virginia and Senator HEITKAMP did the same in North Dakota and we came back as soon as possible. We attended every meeting, every briefing. I went to my Armed Services Committee meeting and also the Foreign Relations Committee meeting to hear the testimony from all of the people in the administration who were making their case.

At the end of the day, it still did not rise to the level, in my mind and I think in the mind of Senator HEITKAMP as well, that we were at a point to where it would be of imminent danger to the United States. So with that, we brought all the people together, and Senator HEITKAMP—and I want her to chime in here—and myself kept pushing and pushing the people who had the knowledge and who had been down that road before—military leaders, past and present, diplomats, and also think tanks—and we finally came up with something that could be done.

I would defer to Senator HEITKAMP on this, but we kept saying if the problem is chemical weapons, why haven't we addressed that? All we knew was there was an imminent strike. We were not going to be able to take out, nor did we intend to take out or change the regime. We could not put boots on the ground, nor did we have a desire—nobody had a desire—for our military men and women to go back in. So we couldn't secure those weapons.

Senator HEITKAMP might want to say how we came to the position we came to and why we felt it was so important.

Ms. HEITKAMP. I think the first thing to talk about is the ability, first and foremost, to look at the mission and look at the event that led to the need for a discussion in this body and a discussion in this country about our relationship in Syria, and that was the use of chemical weapons by the Asad regime in their own home country against their own people.

We know that activity is not only a crime against the Syrian people, but it is a crime against humanity. It is a crime against an international standard that has been in place since World War I and has been greatly honored because of the devastating effects of using chemical weapons.

So when Senator MANCHIN and I looked at this—and we had long discussions with experts in the region—our first concern was securing those chemical weapons and what we could do to make sure those weapons would never again be used on any citizen of Syria and that we would not encourage or in any way give permission to another country to engage in that activity. That is fundamentally the greatest interest we have in securing some kind of resolution in the Congress—to address that concern.

Unfortunately, what we saw was not a targeted resolution that addressed that specific problem. Plus, what we were presented with when we returned were two options: Do nothing, which both of us concluded we could not let an attack such as this go unresponded to. So do nothing or agree to imminent strikes, and that was not an option either of us saw as appropriate, nor was that an option we could agree to, so we looked for common ground, listening not only to the experts in the administration—the diplomats, the military experts, the national security folks—but also bringing a broader group of people together to discuss what is our mission, how do we accomplish this. The result of all of that is the resolution the Senator has before him, the resolution he and I have advanced for a discussion in this body.

It seems critical to me that 1 week ago the interjecting of the chemical weapons ban and the Chemical Weapons Convention into this discussion in a very meaningful way, looking at what is in fact international law, was absolutely critical. Today, we have a very fluid and much different landscape diplomatically. We would like to think these kinds of discussions that have occurred all across the country have driven this, along with the President's discussion with Putin, along with the administration's efforts.

So today we have a situation where we are glad to see some involvement, we are glad to see some movement, but it is absolutely critical we remind everyone that actions speak louder than words. We cannot trust, I don't think, agreements between Russia or Syria until we actually see Syria surrendering these weapons. But today we have an option on the table that is what we call the Manchin–Heitkamp alternative resolution, which can in fact engage us in a broader discussion, engage the international community.

I would say that truly was the motivation behind our work. I think the Senator would agree with that.

Mr. MANCHIN. I sure do. First of all, we all applaud President Obama for bringing it to Congress. We think this is the right place for these types of decisions, with the consequences we are facing and what the repercussions could be. But we have come to a conclusion that any type of imminent strike and the reaction from that would be greater than inaction right now. But doing nothing is unacceptable, which is how we came to this.

Basically, we call this the Chemical Weapons Control Act. The thing about the Chemical Weapons Convention, we felt—and we have heard from diplomats on this—this was the proper course. It was basically giving the Asad regime 45 days. Our resolution is very straightforward. The Asad regime has 45 days to sign and comply, and that means to identify, to secure, and to start eliminating and destroying. He cannot use, nor can he continue to produce, these types of weapons.

Also, in that 45-day period, we have asked the administration and the President to lay forth a plan for Congress to evaluate what Syria would look like at the end. If they do not sign, what are we to do and how would Syria look? If they do sign and that still hasn't brought any peace and an end to a civil war, that needs to be looked at also.

We have all heard from our constituents. In talking to our colleagues we have even heard a lot more. We have had some who have said: Listen, we don't want a strike under any circumstances. No way on God's green Earth do we believe a strike will produce anything but repercussions.

I have said this, and the Senator and I have talked about this: If you believe that money or military might would change the course and direction of that part of the world, which we define as the Middle East or North Africa, then we would have had success by now. We have spent 12 years—the longest war in our history—and we have spent over $1.6 trillion and the results have not been beneficial whatsoever and we have lost thousands of lives.

I have also said being a superpower means more than showing the rest of the world we have the super might to use whenever we feel it is necessary. Being a superpower comes with not only having the super military power, it comes with having the super negotiation ability, the super diplomacy, the super patience, and the super humanitarian aid, as needed. We have the ability to do all of that.

That is what we have asked for. Now we are seeing an evolving situation—not only in 24 hours, but with every 24 minutes it seems like something is changing. The Russians have said they would ask Asad's regime in Syria to sign or be involved. Syria says they have accepted. We have heard now they have said they will comply and join the CWC. These are the changes we have to continue to try to bring to fruition.

On that, we are very happy. I know the Senator and I have spoken about that—and our colleagues are looking at different options—that we didn't have different options as of Monday morning. There were no options. It was are you going to vote to strike or not vote to strike. I am pleased we are moving and I think cooler heads will prevail.

I believe the President is open to making sure the players are sincere and real, meaning what they are saying. I believe now that they have announced to the entire world, the international world, that we will sign and be honest brokers, let's put them on the spot and see if they will sign that and be part of this and become part of the 21st century, if you will.

I have and I will continue to work with my colleague. I think the Geneva Protocol of 1925 prohibits the use of chemical and biological weapons in conflict, but it did not go far enough. We know that. Syria signed the Geneva Protocol in December of 1969. They signed that one, but then they would not and have not been a signatory of the Chemical Weapons Convention of 1993. That is what we are speaking of. That one is the modern-day equivalent of the Geneva Protocol. The international community began negotiating

the CWC in 1980 to close the loopholes of the Geneva Protocol. The CWC opened for signature in 1963 and after the required 65 ratifications were received, entered into force in 1997. We have, I think, five countries that have not signed. Most countries, 191, have signed. That is what we are asking for them to comply with, which we think is the best way, because there is an implementation organization which oversees it and it is not the United States or Russia or not any other country taking the lead but basically it is a way to have the entire international community come back into play.

Ms. HEITKAMP. To add another point to what Senator MANCHIN has spoken about, which is that the results have not been satisfactory—I think the other point we need to make is the results of all that interaction over this decade-plus of activity in this region have not been what was promised. It has made the American people perhaps cynical and very hesitant to rely on what is being said today.

As one of the great honors, but also amazing pieces of sadness in my first days of being a Senator-elect, I attended two funerals for two National Guardsmen who were killed in action in Afghanistan. I remember sitting at the funerals and remember telling myself: Before you vote ever to engage in that kind of conflict, you absolutely need to look at alternatives. You owe it to our men and women in uniform. You owe it to the people of this country who have lost not only the lives of their brothers and sisters and family and friends but the people who have also invested American treasure.

What we are seeking is a discussion, a broader discussion beyond two opposite and unacceptable alternatives. What we are seeing this week—much to our appreciation—is in fact not just our proposal but other proposals coming forth, a broader discussion about what all the options are, and taking a look at how we can work together as a United States government, speak with one voice, and walk together to resolve this conflict.

We cannot ignore that we have a national security interest in working together. We have a national security interest in addressing and resolving the current issues in front of us. That discussion cannot be done among a small group of Senators. It cannot be done in back rooms with a promise of ''trust us,'' because some of that trust has been broken over time. So a broad, open discussion as we are having here today I think is absolutely critical to reestablishing Americans' trust that we can in fact make the right decision in their interests and really in the interests of protecting our servicemen from chemical weapon attacks.

That is obviously a great concern of ours. We need to continue to have this dialog and we need some kind of response. The question is how measured and what that response should be.

I have very much appreciated the Senator's willingness to work with me and I thank the rest of the Members who have approached us who want to talk about this proposal and other proposals for their willingness to broaden their thinking about what those options are.

Mr. MANCHIN. I am so proud to be working on this with the Senator. Our staffs have worked well together. They are most competent and they have done a yeoman job. The resolution we have come with basically is the only one out there, an option today that basically controls the chemical weapons. It actually controls these chemical weapons from ever being used on another human being—which we all deplore. With that, maybe we can help, now, move on to trying to help resolve this civil war. The carnage is unbelievable.

They said there were 99,000 people killed in Syria with conventional weapons and 1,000 with chemicals. To me, every person is a life we could save, we ought to try to save. With that being said, we have to give them a chance to come be involved, and that is what we have done.

At this time last week we never thought we would have been here. This time 2 days ago we would not have thought we could be here. But we are moving in the right direction.

Let me make it clear what the resolution the Senator and our staffs have worked on does. The section, our title, is this, basically:

> Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

The section of our coining, this section of our title

> . . . may be cited as the ''Chemical Weapons Control and Accountability Resolution of 2013.''

Basically exactly what it says. The statement of policy is this:

> It is the policy of the United States that
>
> (1) the Government of Syria must become a signatory to the Chemical Weapons Convention and take concrete steps to comply with the terms and conditions of the Convention;
>
> (2) the failure by the government of Bashar al-Assad to sign and comply with the Convention clearly demonstrates a willful disregard of international norms on the use of chemical weapons; and
>
> (3) if the Government of Syria does not sign and comply with the convention within 45 days after the date of the enactment of this resolution, all elements of national power will be considered by the United States Government.

That reaffirms the war powers the President has. I know there are some who do not believe that is constitutional or do not believe it is law, but we have checked it and researched it, and it is. We reconfirm that. It does not say that imminent strikes will happen at the end of 45 days. It will be up to the President to determine whether negotiations are moving in the right direction, if all players are being sincere in coming on board, but it gives him the chance to be the President, to do whatever he is elected to do. Whomever he or she may be, you want the President's office to be able to exercise the powers they have by law. That is what we have done here.

Everybody has a different approach. Some may say 45 days or you don't need that. Fine. We are open to all that. We have said that before. But the experts who helped us put this together put in timetables they believed were reasonable and believed they were attainable.

Ms. HEITKAMP. There are some who may question whether this is capitulation or whether in fact this is a lack of showing of American unity. How would the Senator respond to those concerns?

Mr. MANCHIN. We have heard our colleagues and had some good conversations with our colleagues. We have had other people saying for real, all you are doing is trying to stall.

I said no. I don't believe anyone really questions the might of the government. I don't think it weakens the U.S. Government, to show super restraint, knowing the volatility of that part of the world.

Also, past experience in my State of West Virginia—and I know in the great State of North Dakota—we know when you try something and put in so much effort trying to change that part of the world and have not had the success, nowhere near, and spent $1.6 trillion and the sacrifice of Americans—maybe that is not something we should repeat. We all know that. We get no support basically from our constituents.

Those of us who are privy to all these high-powered meetings, if you will, have not been convinced that there will be change. With that being said, I say to my friends, if you believe anyone would discount the might of this Nation? I don't think so. The resolve of us to protect our country and our Americans? I don't think so. Or to support our allies, our true friends and allies? I don't think so.

But you know, back home we have a saying: Sometimes you don't have a dog in the fight. We can't really find a friend in that fight. That is the problem. That is the hard sell. With that being said—I have said this before—the Arab League, they should step forward. That is in their backyard. We should give all the support. We have humanitarian aid. We will give all the support we possibly can, but they need to take the lead. It cannot always be the Americans being the policemen of the world and everyone saying: OK, call 911, which goes right to Washington. They will take care of it.

I discount it when they start saying it doesn't show your strength, we might not have that strength of reputation or it might weaken the President. No, I don't think so. Not at all.

Ms. HEITKAMP. I think what we would say to the enemies of this country: Do not take from this democratic process and discussion a lack of resolve. We will stand together shoulder to shoulder. This is the process the Constitution gave us and the President

has asked us to engage in. It shows the strength of this country, that we can have open debate, open disagreements, but at the end of the day we will stand together and stand strongly against our enemies. There should be no comfort taken in any way, shape, or form by the enemies of our country that it somehow weakens our country. In fact it strengthens our country to have this discussion and then stand shoulder to shoulder together.

I do want to mention that during those times last week when we were attending the classified briefings, and a lot of those briefings were bicameral as well as bipartisan—I know we have that reputation today of being hyperpartisan and we cannot have meaningful and open discussion, it degenerates into pettiness and partisanship. I can tell you from my experience of sitting through every one of those briefings what I heard was reasoned discussion. What I heard was rational questioning. What I heard was an equal measure of restraint on both the Democrat and the Republican side and a search for common answers and commonality. It was that discussion that led us to introducing this type of resolution.

For those who say this is just another example of dysfunctionality, it is too bad they could not look in at those discussions because I think they would have seen a Congress that was very engaged. They would have seen individual Members who were not looking to score political points but were looking for information so they could exercise the judgment that their people, their districts, or their States elected them to exercise.

That is the process going through. It is a critical process but it cannot be done yes or no, no other options, and we are not going to have a broader discussion. That is why we are grateful for what is happening on the ground. We will wait to see if it is real. We will wait to see. It is not enough—talk is never enough. We have to see action.

But in the meantime we will continue to have these discussions about what is in America's national security interests and how we exercise our collective will with a resolution that reflects our values and our commitment to this country and its national security.

Mr. MANCHIN. I believe that as the world watches what is unfolding now, they are watching a superpower make a decision. We are using super restraint. We are using super compassion, if you will. But we are super resolved and we have the super might to do what we need to do. I don't think anyone should take that lightly.

I do not think anyone would take for granted that we will not defend this country and every citizen of this country with everything we have and try to spread humanity, if you will, all over the world. But it takes more than us as we move outside the borders of the United States of America. We need an international community working with us. We need some of them stepping to the plate; not just the rhetoric that we hear but basic stuff. We need the United Nations to be functioning again, to have a functioning role and have a strong support role and be able to step to the plate and do it in a fashion that protects the civilized world. Those are the things we have asked for.

I think this gives it a chance. Today we have seen a breakthrough, if President Asad has said: I will sign and I will be a member and I will comply and I will have inspectors come in and I will make sure these weapons are secure and we will start destroying them, taking them off the shelf. Russia can play a part in that. They can pull their ships up, load them up, take them out, take them to a secured area. That is getting them out of that part of the world, and then hopefully we can get people working together to stop the war we have, to stop the carnage, too.

It starts here. People are looking to the United States and I think they have been looking for the leadership we have been able to give, not just in the military and not just in financial, but in some good, solid, concrete decisions that bring this suffering that is going on in Syria to an end.

I am very proud to work with the Senator from North Dakota on this issue. We are asking all of our colleagues to be involved in any way, shape, or form. We will work with them. If there is anyone who has ideas that can make this better and an even more perfect document, then we are all for that. I know the Senator from North Dakota feels that way, and I know her team feels that way also.

I thank Senator HEITKAMP for the work she has done and also the friend she has been. I believe we are close to getting this in the right direction where cooler heads prevail, and I think the world will be safer.

Ms. HEITKAMP. I thank the Senator from West Virginia for the work he has done and the leadership he has shown. I believe that when we work together, collaborate, and actually begin the discussion about what is in America's national security interest and how we can fashion a position and a resolution that reflects that national security interest and open the opportunity for a broader dialog—not just two choices but a broader dialog—we can build consensus in this body. If we can build consensus in this body and if we can work forward to build consensus in America, we can, in fact, move this issue forward, and it might be an example of what we can do with our future.

Again, I thank the Senator from West Virginia for his participation, inclusion, and the work he has done. I believe it has not only offered a very significant alternative, but it has also set an example of where we can go.

Mr. MANCHIN. I don't believe military action is going to correct what is going on with Syria. It is going to be diplomacy and democracy that will hopefully work there. We are trying to put that forward first. More people are coming on board, and we appreciate that. We thank all of our colleagues on both sides of the aisle.

This is not a partisan issue. It truly has not been a partisan issue, and it won't be a partisan issue. This is an American issue that involves all of us, and it is a world issue. The world has great interest, but they also have to have participation.

SUBMITTED RESOLUTIONS

SENATE RESOLUTION 221—DESIGNATING THE WEEK OF OCTOBER 7 THROUGH OCTOBER 13, 2013, AS ''NATUROPATHIC MEDICINE WEEK'' TO RECOGNIZE THE VALUE OF NATUROPATHIC MEDICINE IN PROVIDING SAFE, EFFECTIVE, AND AFFORDABLE HEALTH CARE

Ms. MIKULSKI submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 221

Whereas, in the United States, more than 75 percent of health care costs are due to preventable chronic illnesses, including high blood pressure, which affects 88,000,000 people in the United States, and diabetes, which affects 26,000,000 people in the United States;

Whereas nearly two-thirds of adults in the United States are overweight or obese and, consequently, at risk for serious health conditions, such as high blood pressure, diabetes, cardiovascular disease, arthritis, and depression;

Whereas 70 percent of people in the United States experience physical or nonphysical symptoms of stress, and stress can contribute to the development of major illnesses, such as cardiovascular disease, depression, and diabetes;

Whereas the aforementioned chronic health conditions are among the most common, costly, and preventable health conditions;

Whereas naturopathic medicine provides noninvasive, holistic treatments that support the inherent self-healing capacity of the human body and encourage self-responsibility in health care;

Whereas naturopathic medicine focuses on patient-centered care, the prevention of chronic illnesses, and early intervention in the treatment of chronic illnesses;

Whereas naturopathic physicians attend 4-year, graduate level programs that are accredited by agencies approved by the Department of Education;

Whereas aspects of naturopathic medicine have been shown to lower the risk of major illnesses such as cardiovascular disease and diabetes;

Whereas naturopathic physicians can help address the shortage of primary care providers in the United States;

Whereas naturopathic physicians are trained to refer patients to conventional physicians and specialists when necessary;

Whereas the profession of naturopathic medicine is dedicated to providing health care to underserved populations; and

Whereas naturopathic medicine provides consumers in the United States with more choice in health care, in line with the increased use of a variety of integrative medical treatments: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) designates the week of October 7 through October 13, 2013, as ''Naturopathic Medicine Week'';

(2) recognizes the value of naturopathic medicine in providing safe, effective, and affordable health care; and

(3) encourages the people of the United States to learn about naturopathic medicine and the role that naturopathic physicians play in preventing chronic and debilitating illnesses and conditions.

AMENDMENTS SUBMITTED AND PROPOSED

SA 1850. Mr. INHOFE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 1392, to promote energy savings in residential buildings and industry, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 1851. Mr. INHOFE (for himself and Mr. CARPER) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 1392, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

TEXT OF AMENDMENTS

SA 1850. Mr. INHOFE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 1392, to promote energy savings in residential buildings and industry, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 48, after line 16, add the following:

SEC. 4___. NATURAL GAS VEHICLES.

(a) MAXIMUM FUEL ECONOMY INCREASE FOR ALTERNATIVE FUEL AUTOMOBILES.—Section 32906(a) of title 49, United States Code, is amended by striking ''(except an electric automobile)'' and inserting ''(except an electric or natural gas automobile)''.

(b) AUTOMOBILE FUEL ECONOMY DEFINITIONS.—Section 32901(a) of title 49, United States Code, is amended—

(1) in paragraph (8), by inserting '', but the inclusion of a reserve gasoline tank for incidental or emergency use in the event of alternative fuel depletion shall not detract from the dedicated nature of the automobile'' before the period at the end; and

(2) in paragraph (9)(B), by striking ''provides equal or superior energy efficiency'' and inserting ''provides reasonably comparable energy efficiency''.

(c) MINIMUM DRIVING RANGES FOR DUAL FUELED PASSENGER AUTOMOBILES.—Section 32901(c)(2) of title 49, United States Code, is amended—

(1) in subparagraph (B), by striking ''(except electric automobiles)'' and inserting ''(except electric or natural gas automobiles)''; and

(2) in subparagraph (C), by striking ''(except electric automobiles)'' each place it appears and inserting ''(except electric or natural gas automobiles)''.

(d) MANUFACTURING PROVISION FOR ALTERNATIVE FUEL AUTOMOBILES.—Section 32905(d) of title 49, United States Code, is amended by striking paragraphs (1) and (2) and inserting the following:

''(1) the percentage utilization of the model on gasoline or diesel fuel, as determined by a formula based on the model's alternative fuel range, divided by the fuel economy measured under section 32904(c); and

''(2) the percentage utilization of the model on gaseous fuel, as determined by a formula based on the model's alternative fuel range, divided by the fuel economy measured under subsection (c).''.

SA 1851. Mr. INHOFE (for himself and Mr. CARPER) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 1392, to promote energy savings in residential buildings and industry, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of title III, add the following:

SEC. 30___. FEDERAL PURCHASE REQUIREMENT.

Section 203 of the Energy Policy Act of 2005 (42 U.S.C. 15852) is amended—

(1) in subsection (b), by striking paragraph (2) and inserting the following:

''(2) RENEWABLE ENERGY.—The term 'renewable energy' means electric or thermal energy, generated from or avoided by solar, wind, biomass, landfill gas, ocean (including tidal, wave, current, and thermal), geothermal (including ground source, reclaimed water, or ground water), municipal solid waste, or new hydroelectric generation capacity achieved from increased efficiency or additions of new capacity at an existing hydroelectric project.''; and

(2) in subsection (c)—

(A) by redesignating paragraphs (1) through (3) as subparagraphs (A) through (C), respectively, and indenting appropriately;

(B) in the matter preceding subparagraph (A) (as so redesignated), by striking ''For purposes'' and inserting the following:

''(1) IN GENERAL.—For purposes''; and

(C) by adding at the end the following:

''(2) SEPARATE CALCULATION.—For purposes of determining compliance with the requirements of this section, any energy consumption that is avoided through the use of renewable energy shall be considered to be renewable energy produced.''.

AUTHORITY FOR COMMITTEES TO MEET

COMMITTEE ON BANKING, HOUSING, AND URBAN AFFAIRS

Mr. CASEY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on September 10, 2013, at 10 a.m.

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

COMMITTEE ON INDIAN AFFAIRS

Mr. CASEY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Indian Affairs be authorized to 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.

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

COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY

Mr. CASEY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on the Judiciary be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on September 10, 2013, at 2:30 p.m., in room SH–216 of the Hart Senate Office Building, to conduct a hearing entitled ''Conflicts between State and Federal Marijuana Laws.''

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

COMMITTEE ON RULES AND ADMINISTRATION

Mr. CASEY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Rules and Administration be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on September 10, 2013.

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

COMMITTEE ON VETERANS' AFFAIRS

Mr. CASEY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Veterans' Affairs be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on September 10, 2013, at 10:15 a.m. in room SD–650 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building.

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

SELECT COMMITTEE ON INTELLIGENCE

Mr. CASEY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Select Committee on Intelligence be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on September 10, 2013, at 2:30 p.m.

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

SUBCOMMITTEE ON BANKRUPTCY AND THE COURTS

Mr. CASEY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on the Judiciary, Subcommittee on Bankruptcy and the Courts, be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on September 10, 2013, at 10:30 a.m., in room SD–226 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building, to conduct a hearing entitled ''Federal Judgeship Act of 2013.''

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

ORDER OF BUSINESS

Mr. REID. Madam President, let me announce now, we had an all-Senators briefing scheduled for 2:30 tomorrow. We are not going to do that. I have just spoken to the President's Chief of Staff. There are too many things moving. There are a lot of moving targets here. I think it will be better for the Senate if we do not have that briefing tomorrow.

There are a lot of things going on. We have had many briefings. We have had committee hearings. But tomorrow I think to have this with what is going on—it is my understanding the Secretary of State is going to be in Geneva to meet with his Russian counterpart. So there are a lot of things going on. I think the briefing tomorrow would be very premature with all of the, as I said before, moving targets.

So everyone should know that the 2:30 all-Senators briefing will not occur. So everyone knows the schedule a little bit tomorrow.

NATUROPATHIC MEDICINE WEEK

Mr. REID. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the consideration of S. Res. 221.

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

The bill clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 221) designating the week of October 7 through October 13, 2013 as ''Naturopathic Medicine Week'' to recognize

the value of naturopathic medicine in providing safe, effective, and affordable health care.

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

Mr. REID. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the resolution be agreed to, the preamble be agreed to, and the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table.

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

The resolution (S. Res. 221) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

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

DISCHARGE AND REFERRAL—S. 1427

Mr. REID. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Finance be discharged from further consideration of S. 1427 and that the bill be referred to the Committee on the Judiciary.

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

ORDERS FOR WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 11, 2013

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that when the Senate completes its business today, it adjourn until 10 a.m. on Wednesday, September 11, 2013, and that following the prayer and pledge, the morning hour be deemed expired, the Journal of proceedings be approved to date, and the time for the two leaders be reserved for their use later in the day; that following the prayer and pledge, there be a moment of silence to pay tribute to the thousands of Americans whose lives were taken on September 11, 2001. Of course, there were other casualties. Some people are still suffering the ravages of that sinister attack; that following any leader remarks, the time until 2:30 p.m. be equally divided and controlled between the two leaders or their designees, with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

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

SCHEDULE

Mr. REID. In addition to the moment of silence at 10 a.m., there will be a bipartisan, bicameral remembrance ceremony of the 12th anniversary of the September 11, 2001, attacks at 11 a.m. tomorrow. Members will gather in the Rotunda at 10:45 a.m. Senators will gather in the Rotunda, but then they will walk out and we will have a few speeches on the east front of the Capitol.

ADJOURNMENT UNTIL 10 A.M. TOMORROW

Mr. REID. 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 6:22 p.m., adjourned until Wednesday, September 11, 2013, at 10 a.m.

CONFIRMATION

Executive nomination confirmed by the Senate September 10, 2013:

TENNESSEE VALLEY AUTHORITY

MARILYN A. BROWN, OF GEORGIA, TO BE A MEMBER OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE TENNESSEE VALLEY AUTHORITY FOR A TERM EXPIRING MAY 18, 2017.