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House of Representatives

The House was not in session today. Its next meeting will be held on Friday, January 31, 2014, at 3 p.m.

Senate

THURSDAY, JANUARY 30, 2014

The Senate met at 10 a.m. and was called to order by the Honorable CHRISTOPHER MURPHY, a Senator from the State of Connecticut.

PRAYER

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

Let us pray.

Eternal Spirit, we don't know all that this day holds, but we know that You hold this day in Your sovereign hands. Lord, we praise You, that even though we only have a feeble hold on You, You have a mighty grasp on us.

Guide our lawmakers across their toiling hours, illuminating their moments with the light of Your wisdom. Lord, empower them to live with integrity and wisdom amid the corruption that seeks to keep them from glorifying You. May they be unafraid to contend steadfastly for truth, as You give them the ability to see it. Use their labors to hasten the day when justice and understanding will encompass our world.

We pray in Your great Name. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Presiding Officer led the Pledge of Allegiance, as follows:

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

APPOINTMENT OF ACTING PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will please read a communication to the Senate from the President pro tempore (Mr. LEAHY).

The legislative clerk read the following letter:

U.S. SENATE,
PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE,
Washington, DC, January 30, 2014.

To the Senate:

Under the provisions of rule I, paragraph 3, of the Standing Rules of the Senate, I hereby appoint the Honorable CHRISTOPHER MURPHY, a Senator from the State of Connecticut, to perform the duties of the Chair.

PATRICK J. LEAHY,
President pro tempore.

Mr. MURPHY thereupon assumed the Chair as Acting President pro tempore.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

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

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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 President, I ask unanimous consent the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

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

PROPOSED IRS REGULATIONS

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, earlier this week President Obama explained to the American people what he hopes to accomplish in the year ahead, and I think it is safe to say that despite the hype, there was not a whole lot in this year's State of the Union that would do much to alleviate the concerns and anxieties of most Americans. There was not anything in there that would really address the kind of dramatic wage stagnation we have seen over the past several years among the middle class or the increasingly difficult situation people find themselves in trying to find stable, good-paying jobs. There was no creative proposal for increasing mobility or opportunity for folks who need it most.

Even more remarkable, the President completely ignored the serious hardship that folks in Kentucky and just about everywhere else in the country are dealing with right now as a result of his health care law. He just blew right past it like it was not even happening.

There are serious issues that demand a serious response, and if for some reason the President doesn't want to face up to them or offer meaningful solutions, Republicans certainly will. We have a lot of creative ideas on our side that speak to the day-to-day concerns of middle-class Americans. In the months ahead we will keep talking about them. In fact, just this morning the House Republican leadership reached out to the President in an effort to solicit his help in encouraging the Democratic leadership in the Senate to take up House-passed bills that do the types of things the President said the other night he supports. Maybe that would be a good use of the President's phone and his pen.

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

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This morning I would like to take a moment to address something else the President did not address on Tuesday but that his administration is already quietly planning to do in the months ahead. I am referring to the administration's radical new proposal to codify the same kind of targeting of grassroots groups that an independent inspector general determined that the IRS engaged in in the run up to the 2012 election. I realize it just doesn't seem possible to a lot of people that the Obama administration would even think of touching an issue this radioactive after last year's scandal, but those who think that underestimate the extent to which this administration and its allies are willing to go to keep those who disagree with them from speaking out or participating in the political process. They underestimate the extent to which they are willing to go to hold onto power, and they forget how speech is usually stifled.

James Madison once wrote:

> I believe there are more instances of the abridgement of freedom of the people by gradual and silent encroachments by those in power than by violent and sudden usurpations.

That was James Madison, and that is what is going on. The fact is that right now the Obama administration is getting ready to codify the same kind of intimidation and harassment of its political opponents that stunned the Nation last year, and hardly anybody is talking about it—certainly not the President on Tuesday night. It is time we start talking about it because what the administration is planning is nothing less than declaring a war, not just on its opponents but on free speech itself.

Here is their plan. The administration proposes to redefine political activity so broadly that grassroots groups all across the country that exist for the sole purpose of speaking out on issues of liberty or limited government or free enterprise or anything else that the administration doesn't want to hear about will be forced to literally shut down. Just by speaking out on these issues of broad public concern, they would be ruled out of bounds under new IRS rules—just in time, by the way, for the midterm elections.

If you think this kind of speech is precisely what the First Amendment was written to protect, you would be entirely right. This is exactly what the First Amendment was about. So this is a hugely important issue, and that is why groups all across the political spectrum and the folks who support them are increasingly concerned.

As usual, the folks who are pushing this new assault on speech tell us that it is some kind of good-government proposal that increases transparency, but the truth is that the only transparency here is the administration's thuggish attempt to shut down its critics. It is really incredible, when you think about it. Democrats think that 2014 is shaping up to be a tough year for them politically. So instead of trying to persuade the public that they have the best answers to the problems we face, they try to shut everything else out of the political process. They try to shut them up, and they have no problem using the powers of the government itself to do it—less than a year after presiding over one of the biggest abuses of government power in the modern memory. The arrogance here is literally breathtaking.

But we have seen this kind of thing again and again from our liberal friends over the years. They just cannot accept a public that disagrees with their plans for the country. They just cannot seem to accept a society in which ''we, the people,'' establish the rules—not them. Whether it is the fairness doctrine or the DISCLOSE Act, they want those who disagree with them to sit down and shut up. Their view is you can fight for your ideals, you can speak out, but only if you agree with me. If you are on the other side, you don't have a right to speak out; not only that, but I am going to put you out of business. I am going to use the IRS—for goodness sake, the IRS—to identify anybody who disagrees with me and shut them up. I am doing it through regulation because I cannot pass it through legislation.

This is just one way the President plans to go around the people's elected representatives this year and every American needs to know about this abuse of power. Let me be clear. What the administration is proposing poses a grave threat to the ability of ordinary Americans to freely participate in the democratic process. Rather than reform the IRS and root out any hint of corruption or targeting of political opponents, they are now proposing to codify it. Fearful of losing the Senate, they have decided to double down. Instead of getting the IRS out of the business of policing speech, they want to make it the final arbiter of political speech.

Some may ask, why is the IRS, an agency whose purpose is to collect taxes, even involved in muzzling speech? How did that happen?

That is a very good question. It should not be. The administration needs to start explaining to the American people why it is engaging in this abuse of power, especially after last year. The administration may believe the smoke has cleared, but I do not believe the American people see it that way at all. I think that if the American people knew what the administration was really up to, they would react with the same kind of outrage they did last year about the targeting of conservatives by the IRS, and that is why the new IRS commissioner has a simple choice.

We have a new IRS commissioner over there. He has a simple choice. He can either restore the public's trust in an agency whose reputation was already in doubt or he can allow himself to be used as a political pawn by an administration that now seems willing to do anything to keep those it disagrees with from fully exercising their constitutionally protected right to free speech.

After recent scandals the IRS should not be getting more involved in what people can and cannot say but less involved. Commissioner Koskinen must take a stand against this kind of thuggery and make it clear to a nervous public that his agency will not engage in any more government-sanctioned crackdowns on speech.

You know, the President made what I think was a pretty revealing comment in a recent interview when he talked about his inability to break through with certain Republicans. Rather than concede that they may have a different world view or that they disagree with his approach to the issues of the day, the President blamed FOX News and Rush Limbaugh of somehow convincing folks that he is something he is not.

I think a far more likely explanation is that the President does stuff like this. I think a more likely explanation is that in the sixth year of his Presidency he would rather blow kisses to his liberal base than work with Republicans to create jobs and increase opportunity and prosperity for the millions of Americans who are really struggling out there. Rather than let people from one end of the political spectrum to the other duke it out through robust public debate, he wants to use the IRS to drive conservatives right off the playing field. That is a better explanation for why ordinary conservatives across the country are not buying the idea that you are some kind of pragmatic problem solver, instead of a liberal ideologue who seems more interested in shutting down your critics than working with us in facing the Nation's most urgent problems.

Just 3 months ago the President sought to unite the country around the argument that as Americans we never give up. What I am saying this morning is that even as he is saying that, he is also busy kicking the ladder out from under anybody who disagrees with him. That is just what this new IRS proposal does, and Republicans plan to fight it every step of the way.

Mr. President, I say to my friend the majority leader, who deferred to me this morning, that I have two more statements. I am sorry to detain him.

Mr. REID. No problem.

REMEMBERING STAFF SERGEANT RYAN D. AUSTIN

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, it is my sad duty to report to my colleagues on a young Kentuckian who has been lost while serving his country. SSgt Ryan D. Austin of the U.S. Air Force passed away on August 6, 2013, in Maidstone, in the United Kingdom. He had been stationed at Ramstein Air Base in Germany, and he was 25 years old.

For his service in uniform, Staff Sergeant Austin received several medals,

awards, and decorations, including the Air Force Achievement Medal, the Meritorious Unit Award, the Air Force Good Conduct Medal, the National Defense Service Medal, the Global War on Terrorism Expeditionary Medal, the Global War on Terrorism Service Medal, the Air Force Expeditionary Service Ribbon, the NCO Professional Military Education Graduate Ribbon, the Small Arms Expert Marksman Ribbon, the Air Force Training Ribbon, and the Cyberspace Support Badge.

Ryan enlisted in the Air Force in January of 2010. He was deployed to Germany with the 435th Air Ground Operations Wing, First Communications Maintenance Squadron.

Ryan's brother Nathan said:

> Being with [the Air Force] was the best career move he ever made. The Air Force gave him the chance to go overseas, learn new cultures and serve his country just like our father did. It made him feel he gave something back to his country, as well as protect America.

Ryan was raised in Laurel County, the son of Karen Long and Doug Austin, who also served in uniform. He graduated from South Laurel High School in 2006. Friends remember that he enjoyed golf, cooking, working for charities, and traveling.

Nathan remembers:

> When Ryan was around, he was fun to be with. We included each other in our hobbies like tennis, basketball and video games. We had our friends and we always had great times . . . it's really a heavy burden on my heart to know that I have lost a brother.

While in high school, Ryan worked as a teacher's aide for Joey Marcum, a science teacher. Joey remembers:

> Ryan was such an awesome young man. He was honest, hardworking and dependable. You could depend on him for literally anything. He was just a really good guy.

Ryan leaves behind his wife Jessica. The two of them were married on December 6, 2009. At the time of Ryan's death, Jessica was pregnant with their first child. She had a boy, named Brayden Kaine Austin. Ryan ''was really looking forward to being a father,'' his brother Nathan said.

Christa Koeller is a friend of Ryan and Jessica's who lived across the street from them when Ryan and Christa's husband were both stationed at Offutt Air Force Base near Omaha. She remembers the couple's joy at learning they would have a baby:

> When he found out and Jessica found out that they both would be parents, they were so overjoyed to start that new segment of their lives. Ryan was a family man, devoted to his job, and he was very dedicated as an airman. . . . A baby son lost his father, and will never know him.

Ryan's funeral service in Corbin, KY, was officiated by Pastor Daniel Carmack of Hawk Creek Church. Firefighters, policemen, county health care workers, friends, family, and even those who did not know Ryan but wished to pay their respects literally lined the town streets as the funeral procession passed by. Ryan received full military honors from the Honor Guard of Wright-Patterson Air Force Base.

Pastor Carmack said:

> Ryan Austin was not only a soldier, but a leader that has left an indelible mark on this generation.

The Pastor continued:

> Ryan will long be remembered as . . . a devoted husband, loving son, leader to his generation, and always a friend. Although he was only 25, he have proved the statement true that ''life is not measured in quantity, but in quality,'' and he lived his life to the full with integrity and honor.

Pastor Carmack, who was Ryan's youth pastor and watched this young man grow up, remembers that ''Ryan was a kid that always served others.'' I think it is clear that as an adult, a husband, a father, and an airman, Ryan's commitment to serving others only grew stronger.

We in the Senate are thinking today of Ryan Austin's loved ones, including his wife Jessica; his son Brayden; his father Doug; his brothers Nathan Austin and Dylon Wall; his sister Rachel Austin; and many other beloved family members and friends. Ryan was laid to rest next to his mother Karen Long.

I would like Ryan's family to know that the Senate honors Sergeant Ryan D. Austin's life of service. We are saddened by this very tragic loss, and we are grateful for his supreme sacrifice, which reminds us all of the meaning of valor.

GREENVILLE, KENTUCKY, FIRE

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I wish to speak briefly on a tragedy that happened this morning in Kentucky.

News reports are still developing, but we do know that a large house fire occurred in Greenville, in Muhlenberg County, in western Kentucky. Fire officials reports say multiple lives were lost in the fire, including children. There are two survivors who have been flown to Vanderbilt University Medical Center for treatment.

Personnel from three fire departments—Greenville Fire, Graham Volunteer Fire, and Beechmont Volunteer Fire—responded to the blaze. I thank these brave firefighters, as well as the emergency medical technicians, police officers, and other responders who heroically leapt in to save lives.

Elaine and I are hopeful for a speedy recovery for the two victims who are still alive, and we extend our prayers and condolences to the families of the souls lost in this destructive fire. I will pay close attention to this story as events further develop. The entire Commonwealth stands behind Muhlenberg County right now, and we will do whatever we can to help recover from this horrific loss.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

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

STAFF-PREPARED MATERIALS

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I am sure not many people care, but the reason I didn't go first today is that those of us who serve in office depend on other people to prepare materials for us so we can make a reasonably good presentation. Well, I came here today and looked at my stuff—it was yesterday's. So I figured I would be better off waiting until I got the right one—which reminds me of something I heard as a very young Lieutenant Governor. This story may be true; it didn't happen to me, but I have always remembered it. It has always made me aware of the great work my staff does.

A man is used to his staff preparing his remarks, flowery remarks, and always so very, very well. He has a long speech he has to deliver. He gets to page 5, and it says, ''OK, you SOB, you are on your own'' and the rest is blank. I remembered that today, and figured I had better wait until my office had the right speech.

IMPROVING THE PROVISION OF MEDICAL SERVICES AND BENEFITS TO VETERANS—MOTION TO PROCEED

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I now move to proceed to Calendar No. 297, S. 1950.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will report the motion.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

> Motion to proceed to Calendar No. 297, S. 1950, a bill to improve the provision of medical services and benefits to veterans, and for other purposes.

SCHEDULE

Mr. REID. Mr. President, following my remarks the time until 11:15 a.m. will be equally divided and controlled dealing with flood insurance. At 11:15 a.m. there will be up to four rollcall votes in relation to amendments to that bill.

ORDER OF PROCEDURE

Mr. REID. Mr. President, following those votes the recess which was originally scheduled until 2 p.m.—and that will still be the case, except I ask unanimous consent that on the passage of S. 1926, as amended, the votes start at 1:50 p.m., with all other provisions of the previous order remaining in effect.

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

Mr. REID. Additionally, we expect to receive momentarily the conference report to accompany the farm bill today, and we will work on getting an agreement to move forward on this today.

RETIREMENT OF JOEL BREITNER

Mr. REID. Mr. President, here in the Senate we work closely with so many people, but no one do we work more closely with than the court reporters. They are right here in our face every time we talk, taking down a verbatim transcript of what we say, and they work extremely hard.

We went through a period of time when we were working through all

these nominations, and they went for days without going home. They had a cot in their office, and they never missed a beat.

I always watch very closely the court reporters because my brother—who is 22 months younger than I am—was a court reporter. He retired from doing that, but I watched him work so hard.

Court reporting is extremely difficult. It is very intense. In court we rarely have court reporters who take what we call a daily. They will have a couple of court reporters during a trial and they will transcribe their notes sometime later. But here in the Senate they transcribe their notes now—immediately.

The reason I mention that today is one of our reporters is going to retire. Joel Breitner has been here for three decades in the Senate. Prior to coming here, he was a court reporter. He has this designation now—as this young woman in front of me is reporting what I say—as an Official Reporter for the United States Senate.

Joel began working here in this body in 1987, after having been a court reporter already for 23 years. During his time in the reporters office, he has witnessed both innovation and a lot of history. He was one of the first reporters to use computer-aided transcription, which is a modern miracle—it really is—because the stenographic notes at the same time they type them, are already translating into English. That isn't the way it used to be.

I can remember my brother—and, of course, Joel, who was one of the first here in this body to use the computer-aided transcription and did what my brother did—you took down what people said with your machine, and then you would go back to your office, look over your notes, and transcribe them, and then either you would type them up or have someone do so. So it was a lot of work. It is still a lot of work, but it is a lot different than it used to be.

He is one of the first, if not the first, in this body to use this computer-aided transcription, and it really helped modernize the Office of Official Reporters.

He has reported historic events, countless numbers of them—President Clinton's first inaugural address, his impeachment. Over the years he has been a friend and resource to the Senate pages. Joel is a very nice, quiet person whom I will miss.

When we cross—I always see them—I say: ''Saddling up again''—putting on the heavy equipment they wear during the time they are here. They work very, very hard, and they transcribe every word we say. There are times I wish they hadn't, but they did.

Mr. President, it is no surprise, with the affection that Joel has shown for the pages, that Jamie, one of his children, has been a Senate page.

So I thank him on behalf of the entire Senate for his years of service not only to Senators but everybody, for his years of service in the reporters office, and I congratulate him on a very distinguished career. I wish him the best in retirement. I know he will enjoy spending more time with his children and with Carol, his wife of almost three decades.

WORKING TOGETHER

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I need to comment on part of what my Republican counterpart said. The President gave a good State of the Union Address to the country on Tuesday night. It was a dramatic speech, and he called upon us to work together. You would never know that from what the Republican leader said today.

He also said, as President of the United States, he has the power to do things when the Senate finds itself bogged down, as we have been with countless filibusters. During the years I have been leader of the Senate, there have been more than 470 filibusters conducted by the Republicans. Is it any wonder the President is going to do some things administratively because of the logjam we have here? Hopefully we can do better than we have done. I hope that is the case.

This country has been hurt by the constant obstruction we have had. I am surprised—but not too much—that my Republican colleague would say the President has to do something to help create jobs. One need only reflect on when President Obama took office. We were losing 700,000 jobs a month at that time. But because of his patience and wisdom and the fact that he had a Democratic Senate and Congress for the first 2 years of his Presidency, we were able to do some terrific things for the country.

Since then, as we know, the Republican leader has said his No. 1 goal was to defeat Obama for the reelection, and that is how the Republicans have legislated. Over the last 3 years, they have done everything they could to stop the country from moving forward. They actually did it during the first 2 years he was President, but they didn't have the power to do much then except obstruct, and we had enough votes to overcome their obstruction.

I don't know if my friend the Republican leader understands that in spite of his No. 1 goal to defeat the President that he was reelected overwhelmingly because the American people agreed with his view of the country.

I am not going to go into more detail about how I believe my Republican colleague is wrong on what has happened with bogging down the Senate, but I will comment on one aspect of his presentation: Because of the U.S. Supreme Court case called Citizens United, there has been some really untoward stuff going on in the political world. We have two brothers who are actually trying to buy the country. Last year the Koch brothers made billions of dollars. They are spending their billions of dollars by going into State legislatures, Governors races, and secretary of state races on a State level, and, of course, spending huge amounts of money around the country in an attempt to defeat Democrats both in the House and the Senate.

The Republican leader has long been an opponent of campaign finance reform. This has been part of his career. So it is no surprise that he opposes the administration's effort for greater disclosure. The abuse here is not the administration enforcing the law, but folks like the Koch brothers pretending to be social welfare organizations.

The Presiding Officer has dedicated much of his life to improving the social welfare of people from his State. These social welfare organizations are extremely helpful for people who have problems. The Koch brothers are not a social welfare organization. They are plainly acting as a political organization. They are spending tens and hundreds of millions of dollars on political activities. They have not contributed to anything that deals with social welfare. Folks who act as political organizations should have to disclose where the money comes from.

As the Presiding Officer knows, the Koch brothers hide all of their campaign efforts. They disguise themselves, with rare exception, as social welfare organizations. They have all these fancy names and go after people who are trying to improve the country.

We have an important piece of legislation we are going to pass today to improve the ability of our country to prosper. The bipartisan measure called the flood insurance bill will protect the Nation's recovering housing market and save consumers money.

I thank Senator MENENDEZ, the chairman of the banking committee, and Chairman LANDRIEU, who is chairman of the small business committee. They have done a wonderful job—these two working together with Senator ISAKSON—with their leadership on this issue.

I look forward to a strong bipartisan vote on this measure this afternoon. I would note that the bipartisan agreement to vote on a reasonable number of relevant amendments and on final passage of the flood insurance measure is exactly the kind of agreement that Republicans have rejected on other legislative priorities.

For example, when Democrats offered to vote on 20 relevant amendments to a full offset extension of unemployment insurance a couple of weeks ago, the Republicans refused. Since then, 150,000 more Americans have lost emergency benefits that were helping them to stay above water while they look for work. In all, more than 1.6 million out-of-work Americans have lost benefits to help them put food on the table and gas in the tank so they can focus on their job search.

I hope in the coming week Democrats and Republicans will be able reach a bipartisan agreement to have an up-or-down vote on the extension of unemployment insurance as well. I hope it is not again bogged down with obstruction. I am confident that we have the

opportunity to do that, and we should do it. Millions of fellow Americans are counting on us to do this on an affirmative basis.

While we work toward an agreement to restore unemployment benefits, the Senate will also, as I mentioned earlier, consider the farm bill conference report. America's farms and ranches are the most productive in the world. They support 16 million private sector jobs. Smart farm policies will help American farmers thrive. That is an important part of our work to keep the economic recovery rolling. The farm bill will create jobs and cut taxpayer subsidies and save $23 billion which will be used to reduce the deficit.

I would also note that we have done an admirable job of reducing the debt. Do we need to do more? Of course we do. We have already reduced the debt during the Obama years by almost $3 trillion, and if we could get the Republicans in the House to agree on the bill we passed dealing with immigration reform, it would be another $1 trillion toward reducing the debt.

I would also note, as I indicated earlier, that when President Obama first took office, we were losing 700,000 jobs a month. We have now created more than 8 million jobs. We need to do more and the farm bill will help that. The farm bill will create jobs and cut taxpayer subsidies and save $20 billion which will be used to reduce the debt and deficit. The bill includes important reforms to farm programs, and while this measure doesn't include as much funding for programs to reduce hunger as a number of us would like, it is a good compromise and it will protect needy families.

Senator STABENOW from Michigan has been the chairman of this committee. She has worked so hard for years to get this done. We have passed it twice here in the Senate. We have struggled to get something done in the House, and we were finally able to get this done under her leadership.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

Mr. REID. Would the Chair announce the business of the day.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. BOOKER). Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

HOMEOWNER FLOOD INSURANCE AFFORDABILITY ACT OF 2014

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will resume consideration of S. 1926, which the clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 1926) to delay the implementation of certain provisions of the Biggert-Waters Flood Insurance Reform Act of 2012 and to reform the National Association of Registered Agents and Brokers, and for other purposes.

Pending:

Heller/Lee amendment No. 2700, to clarify that any private flood insurance policy accepted by a State shall satisfy the mandatory purchase requirement under the Flood Disaster Protection Act of 1973.

Coburn/McCain amendment No. 2697, to allow States to opt out of participation in the National Association of Registered Agents and Brokers.

Toomey modified amendment No. 2707, to adjust phase-ins of flood insurance rate increases.

Merkley modified amendment No. 2709, to establish limitations on force-placed insurance.

SCHEDULE

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the time until 11:15 a.m. shall be equally divided and controlled between the two leaders or their designees, with Senators MENENDEZ and TOOMEY or their designees controlling the final 10 minutes.

The Senator from New York.

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I rise today in very strong support of the Homeowner Flood Insurance Affordability Act and urge my colleagues to vote today to pass this legislation that will help millions of Americans across the country.

First, I want to recognize the admirable leadership of Senators MENENDEZ, ISAKSON, and LANDRIEU for helping to put together such a strong coalition amidst some challenging political headwinds.

Senator LANDRIEU, in particular, has been like Paul Revere in the night for not only calling our attention to the detrimental elements of the Biggert-Waters bill but for continuing to emphasize this bill's importance to States from coast to coast.

Senator MENENDEZ and I share the New York-New Jersey coast, as does the Presiding Officer, and that, of course, has been devastated.

I will briefly say what has happened here. Literally tens of thousands of Americans will lose their homes—middle-class Americans, working-class Americans, and poor Americans—if we don't pass this legislation. Very simply, Biggert-Waters was not followed. Before increases were to go into effect, an affordability study was to be done. It was not. As a result, homeowners are having to pay thousands of dollars more. Homeowners who paid $500 a year for flood insurance—it is mandatory—now pay $4,000 or $5,000. There are some who pay as much as $30,000. Even worse, many more will lose their homes when they sell them because the flood insurance for the next owner will go up so much they will lose tremendous value on their homes.

A home is the middle class's piece of the rock. People struggle long and hard to pay that mortgage, and when they are in their later years, fifties, sixties, seventies—I guess fifties isn't later years these days—this is what they have. Their nest egg is their home. To all of a sudden pull the rug out from under them and say when you sell your home, the next person is going to have to pay $15,000 or $20,000 a year in flood insurance, which makes the value of that home plummet, is so unfair.

We have additional unfairness in our State of New York, as well as the neighboring State of New Jersey. People who were devastated by Sandy and struggled to rebuild their homes are all of a sudden getting walloped with huge flood insurance bills which they cannot afford. They are already in debt. So to allow this to go on makes no sense. If Americans ever want the Government to act, it is in these types of situations where there is an unfairness that is unrelated to any individual action by these homeowners which clobbers them. It takes away their financial security, it takes away their home, and makes life miserable.

It should come as no surprise that if people cannot afford flood insurance policies, we will see more and more homeowners decide to drop out of the program, or communities that decide not to adopt new flood maps proposed by FEMA. On top of that, as rates go higher and higher, those folks who are not required to buy flood insurance but wanted to do the prudent thing, may drop out of the program as well.

So, let me emphasize one point for my colleagues that may still have reservations about our bill: If folks start dropping out of the National Flood Insurance Program en masse, that would be a much larger drag on the system than a simple delay of rate increases. Without flood insurance, when future disasters hit, these families and communities will be entirely dependent on Federal aid to help them rebuild.

I fully support efforts to put the National Flood Insurance Program on a path to solvency, but it will not happen overnight, and attempting to do so in a manner that raises premiums too high too quickly, without consideration for broader affordability concerns, will end up being a decision that they come to regret.

We have to prevent the most devastating rate hikes from going into effect until FEMA and Congress can figure out a way to ensure the solvency of the National Flood Insurance Program without breaking the bank for middle-class homeowners.

It's illogical for homeowners to pay higher premiums based on the risk-zone of their home before FEMA accurately determines the actual risk. Yet, that is exactly what is happening today.

Currently, millions of policyholders who built to code and whose homes have been subsequently remapped into a higher risk area are facing significant rate increases with no assurance that the FEMA flood maps are accurate.

Prematurely forcing individuals and families out of their homes with astronomical increases of flood insurance premiums before even guaranteeing the reliability of rate maps is asinine.

But the legislation before us today delays these rate increases until an overseer can certify that FEMA has implemented a flood mapping approach

that utilizes sound scientific and engineering methodologies that accurately determine varying levels of flood risk.

Not a day goes by that I don't think about the impact that Sandy had on the millions of families across New York. Their stories and the struggles they face motivate me each day to do whatever I can to make their lives better.

As my colleagues can attest these are not isolated events. Storms are becoming more prevalent and more ferocious. And they are not just in coastal New York, New Jersey and Louisiana, but Montana, Colorado and central States as well.

New Yorkers and families across the country aren't thinking about whether the next natural disaster will impact them, they are thinking about when. This body can act now and prevent a manmade disaster from burdening them as well.

This bill, the Homeowner Flood Insurance Affordability Act, will protect homeowners across the country, many of whom have only just begun to recover, from potentially huge flood insurance premium hikes and loss of property value. We must pass this bill today.

To reiterate, my colleagues Senator LANDRIEU, Senator MENENDEZ, Senator ISAKSON and others have worked tirelessly to advance this bill and help all our constituents who have built back after seemingly insurmountable loss. I implore my colleagues to stand together, in a true bipartisan effort, to make this program fairer for middle class families struggling to hold onto the homes they rebuilt in the communities they call home.

The bottom line is we have to pass this bill. It makes no sense. We required a study before imposing devastating rate increases on homeowners to see what the effect would be to put the rates into effect. It is putting the cart before the horse. If it is not backward thinking, I don't know what it is. It makes no sense to do this.

The Toomey amendment will come forward, and it basically is not passing any bill. The Toomey amendment says we should put all the costs on these middle-class and working-class homeowners quickly. It doesn't have any limits, and it would do the same exact thing. So anyone who thinks the Toomey amendment is palliative, you may as well vote against the bill.

The good news here: Democrats and Republicans have come together. This is how this body should work. We have allowed a limited number of amendments on each side. I was glad to hear the minority leader talk the other day about how this is how the Senate should work. We agree, and I hope this will set the precedent for future bills where we can come together on the floor, have a reasonable number of amendments—hopefully relevant and germane that relate to improving the legislation—and then we will have the bill be given an up-or-down vote.

This bill will pass this afternoon. When this bill passes—and when it passes the House—millions of homeowners across America will breathe a sigh of relief. They will be able to keep their homes. They will be able to sell their homes, and they will know there is a process to put flood insurance on an even keel that won't be all on their backs.

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

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

The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

Ms. LANDRIEU. Mr. President, I understand Senator TOOMEY and Senator MENENDEZ will be coming to the floor to have the last 10 minutes of this debate, so I wish to take a moment to come to the floor to thank all of my colleagues who helped so much, particularly in the early days—a year and a half ago—to help make this bill possible today. This truly was a team effort, and I really appreciate the compliments from my colleagues about the leadership I provided, and I am happy to do so. Believe me, this never would have happened without a great team that was built to spread the word about the disastrous consequences of a law that had good intentions but with horrific ramifications on people all over the country. Because this is not just a coastal issue that affects New Jersey, the State of the Presiding Officer, and my State of Louisiana, we had some extraordinary Senators step up, such as Senator HEITKAMP, such as Senator JOE MANCHIN from West Virginia—not an ocean around or in sight. We had other Senators step up who do not have coastlines but who have States and subdivisions and communities and cities and rural areas that are in desperate need of a strong, good, solid, affordable, and sustainable flood insurance package for this country—a flood insurance program.

Some people thought that is what we were getting with Biggert-Waters, but it soon became clear, literally before the ink was dry, that it wasn't going to work. Sometimes mistakes are made and when they are, we have to step up and fix them as quickly as possible. It has taken us longer than it should have because some Senators have not had an open mind or an open heart. They have not dealt in the best of faith, but despite all of that, we are here today because a number of Senators stood up.

I wish to read their names into the RECORD: Senator THAD COCHRAN from Mississippi, Senator JEFF MERKLEY from Oregon, Senator JOHN HOEVEN from North Dakota, Senator TIM SCOTT from South Carolina, Senator HEIDI HEITKAMP from North Dakota, Senator ROGER WICKER from Mississippi, Senator VITTER from Louisiana, Senator CHUCK SCHUMER was a particularly strong leader, Senator KIRSTEN GILLIBRAND from New York, Senator ED MARKEY from Massachusetts, as well as ELIZABETH WARREN from Massachusetts, who were early supporters of this bill; Senator BILL NELSON of Florida, Senator RUBIO of Florida—and particularly Senator NELSON who got on this bill early and began educating people not only in Florida but around the country; Senator AL FRANKEN from Minnesota, Senator JOE MANCHIN, Senator BOB CASEY from Pennsylvania, another Senator who has no ocean, but Pennsylvania has I think the most new FEMA maps of any State in the Union. The people of Pennsylvania would really be affected if our bill doesn't pass. Even the amendment that is being offered by one of the Senators does not solve their problem and it is unfortunate, and I hope people will vote strongly against the Toomey amendment; Senator KAY HAGAN from North Carolina; of course, yours truly in the Chair, Senator CORY BOOKER, who came on early and was a huge supporter as soon as he got here. I think this was one of the first bills he cosponsored and I couldn't be more grateful, and I know the people of New Jersey are grateful for his leadership; Senator LINDSEY GRAHAM of South Carolina, Senator BRIAN SCHATZ of Hawaii, Senator RICHARD BLUMENTHAL of Connecticut, Senator JACK REED of Rhode Island, Senator SHELDON WHITEHOUSE of Rhode Island, Senator LISA MURKOWSKI from Alaska, Senator RON WYDEN from Oregon, Senator SUSAN COLLINS from Maine, and Senator DEBBIE STABENOW from Michigan; obviously, Senator MENENDEZ has been our leader on the Democratic side, and we would not be where we are today without his leadership.

We would not be where we are today without the commitment of Senator HARRY REID who recognizes he has a flooding problem as well and that this is not just a coastal issue. He stood up early to tell us that if we could build a strong coalition, if we could build 60-plus votes, he would help us get to a point where we could actually have a debate on amendments, vote them up or down, and then move this bill, with the strongest vote possible, to the House of Representatives, where I am proud to say there are 131 cosponsors on this bill. That number is growing every day. As people hear about what is happening and begin to understand, as they get notices from their insurance companies—which, by the way, are taking 30 percent of every policy off the top and assuming virtually no risk, which is an issue we have to address; it is not addressed in this bill—but as people begin to understand, they are going to be clamoring for real change. They will want something that helps taxpayers for it to be sustainable, that addresses the climate issues that are affecting this program, that helps middle-class homeowners be able, as

Senator SCHUMER said, to stay in their homes and not lose all the equity they have literally worked for not only their entire lives but potentially for two generations of work which has gone into building equity—sometimes three generations of work have gone into building equity in homes—just for a misguided piece of legislation to swipe away from them, in the blink of an eye, their homes' value.

So I hope people will vote strongly against the Toomey amendment. A vote for the Toomey amendment will signal a vote against our efforts for reform. He will say his efforts are to reform, that it will only allow raises of 25 percent a year. There is no cap on his bill. There are no requirements for an affordability study. There are no requirements for accurate FEMA mapping. His bill is a red herring and a distraction from what we are trying to do.

Senator JOHNNY ISAKSON on the Republican side deserves so much credit for organizing his team.

I also recognize the minority leader, the Senator from Kentucky, for his help in getting us to this point, and I thank him.

I also want to thank a very important group which is GNO, Inc.—Greater New Orleans, Inc.—which is a 16-parish economic coalition in our State, made up of parish presidents and elected officials and university presidents, that really focuses on the economic vitality of our region. Michael Hetch is the executive director—an extremely talented young leader. They recognized immediately, as I brought to their attention the problems with Biggert-Waters, the disaster it would be to the 16 parishes they represent. Not only did they step up and help us organize all of our 16 parishes, but they began immediately to reach out to New Jersey and to New York and to Pennsylvania and to California and to Oregon—to reach out to the bankers and the realtors. That began an extraordinary development of a very strong coalition. I thank them for their leadership.

I thank the National Association of Realtors and the National Homebuilders Association, NACo. The president of NACo—the National Association of Counties—was in my office on several occasions working very hard with elected officials all over the country to raise the flag about this issue and to say it is time to take a pause on Biggert-Waters—not a complete repeal; not moving back on our reforms, but to take a pause to get it right.

It is important to get this right. There are too many homes that will be lost, too many families impacted, too many businesses hurt, too many communities that will see a downward spiral from a housing market that is just now recovering after a very difficult national recession.

I thank the National League of Cities, the American Bankers Association, the Independent Community Bankers of America, and the Independent Insurance Agents and Brokers of America. I really want to thank them.

There are hundreds of other smaller organizations—neighborhood groups, I am sure, from New Jersey to New York, including Louisiana homeowners groups, that have spoken and are educating people about this challenge. But in a Congress where it is hard to come to a consensus on singing happy birthday to one of our Members, which is unfortunate today, this is a real accomplishment for such a broad, deep, and strong coalition—bipartisan, bicoastal—to come together and pass a bill that will bring relief to millions and millions of families.

This will be a great victory today. I believe we will have a strong vote in the Senate. I am confident of that. But we have work to do. This bill has to go to the House. MAXINE WATERS and Congressman GRIMM from New York are leading this effort. We need all the Senators to talk with their delegations in the House and get them to really step up. We need a lot of communication to the Speaker to say: Mr. Speaker, this cannot wait. There is already too much time, too much anxiety, too many real estate agents being put out of business, too many for-sale signs coming down, too many people making decisions because they have lost equity in their home. It is time to fix this problem now, and we can.

I thank Senator MERKLEY, who will be the subcommittee chair as this sort of new reform is written. And finally, I thank again Senator MENENDEZ and Senator ISAKSON for their extraordinary knowledge of this subject, their leadership, and helping us get to the point where we are.

I do not see any other colleagues on the floor. When I do, I will yield the floor. I understand Senator TOOMEY and Senator MENENDEZ are going to come to close out this debate. But I do want to say again that the Biggert-Waters bill was built backwards and upside down. It authorized immediate rate increases on responsible homeowners without any understanding of how it would impact their individual policies.

I want to also say this, Mr. President—and I think you have heard me speak about this both publicly and we have talked privately—the people in Louisiana who have been the victims and survivors of massive hurricanes and storms and levee breaks are well aware of the weather changes. We accept it as a reality. We are building our levees as fast as we can, with very little help over time. Now, after emergencies, the Federal Government comes in with a lot of money, but year in and year out we are having a very hard time getting any infrastructure from the Corps of Engineers budget, which is woefully underfunded for the whole country. And the Presiding Officer knows that because his communities suffer as well.

We are building levees as fast as we can with a lot of our own money and a lot of our own tax dollars. We are raising our homes as fast as we can, elevating them. We are putting in new zoning, and people are very mindful of not developing low-lying areas. But we have to have policies that are well thought out and well balanced to accommodate communities that have literally been here for 300 years.

New Orleans will be celebrating its 300th birthday in just a few years from now, in 2018. This is not about a group of people who went down there 20 years ago for Sun and for vacation. This is about people who came 300 years ago to secure the mouth of the greatest river system in North America and one of the greatest river systems in the world.

This is not fun and games. This is work and empowerment and wealth building and opportunity that the President talked about the other day. That is what this bill is about.

We need to start with building a flood program, partnershipped with the private sector, that works for average, middle-class families. We do not have that, and we are going to get the first step toward that today.

I see my colleagues on the floor, so I am going to yield the floor. I know the time has been set aside. When we vote on the Toomey amendment, please vote a strong no. When we vote on final passage, please vote a strong yes. There are a few other amendments Senators ISAKSON and MENENDEZ will speak to more directly, as we wrap up this debate today.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New Jersey.

Mr. MENENDEZ. Mr. President, it is good to see my colleague from New Jersey presiding.

I rise in support of this legislation we are about to consider, the Homeowner Flood Insurance Affordability Act, which, again, is unique insofar as it is a bipartisan, bicameral piece of legislation, to ensure families will be able to afford flood insurance so they can stay in their homes, so that businesses can stay open, and property values will not plummet.

AMENDMENT NO. 2707

I also rise in opposition to the Toomey substitute amendment, which would completely undermine our bill and perpetuate a failed policy. While we support putting the National Flood Insurance Program on a path to solvency, current law hikes rates so fast and so high that it will actually undermine the solvency of the program. These drastic increases will act as a de facto eviction notice for homeowners who have lived in their homes and played by the rules their entire lives. That is going to drive down property values, as the housing market is struggling to recover.

What is most alarming is the fact that FEMA does not even know the size or scope of this problem. They were supposed to complete a study on the affordability of rate increases mandated by Biggert-Waters by last April, but they failed to do so. That is simply unacceptable.

While there is no question we need to put the flood insurance program on a more solvent trajectory, we first need to understand the impact these dramatic changes in Biggert-Waters will have on the housing market and be sure the mapping process they use to set these rates is accurate.

That is why our bill would impose a moratorium on the phaseout of subsidies and grandfathers included in Biggert-Waters for most primary residences until FEMA completes the affordability study that was mandated in Biggert-Waters and proposes a regulatory framework to address the issues found in the study.

Whether FEMA does that in 6 months, 1 year—whatever periods of time—as soon as they do that and propose that regulatory framework, we are ready to go. So those who say this is somehow an inordinate amount of time, that is going to be determined by FEMA's promptness in getting the affordability study that was supposed to have been done under law by last April.

It would also require FEMA to certify in writing that it has implemented a flood mapping approach that utilizes sound scientific and engineering methodologies before certain rate reforms are implemented.

The reason that is important is because, for example, we saw in New Jersey where FEMA maps were put out, and we ultimately heard a hue and cry from communities and counties across the State that said: Look, that can't be right. We have had properties that have never flooded. Even in Sandy they did not have virtually any flooding, and now they are in the zone, and particularly in the most difficult zones, called V zones, where the consequence of being in a V zone may very well be whether you can keep your house. When we challenged and brought municipal and county engineers to bear, what did we find? In some counties we had an 80-percent reduction. Had we not challenged those maps, where would those families be today? So we want the basis of these maps to be scientific, using engineering methodologies that are sound.

Also, this new legislation would reimburse qualifying homeowners for successful appeals of erroneous flood map determinations. If we are going to say these maps are somehow sacrosanct, and you go and challenge them, and find out they were wrong, you should be able to not have to bear that burden.

It would give communities fair credit for locally funded flood protection systems. It would continue the fair treatment afforded to communities with floodproof basement exemptions. It would provide for a FEMA ombudsman to advocate for and provide information to policyholders. It would streamline the registration process for insurance brokers and agents so they can provide better timely services to policyholders during a disaster.

Just as important as what this bill does is what it will not do. The legislation would not stop the phaseout of taxpayer-funded subsidies for vacation homes and homes that have been substantially damaged. It would not stop the phaseout of taxpayer-funded subsidies for properties that have been repetitively flooded, including the 1 percent riskiest properties that account for over a third of all claims. It would not encourage new construction in environmentally sensitive or flood-prone areas. And it would not stop most of the important reforms included in Biggert-Waters.

This legislation reaches a delicate balance that recognizes the need to improve solvency and phase out certain subsidies but tries to do so without discouraging program participation.

Finally, Senator TOOMEY acknowledges that Biggert-Waters, I think, is totally flawed and must be changed, but basically his amendment falls far short of what all of us who have come together in support will do.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Pennsylvania.

Mr. TOOMEY. Mr. President, I rise to discuss briefly my amendment and the underlying bill. But first I want to thank my cosponsors—Senators COATS, MCCONNELL, COBURN, HATCH, KIRK, and JOHANNS—and I want to thank the bipartisan coalition of Senators who are supporting my approach.

There is a real problem with our flood insurance program as a result of the reforms, and it needs to be addressed. The problem is that, in the process of reforming this program so it would actually be sustainable—so that it actually could become solvent—in the process of making those changes, some people's premiums go up very dramatically and pretty suddenly. The phase-in is very quick and the increase is very high. That is a huge problem, and it needs to be addressed.

The Menendez bill addresses it the wrong way. What this bill does is it does kill the meaningful reform. It completely suspends for 4 years. There is no adjustment of premiums toward an actuarially sound market-based level of premiums that do not require taxpayer subsidy. So we will be going back—oh, it busts the budget, by the way—we will be going back to a system where literally Warren Buffett can buy a home, and as long as he makes it his primary residence, he can continue to have taxpayers subsidize his cost of flood insurance. I just do not know how that is even remotely defensible. But that is what we would be heading back to if we adopt the Menendez bill.

In addition, by throwing out the reform, by throwing out the movement toward an actuarially sound system, we go right back to the insolvent, unsustainable program we had before, which means the NFIP, under the Menendez bill, will that much sooner reach the day when it cannot honor its claims, when the people who have been paying their insurance premiums discover there is no money to honor their claim when the flood occurs because it does not have the reforms that put it on a sustainable basis.

Finally, it is flawed because it cannot become law. This approach is not going to become law. We know that. It is not just me who opposes this approach. The administration does not accept this approach. This is what the Statement of Administration Policy said that was put out this week by the President of the United States about this bill. He referred to this bill specifically and said:

> Delaying implementation of these reforms—

referring to the Biggert-Waters reforms—

> would further erode the financial position of the NFIP, which is already $24 billion in debt. This delay would also reduce FEMA's ability to pay future claims made by all policyholders.

The Speaker of the House and the leadership in the House feel the same way. They are not willing to throw out the reforms and leave us with an NFIP that cannot honor its claims. They are not going to do it.

So if you really want to do something for the people who are facing these big premium increases, you have to support a program, an approach that actually works. That is why I have offered this amendment. I urge my colleagues to support this amendment.

What we do is simple. We phase in the premium increases gradually. For people facing a big premium increase, we phase it in very gradually. It gives people time to adjust, time to mitigate, time to challenge if the map is drawn wrong. They can do that. We preserve the important, valuable ideas in the Menendez bill, such as the ability to recoup the cost of a successful challenge to a mapping problem for an individual homeowner, also for a community. That is there. That is important.

We preserve the opportunity to have the benefit and force NFIP to recognize the benefit of mitigation measures that have been taken by others. So if your community has built a levee or a dam or some kind of flood mitigation system, with or without Federal money, that needs to be acknowledged, that needs to be reflected. If your community, your home is safer because of that investment, your premium needs to reflect the fact that you have a safer situation. We cover that as well.

Finally, the administration supports this approach. In the very same Statement of Administration Policy, President Obama's administration stated this:

> The Administration strongly supports a phased transition to actuarially sound flood insurance rates.

The Menendez bill absolutely does not do this. My amendment absolutely does because this is what makes sense. This is how we soften the blow. We create a reasonable transition and we maintain a fiscally sound, actuarially sound program that does not bust the

budget. That is what my amendment does.

Finally, let me just conclude with this. There are a lot of Members of this body on both sides of the aisle who have spent a lot of time, especially in recent years, in sincere, concerted ongoing efforts to address one of the biggest challenges we face as a country; that is, the fiscally unsustainable position of our Federal Government, driven by mandatory spending.

We have cut discretionary spending significantly as a percentage of our budget, as a percentage of our economy. Any way you measure it, discretionary spending has been squeezed. Mandatory spending has been almost completely untouched. It is growing far too fast. Recently this body, including every Democrat who supports this Menendez bill, voted for a reform, a reform of one mandatory program that makes it sustainable, makes it viable.

We should not be walking away. If we were at all serious about getting our mandatory spending under control, we should not walk away from this reform. Please, I urge my colleagues, support the Toomey amendment.

I yield back my time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, there be will be 2 minutes of debate equally divided prior to a vote on amendment No. 2707, as modified, offered by the Senator from Pennsylvania, Mr. TOOMEY.

Mr. MENENDEZ. Mr. President, parliamentary inquiry: Is my understanding correct that Senator TOOMEY has used his minute as part of his presentation or is there a minute still pending for each side?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. There is a minute still pending for each side.

Mr. TOOMEY. Mr. President, I think I made my case. I will yield back the remainder of my last minute.

Mr. MENENDEZ. Mr. President, first of all, let me clear up some things. No. 1, the administration has not come and said it supports Senator TOOMEY's amendment. So let's be clear about that. As a matter of fact, my understanding is the administration has called him out and said they do not oppose our legislation.

I think we do transition ultimately to a place where we have an actuarially sound flood insurance program. There is a CBO score out there of over 10 years of zero. Look. The reality is, if you want the real estate markets to take a real hit, if you want families to be displaced from their homes, you adopt the Toomey amendment.

If you want to do what on a bipartisan basis has been the focus of this legislation, to keep an actuarially sound flood insurance program but at the same time make sure we do not drive people out of their homes and make sure that we get the study done before we get the actions done, then you will oppose the Toomey amendment and support the underlying bill.

I yield the floor and ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There is a sufficient second.

The question is on agreeing to the amendment.

The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from West Virginia (Mr. ROCKEFELLER) is necessarily absent.

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

The result was announced—yeas 34, nays 65, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 16 Leg.]

YEAS—34

Alexander	Enzi	McConnell
Ayotte	Fischer	Moran
Barrasso	Flake	Portman
Boozman	Grassley	Risch
Burr	Hatch	Roberts
Chambliss	Heller	Scott
Coats	Inhofe	Sessions
Coburn	Johanns	Shelby
Corker	Johnson (WI)	Thune
Cornyn	Kirk	Toomey
Crapo	Lee	
Cruz	McCain	

NAYS—65

Baldwin	Hagan	Murray
Baucus	Harkin	Nelson
Begich	Heinrich	Paul
Bennet	Heitkamp	Pryor
Blumenthal	Hirono	Reed
Blunt	Hoeven	Reid
Booker	Isakson	Rubio
Boxer	Johnson (SD)	Sanders
Brown	Kaine	Schatz
Cantwell	King	Schumer
Cardin	Klobuchar	Shaheen
Carper	Landrieu	Stabenow
Casey	Leahy	Tester
Cochran	Levin	Udall (CO)
Collins	Manchin	Udall (NM)
Coons	Markey	Vitter
Donnelly	McCaskill	Warner
Durbin	Menendez	Warren
Feinstein	Merkley	Whitehouse
Franken	Mikulski	Wicker
Gillibrand	Murkowski	Wyden
Graham	Murphy	

NOT VOTING—1

Rockefeller

The amendment (No. 2707), as modified, was rejected.

Mr. MENENDEZ. Mr. President, I move to reconsider the vote and to lay that motion on the table.

The motion to lay on the table was agreed to.

AMENDMENT NO. 2697

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, there will be 2 minutes of debate equally divided prior to the vote on amendment No. 2697 offered by the Senator from Oklahoma, Mr. COBURN.

The Senator from Oklahoma.

Mr. COBURN. Mr. President, what the sponsors claim about my amendment is factually incorrect. Their statement is that all the States and everybody wants to do the NARAB bill. I agree, we should do it, but if all the States really want to do it, my amendment has no effect whatsoever because it allows an opt-out for a State that doesn't want to do it. So either it is true that they all want to do it or it is not true that they all want to do it, and we are going to force some States to not do it.

An opt-out protecting 10th Amendment privileges of the State is highly required to make sure we do not go outside the bounds of our legal obligations.

I reserve the remainder of my time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Montana.

Mr. TESTER. Mr. President, we have been here before. Fifteen years ago, Gramm-Leach-Bliley offered what the good Senator from Oklahoma is offering, and it is why NARAB has never been successful.

What this does is it empowers our State regulators, and that is why they support this bill. Notice you haven't heard a lot from States about taking away their rights here because it does not. It empowers them, it brings more competition in the marketplace, and it helps consumers. This is good.

I kick it over to my cosponsor and the good Senator from Nebraska.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Nebraska.

Mr. JOHANNS. Mr. President, I thank my cosponsor Senator TESTER, and he is 1,000 percent right. We have been down this road. We have worked so hard to get everybody on board. States are on board. It does empower States. It does allow them to do what they need to do.

I urge my colleagues to be a ''no'' vote on the Coburn amendment.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Oklahoma.

Mr. COBURN. Mr. President, if this is true, with no opt-out, then why not do it for lawyers? Why not do it for doctors? Why not do it for every other thing that is licensed that would be better for consumers? To not give an opt-out is not right to the individual States.

I support the bill; I just think we need to have a protection for the States. And the reason there is opposition to this is because there is obviously some people who don't agree that everybody is on board.

I yield back.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. All time has expired.

The question is on agreeing to the amendment.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second? There is a sufficient second.

The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk called the roll.

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

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from West Virginia (Mr. ROCKEFELLER) is necessarily absent.

The result was announced—yeas 24, nays 75, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 17 Leg.]

YEAS—24

Alexander	Chambliss	Cornyn
Barrasso	Coburn	Crapo
Burr	Cochran	Cruz

Enzi	Isakson	Paul
Flake	Lee	Risch
Graham	Manchin	Rubio
Hatch	McCain	Sessions
Inhofe	Merkley	Vitter

NAYS—75

Ayotte	Grassley	Murphy
Baldwin	Hagan	Murray
Baucus	Harkin	Nelson
Begich	Heinrich	Portman
Bennet	Heitkamp	Pryor
Blumenthal	Heller	Reed
Blunt	Hirono	Reid
Booker	Hoeven	Roberts
Boozman	Johanns	Sanders
Boxer	Johnson (SD)	Schatz
Brown	Johnson (WI)	Schumer
Cantwell	Kaine	Scott
Cardin	King	Shaheen
Carper	Kirk	Shelby
Casey	Klobuchar	Stabenow
Coats	Landrieu	Tester
Collins	Leahy	Thune
Coons	Levin	Toomey
Corker	Markey	Udall (CO)
Donnelly	McCaskill	Udall (NM)
Durbin	McConnell	Warner
Feinstein	Menendez	Warren
Fischer	Mikulski	Whitehouse
Franken	Moran	Wicker
Gillibrand	Murkowski	Wyden

NOT VOTING—1

Rockefeller

The amendment (No. 2697) was rejected.

AMENDMENT NO. 2709, AS MODIFIED—WITHDRAWN

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, there will be 2 minutes of debate, equally divided, prior to a vote on amendment No. 2709, as modified, offered by Senator from Oregon, Mr. MERKLEY.

The Senator from Oregon.

Mr. MERKLEY. Madam President, in a moment I will ask unanimous consent to withdraw this amendment. I think there is a better way to tackle this particular issue. But I will use this moment to note for my colleagues that I appreciate all the Senators who have come to me to say they share the outrage at the exploitative, predatory pricing of force-placed insurance on our homeowners. This drives homeowners into foreclosure, which is not good for families, not good for the communities, and it is certainly not good for the U.S. Government because we insure the vast bulk of these mortgages. Therefore, if we are going to be responsible from an accounting sense for the investment of the U.S. taxpayer, this needs to be addressed.

I ask unanimous consent to withdraw my amendment No. 2709, as modified.

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

The Senator from New Jersey.

Mr. MENENDEZ. Madam President, very briefly, I wish to thank the Senator from Oregon both for driving the issue and for working with us in the process to get to where he wants to be and where we can maximize our votes on this bill. I appreciate his courtesy and cooperation and look forward to working with him.

AMENDMENT NO. 2700

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, there will be 2 minutes of debate, equally divided, prior to a vote on amendment No. 2700, offered by the Senator from Nevada, Mr. HELLER.

The Senator from Nevada is recognized.

Mr. HELLER. Madam President, let me be clear that my amendment simply clarifies existing law. I am trying to provide some clarity that private flood insurance can be a viable option for homeowners and businesses. Private insurers are already subject to regulations in each and every State by their insurance commissioners, and those insurance commissioners are the best regulators for ensuring proper consumer protection.

So I ask my colleagues to support the Heller-Lee amendment so we can provide the American people with more competition, higher quality, and less cost when it comes to flood insurance.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New Jersey.

Mr. MENENDEZ. Madam President, I have to oppose the Heller amendment. This amendment would weaken consumer protections and completely remove minimum standards with respect to private flood insurance policies. In particular, the amendment strips the requirement that the private policy has to be comparable to a national flood insurance policy, meaning that companies would be able to offer inadequate policies to consumers across the country without any requirements as to what is in the policy. For all of those who have talked about solvency, if you have insurance that doesn't meet a minimum standard to ensure that the consequences of flooding can be paid for by the policy, you want to vote against this amendment.

I urge a ''no'' vote on the Heller amendment, and I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second? There appears to be a sufficient second.

The question is on agreeing to the amendment.

The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from West Virginia (Mr. ROCKEFELLER) is necessarily absent.

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

The result was announced—yeas 49, nays 50, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 18 Leg.]

YEAS—49

Alexander	Enzi	Kirk
Ayotte	Fischer	Lee
Barrasso	Flake	McCain
Blunt	Graham	McConnell
Boozman	Grassley	Moran
Burr	Hagan	Paul
Chambliss	Hatch	Portman
Coats	Heinrich	Risch
Coburn	Heller	Roberts
Cochran	Hoeven	Rubio
Collins	Inhofe	Scott
Corker	Isakson	Sessions
Cornyn	Johanns	Shelby
Crapo	Johnson (WI)	
Cruz	King	
Tester	Toomey	Warner
Thune	Vitter	Wicker

NAYS—50

Baldwin	Gillibrand	Murphy
Baucus	Harkin	Murray
Begich	Heitkamp	Nelson
Bennet	Hirono	Pryor
Blumenthal	Johnson (SD)	Reed
Booker	Kaine	Reid
Boxer	Klobuchar	Sanders
Brown	Landrieu	Schatz
Cantwell	Leahy	Schumer
Cardin	Levin	Shaheen
Carper	Manchin	Stabenow
Casey	Markey	Udall (CO)
Coons	McCaskill	Udall (NM)
Donnelly	Menendez	Warren
Durbin	Merkley	Whitehouse
Feinstein	Mikulski	Wyden
Franken	Murkowski	

NOT VOTING—1

Rockefeller

The amendment (No. 2700) was rejected.

Mr. MENENDEZ. Madam President, I move to reconsider the vote and lay that motion on the table.

The motion to lay on the table was agreed to.

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. President, I support S. 1926, the Homeowner Flood Insurance Affordability Act.

While the Biggert-Waters Flood Insurance Reform Act improved many aspects of the National Flood Insurance Program, it also resulted in a dire situation for a number of American families who suddenly found that their insurance rates would be doubled, tripled, or more. And it locked some families into homes they couldn't afford to insure but also couldn't afford to sell.

Today's bill will fix many of these problems by allowing the use of the rate structure in place before passage of Biggert-Waters for some properties. In 4 years, when the Flood Insurance Program will be up for reauthorization, Congress will be able to look to the results of two new studies, called for in today's bill, for ways to make the Flood Insurance Program more equitable.

While I am pleased that this fix is being implemented, I still have concerns about the Flood Insurance Program in general. Since the program's inception, Michigan residents have paid about six times more in premiums than they have received in claims. This inequity isn't fair for Michigan homeowners, and I believe we need to take action to resolve this issue.

I had this inequity in mind in 2012 when we passed Biggert-Waters. I was hopeful that the bill's provisions allowing for the development of private flood insurance markets would result in lower, more equitable rates for Michigan residents. So it was important to me that any action we took today wouldn't make Michigan residents worse off than they are under current law. After consulting with my colleagues and FEMA, I have been assured that the bill before us would not prevent a homeowner's flood insurance rates from decreasing if that rate would have decreased under current law. I thank Senator MENENDEZ for his assurances on this matter, and I appreciate him engaging in a colloquy with

me that will be made part of the record.

Again, the bill before us provides some relief for homeowners facing huge rate increases, while preserving rate decreases for homeowners that are currently eligible for them, and I am therefore supportive of this bill.

RECESS

Mr. MENENDEZ. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate recess until 1:50 p.m. today.

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

Under the previous order, the Senate stands in recess until 1:50 p.m.

Thereupon, the Senate, at 12:29 p.m., recessed until 1:50 p.m. and reassembled when called to order by the Presiding Officer (Ms. HIRONO).

AGRICULTURAL ACT OF 2014—CONFERENCE REPORT

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader.

Mr. REID. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the conference report to accompany H.R. 2642.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

The committee of conference on the disagreeing votes of the two Houses on the amendment of the House to the amendment of the Senate to the bill (H.R. 2642), to provide for the reform and continuation of agricultural and other programs of the Department of Agriculture through fiscal year 2018, and for other purposes, having met, have agreed that the House recede from its amendment to the amendment of the Senate and agree to the same with an amendment, and the Senate agree to the same, signed by a majority of all conferees on the part of both Houses.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection to proceeding with the conference report?

Without objection, the Senate will proceed.

(The conference report is printed in the House Proceedings of the RECORD of Monday, January 27, 2014.)

CLOTURE MOTION

Mr. REID. I have a cloture motion that I ask be reported.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The cloture motion having been presented under rule XXII, the Chair directs the clerk to read the motion.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, hereby move to bring to a close debate on the conference report to accompany H.R. 2642, the Federal Agricultural Reform and Risk Management Act.

Harry Reid, Debbie Stabenow, Robert Menendez, Bill Nelson, Tom Harkin, Tammy Baldwin, Jon Tester, Michael F. Bennet, Patrick J. Leahy, Max Baucus, Amy Klobuchar, Heidi Heitkamp, Joe Donnelly, Richard J. Durbin, Mark Udall, Martin Heinrich, Sherrod Brown.

Mr. REID. I ask unanimous consent that the mandatory quorum under rule XXII be waived; that the cloture vote occur at 5:30 p.m. on Monday, February 3; that if cloture is invoked, there be 20 minutes remaining postcloture at 2:15 p.m., Tuesday, February 4, to be equally divided between the two leaders or their designees; that upon the use or yielding back of that time, all postcloture time be considered expired and the Senate proceed to vote on adoption of the conference report.

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

HOMEOWNER FLOOD INSURANCE AFFORDABILITY ACT OF 2014—Continued

Mr. REID. I ask unanimous consent that we resume consideration of S. 1926.

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

Under the previous order, there will be 2 minutes of debate equally divided prior to a vote on passage of S. 1926.

Who yields time?

The Senator from Georgia.

Mr. ISAKSON. Madam President, I will be brief in our 1 minute just to express my thanks to Senator MENENDEZ from New Jersey, as well as Senator LANDRIEU and Senator VITTER and all of those who came together to put together a great bill for the people of the United States of America for Federal flood insurance. It was a team effort, a bipartisan effort, an equally divided effort between Republicans and Democrats.

I urge everybody to vote for the bill, and I again thank the Senator from New Jersey for his cooperation.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New Jersey.

Mr. MENENDEZ. Madam President, I urge all of our colleagues to cast a ''yes'' vote on the final passage of the homeowner flood insurance act.

I think this has been an excellent week for the Senate. We were able to break through what sometimes is partisan gridlock and far too often pervades this auspicious Chamber. We have had an honest and open debate on this issue that is critical to the American people. We have had a respectable debate on good-faith amendments that were germane to the bill and lived up to the ideals of the Senate, and now we are poised to pass a critical piece of legislation which I believe enjoys overwhelming bipartisan support which will provide real relief to millions of American families.

I thank all of our cosponsors and their staffs, including a very large list of Republican colleagues who support the bill. I particularly thank my lead Republican cosponsor, Senator ISAKSON, for his efforts and the partnership on this issue and many others. I have had the pleasure to work with Senator ISAKSON on a number of issues and have come to respect his honesty and his desire to come together and get things done, regardless of the issue. I think he is one of the most well-respected Members of the Senate. Together, working with our colleagues, I think we are poised to give some real relief to families and to send a strong message to the House and hope they will follow suit.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. All time has expired.

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

Mr. MENENDEZ. Madam President, I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second? There appears to be a sufficient second.

The bill having been read the third time, the question is, Shall the bill, as amended, pass?

The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Ohio (Mr. BROWN) is necessarily absent.

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

The result was announced—yeas 67, nays 32, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 19 Leg.]

YEAS—67

Baldwin	Harkin	Nelson
Baucus	Heinrich	Pryor
Begich	Heitkamp	Reed
Bennet	Hirono	Reid
Blumenthal	Hoeven	Rockefeller
Blunt	Isakson	Rubio
Booker	Johanns	Sanders
Boxer	Johnson (SD)	Schatz
Burr	Kaine	Schumer
Cantwell	King	Scott
Cardin	Klobuchar	Shaheen
Casey	Landrieu	Stabenow
Chambliss	Leahy	Tester
Cochran	Levin	Udall (CO)
Collins	Manchin	Udall (NM)
Coons	Markey	Vitter
Donnelly	McCaskill	Warner
Durbin	Menendez	Warren
Feinstein	Merkley	Whitehouse
Franken	Mikulski	Wicker
Gillibrand	Murkowski	Wyden
Graham	Murphy	
Hagan	Murray	

NAYS—32

Alexander	Enzi	McConnell
Ayotte	Fischer	Moran
Barrasso	Flake	Paul
Boozman	Grassley	Portman
Carper	Hatch	Risch
Coats	Heller	Roberts
Coburn	Inhofe	Sessions
Corker	Johnson (WI)	Shelby
Cornyn	Kirk	Thune
Crapo	Lee	Toomey
Cruz	McCain	

NOT VOTING—1

Brown

The bill (S. 1926), as amended, was passed, as follows:

S. 1926

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

SECTION 1. TABLE OF CONTENTS.

The table of contents for this Act is as follows:

Sec. 1. Table of contents.

TITLE I—HOMEOWNER FLOOD INSURANCE AFFORDABILITY ACT

Sec. 101. Short title.
Sec. 102. Definitions.
Sec. 103. Delayed implementation of flood insurance rate increases; draft affordability framework.
Sec. 104. Affordability study and report.
Sec. 105. Affordability study funding.
Sec. 106. Funds to reimburse homeowners for successful map appeals.
Sec. 107. Flood protection systems.
Sec. 108. Treatment of floodproofed residential basements.
Sec. 109. Designation of flood insurance advocate.
Sec. 110. Exceptions to escrow requirement for flood insurance payments.
Sec. 111. Monthly installment payments for premiums.
Sec. 112. Accounting for flood mitigation activities in estimates of premium rates.
Sec. 113. Home improvement fairness.
Sec. 114. Study of voluntary community-based flood insurance options.
Sec. 115. Exemption from fees for certain map change requests.
Sec. 116. Flood mitigation methods for urban buildings.

TITLE II—NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REGISTERED AGENTS AND BROKERS

Sec. 201. Short Title.
Sec. 202. Reestablishment of the National Association of Registered Agents and Brokers.

TITLE I—HOMEOWNER FLOOD INSURANCE AFFORDABILITY ACT

SEC. 101. SHORT TITLE.

This title may be cited as the ''Homeowner Flood Insurance Affordability Act of 2014''.

SEC. 102. DEFINITIONS.

As used in this title, the following definitions shall apply:

(1) ADJUSTED BASE FLOOD ELEVATION.—For purposes of rating a floodproofed covered structure, the term ''adjusted base flood elevation'' means the base flood elevation for a covered structure on the applicable effective flood insurance rate map, plus 1 foot.

(2) ADMINISTRATOR.—The term ''Administrator'' means the Administrator of the Federal Emergency Management Agency.

(3) AFFORDABILITY STUDY.—The term ''affordability study'' means the study required under section 100236 of the Biggert-Waters Flood Insurance Reform Act of 2012 (Public Law 112–141; 126 Stat. 957).

(4) APPLICABLE FLOOD PLAIN MANAGEMENT MEASURES.—The term ''applicable flood plain management measures'' means flood plain management measures adopted by a community under section 60.3(c) of title 44, Code of Federal Regulations.

(5) COVERED STRUCTURE.—The term ''covered structure'' means a residential structure—

(A) that is located in a community that has adopted flood plain management measures that are approved by the Federal Emergency Management Agency and that satisfy the requirements for an exception for floodproofed residential basements under section 60.6(c) of title 44, Code of Federal Regulations; and

(B) that was built in compliance with the applicable flood plain management measures.

(6) DRAFT AFFORDABILITY FRAMEWORK.—The term ''draft affordability framework'' means the draft programmatic and regulatory framework required to be prepared by the Administrator and submitted to Congress under section 103(d) addressing the issues of affordability of flood insurance sold under the National Flood Insurance Program, including issues identified in the affordability study.

(7) FLOODPROOFED ELEVATION.—The term ''floodproofed elevation'' means the height of floodproofing on a covered structure, as identified on the Residential Basement Floodproofing Certificate for the covered structure.

(8) NATIONAL FLOOD INSURANCE PROGRAM.—The term ''National Flood Insurance Program'' means the program established under the National Flood Insurance Act of 1968 (42 U.S.C. 4001 et seq.).

SEC. 103. DELAYED IMPLEMENTATION OF FLOOD INSURANCE RATE INCREASES; DRAFT AFFORDABILITY FRAMEWORK.

(a) DELAYED IMPLEMENTATION OF FLOOD INSURANCE RATE INCREASES.—

(1) GRANDFATHERED PROPERTIES.—Beginning on the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator may not implement section 1308(h) of the National Flood Insurance Act of 1968 (42 U.S.C. 4015(h)).

(2) PRE-FIRM PROPERTIES.—Beginning on the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator may not implement—

(A) section 1307(g)(1) of the National Flood Insurance Act of 1968 (42 U.S.C. 4014(g)(1)); or

(B) section 1307(g)(3) of the National Flood Insurance Act of 1968 (42 U.S.C. 4014(g)(3)) with respect to any policy described in that section, provided that the decision of the policy holder to permit a lapse in flood insurance coverage was as a result of the property covered by the policy no longer being required to retain such coverage.

(3) EXPIRATION.—The prohibitions set forth under paragraphs (1) and (2) shall expire 6 months after the later of—

(A) the date on which the Administrator proposes the draft affordability framework; or

(B) the date on which the Administrator certifies in writing to Congress that the Federal Emergency Management Agency has implemented a flood mapping approach that, when applied, results in technically credible flood hazard data in all areas where Flood Insurance Rate Maps are prepared or updated.

(b) PROPERTY SALE TRIGGER.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Section 1307(g)(2) of the National Flood Insurance Act of 1968 (42 U.S.C. 4014(g)(2)) is amended to read as follows:

''(2) any property purchased after the expiration of the 6-month period set forth under section 103(a)(3) of the Homeowner Flood Insurance Affordability Act of 2014;''.

(2) PROTECTION OF SUBSIDY FOR PROPERTIES PURCHASED ON OR BEFORE EXPIRATION DATE.—Notwithstanding paragraph (1) or (3) of section 1307(g) of the National Flood Insurance Act of 1968 (42 U.S.C. 4014(g)(1) and (3)), the Administrator may not reduce the risk premium rate subsidy for flood insurance for a property purchased on or before the expiration of the 6-month period set forth under subsection (a)(3) of this section based on the fact that—

(A) the property was not insured by the flood insurance program as of the date of enactment of the Biggert-Waters Flood Insurance Reform Act of 2012 (Public Law 112–141; 126 Stat. 916); or

(B) on or before the expiration of that 6-month period, the policy for the property had lapsed in coverage as a result of the deliberate choice of the policy holder, provided that the decision of the policy holder to permit a lapse in coverage was as a result of the property no longer being required to retain such coverage.

(c) TREATMENT OF PRE-FIRM PROPERTIES.—Beginning on the date of enactment of this Act and ending upon the expiration of the 6-month period set forth under subsection (a)(3), the Administrator shall restore the risk premium rate subsidies for flood insurance estimated under section 1307(a)(2) of the National Flood Insurance Act of 1968 (42 U.S.C. 4014(a)(2)) for any property—

(1) with respect to which the Administrator may not, under subsection (a)(2)(A) of this section, implement section 1307(g)(1) of the National Flood Insurance Act of 1968;

(2) with respect to which the Administrator may not, under subsection (a)(2)(B) of this section, implement section 1307(g)(3) of the National Flood Insurance Act of 1968; or

(3) described in section 1307(g)(2) of the National Flood Insurance Act of 1968 (42 U.S.C. 4014(g)(2)), as in effect on the day before the date of enactment of this Act.

(d) DRAFT AFFORDABILITY FRAMEWORK.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Administrator shall prepare a draft affordability framework that proposes to address, via programmatic and regulatory changes, the issues of affordability of flood insurance sold under the National Flood Insurance Program, including issues identified in the affordability study.

(2) CRITERIA.—In carrying out the requirements under paragraph (1), the Administrator shall consider the following criteria:

(A) Accurate communication to consumers of the flood risk associated with their property.

(B) Targeted assistance to flood insurance policy holders based on their financial ability to continue to participate in the National Flood Insurance Program.

(C) Individual or community actions to mitigate the risk of flood or lower the cost of flood insurance.

(D) The impact of increases in risk premium rates on participation in the National Flood Insurance Program.

(E) The impact flood insurance rate map updates have on the affordability of flood insurance.

(3) DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSION.—Not later than 18 months after the date on which the Administrator submits the affordability study, the Administrator shall submit to the full Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs and the full Committee on Appropriations of the Senate and the full Committee on Financial Services and the full Committee on Appropriations of the House of Representatives the draft affordability framework.

(e) INTERAGENCY AGREEMENTS.—The Administrator may enter into an agreement with another Federal agency to—

(1) complete the affordability study; or

(2) prepare the draft affordability framework.

(f) CLEAR COMMUNICATIONS.—The Administrator shall clearly communicate full flood risk determinations to individual property owners regardless of whether their premium rates are full actuarial rates.

(g) RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.—Nothing in this section shall be construed to provide the Administrator with the authority to provide assistance to homeowners based on affordability that was not available prior to the enactment of the Biggert-Waters Flood Insurance Reform Act of 2012 (Public Law 112–141; 126 Stat. 916).

(h) DISCLOSURE.—

(1) CHANGE IN RATES UNDER BIGGERT-WATERS.—Not later than the date that is 6 months before the date on which any change in risk premium rates for flood insurance coverage under the National Flood Insurance Program resulting from the amendment made by section 100207 of the Biggert-Waters Flood Insurance Reform Act of 2012 (Public

Law 112–141; 126 Stat. 919) is implemented, the Administrator shall make publicly available the rate tables and underwriting guidelines that provide the basis for the change.

(2) CHANGE IN RATES UNDER THIS ACT.—Not later than the date that is 6 months before the date on which any change in risk premium rates for flood insurance coverage under the National Flood Insurance Program resulting from this Act or any amendment made by this Act is implemented, the Administrator shall make publicly available the rate tables and underwriting guidelines that provide the basis for the change.

(3) REPORT ON POLICY AND CLAIMS DATA.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 90 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator shall submit to Congress a report on the feasibility of—

(i) releasing property-level policy and claims data for flood insurance coverage under the National Flood Insurance Program; and

(ii) establishing guidelines for releasing property-level policy and claims data for flood insurance coverage under the National Flood Insurance Program in accordance with section 552a of title 5, United States Code (commonly known as the ''Privacy Act of 1974'').

(B) CONTENTS.—The report submitted under subparagraph (A) shall include—

(i) an analysis and assessment of how releasing property-level policy and claims data for flood insurance coverage under the National Flood Insurance Program will aid policy holders and insurers to understand how the Administration determines actuarial premium rates and assesses flood risks; and

(ii) recommendations for protecting personal information in accordance with section 552a of title 5, United States Code (commonly known as the ''Privacy Act of 1974'').

SEC. 104. AFFORDABILITY STUDY AND REPORT.

Notwithstanding the deadline under section 100236(c) of the Biggert-Waters Flood Insurance Reform Act of 2012 (Public Law 112–141; 126 Stat. 957), not later than 2 years after the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator shall submit to the full Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs and the full Committee on Appropriations of the Senate and the full Committee on Financial Services and the full Committee on Appropriations of the House of Representatives the affordability study and report required under such section.

SEC. 105. AFFORDABILITY STUDY FUNDING.

Section 100236(d) of the Biggert-Waters Flood Insurance Reform Act of 2012 (Public Law 112–141; 126 Stat. 957) is amended by striking ''not more than $750,000'' and inserting ''such amounts as may be necessary''.

SEC. 106. FUNDS TO REIMBURSE HOMEOWNERS FOR SUCCESSFUL MAP APPEALS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 1363(f) of the National Flood Insurance Act of 1968 (42 U.S.C. 4104(f)) is amended—

(1) in the first sentence, by inserting after ''as the case may be,'' the following: ''or, in the case of an appeal that is resolved by submission of conflicting data to the Scientific Resolution Panel provided for in section 1363A, the community,''; and

(2) by striking the second sentence and inserting the following: ''The Administrator may use such amounts from the National Flood Insurance Fund established under section 1310 as may be necessary to carry out this subsection.''.

(b) CONFORMING AMENDMENT.—Section 1310(a) of the National Flood Insurance Act of 1968 (42 U.S.C. 4017(a)) is amended—

(1) in paragraph (6), by striking ''and'' at the end;

(2) in paragraph (7), by striking the period at the end and inserting ''; and''; and

(3) by adding at the end the following:

''(8) for carrying out section 1363(f).''.

SEC. 107. FLOOD PROTECTION SYSTEMS.

(a) ADEQUATE PROGRESS ON CONSTRUCTION OF FLOOD PROTECTION SYSTEMS.—Section 1307(e) of the National Flood Insurance Act of 1968 (42 U.S.C. 4014(e)) is amended—

(1) in the first sentence, by inserting ''or reconstruction'' after ''construction'';

(2) by striking the second sentence and inserting the following: ''The Administrator shall find that adequate progress on the construction or reconstruction of a flood protection system, based on the present value of the completed flood protection system, has been made only if (1) 100 percent of the cost of the system has been authorized, (2) at least 60 percent of the cost of the system has been appropriated, (3) at least 50 percent of the cost of the system has been expended, and (4) the system is at least 50 percent completed.''; and

(3) by adding at the end the following: ''Notwithstanding any other provision of law, in determining whether a community has made adequate progress on the construction, reconstruction, or improvement of a flood protection system, the Administrator shall consider all sources of funding, including Federal, State, and local funds.''.

(b) COMMUNITIES RESTORING DISACCREDITED FLOOD PROTECTION SYSTEMS.—Section 1307(f) of the National Flood Insurance Act of 1968 (42 U.S.C. 4014(f)) is amended by striking the first sentence and inserting the following: ''Notwithstanding any other provision of law, this subsection shall apply to riverine and coastal levees that are located in a community which has been determined by the Administrator of the Federal Emergency Management Agency to be in the process of restoring flood protection afforded by a flood protection system that had been previously accredited on a Flood Insurance Rate Map as providing 100-year frequency flood protection but no longer does so, and shall apply without regard to the level of Federal funding of or participation in the construction, reconstruction, or improvement of the flood protection system.''.

SEC. 108. TREATMENT OF FLOODPROOFED RESIDENTIAL BASEMENTS.

In implementing section 1308(h) of the National Flood Insurance Act of 1968 (42 U.S.C. 4015(h)), the Administrator shall rate a covered structure using the elevation difference between the floodproofed elevation of the covered structure and the adjusted base flood elevation of the covered structure.

SEC. 109. DESIGNATION OF FLOOD INSURANCE ADVOCATE.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Administrator shall designate a Flood Insurance Advocate to advocate for the fair treatment of policy holders under the National Flood Insurance Program and property owners in the mapping of flood hazards, the identification of risks from flood, and the implementation of measures to minimize the risk of flood.

(b) DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES.—The duties and responsibilities of the Flood Insurance Advocate designated under subsection (a) shall be to—

(1) educate property owners and policyholders under the National Flood Insurance Program on—

(A) individual flood risks;

(B) flood mitigation;

(C) measures to reduce flood insurance rates through effective mitigation; and

(D) the flood insurance rate map review and amendment process;

(2) assist policy holders under the National Flood Insurance Program and property owners to understand the procedural requirements related to appealing preliminary flood insurance rate maps and implementing measures to mitigate evolving flood risks;

(3) assist in the development of regional capacity to respond to individual constituent concerns about flood insurance rate map amendments and revisions;

(4) coordinate outreach and education with local officials and community leaders in areas impacted by proposed flood insurance rate map amendments and revisions; and

(5) aid potential policy holders under the National Flood Insurance Program in obtaining and verifying accurate and reliable flood insurance rate information when purchasing or renewing a flood insurance policy.

(c) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There are authorized to be appropriated for each fiscal year such sums as may be necessary to carry out the duties and responsibilities of the Flood Insurance Advocate.

SEC. 110. EXCEPTIONS TO ESCROW REQUIREMENT FOR FLOOD INSURANCE PAYMENTS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 102(d)(1) of the Flood Disaster Protection Act of 1973 (42 U.S.C. 4012a(d)(1)) is amended—

(1) in subparagraph (A), in the second sentence, by striking ''subparagraph (C)'' and inserting ''subparagraph (B)''; and

(2) in subparagraph (B)—

(A) in clause (ii), by redesignating subclauses (I) and (II) as items (aa) and (bb), respectively, and adjusting the margins accordingly;

(B) by redesignating clauses (i) and (ii) as subclauses (I) and (II), respectively, and adjusting the margins accordingly;

(C) in the matter preceding subclause (I), as redesignated by subparagraph (B), by striking ''(A) or (B), if—'' and inserting the following: ''(A)—

''(i) if—'';

(D) by striking the period at the end and inserting ''; or''; and

(E) by adding at the end the following

''(ii) in the case of a loan that—

''(I) is in a junior or subordinate position to a senior lien secured by the same residential improved real estate or mobile home for which flood insurance is being provided at the time of the origination of the loan;

''(II) is secured by residential improved real estate or a mobile home that is part of a condominium, cooperative, or other project development, if the residential improved real estate or mobile home is covered by a flood insurance policy that—

''(aa) meets the requirements that the regulated lending institution is required to enforce under subsection (b)(1);

''(bb) is provided by the condominium association, cooperative, homeowners association, or other applicable group; and

''(cc) the premium for which is paid by the condominium association, cooperative, homeowners association, or other applicable group as a common expense;

''(III) is secured by residential improved real estate or a mobile home that is used as collateral for a business purpose;

''(IV) is a home equity line of credit;

''(V) is a nonperforming loan; or

''(VI) has a term of not longer than 12 months.''.

(b) APPLICABILITY.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—

(A) REQUIRED APPLICATION.—The amendments to section 102(d)(1) of the Flood Disaster Protection Act of 1973 (42 U.S.C. 4012a(d)(1)) made by section 100209(a) of the Biggert-Waters Flood Insurance Reform Act of 2012 (Public Law 112–141; 126 Stat. 920) and by subsection (a) of this section shall apply to any loan that is originated, refinanced, increased, extended, or renewed on or after January 1, 2016.

(B) OPTIONAL APPLICATION.—

(i) DEFINITIONS.—In this subparagraph—

(I) the terms ''Federal entity for lending regulation'', ''improved real estate'', ''regulated lending institution'', and ''servicer'' have the meanings given the terms in section 3 of the Flood Disaster Protection Act of 1973 (42 U.S.C. 4003);

(II) the term ''outstanding loan'' means a loan that—

(aa) is outstanding as of January 1, 2016;

(bb) is not subject to the requirement to escrow premiums and fees for flood insurance under section 102(d)(1) of the Flood Disaster Protection Act of 1973 (42 U.S.C. 4012a(d)(1)) as in effect on July 5, 2012; and

(cc) would, if the loan had been originated, refinanced, increased, extended, or renewed on or after January 1, 2016, be subject to the requirements under section 102(d)(1)(A) of the Flood Disaster Protection Act of 1973, as amended; and

(III) the term ''section 102(d)(1)(A) of the Flood Disaster Protection Act of 1973, as amended'' means section 102(d)(1)(A) of the Flood Disaster Protection Act of 1973 (42 U.S.C. 4012a(d)(1)(A)), as amended by—

(aa) section 100209(a) of the Biggert-Waters Flood Insurance Reform Act of 2012 (Public Law 112–141; 126 Stat. 920); and

(bb) subsection (a) of this section.

(ii) OPTION TO ESCROW FLOOD INSURANCE PAYMENTS.—Each Federal entity for lending regulation (after consultation and coordination with the Federal Financial Institutions Examination Council) shall, by regulation, direct that each regulated lending institution or servicer of an outstanding loan shall offer and make available to a borrower the option to have the borrower's payment of premiums and fees for flood insurance under the National Flood Insurance Act of 1968 (42 U.S.C. 4001 et seq.), including the escrow of such payments, be treated in the same manner provided under section 102(d)(1)(A) of the Flood Disaster Protection Act of 1973, as amended.

(2) REPEAL OF 2-YEAR DELAY ON APPLICABILITY.—Subsection (b) of section 100209 of the Biggert-Waters Flood Insurance Reform Act of 2012 (Public Law 112–141; 126 Stat. 920) is repealed.

(3) RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.—Nothing in this section or the amendments made by this section shall be construed to supersede, during the period beginning on July 6, 2012 and ending on December 31, 2015, the requirements under section 102(d)(1) of the Flood Disaster Protection Act of 1973 (42 U.S.C. 4012a(d)(1)), as in effect on July 5, 2012.

SEC. 111. MONTHLY INSTALLMENT PAYMENTS FOR PREMIUMS.

Section 1308(g) of the National Flood Insurance Act of 1968 (42 U.S.C. 4015(g)) is amended by striking ''either annually or in more frequent installments'' and inserting ''annually, monthly, or in other installments that are more frequent than annually''.

SEC. 112. ACCOUNTING FOR FLOOD MITIGATION ACTIVITIES IN ESTIMATES OF PREMIUM RATES.

Section 1307(a)(1) of the National Flood Insurance Act of 1968 (42 U.S.C. 4014(a)(1)) is amended by amending subparagraph (A) to read as follows:

''(A) based on consideration of—

''(i) the risk involved and accepted actuarial principles; and

''(ii) the flood mitigation activities that an owner or lessee has undertaken on a property, including differences in the risk involved due to land use measures, floodproofing, flood forecasting, and similar measures,''.

SEC. 113. HOME IMPROVEMENT FAIRNESS.

Section 1307(a)(2)(E)(ii) of the National Flood Insurance Act of 1968 (42 U.S.C. 4014(a)(2)(E)(ii)) is amended by striking ''30 percent'' and inserting ''50 percent''.

SEC. 114. STUDY OF VOLUNTARY COMMUNITY-BASED FLOOD INSURANCE OPTIONS.

(a) STUDY.—

(1) STUDY REQUIRED.—The Administrator shall conduct a study to assess options, methods, and strategies for making available voluntary community-based flood insurance policies through the National Flood Insurance Program.

(2) CONSIDERATIONS.—The study conducted under paragraph (1) shall—

(A) take into consideration and analyze how voluntary community-based flood insurance policies—

(i) would affect communities having varying economic bases, geographic locations, flood hazard characteristics or classifications, and flood management approaches; and

(ii) could satisfy the applicable requirements under section 102 of the Flood Disaster Protection Act of 1973 (42 U.S.C. 4012a); and

(B) evaluate the advisability of making available voluntary community-based flood insurance policies to communities, subdivisions of communities, and areas of residual risk.

(3) CONSULTATION.—In conducting the study required under paragraph (1), the Administrator may consult with the Comptroller General of the United States, as the Administrator determines is appropriate.

(b) REPORT BY THE ADMINISTRATOR.—

(1) REPORT REQUIRED.—Not later than 18 months after the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator shall submit to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on Financial Services of the House of Representatives a report that contains the results and conclusions of the study conducted under subsection (a).

(2) CONTENTS.—The report submitted under paragraph (1) shall include recommendations for—

(A) the best manner to incorporate voluntary community-based flood insurance policies into the National Flood Insurance Program; and

(B) a strategy to implement voluntary community-based flood insurance policies that would encourage communities to undertake flood mitigation activities, including the construction, reconstruction, or improvement of levees, dams, or other flood control structures.

(c) REPORT BY COMPTROLLER GENERAL.—Not later than 6 months after the date on which the Administrator submits the report required under subsection (b), the Comptroller General of the United States shall—

(1) review the report submitted by the Administrator; and

(2) submit to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on Financial Services of the House of Representatives a report that contains—

(A) an analysis of the report submitted by the Administrator;

(B) any comments or recommendations of the Comptroller General relating to the report submitted by the Administrator; and

(C) any other recommendations of the Comptroller General relating to community-based flood insurance policies.

SEC. 115. EXEMPTION FROM FEES FOR CERTAIN MAP CHANGE REQUESTS.

Notwithstanding any other provision of law, a requester shall be exempt from submitting a review or processing fee for a request for a flood insurance rate map change based on a habitat restoration project that is funded in whole or in part with Federal or State funds, including dam removal, culvert redesign or installation, or the installation of fish passage.

SEC. 116. FLOOD MITIGATION METHODS FOR URBAN BUILDINGS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator shall issue guidelines for property owners that—

(1) provide alternative methods of mitigation, other than building elevation, to reduce flood risk to urban residential buildings that cannot be elevated due to their structural characteristics, including—

(A) types of building materials; and

(B) types of floodproofing; and

(2) inform property owners about how the implementation of mitigation methods described in paragraph (1) may affect risk premium rates for flood insurance coverage under the National Flood Insurance Program.

(b) CALCULATION OF RISK PREMIUM RATES.—In calculating the risk premium rate charged for flood insurance for a property under section 1308 of the National Flood Insurance Act of 1968 (42 U.S.C. 4015), the Administrator shall take into account the implementation of any mitigation method identified by the Administrator in the guidance issued under subsection (a) of this section.

TITLE II—NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REGISTERED AGENTS AND BROKERS

SEC. 201. SHORT TITLE.

This title may be cited as the ''National Association of Registered Agents and Brokers Reform Act of 2014''.

SEC. 202. REESTABLISHMENT OF THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REGISTERED AGENTS AND BROKERS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Subtitle C of title III of the Gramm-Leach-Bliley Act (15 U.S.C. 6751 et seq.) is amended to read as follows:

"Subtitle C—National Association of Registered Agents and Brokers

"SEC. 321. NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REGISTERED AGENTS AND BROKERS.

''(a) ESTABLISHMENT.—There is established the National Association of Registered Agents and Brokers (referred to in this subtitle as the Association).

''(b) STATUS.—The Association shall—

''(1) be a nonprofit corporation;

''(2) not be an agent or instrumentality of the Federal Government;

''(3) be an independent organization that may not be merged with or into any other private or public entity; and

''(4) except as otherwise provided in this subtitle, be subject to, and have all the powers conferred upon, a nonprofit corporation by the District of Columbia Nonprofit Corporation Act (D.C. Code, sec. 29–301.01 et seq.) or any successor thereto.

"SEC. 322. PURPOSE.

''The purpose of the Association shall be to provide a mechanism through which licensing, continuing education, and other nonresident insurance producer qualification requirements and conditions may be adopted and applied on a multi-state basis without affecting the laws, rules, and regulations, and preserving the rights of a State, pertaining to—

''(1) licensing, continuing education, and other qualification requirements of insurance producers that are not members of the Association;

''(2) resident or nonresident insurance producer appointment requirements;

''(3) supervising and disciplining resident and nonresident insurance producers;

''(4) establishing licensing fees for resident and nonresident insurance producers so that there is no loss of insurance producer licensing revenue to the State; and

''(5) prescribing and enforcing laws and regulations regulating the conduct of resident and nonresident insurance producers.

"SEC. 323. MEMBERSHIP.

''(a) ELIGIBILITY.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—Any insurance producer licensed in its home State shall, subject to paragraphs (2) and (4), be eligible to become a member of the Association.

''(2) INELIGIBILITY FOR SUSPENSION OR REVOCATION OF LICENSE.—Subject to paragraph (3), an insurance producer is not eligible to become a member of the Association if a State insurance regulator has suspended or revoked the insurance license of the insurance producer in that State.

''(3) RESUMPTION OF ELIGIBILITY.—Paragraph (2) shall cease to apply to any insurance producer if—

''(A) the State insurance regulator reissues or renews the license of the insurance producer in the State in which the license was suspended or revoked, or otherwise terminates or vacates the suspension or revocation; or

''(B) the suspension or revocation expires or is subsequently overturned by a court of competent jurisdiction.

''(4) CRIMINAL HISTORY RECORD CHECK REQUIRED.—

''(A) IN GENERAL.—An insurance producer who is an individual shall not be eligible to become a member of the Association unless the insurance producer has undergone a criminal history record check that complies with regulations prescribed by the Attorney General of the United States under subparagraph (K).

''(B) CRIMINAL HISTORY RECORD CHECK REQUESTED BY HOME STATE.—An insurance producer who is licensed in a State and who has undergone a criminal history record check during the 2-year period preceding the date of submission of an application to become a member of the Association, in compliance with a requirement to undergo such criminal history record check as a condition for such licensure in the State, shall be deemed to have undergone a criminal history record check for purposes of subparagraph (A).

''(C) CRIMINAL HISTORY RECORD CHECK REQUESTED BY ASSOCIATION.—

''(i) IN GENERAL.—The Association shall, upon request by an insurance producer licensed in a State, submit identification information obtained from the insurance producer, and a request for a criminal history record check of the insurance producer, to the Federal Bureau of Investigation.

''(ii) PROCEDURES.—The board of directors of the Association (referred to in this subtitle as the Board) shall prescribe procedures for obtaining and utilizing identification information and criminal history record information, including the establishment of reasonable fees required to perform a criminal history record check and appropriate safeguards for maintaining confidentiality and security of the information.

''(D) FORM OF REQUEST.—A submission under subparagraph (C)(i) shall include such identification information as is required by the Attorney General concerning the person about whom the criminal history record check is requested, and a statement signed by the person authorizing the Attorney General to provide the information to the Association and for the Association to receive the information.

''(E) PROVISION OF INFORMATION BY ATTORNEY GENERAL.—Upon receiving a submission under subparagraph (C)(i) from the Association, the Attorney General shall search all criminal history records of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, including records of the Criminal Justice Information Services Division of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, that the Attorney General determines appropriate for criminal history records corresponding to the identification information provided under subparagraph (D) and provide all criminal history record information included in the request to the Association.

''(F) LIMITATION ON PERMISSIBLE USES OF INFORMATION.—Any information provided to the Association under subparagraph (E) may only—

''(i) be used for purposes of determining compliance with membership criteria established by the Association;

''(ii) be disclosed to State insurance regulators, or Federal or State law enforcement agencies, in conformance with applicable law; or

''(iii) be disclosed, upon request, to the insurance producer to whom the criminal history record information relates.

''(G) PENALTY FOR IMPROPER USE OR DISCLOSURE.—Whoever knowingly uses any information provided under subparagraph (E) for a purpose not authorized in subparagraph (F), or discloses any such information to anyone not authorized to receive it, shall be fined under title 18, United States Code, imprisoned for not more than 2 years, or both.

''(H) RELIANCE ON INFORMATION.—Neither the Association nor any of its Board members, officers, or employees shall be liable in any action for using information provided under subparagraph (E) as permitted under subparagraph (F) in good faith and in reasonable reliance on its accuracy.

''(I) FEES.—The Attorney General may charge a reasonable fee for conducting the search and providing the information under subparagraph (E), and any such fee shall be collected and remitted by the Association to the Attorney General.

''(J) RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.—Nothing in this paragraph shall be construed as—

''(i) requiring a State insurance regulator to perform criminal history record checks under this section; or

''(ii) limiting any other authority that allows access to criminal history records.

''(K) REGULATIONS.—The Attorney General shall prescribe regulations to carry out this paragraph, which shall include—

''(i) appropriate protections for ensuring the confidentiality of information provided under subparagraph (E); and

''(ii) procedures providing a reasonable opportunity for an insurance producer to contest the accuracy of information regarding the insurance producer provided under subparagraph (E).

''(L) INELIGIBILITY FOR MEMBERSHIP.—

''(i) IN GENERAL.—The Association may, under reasonably consistently applied standards, deny membership to an insurance producer on the basis of criminal history record information provided under subparagraph (E), or where the insurance producer has been subject to disciplinary action, as described in paragraph (2).

''(ii) RIGHTS OF APPLICANTS DENIED MEMBERSHIP.—The Association shall notify any insurance producer who is denied membership on the basis of criminal history record information provided under subparagraph (E) of the right of the insurance producer to—

''(I) obtain a copy of all criminal history record information provided to the Association under subparagraph (E) with respect to the insurance producer; and

''(II) challenge the denial of membership based on the accuracy and completeness of the information.

''(M) DEFINITION.—For purposes of this paragraph, the term criminal history record check means a national background check of criminal history records of the Federal Bureau of Investigation.

''(b) AUTHORITY TO ESTABLISH MEMBERSHIP CRITERIA.—The Association may establish membership criteria that bear a reasonable relationship to the purposes for which the Association was established.

''(c) ESTABLISHMENT OF CLASSES AND CATEGORIES OF MEMBERSHIP.—

''(1) CLASSES OF MEMBERSHIP.—The Association may establish separate classes of membership, with separate criteria, if the Association reasonably determines that performance of different duties requires different levels of education, training, experience, or other qualifications.

''(2) BUSINESS ENTITIES.—The Association shall establish a class of membership and membership criteria for business entities. A business entity that applies for membership shall be required to designate an individual Association member responsible for the compliance of the business entity with Association standards and the insurance laws, rules, and regulations of any State in which the business entity seeks to do business on the basis of Association membership.

''(3) CATEGORIES.—

''(A) SEPARATE CATEGORIES FOR INSURANCE PRODUCERS PERMITTED.—The Association may establish separate categories of membership for insurance producers and for other persons or entities within each class, based on the types of licensing categories that exist under State laws.

''(B) SEPARATE TREATMENT FOR DEPOSITORY INSTITUTIONS PROHIBITED.—No special categories of membership, and no distinct membership criteria, shall be established for members that are depository institutions or for employees, agents, or affiliates of depository institutions.

''(d) MEMBERSHIP CRITERIA.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—The Association may establish criteria for membership which shall include standards for personal qualifications, education, training, and experience. The Association shall not establish criteria that unfairly limit the ability of a small insurance producer to become a member of the Association, including imposing discriminatory membership fees.

''(2) QUALIFICATIONS.—In establishing criteria under paragraph (1), the Association shall not adopt any qualification less protective to the public than that contained in the National Association of Insurance Commissioners (referred to in this subtitle as the NAIC) Producer Licensing Model Act in effect as of the date of enactment of the National Association of Registered Agents and Brokers Reform Act of 2014, and shall consider the highest levels of insurance producer qualifications established under the licensing laws of the States.

''(3) ASSISTANCE FROM STATES.—

''(A) IN GENERAL.—The Association may request a State to provide assistance in investigating and evaluating the eligibility of a prospective member for membership in the Association.

''(B) AUTHORIZATION OF INFORMATION SHARING.—A submission under subsection (a)(4)(C)(i) made by an insurance producer licensed in a State shall include a statement signed by the person about whom the assistance is requested authorizing—

''(i) the State to share information with the Association; and

''(ii) the Association to receive the information.

''(C) RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.—Subparagraph (A) shall not be construed as requiring or authorizing any State to adopt new or additional requirements concerning the licensing or evaluation of insurance producers.

''(4) DENIAL OF MEMBERSHIP.—The Association may, based on reasonably consistently applied standards, deny membership to any State-licensed insurance producer for failure to meet the membership criteria established by the Association.

''(e) EFFECT OF MEMBERSHIP.—

''(1) AUTHORITY OF ASSOCIATION MEMBERS.—Membership in the Association shall—

''(A) authorize an insurance producer to sell, solicit, or negotiate insurance in any State for which the member pays the licensing fee set by the State for any line or lines of insurance specified in the home State license of the insurance producer, and exercise all such incidental powers as shall be necessary to carry out such activities, including claims adjustments and settlement to the extent permissible under the laws of the State, risk management, employee benefits advice, retirement planning, and any other insurance-related consulting activities;

''(B) be the equivalent of a nonresident insurance producer license for purposes of authorizing the insurance producer to engage in the activities described in subparagraph (A) in any State where the member pays the licensing fee; and

''(C) be the equivalent of a nonresident insurance producer license for the purpose of subjecting an insurance producer to all laws, regulations, provisions or other action of any State concerning revocation, suspension, or other enforcement action related to the ability of a member to engage in any activity within the scope of authority granted under this subsection and to all State laws, regulations, provisions, and actions preserved under paragraph (5).

''(2) VIOLENT CRIME CONTROL AND LAW ENFORCEMENT ACT OF 1994.—Nothing in this subtitle shall be construed to alter, modify, or supercede any requirement established by section 1033 of title 18, United States Code.

''(3) AGENT FOR REMITTING FEES.—The Association shall act as an agent for any member for purposes of remitting licensing fees to any State pursuant to paragraph (1).

''(4) NOTIFICATION OF ACTION.—

''(A) IN GENERAL.—The Association shall notify the States (including State insurance regulators) and the NAIC when an insurance producer has satisfied the membership criteria of this section. The States (including State insurance regulators) shall have 10 business days after the date of the notification in order to provide the Association with evidence that the insurance producer does not satisfy the criteria for membership in the Association.

''(B) ONGOING DISCLOSURES REQUIRED.—On an ongoing basis, the Association shall disclose to the States (including State insurance regulators) and the NAIC a list of the States in which each member is authorized to operate. The Association shall immediately notify the States (including State insurance regulators) and the NAIC when a member is newly authorized to operate in one or more States, or is no longer authorized to operate in one or more States on the basis of Association membership.

''(5) PRESERVATION OF CONSUMER PROTECTION AND MARKET CONDUCT REGULATION.—

''(A) IN GENERAL.—No provision of this section shall be construed as altering or affecting the applicability or continuing effectiveness of any law, regulation, provision, or other action of any State, including those described in subparagraph (B), to the extent that the State law, regulation, provision, or other action is not inconsistent with the provisions of this subtitle related to market entry for nonresident insurance producers, and then only to the extent of the inconsistency.

''(B) PRESERVED REGULATIONS.—The laws, regulations, provisions, or other actions of any State referred to in subparagraph (A) include laws, regulations, provisions, or other actions that—

''(i) regulate market conduct, insurance producer conduct, or unfair trade practices;

''(ii) establish consumer protections; or

''(iii) require insurance producers to be appointed by a licensed or authorized insurer.

''(f) BIENNIAL RENEWAL.—Membership in the Association shall be renewed on a biennial basis.

''(g) CONTINUING EDUCATION.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—The Association shall establish, as a condition of membership, continuing education requirements which shall be comparable to the continuing education requirements under the licensing laws of a majority of the States.

''(2) STATE CONTINUING EDUCATION REQUIREMENTS.—A member may not be required to satisfy continuing education requirements imposed under the laws, regulations, provisions, or actions of any State other than the home State of the member.

''(3) RECIPROCITY.—The Association shall not require a member to satisfy continuing education requirements that are equivalent to any continuing education requirements of the home State of the member that have been satisfied by the member during the applicable licensing period.

''(4) LIMITATION ON THE ASSOCIATION.—The Association shall not directly or indirectly offer any continuing education courses for insurance producers.

''(h) PROBATION, SUSPENSION AND REVOCATION.—

''(1) DISCIPLINARY ACTION.—The Association may place an insurance producer that is a member of the Association on probation or suspend or revoke the membership of the insurance producer in the Association, or assess monetary fines or penalties, as the Association determines to be appropriate, if—

''(A) the insurance producer fails to meet the applicable membership criteria or other standards established by the Association;

''(B) the insurance producer has been subject to disciplinary action pursuant to a final adjudicatory proceeding under the jurisdiction of a State insurance regulator;

''(C) an insurance license held by the insurance producer has been suspended or revoked by a State insurance regulator; or

''(D) the insurance producer has been convicted of a crime that would have resulted in the denial of membership pursuant to subsection (a)(4)(L)(i) at the time of application, and the Association has received a copy of the final disposition from a court of competent jurisdiction.

''(2) VIOLATIONS OF ASSOCIATION STANDARDS.—The Association shall have the power to investigate alleged violations of Association standards.

''(3) REPORTING.—The Association shall immediately notify the States (including State insurance regulators) and the NAIC when the membership of an insurance producer has been placed on probation or has been suspended, revoked, or otherwise terminated, or when the Association has assessed monetary fines or penalties.

''(i) CONSUMER COMPLAINTS.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—The Association shall—

''(A) refer any complaint against a member of the Association from a consumer relating to alleged misconduct or violations of State insurance laws to the State insurance regulator where the consumer resides and, when appropriate, to any additional State insurance regulator, as determined by standards adopted by the Association; and

''(B) make any related records and information available to each State insurance regulator to whom the complaint is forwarded.

''(2) TELEPHONE AND OTHER ACCESS.—The Association shall maintain a toll-free number for purposes of this subsection and, as practicable, other alternative means of communication with consumers, such as an Internet webpage.

''(3) FINAL DISPOSITION OF INVESTIGATION.—State insurance regulators shall provide the Association with information regarding the final disposition of a complaint referred pursuant to paragraph (1)(A), but nothing shall be construed to compel a State to release confidential investigation reports or other information protected by State law to the Association.

''(j) INFORMATION SHARING.—The Association may—

''(1) share documents, materials, or other information, including confidential and privileged documents, with a State, Federal, or international governmental entity or with the NAIC or other appropriate entity referenced in paragraphs (3) and (4), provided that the recipient has the authority and agrees to maintain the confidentiality or privileged status of the document, material, or other information;

''(2) limit the sharing of information as required under this subtitle with the NAIC or any other non-governmental entity, in circumstances under which the Association determines that the sharing of such information is unnecessary to further the purposes of this subtitle;

''(3) establish a central clearinghouse, or utilize the NAIC or another appropriate entity, as determined by the Association, as a central clearinghouse, for use by the Association and the States (including State insurance regulators), through which members of the Association may disclose their intent to operate in 1 or more States and pay the licensing fees to the appropriate States; and

''(4) establish a database, or utilize the NAIC or another appropriate entity, as determined by the Association, as a database, for use by the Association and the States (including State insurance regulators) for the collection of regulatory information concerning the activities of insurance producers.

''(k) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The provisions of this section shall take effect on the later of—

''(1) the expiration of the 2-year period beginning on the date of enactment of the National Association of Registered Agents and Brokers Reform Act of 2014; and

''(2) the date of incorporation of the Association.

''SEC. 324. BOARD OF DIRECTORS.

''(a) ESTABLISHMENT.—There is established a board of directors of the Association, which shall have authority to govern and supervise all activities of the Association.

''(b) POWERS.—The Board shall have such of the powers and authority of the Association as may be specified in the bylaws of the Association.

''(c) COMPOSITION.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—The Board shall consist of 13 members who shall be appointed by the President, by and with the advice and consent of the Senate, in accordance with the procedures established under Senate Resolution 116 of the 112th Congress, of whom—

''(A) 8 shall be State insurance commissioners appointed in the manner provided in paragraph (2), 1 of whom shall be designated by the President to serve as the chairperson of the Board until the Board elects one such State insurance commissioner Board member to serve as the chairperson of the Board;

''(B) 3 shall have demonstrated expertise and experience with property and casualty insurance producer licensing; and

''(C) 2 shall have demonstrated expertise and experience with life or health insurance producer licensing.

''(2) STATE INSURANCE REGULATOR REPRESENTATIVES.—

''(A) RECOMMENDATIONS.—Before making any appointments pursuant to paragraph (1)(A), the President shall request a list of recommended candidates from the States through the NAIC, which shall not be binding on the President. If the NAIC fails to

submit a list of recommendations not later than 15 business days after the date of the request, the President may make the requisite appointments without considering the views of the NAIC.

''(B) POLITICAL AFFILIATION.—Not more than 4 Board members appointed under paragraph (1)(A) shall belong to the same political party.

''(C) FORMER STATE INSURANCE COMMISSIONERS.—

''(i) IN GENERAL.—If, after offering each currently serving State insurance commissioner an appointment to the Board, fewer than 8 State insurance commissioners have accepted appointment to the Board, the President may appoint the remaining State insurance commissioner Board members, as required under paragraph (1)(A), of the appropriate political party as required under subparagraph (B), from among individuals who are former State insurance commissioners.

''(ii) LIMITATION.—A former State insurance commissioner appointed as described in clause (i) may not be employed by or have any present direct or indirect financial interest in any insurer, insurance producer, or other entity in the insurance industry, other than direct or indirect ownership of, or beneficial interest in, an insurance policy or annuity contract written or sold by an insurer.

''(D) SERVICE THROUGH TERM.—If a Board member appointed under paragraph (1)(A) ceases to be a State insurance commissioner during the term of the Board member, the Board member shall cease to be a Board member.

''(3) PRIVATE SECTOR REPRESENTATIVES.—In making any appointment pursuant to subparagraphs (B) and (C) of paragraph (1), the President may seek recommendations for candidates from groups representing the category of individuals described, which shall not be binding on the President.

''(4) STATE INSURANCE COMMISSIONER DEFINED.—For purposes of this subsection, the term State insurance commissioner means a person who serves in the position in State government, or on the board, commission, or other body that is the primary insurance regulatory authority for the State.

''(d) TERMS.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided under paragraph (2), the term of service for each Board member shall be 2 years.

''(2) EXCEPTIONS.—

''(A) 1-YEAR TERMS.—The term of service shall be 1 year, as designated by the President at the time of the nomination of the subject Board members for—

''(i) 4 of the State insurance commissioner Board members initially appointed under paragraph (1)(A), of whom not more than 2 shall belong to the same political party;

''(ii) 1 of the Board members initially appointed under paragraph (1)(B); and

''(iii) 1 of the Board members initially appointed under paragraph (1)(C).

''(B) EXPIRATION OF TERM.—A Board member may continue to serve after the expiration of the term to which the Board member was appointed for the earlier of 2 years or until a successor is appointed.

''(C) MID-TERM APPOINTMENTS.—A Board member appointed to fill a vacancy occurring before the expiration of the term for which the predecessor of the Board member was appointed shall be appointed only for the remainder of that term.

''(3) SUCCESSIVE TERMS.—Board members may be reappointed to successive terms.

''(e) INITIAL APPOINTMENTS.—The appointment of initial Board members shall be made no later than 90 days after the date of enactment of the National Association of Registered Agents and Brokers Reform Act of 2014.

''(f) MEETINGS.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—The Board shall meet—

''(A) at the call of the chairperson;

''(B) as requested in writing to the chairperson by not fewer than 5 Board members; or

''(C) as otherwise provided by the bylaws of the Association.

''(2) QUORUM REQUIRED.—A majority of all Board members shall constitute a quorum.

''(3) VOTING.—Decisions of the Board shall require the approval of a majority of all Board members present at a meeting, a quorum being present.

''(4) INITIAL MEETING.—The Board shall hold its first meeting not later than 45 days after the date on which all initial Board members have been appointed.

''(g) RESTRICTION ON CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION.—Board members appointed pursuant to subparagraphs (B) and (C) of subsection (c)(1) shall not have access to confidential information received by the Association in connection with complaints, investigations, or disciplinary proceedings involving insurance producers.

''(h) ETHICS AND CONFLICTS OF INTEREST.—The Board shall issue and enforce an ethical conduct code to address permissible and prohibited activities of Board members and Association officers, employees, agents, or consultants. The code shall, at a minimum, include provisions that prohibit any Board member or Association officer, employee, agent or consultant from—

''(1) engaging in unethical conduct in the course of performing Association duties;

''(2) participating in the making or influencing the making of any Association decision, the outcome of which the Board member, officer, employee, agent, or consultant knows or had reason to know would have a reasonably foreseeable material financial effect, distinguishable from its effect on the public generally, on the person or a member of the immediate family of the person;

''(3) accepting any gift from any person or entity other than the Association that is given because of the position held by the person in the Association;

''(4) making political contributions to any person or entity on behalf of the Association; and

''(5) lobbying or paying a person to lobby on behalf of the Association.

''(i) COMPENSATION.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in paragraph (2), no Board member may receive any compensation from the Association or any other person or entity on account of Board membership.

''(2) TRAVEL EXPENSES AND PER DIEM.—Board members may be reimbursed only by the Association for travel expenses, including per diem in lieu of subsistence, at rates consistent with rates authorized for employees of Federal agencies under subchapter I of chapter 57 of title 5, United States Code, while away from home or regular places of business in performance of services for the Association.

''SEC. 325. BYLAWS, STANDARDS, AND DISCIPLINARY ACTIONS.

''(a) ADOPTION AND AMENDMENT OF BYLAWS AND STANDARDS.—

''(1) PROCEDURES.—The Association shall adopt procedures for the adoption of bylaws and standards that are similar to procedures under subchapter II of chapter 5 of title 5, United States Code (commonly known as the Administrative Procedure Act).

''(2) COPY REQUIRED TO BE FILED.—The Board shall submit to the President, through the Department of the Treasury, and the States (including State insurance regulators), and shall publish on the website of the Association, all proposed bylaws and standards of the Association, or any proposed amendment to the bylaws or standards of the Association, accompanied by a concise general statement of the basis and purpose of such proposal.

''(3) EFFECTIVE DATE.—Any proposed bylaw or standard of the Association, and any proposed amendment to the bylaws or standards of the Association, shall take effect, after notice under paragraph (2) and opportunity for public comment, on such date as the Association may designate, unless suspended under section 329(c).

''(4) RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.—Nothing in this section shall be construed to subject the Board or the Association to the requirements of subchapter II of chapter 5 of title 5, United States Code (commonly known as the Administrative Procedure Act).

''(b) DISCIPLINARY ACTION BY THE ASSOCIATION.—

''(1) SPECIFICATION OF CHARGES.—In any proceeding to determine whether membership shall be denied, suspended, revoked, or not renewed, or to determine whether a member of the Association should be placed on probation (referred to in this section as a disciplinary action) or whether to assess fines or monetary penalties, the Association shall bring specific charges, notify the member of the charges, give the member an opportunity to defend against the charges, and keep a record.

''(2) SUPPORTING STATEMENT.—A determination to take disciplinary action shall be supported by a statement setting forth—

''(A) any act or practice in which the member has been found to have been engaged;

''(B) the specific provision of this subtitle or standard of the Association that any such act or practice is deemed to violate; and

''(C) the sanction imposed and the reason for the sanction.

''(3) INELIGIBILITY OF PRIVATE SECTOR REPRESENTATIVES.—Board members appointed pursuant to section 324(c)(3) may not—

''(A) participate in any disciplinary action or be counted toward establishing a quorum during a disciplinary action; and

''(B) have access to confidential information concerning any disciplinary action.

''SEC. 326. POWERS.

''In addition to all the powers conferred upon a nonprofit corporation by the District of Columbia Nonprofit Corporation Act, the Association shall have the power to—

''(1) establish and collect such membership fees as the Association finds necessary to impose to cover the costs of its operations;

''(2) adopt, amend, and repeal bylaws, procedures, or standards governing the conduct of Association business and performance of its duties;

''(3) establish procedures for providing notice and opportunity for comment pursuant to section 325(a);

''(4) enter into and perform such agreements as necessary to carry out the duties of the Association;

''(5) hire employees, professionals, or specialists, and elect or appoint officers, and to fix their compensation, define their duties and give them appropriate authority to carry out the purposes of this subtitle, and determine their qualification;

''(6) establish personnel policies of the Association and programs relating to, among other things, conflicts of interest, rates of compensation, where applicable, and qualifications of personnel;

''(7) borrow money; and

''(8) secure funding for such amounts as the Association determines to be necessary and appropriate to organize and begin operations of the Association, which shall be treated as loans to be repaid by the Association with interest at market rate.

"SEC. 327. REPORT BY THE ASSOCIATION.

''(a) IN GENERAL.—As soon as practicable after the close of each fiscal year, the Association shall submit to the President, through the Department of the Treasury, and the States (including State insurance regulators), and shall publish on the website of the Association, a written report regarding the conduct of its business, and the exercise of the other rights and powers granted by this subtitle, during such fiscal year.

''(b) FINANCIAL STATEMENTS.—Each report submitted under subsection (a) with respect to any fiscal year shall include audited financial statements setting forth the financial position of the Association at the end of such fiscal year and the results of its operations (including the source and application of its funds) for such fiscal year.

"SEC. 328. LIABILITY OF THE ASSOCIATION AND THE BOARD MEMBERS, OFFICERS, AND EMPLOYEES OF THE ASSOCIATION.

''(a) IN GENERAL.—The Association shall not be deemed to be an insurer or insurance producer within the meaning of any State law, rule, regulation, or order regulating or taxing insurers, insurance producers, or other entities engaged in the business of insurance, including provisions imposing premium taxes, regulating insurer solvency or financial condition, establishing guaranty funds and levying assessments, or requiring claims settlement practices.

''(b) LIABILITY OF BOARD MEMBERS, OFFICERS, AND EMPLOYEES.—No Board member, officer, or employee of the Association shall be personally liable to any person for any action taken or omitted in good faith in any matter within the scope of their responsibilities in connection with the Association.

"SEC. 329. PRESIDENTIAL OVERSIGHT.

''(a) REMOVAL OF BOARD.—If the President determines that the Association is acting in a manner contrary to the interests of the public or the purposes of this subtitle or has failed to perform its duties under this subtitle, the President may remove the entire existing Board for the remainder of the term to which the Board members were appointed and appoint, in accordance with section 324 and with the advice and consent of the Senate, in accordance with the procedures established under Senate Resolution 116 of the 112th Congress, new Board members to fill the vacancies on the Board for the remainder of the terms.

''(b) REMOVAL OF BOARD MEMBER.—The President may remove a Board member only for neglect of duty or malfeasance in office.

''(c) SUSPENSION OF BYLAWS AND STANDARDS AND PROHIBITION OF ACTIONS.—Following notice to the Board, the President, or a person designated by the President for such purpose, may suspend the effectiveness of any bylaw or standard, or prohibit any action, of the Association that the President or the designee determines is contrary to the purposes of this subtitle.

"SEC. 330. RELATIONSHIP TO STATE LAW.

''(a) PREEMPTION OF STATE LAWS.—State laws, regulations, provisions, or other actions purporting to regulate insurance producers shall be preempted to the extent provided in subsection (b).

''(b) PROHIBITED ACTIONS.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—No State shall—

''(A) impede the activities of, take any action against, or apply any provision of law or regulation arbitrarily or discriminatorily to, any insurance producer because that insurance producer or any affiliate plans to become, has applied to become, or is a member of the Association;

''(B) impose any requirement upon a member of the Association that it pay fees different from those required to be paid to that State were it not a member of the Association; or

''(C) impose any continuing education requirements on any nonresident insurance producer that is a member of the Association.

''(2) STATES OTHER THAN A HOME STATE.—No State, other than the home State of a member of the Association, shall—

''(A) impose any licensing, personal or corporate qualifications, education, training, experience, residency, continuing education, or bonding requirement upon a member of the Association that is different from the criteria for membership in the Association or renewal of such membership;

''(B) impose any requirement upon a member of the Association that it be licensed, registered, or otherwise qualified to do business or remain in good standing in the State, including any requirement that the insurance producer register as a foreign company with the secretary of state or equivalent State official;

''(C) require that a member of the Association submit to a criminal history record check as a condition of doing business in the State; or

''(D) impose any licensing, registration, or appointment requirements upon a member of the Association, or require a member of the Association to be authorized to operate as an insurance producer, in order to sell, solicit, or negotiate insurance for commercial property and casualty risks to an insured with risks located in more than one State, if the member is licensed or otherwise authorized to operate in the State where the insured maintains its principal place of business and the contract of insurance insures risks located in that State.

''(3) PRESERVATION OF STATE DISCIPLINARY AUTHORITY.—Nothing in this section may be construed to prohibit a State from investigating and taking appropriate disciplinary action, including suspension or revocation of authority of an insurance producer to do business in a State, in accordance with State law and that is not inconsistent with the provisions of this section, against a member of the Association as a result of a complaint or for any alleged activity, regardless of whether the activity occurred before or after the insurance producer commenced doing business in the State pursuant to Association membership.

"SEC. 331. COORDINATION WITH FINANCIAL INDUSTRY REGULATORY AUTHORITY.

''The Association shall coordinate with the Financial Industry Regulatory Authority in order to ease any administrative burdens that fall on members of the Association that are subject to regulation by the Financial Industry Regulatory Authority, consistent with the requirements of this subtitle and the Federal securities laws.

"SEC. 332. RIGHT OF ACTION.

''(a) RIGHT OF ACTION.—Any person aggrieved by a decision or action of the Association may, after reasonably exhausting available avenues for resolution within the Association, commence a civil action in an appropriate United States district court, and obtain all appropriate relief.

''(b) ASSOCIATION INTERPRETATIONS.—In any action under subsection (a), the court shall give appropriate weight to the interpretation of the Association of its bylaws and standards and this subtitle.

"SEC. 333. FEDERAL FUNDING PROHIBITED.

''The Association may not receive, accept, or borrow any amounts from the Federal Government to pay for, or reimburse the Association for, the costs of establishing or operating the Association.

"SEC. 334. DEFINITIONS.

''For purposes of this subtitle, the following definitions shall apply:

''(1) BUSINESS ENTITY.—The term business entity means a corporation, association, partnership, limited liability company, limited liability partnership, or other legal entity.

''(2) DEPOSITORY INSTITUTION.—The term depository institution has the meaning as in section 3 of the Federal Deposit Insurance Act (12 U.S.C. 1813).

''(3) HOME STATE.—The term home State means the State in which the insurance producer maintains its principal place of residence or business and is licensed to act as an insurance producer.

''(4) INSURANCE.—The term insurance means any product, other than title insurance or bail bonds, defined or regulated as insurance by the appropriate State insurance regulatory authority.

''(5) INSURANCE PRODUCER.—The term insurance producer means any insurance agent or broker, excess or surplus lines broker or agent, insurance consultant, limited insurance representative, and any other individual or entity that sells, solicits, or negotiates policies of insurance or offers advice, counsel, opinions or services related to insurance.

''(6) INSURER.—The term insurer has the meaning as in section 313(e)(2)(B) of title 31, United States Code.

''(7) PRINCIPAL PLACE OF BUSINESS.—The term principal place of business means the State in which an insurance producer maintains the headquarters of the insurance producer and, in the case of a business entity, where high-level officers of the entity direct, control, and coordinate the business activities of the business entity.

''(8) PRINCIPAL PLACE OF RESIDENCE.—The term principal place of residence means the State in which an insurance producer resides for the greatest number of days during a calendar year.

''(9) STATE.—The term State includes any State, the District of Columbia, any territory of the United States, and Puerto Rico, Guam, American Samoa, the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands, the Virgin Islands, and the Northern Mariana Islands.

''(10) STATE LAW.—

''(A) IN GENERAL.—The term State law includes all laws, decisions, rules, regulations, or other State action having the effect of law, of any State.

''(B) LAWS APPLICABLE IN THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA.—A law of the United States applicable only to or within the District of Columbia shall be treated as a State law rather than a law of the United States.''.

(b) TECHNICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of contents for the Gramm-Leach-Bliley Act is amended by striking the items relating to subtitle C of title III and inserting the following new items:

''Subtitle C—National Association of Registered Agents and Brokers

''Sec. 321. National Association of Registered Agents and Brokers.
''Sec. 322. Purpose.
''Sec. 323. Membership.
''Sec. 324. Board of directors.
''Sec. 325. Bylaws, standards, and disciplinary actions.
''Sec. 326. Powers.
''Sec. 327. Report by the Association.
''Sec. 328. Liability of the Association and the Board members, officers, and employees of the Association.
''Sec. 329. Presidential oversight.
''Sec. 330. Relationship to State law.
''Sec. 331. Coordination with Financial Industry Regulatory Authority.
''Sec. 332. Right of action.
''Sec. 333. Federal funding prohibited.
''Sec. 334. Definitions.''.

Mr. COCHRAN. Madam President, I move to reconsider the vote.

Mr. CARDIN. I move to lay that motion upon the table.

The motion to lay upon the table was agreed to.

AGRICULTURAL ACT OF 2014—CONFERENCE REPORT—Continued

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

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

INCOME INEQUALITY

Mr. CARDIN. Madam President, on Tuesday evening, President Obama, in his State of the Union Address, made the point that America must be the land of opportunity for all. He acknowledged, quite frankly, that for many families in this country the American dream is just that, a dream.

Many families have lost hope that their children or grandchildren will be able to achieve the American dream. President Obama made the point that if we all work together, the outlook for this country is strong and that we can make not only the American dream something people can continue to believe but it can become a reality for more and more American families.

But he also expressed the reality of where we are. The facts indicate that intergenerational mobility, that is, for a child born into poverty, their ability to move up the economic ladder has not changed in the last several decades. The American dream has become just that for too many families.

Let me point out some of the income disparity we have seen grow in the United States. Some of this is very understandable. It is understandable that people get paid differently. Some people work a lot harder, some people come up with an incredibly ingenious way of doing something, the American way of developing new technologies, people are willing to take greater risks than others. Yes, the reward will be greater. We do expect and we do appreciate, we do look up to people who can be very successful in our economic system.

But what is not understandable is how we have seen a growth in the income disparity among Americans during good times and bad times. Between 1979 and 2007, the top 1 percent in income in America saw their income go up 275 percent, whereas the three middle quintiles—this is what we usually consider to be the middle class, those from 20 percent to 80 percent—saw their income go up only 40 percent. This is in a period of economic growth in this country from 1979. To see your income go up only 40 percent, whereas the wealthiest are going up close to 300 percent, should be of concern to people of this country.

As we all know, in 2007 we went through a recession. Since that recession, median income in this country has declined. It went down 31 percent during the recession. But for the wealthiest, it actually went up. It went up 31 percent. The median income went down for most Americans.

We have a problem. During good times, we are seeing the income of the wealthiest get larger, in bad times we see wealthy people protected, whereas middle-income families are doing worse. We even have what is known as the birth lottery. If you are born into poverty, we know you have a hard time getting out of poverty today. If you are in certain communities, it is even much more difficult.

So President Obama was right to concentrate on America as opportunity for all. How can we get a growing middle class in this country? What can we do to help everyone do better in our country? Many countries are doing much better than we are. This disparity strikes at the heart of who we are as a nation. We believe that if you work hard, you play according to the rules, you should be able to succeed in this country. For too many families, that is not the reality.

What can we do to make a difference? I know there has been a lot of talk as to what we can do to help in that regard, what we can do to make it better. It is very important to do that for the values of our country. It is important for the families who are affected. But it is also important for our economy.

So, yes, we need to increase opportunity for middle-income families so more people can live the American dream. We need to do that because that is what we stand for as a country. Those are our values. But we also need to do this for our economy. It is very interesting that the companies that are making money today are ready to invest in the growth of our economy. They need consumers. They need people who will buy the automobiles. They need people who will eat in the restaurants. They need people who will go on vacations. They need people who will buy the clothing in the stores. If they do not have the income to do it, they do not buy the products, our economy does not grow. So a growing middle class is critically important to our economy.

What steps can we take? First, we have already taken one very important step with the passage of the Affordable Care Act. The Affordable Care Act dealt with health care costs. We have seen a reduction in the rate of health care costs over the past couple of years. It is a major cost among American families. It has been growing and growing every year. We are now starting to see a slowdown in that. Why? Because we are dealing with health delivery. We are trying to make the health care system more efficient by looking at the total care of an individual rather than just looking at a specific episode.

We are trying to reduce readmissions. We are dealing with healthy lifestyles. The Affordable Care Act rewards all of those issues. We make quality affordable insurance available to all Americans.

Last year, nearly 2 million families had to go through bankruptcy in America because of health care costs. Last year it was estimated that 56 million American families struggled to pay their medical bills. So this is an issue we need to look at from the point of view of helping middle-income families.

Alan Krueger, the economist, observed:

> We helped the middle class and those struggling to get into the middle class by lowering the growth of health care costs, by preventing those with pre-existing conditions from being denied health insurance coverage, by creating exchanges for small businesses and lower income families to obtain health insurance at competitive rates, and by providing tax subsidies to small businesses and lower income workers to purchase insurance.

The point Mr. Krueger was making is when we eliminate preexisting conditions, when we have health exchanges that allow individuals and small businesses to be able to get competitive rates, we are helping with middle-income growth in America.

There is a lot more we need to do in addition to the health care problems we have in this country. The President mentioned during his State of the Union Address that Americans need a pay raise. I could not agree with him more. In 1968—that was 46 years ago—the minimum wage in this country was set at $1.60 per hour. If you adjust that for inflation, the minimum wage would be $10.77. The minimum wage in America is not $10.77, it is $7.25 per hour. The tipped employee minimum wage is $2.13. For a full-time worker at the minimum wage, $7.25 per hour wage, they would be making a little over $15,000 a year. You cannot support your family on $15,000 a year.

The National Low Income Housing Coalition has done a study. There is not a single State in the Union where you can afford affordable housing. They defined that as a two-bedroom housing unit on the rental market. There is not a single State in the Nation where the $15,000-a-year income allows you to be able to afford that housing for your family.

The American dream is on life support. We need to do more about that. One thing we can easily do in this Congress this year is raise the minimum wage to $10.10 an hour.

We also need to adjust it for inflation. What does that mean? We have only adjusted minimum wages maybe three times in the last 30-some years. We need to have the minimum wage keep up with inflation. That way we do not have to deal with abrupt increases. We will have gentle increases, which I think is better for our economy to start off with, but it also keeps the minimum wage at where we want to set it. It does not erode the year after we pass it.

I think that makes sense. Let me dispel some of the myths about the minimum wage.

I hear frequently: Well, we are only taking about teenagers or those in their early twenties, it is their first job, and it is not so serious.

Let's look at the facts. The average age of a person earning minimum wage is 35. The median age is 31; 36 percent are over 40 years of age, 40 years of age or older; 56 percent are women—now only 56 percent of our workforce is women, but at minimum wage it is much more likely to be a woman than a man earning minimum wage; 28 percent of people who are earning the minimum wage have children. These are families trying to live on minimum wage.

Increasing the minimum wage will help to grow the middle class. It will help our economy. A $10.10 per hour minimum wage will generate about $34 billion in wages into our economy, $34 billion. Do you know what that means for the local businesses that are there? Do you know what that means for our economy? I know our economy is on the right path, but we have to help it along. We don't have enough jobs in America, and $35 billion will allow that local supermarket or that restaurant or that business owner to hire some more people, creating more jobs, helping our economy continue to grow.

People who work full time shouldn't live in poverty. Today, with the current minimum wage, and even with the tax credits we have available, most individuals will live in poverty. That is unacceptable. At $10.10 per hour, we will be above the poverty line with the tax credits.

That is what we should do. If we play according to the rules, we should be able to succeed; work 40 hours a week, we shouldn't have to live in poverty, not in the United States of America.

Americans understand this. Polls have shown over and over that the overwhelming majority of Americans support a reasonable adjustment in the minimum wage. The Gallup poll found that 76 percent of Americans believe Congress should pass an increase in the minimum wage. President Obama has already taken action, and I applaud him for that. He is going to be signing an executive order. So those people who are Federal workers, from a contractor, Federal contract worker, someone who is getting money from the Federal Government and hires people, they are going to have to pay the minimum of a $10.10 minimum wage. We should do the same for all workers in this country, and we have it in our power to do it.

There are a lot of other things the President mentioned. There are many other issues that I think we need to deal with for our agenda for a growing middle class. We clearly need to do a much better job in education. Education is the key to opportunity in America. It truly does open doors. We want to open up jobs, but we need people who are trained to be competitive for these jobs, particularly in a global economy. We need people trained.

The President is right to say it starts at a very early age, pre-K. In the pre-K through 12, we have to insist on quality education. We have some great schools in America, but not all children have access to those good schools. We need to do a better job at educating our children in all fields—all fields. STEM is very important, but so are the humanities, so are the arts. We have to do a better job in our pre-K through 12. In higher education, we have to make it much more affordable.

How do we expect to get a growing middle class when so many families are looking at tens of thousands of dollars of educational bills but they don't have any idea of how they are going to be able to pay for it—or our young workers saddled with these large debts affecting what career they are going to go into.

We have to invest in quality education but also affordable higher education. That is why it is important for us to reauthorize the Higher Education Act, to demand that there be value given for the money that we invest in higher education but that we also make it affordable for American families.

We need a modern infrastructure, and the President talked about that. Good jobs go to where there are good roads, good bridges, and good transit systems. Any morning today, try to get around this region; we know how important the transit system is in the Washington area.

In my own State I know we have three major transit projects that we need to get funded so people don't spend hours in gridlock every morning.

We need modern infrastructure in Maryland. In my own State of Maryland we have had tremendous problems with our water infrastructure. We have had roads flooded and homes damaged. We need to rebuild our water infrastructure and assure that people get clean, safe drinking water and that we take care of our water infrastructure in America.

We need a modern energy grid in this country, which is critically important for economic growth. As President Obama said, good jobs go to where there is good infrastructure, and we need to do a better job with the infrastructure in America.

We will have a chance again in this Congress. We haven't reauthorized the Surface Transportation Act. I hope a WRDA bill will get done with some of our WRDA projects. It is in conference today. Those are things we can do to help grow a middle class.

We have to invest in research. I think one of the lines that received the biggest applause in the President's State of the Union Address when he said: We have to restore the cuts we made that we should never have made to the basic research, the National Institutes of Health—headquartered in my State. They are located in every State, but they are headquartered in Maryland. The work they do is critically important to economic growth in our country. We have to invest in research.

We need a progressive tax structure. More and more economists are telling us that to have a growing middle class, we need the revenue. We are going to pay our bills—we don't want the debt—but we have to do it in a way that is fair and rewards the middle class.

Middle-class families don't take advantage of these tax breaks, these tax loopholes. At a minimum, we have to close those tax loopholes. I agree with the President in that regard.

The President also mentioned in the State of the Union Address that for growing a middle class we want to make sure they have a job, we want to make sure they are trained for that job, we want to make sure they are rewarded for that job with fair wages, and we also want to make sure they have a secure retirement. We are not doing enough to make sure Americans have a secure retirement.

We have to save more as a nation. The best way to save is through retirement savings. We can all come together to do more. This is not a partisan issue. We should be able to do this together.

Let me end on a quote from a former President, Theodore Roosevelt.

He said: ''This country will not be a permanently good place for any of us to live in unless we make it a reasonably good place for all of us to live in.''

I think that was what President Obama was talking about when he said ''opportunity for all.''

That is what this Nation stands for. We have all the reason to believe we can accomplish this for the people of America, but we need to work together with the President to work to implement commonsense changes so we can have a growing middle class in America.

With that, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Republican whip.

Mr. CORNYN. Madam President, earlier this month the Quinnipiac poll asked voters what the top priority they had for President Obama and Members of Congress in 2014: 18 percent said health care; 16 percent said jobs and unemployment; 15 percent said the economy in general. By comparison, only 1 percent of the voters said income inequality.

In other words, 99 percent of the voters in this Quinnipiac poll felt that income inequality should not be our top priority and that, rather, they would like for us to focus on not only the symptoms of the problems but the root causes: how do we get people back to work; how do we increase upward income mobility, letting people climb that ladder of success so they can pursue their own American dream.

Yet the most significant economic proposal President Obama mentioned in his State of the Union was aimed not at fixing our health care system, creating jobs or boosting growth but, rather, at this idea of reducing income inequality. The American people are pretty darn smart, and they understand that we need to grow the size of the pie, not only cut up the pie into different pieces.

The best way to do that is by guaranteeing that people have the opportunity to pursue their dreams, not some socialistic notion of let's slice up the pie in Washington, DC. No one does better under that kind of system.

But I also mentioned the President's—apparently—signature proposal for addressing income inequality; that is, by raising the minimum wage. I heard my friend from Maryland talking about the minimum wage as if Washington can wave a magic wand and say: You, Mr. Employer, you, Madam Employer, are now going to start paying your employees 40 percent more than you did yesterday because the big bad Federal Government orders you to do so.

They act as if that would have no other consequences or costs.

As I mentioned yesterday, there are studies that have been done that indicate that if we raise the minimum wage to $10.10, for which the President has argued, it could well dislocate as many as several hundred thousand people from their existing jobs.

Let's think about this for a minute. A small employer has a business—let's say they have a fast food restaurant; I have hundreds of them, maybe thousands of them in my State—and the employer is worried about bringing money in the front door from selling their product, selling the food at their fast food restaurant, they know they are going to have certain expenses. Some of that is the materials or food they put together. Some of it is their overhead such as electricity and energy, but a significant part of that is going to be the cost of labor, paying people to work there.

If we automatically tell that small employer, that fast food restaurant, instead of $7 an hour, they now have to pay 40 percent more, what is that going to do to their ability to not only hire and grow their business but to maintain their current level of employment?

Perhaps there is a reason the President has counterintuitively decided to come up with some sort of feel good quick patch such as the minimum wage, which would actually make things worse. Perhaps he has decided to focus on this because maybe he is feeling a little bit guilty about his record over the past 4 to 5 years.

According to the New York Times—hardly a bastion of conservative propaganda—the trend of rising inequality ''appears to have accelerated during the Obama administration.''

The President—and I will get to this in a moment—appeared to concede that much in his State of the Union speech. In fact, one measure of the income gap suggests the inequality of wages has increased four times faster under President Obama than it did under the 43rd President of the United States, George W. Bush. The best thing we could do to support upward mobility is not to address the symptom of lower wages but to address the root cause, expand the economy, jobs, and to give people the tools they need to qualify for good, high-paying jobs for which they don't have the job skills currently.

We know a lot of our community colleges, such as the one I visited last week in Houston, San Jacinto College, does a very good job of training people for the skills they need in order to qualify for good, high-paying jobs. That is where we ought to focus our government, not by the Federal Government trying to fix prices when it comes to wages and actually end up making things worse.

Unfortunately, the President seems incapable of embracing an economic strategy that doesn't involve more government, particularly more government spending and more government control over the private sector. My constituents in Texas tell me one reason they are feeling uncertain about the future and the economy, particularly if they are a business owner, is they don't know what kind of new taxes, they don't know what kind of new regulation, and they don't know what financial burden, such as ObamaCare, will be thrust down on them that will totally change their business model and cause them to go bankrupt—perhaps because they hadn't counted on what the Federal Government might do to them, as opposed to the market.

But we have tried the President's approach: big government, spending, stimulus spending, and the like. That is a big reason why we are suffering through the slowest economic recovery since the Great Depression and the highest and longest period of high unemployment since that same time.

Even when the President seems to be supporting a fresh approach, he is actually selling old ideas in a new package. I remember the President talking, for example, about tax reform. He called for abolishing loopholes in the Tax Code and simultaneously lowering the marginal rates. That sounds pretty good. I would support that, and I believe we could get strong bipartisan support for that kind of tax reform—lower the rates, cut out a lot of the underbrush, the tax expenditures.

They are much like the President's own bipartisan fiscal and debt commission, the Simpson-Bowles commission, recommended in December of 2010. But what did the President do when his own bipartisan fiscal commission reported to him a bipartisan plan to deal with the debt and to get the economy moving again? He ignored it. He walked away from it.

Unfortunately, the President, when he talks about tax reform, is actually talking about a way to raise taxes, to raise revenue. This is what I mean by that. He talks about tax reform as a vehicle for a tax increase, even though he has already raised the taxes of hardworking American families by $1.7 trillion while he has been President. But the American people are plenty smart and they can figure out if the President is going to eliminate their deductions and tax credits and the like that he is going to have to bring down their rate or else it will actually be a tax increase.

There is another good reason why we need to do the kind of tax reform I am talking about, and that occasionally the President talks about when he is talking about progrowth tax reform, and that is to make it revenue neutral, to bring down the rates, which will encourage people to invest and create jobs because they know the incentives will be there for them. They will be able to reap the fruits of their labor and of their risk. That is the kind of tax reform both political parties supported back in 1986 and the kind of tax reform we need to do again.

Sadly, the President and the majority leader have chosen to hijack this wonderful idea of tax reform while demanding another $1 trillion tax increase. Meanwhile, the President wants to use the Tax Code to pick winners and losers by discriminating against certain industries and increasing government subsidies to others.

I heard him talk about the oil and gas industry again. This is actually one of the brightest sectors of the economy. But the President wants to take the goose that laid the golden egg and burden it with additional regulations and taxes.

Truth be known, 80 percent of the tax benefits that flow to the energy sector flow to the so-called green energy sector—many of which I think are important—but we have to be realistic. We are actually writing them a check as opposed to the millions and millions—and literally hundreds of millions of dollars—of tax revenue generated from the oil and gas industry.

If there is one sector of the energy economy that is creating more jobs and opportunity and provides more chance for us to reduce our imports from dangerous parts of the world, it is our domestic energy sector. But the President wants to raise their taxes.

The President acknowledged on Tuesday night that what has happened during the 5-year term of his Presidency is that average wages have barely budged, inequality has deepened, and upward mobility has stalled. In other words, he agrees with the assessment of The New York Times. The problem is the solution to that condition would actually make things worse and not better.

So I actually agree with the President's assessment: During his 5 years as President, average wages have barely budged, inequality has deepened, and upward mobility has stalled. So why in the world would we want to add another $1 trillion tax burden on our economy and on the productive sector of our economy at a time when average wages have barely budged, inequality has deepened and upward mobility has stalled? Why in the world would we jeopardize the renaissance in American oil and gas production, which represents one of our few economic bright

spots? Why in the world would the President continue to reject the Keystone XL Pipeline from Canada, which would create thousands of well-paying jobs?

You will notice, by the way, Madam President, that President Obama said nothing—zero, zip, nada—about the Keystone XL Pipeline in his State of the Union. It really is just mind-boggling.

I would like to close by noting something the President said about health care, and this is another interesting aspect of his State of the Union speech. It was about 40 minutes into his speech before he even mentioned health care, when that is the big, looming, 800-pound gorilla in the room. People are anxious about this rollout of ObamaCare—first the Web site, then the cancellations, and then the sticker shock. People are worried about it. But the President waited 40 minutes into his State of the Union speech before even addressing it.

But here is what the President said to congressional Republicans. He said: If you have specific plans to cut costs, cover more people, and increase choice, tell America what you would do differently.

The problem is we have been telling the President since 2009, but he has refused to listen. He has refused to listen, and he is still refusing to listen.

The President went on to say that Republicans owe it to the American people to say what they are for, not just what they are against. I agree with the President, and we have, and continue to do so, but he continues not to listen.

Republicans have been offering health care alternatives for at least the last 5 years, most recently just earlier this week when three of my colleagues: Senator HATCH, Senator BURR, and Senator COBURN introduced a health reform blueprint that would reduce costs, expand quality insurance coverage, and improve patient access to doctors and hospitals. If President Obama wasn't aware of this, then perhaps he needs to spend a little more time outside the White House and the Democratic echo chamber and actually engage with Members of this side of the aisle in serious discussions. It is really easy to knock down a straw man, but only when it is not true. Given all the massive problems with the implementation of ObamaCare—not just with the Web site, not just with the cancellations, not just with the sticker shock or the fact you can't keep your doctors if you like them—and along with all of the massive problems still plaguing our economy and stalling wages, it is time for the President to show some real leadership. The way he could show that leadership is simply to get in a room with Members of the opposing party and to say: Let's figure this out.

This plan or this blueprint that Senators COBURN, BURR, and HATCH have introduced is just one of dozens of ideas that would actually bring down the cost of health insurance, which would make it more affordable, and that means more people could buy it and more people would get covered. But the difference between our approach and the President's approach under ObamaCare is that under ObamaCare the government gets to choose, and under our alternatives individuals and families get to choose what is best for them.

Madam President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Georgia.

Mr. CHAMBLISS. Madam President, I rise today to express my support for the Agricultural Act of 2014, which is commonly known as the farm bill. It has been quite a journey over the past 3 years, and the bill before us is the result of many long hours of hard work. This bill, I understand, will be on the floor come Monday, and hopefully we will have a vote on final passage on this bill on Tuesday.

I believe this bill achieves the promise of reform while tackling the single largest domestic issue facing our country: The debt and the deficit. I commend Chairwoman STABENOW, Chairman LUCAS, Ranking Members COCHRAN and PETERSON, as well as my fellow conferees for finishing what has been a very difficult and complex task.

It is my sincere hope the Senate will adopt this bipartisan conference report, a bill that reforms critical farm programs, strengthens the Nation's food security, protects the livelihood of our farmers and ranchers and preserves our efforts to remain good stewards of the environment.

The bill not only works to protect producers in a time of need, but it also serves as a safety net for the nutritional well-being of low-income Americans. Our nutrition assistance programs play a key role in ensuring that needy Americans have access to the food they need to lead healthy, productive lives.

We have worked to find savings while still ensuring those in greatest need are provided a helping hand. I commend the important reinvestments made in this bill to local food banks which provide support for so many of our communities.

Agricultural producers face a combination of challenges, such as unpredictable weather, variable input costs and market volatility that all combine to determine profit or loss in any given year. The 2008 farm bill provided a strong safety net for producers, and I believe the farm bill before us adheres to and honors the same commitment we made 5 years ago in that farm bill.

Notably, Congress has taken a fresh look at our commodity programs. Maintaining an effective safety net is critical to America's farmers, and the bill before us eliminates direct payments while enhancing options for farmers to manage their risk. We do so in a way that doesn't disadvantage one region over another, a formula I thought was lacking in versions of this bill in the last Congress. Since then, I have stressed to my colleagues the importance of producer choice, and I am truly pleased with the options that are built into this piece of legislation.

One part of this bill I am uniquely proud of concerns cotton, a crop that is particularly close to my heart and close to my home. More than any other part of this bill, the Upland cotton program represents fundamental reform. It meets our commitments in the World Trade Organization and will resolve our dispute with Brazil.

Moreover, our Nation's farmers and landowners deserve to have long-term conservation programs that have certainty to effectively and efficiently manage their land and resources for the years ahead. Locally led conservation is critical in supporting America's long-term environmental and economic stability. Not only do farm bill conservation programs play a key role in supporting clean air, clean water, and productive soils, they also help producers avoid unnecessary regulation and support our Nation's long-term economic and food security.

I also want to highlight language in this bill that links conservation compliance to crop insurance. My amendment led many leading agricultural, conservation, and crop insurance groups to come together and forge a compromise, ensuring crop insurance doesn't compromise our natural resources for generations to come. It also provides an opportunity for wildlife habitat to flourish and, thus, this farm bill is supported by virtually every hunting and fishing organization in the country.

While all of the regulatory issues I supported were not able to be included in the final conference report, I am happy that language was included to clarify forest roads are not point sources and are not subject to permit requirements under the Clean Water Act.

We must do what we can to protect producers, businesses, and all of our constituents from over-burdensome regulations coming out of EPA. After all, I am confident we have balanced the needs and interests between commodities and regions. Ultimately, the reason we are here is to represent those who work the land each and every day to ensure that Americans continue to have the highest quality agricultural products in the world.

Contrary to popular belief, food does not come from the grocery store. For every piece of fresh produce purchased, every pound of meat, every cotton t-shirt, and for every jar of peanut butter there is a farmer or a rancher somewhere in America working each and every day—and working very hard—to get it there. I hope that we never take for granted the ability to get safe quality food to stores across America for consumers to purchase.

This will be my fourth and final farm bill as a Member of Congress. As a former chairman and ranking member

of the Senate Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry, I am very proud of this bill and of all previous farm bills of which I have had the privilege to be a part.

As I have said, I have been around the country as a Member of Congress over the last 20 years. When I leave Congress, as I will at the end of this year, I want to make sure we have strong agricultural policies in place so that young people, such as my grandson John and my grandson Jay, if they make a decision to come back to the farm, will have an incentive to do so, and they will be able to provide a quality of life for their family very much like the quality of life they have today. Good agricultural policy will incentivize those young people to stay in rural America and on the farm, and I think this Farm bill does that.

There is no single piece of legislation that impacts as many people in my State as this one. I believe it is vitally important to the farmers, ranchers, and consumers of Georgia, as well as to those across this great Nation that we support this legislation.

In closing, let me say it has been my distinct honor to represent and work with the people, farmers, and ranchers of Georgia for 20 years. You provide the highest quality food, feed, and fiber in the world. Thanks for the opportunity to represent you in Congress and to be a member of what I think is an outstanding agricultural committee.

Madam President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Colorado.

Mr. BENNET. Madam President, before he leaves the floor, I wish to thank the Senator from Georgia through the Chair for all of his extraordinary leadership on the agriculture committee for so many years. As a new member of that committee, I saw firsthand how important he was to our getting to a compromise.

So through the Chair, I say thank you to the Senator for his great service, and particularly his great service to farmers and ranchers all across his home State and also across the great State of Colorado.

I too wish to speak today on this compromise bill, this bipartisan bill, this farm bill which has such a long history. In 2012 the Senate agriculture committee was the only committee in the entire Congress with a bipartisan deficit plan. It passed the Senate. The House didn't take it up. I think it was an enormous disservice to rural Americans that we didn't pass this bill 2 years ago, particularly when farmers and ranchers in my region are facing an unprecedented drought.

I distinctly remember being out during the summer of 2012 on the eastern plains and the western slope of Colorado right before the Presidential election. While this town was completely consumed with who was going to win that election, people in Colorado weren't talking about it at all. They were asking: Why in the world can't we pass the farm bill through the Congress and get it to the President's desk?

Now finally, after a series of extensions and half measures, we actually got to a conference committee. I think it may be the only conference committee in this Congress. This is how we used to do business around here, I am told. I was glad to be a member of the one conference committee in this Congress. We got to committee on a long-term bill.

I have stood on this floor before talking about the land of flickering lights. This town has become a place where the standard of success is keeping the lights on for 2 more weeks or 2 more months. Here we have an honest-to-goodness 5-year farm bill.

Agreed to by both Republicans and Democrats, it has now been passed by the House of Representatives, and next week we will have a chance to pass it here. Thanks to the tireless work of Chairwoman STABENOW, Ranking Member COCHRAN, and the other conferees, we now will have the chance to vote.

Our rural communities are demanding the certainty that comes with a long-term bill. Under the last farm bill—and history ought to be our guide here—our farmers and ranchers were remarkably productive. They delivered the strongest 5-year stretch of farm exports in the history of the United States of America. Now it is time to make some reforms to farm policy and to once again give rural America the stability it needs to provide food, fuel, and fiber to the Nation.

This bill reflects the values and process we want to see in other areas of the budget. We came together as Republicans and Democrats to identify priorities, to streamline duplication, to get rid of things we didn't need to do anymore, and to focus in the areas that were important—to break away from old, inefficient habits, to eliminate for the first time direct payments issued to farmers regardless of economic needs or market signals. That is a significant reform.

This bill prioritizes what is working for producers instead; namely, crop insurance, which is a large part of what keeps farmers and rural economies in business in this country, and that is why it is a priority.

Beyond crop insurance, another key highlight of this bill is the great tools it includes for livestock. It includes resources for much-needed livestock disaster programs that are critical to southeast Colorado, where ranchers are battling dry conditions we haven't seen since the dust bowl.

When I visited last August, producers who are facing stubbornly persistent drought and feed shortages told me that nearly 70 percent of their livestock had been liquidated or relocated from the region in just 2 years. That is part of a boom and bust cycle that comes with our livestock industry which makes it difficult to build for the future. This farm bill couldn't come sooner for Colorado's ranchers.

Beyond livestock disaster, there is a lot to support our ranching community in this bill. We have included a revamped conservation title—and I chair that subcommittee—which will keep our ranching lands in the West in their current state, rather than being divided for development.

The conference report also carries over important conservation title reforms from the Senate bill. Notably, it carries forward a Senate provision to ensure that recipients of government-supported crop insurance comply with basic conservation requirements. That measure was the result of a historic agreement between the commodity groups and our conservation groups. It is supported by a wide variety of people, from the Farm Bureau to the National Wildlife Federation.

This revamped conservation title is huge for rural America. It is huge for farming and ranching families looking to keep their land and agriculture. It is huge for sportsmen. It is huge for anyone who cares about the long-term health of our soil, our air, and our water. I thank again the groups who traditionally represent producers and the groups who traditionally represent the environmental community and conservationists and sportsmen for coming together on commonsense reforms. These conservation measures will help us improve the efficiency and production of agriculture and improve the quality of the environment in farm country.

We recognize that keeping these landscapes in their historical undeveloped state is an economic driver—for our State, anyway, and I suspect for many States—for tourism and for wildlife habitat.

As I have traveled the State of Colorado, farmers and ranchers are constantly talking to me about the importance of conservation and their commitment to be stewards of the land for the next generation. They highlighted in particular conservation easements which provide the Department of Agriculture assistance to help landowners voluntarily conserve the farming and ranching heritage of their land. I will spend a couple of minutes sharing a story I have told on this floor before about one of the many Coloradans who have benefited from the easement program.

This is a picture of the Music Meadows Ranch. I actually liked this photo so much when I was on the floor the last time with it that I now have a copy of it hanging in my office here in Washington. It is outside of Westcliffe, CO, which is at an elevation of 9,000 feet. There are 4,000 acres in the ranch. Elin Ganschow raises some of the finest grass-fed beef in the country on this family ranch. Thanks to the grassland reserve program, Elin's ranch now has a permanent conservation easement, providing critical wildlife habitat for elk, mule deer, black bear, and mountain lions—species prized by Colorado's sportsmen—that contribute millions to our State's economy. Thanks

to an amendment included in the conference report, we will see even more of these easements happen on high-priority landscapes such as the Music Meadows Ranch.

It is critical to our legacy and to the next generation of Coloradans to make sure we can find a way, when the land prices are rising the way they are, to keep farms and ranches in the hands of our family farmers and our family ranches. That is what this bill will help us do.

I thank Chairwoman STABENOW and Senator COCHRAN for working with me to get that amendment approved and carried into the final bill. I thank all the Colorado ranchers, sportsmen, and advocates of the outdoors for their support in drafting this legislation.

Also important to the West, this legislation makes great strides on forest help. This is a huge issue for Colorado and all Western States as we deal with terrible droughts, overgrown forests, and massive wildfires—a number of which have occurred in Colorado.

This conference report gives the Forest Service new tools to treat areas in need of restoration, like acreage suffering from the bark beetle epidemic that has ravaged Colorado.

The forestry title also reauthorizes important programs such as stewardship contracting and so-called good neighbor authority for our national forests.

So all in all, I again say thank you to my colleagues on the committee for working so hard together, for acknowledging regional interests that we have in the West which may not be shared with everybody. Although anybody who is downstream from Colorado—and that is basically the entire country—ought to care about forest health in Colorado and ought to care about water quality in Colorado. I think we were heard in this bill, and I deeply appreciate that.

The final point I would make is something which just came up in the last 2 weeks and we were able to resolve. We had an appropriations bill which passed a couple of weeks ago that failed to include a very important provision to States that have a high percentage of their land occupied with Federal land, and that is the so-called PILT payments, payment in lieu of taxes.

The program helps rural counties containing Federal land within their boundaries offset the revenue they lose because they can't derive property taxes from their land. Dozens of Colorado counties derive significant portions of their operating budget from PILT. By the way, they use those operating budgets to help maintain a lot of these Federal assets out there by, for example, providing search and rescue missions. I can say, most of the people they are rescuing are not even from Colorado.

So I am very grateful to Chairwoman STABENOW for working with me and other Senators from the West to include a PILT extension in the conference report. It is only 1 year, however. Unlike the 5-year farm bill, this is not going to give us the predictability that we need. I will continue to work with my senior Senator, Mr. UDALL, and others to make sure people hear the voice of the West in this Chamber.

Finally, this bill reduces the deficit by $23 billion. As I said, it is going to bring certainty and continued prosperity to rural America. From our forests, to our farms, to our ranches and rural communities, it is long overdue.

This bill has been supported across my home State of Colorado, from the orchards of the Grand Valley, to the wheat fields of Washington County, and on the editorial pages of the Greeley Tribune and the Denver Post.

This is a good bill. It passed the House with strong bipartisan support, and I urge a yes vote when we take up the farm bill conference report next week.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. WARREN). The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

THE ECONOMY

Mr. SESSIONS. Madam President, I wish to share some remarks this afternoon concerning a very important issue; that is, the financial condition of working Americans. Things are not good for them at this point in time.

Just a few weeks ago on January 5, Gene Sperling, the key economic adviser to President Barack Obama, appeared on CNN's ''Face the Nation.'' He said most of the people are desperately looking for jobs.

> . . . our economy still has three people looking for every job opening.

It has been reported that the House is having a retreat today and that they are discussing whether to proceed with immigration reform—apparently it would have to be somewhat like what passed the Senate or it would have no chance of passing the Senate—and they want to move this bill to try to solve a problem out there, but I think it is not practical at this point in time.

I wish to share some thoughts about what we should consider as we evaluate what the proper immigration flow into the United States is at this time. We are a nation that is founded on immigrants. We believe in that. We admit 1 million people a year lawfully now, and that is the largest number of any country in the world. We are about at the point—and I think we have reached it—where we have the largest percentage of foreign born in the history of the United States.

We hear advice from certain businesses. Despite Mr. Sperling's statement that there are three applicants for every job opening—we have advice of a different kind out of the business community: this is a post from the CEO of Marriott Hotels. Mr. Bill Marriott, by all accounts, is a fine citizen. He says the House is ready to tackle immigration. He said: ''As unemployment inches downward, we also need a functioning immigration system that helps us staff positions that might otherwise go unfilled.''

Apparently, he would like to have even more applicants for positions at his hotels and would probably suggest that the Republic would be in great danger if there is not somebody available at every one of his hotel resorts to roll down somebody's covers and put a chocolate drop on it. I don't know if that is the No. 1 challenge America faces at this time.

The Financial Times of London says that business groups are pushing Republicans for immigration reform.

I just want to talk about the economics of massive immigration. We need to understand it, and we need to understand it clearly. The proper flow of immigration into America is good for our country, but we need to be careful about this—particularly at a time of financial stress for millions of Americans who can't get a job or who can only get a part-time job or who have not seen their wages increase for many years.

Responsible immigration, I would suggest first and foremost, should help the economy, not hurt it. The great public policy question of immigration reform is now before the House, and given the poor state of the economy and the abysmal condition of the Federal budget, immigration reform has become a cutting-edge debate, and a vigorous national discussion about our country's economic future and reform of the Federal programs that are driving unsustainable annual deficits.

Significantly increasing the inflow of immigrants into our country at this time would adversely shock an already weak economy, lower average wages, increase unemployment, and decrease each American's prosperity and share of total output. As experts tell us, the GDP, growth of America's economy per capita, will decline if the bill that was introduced in the Senate were to become law and pass the Senate.

The Congressional Budget Office—our own experts, the people who advise us—reported in its evaluation the Senate's effort to increase immigration substantially. So the immigration reform was touted as a tough immigration bill that was going to end all kinds of problems, but it dramatically increased the amount of immigration.

They evaluated this bill and found that the economy would indeed grow bigger because it would contain more people, but it would not be a stronger economy for Americans. GDP per person would actually decline. So that means the relative financial position of each American here would decline if the legislation were passed based on

the careful analysis of the Congressional Budget Office.

Considering the acute current weaknesses of labor markets and the slowest economic recovery from a recession since the end of World War II, the last thing the U.S. economy needs is a handicap—much less an enormous harmful economic shock.

We still have not seen job markets recover to 2007 levels—6 years after the start of the recession. Our economy still has three people looking for every job opening. President Obama's advisers have said that labor markets still have not recovered. A significant expansion of the flow of immigrants into America would be occurring at a time of substantial weakness in labor markets.

It is not the unemployment rate that is so definitive. It is the number of people who are actually able to find a job and are working. The current economic recovery has been too slow to produce an economic rebound. We still have fewer jobs than we had in 2007, when the recession began, even though the population increased each year.

This chart is about employment as a share of the population. It shows at the period of the recession that we had this rapid drop from 63 percent of the population working down to a little above 58 percent, and it stuck there and still there today. This represents millions of people who are not working today because they cannot find a job.

The concept that we would bring in more foreign workers to take the very limited number of jobs we have, and increasing our flow over the normal generous flow, makes no sense to me. I don't see how it can be defended intellectually. It might give Mr. Marriott the ability to have more cheap labor, and he may have to pay less to get somebody to work at his resorts, but that is not our problem. Our problem and our challenge is to help the average American citizen live a better life, and we are not doing that effectively. It has not happened, and this is years into this post-recession recovery—the so-called recovery.

The economy has produced 4.7 million jobs since the recovery began in 2009. There are 6.3 million people who have dropped out of the workforce. They have given up. They are discouraged workers who ceased to look for a job and do not show up on the unemployment rolls.

Some of them have taken disability. Some of them took early retirement. Some of them just quit. Maybe they have a spouse who is working and they are no longer able to work. This is an amazing statistic that dropouts exceed newly employed. This is unprecedented in the post-World War II period.

As of the end of 2013, 58.6 percent of the adult population was employed. This is down from 62.7 percent at the start of the recession. The percentage has been stuck at about 58.6 percent since September of 2009. It has not improved since 2009. If the same percentage of the population worked today as was working at the start of the recession, we would have 10 million more jobs. We would have 10 million more people working, 10 million more people able to support their families better, 10 million more people who are perhaps not on welfare than there are today.

In 2007, there were 146 million Americans employed. Today there are 144.6 million employed. At the same time, the population of those older than 16 years of age has grown by 13.5 million. So while the population is increasing, the number of people actually working is lower than it was in 2007.

Moreover, there has been no growth in the income of working Americans. Working American families are stressed. Jobs just are not being created at nearly the rate to keep up with the population, and millions are simply dropping out. To make matters even worse, the Census Bureau reported in August of 2013 that the incomes of working families have been in decline since 2007, adjusting for inflation.

This chart shows that it has been a fairly steady decline over a long period of time.

Look at this chart. A median income in 2012 dollars—constant dollars—was $56,000 in 1999. Today, in 2012, it is down to $51,000. That is a dramatic reduction in the average net income of American workers. Someone says: What does that have to do with immigration? I will discuss it. It is a factor in what is happening. It just is.

What does CBO say about immigration and wages? It is against this difficult economic backdrop that immigration reformers want to massively increase the number of work visas—doubling them—by increasing the flow of migrants and legalizing those in the country without documents. Basically, we would increase the current flow of legal immigrants to America from 10 million over 10 years to 30 million, and who would get permanent resident status in the United States, over a 10-year period. Each of those 30 million would be available to compete for any job in the marketplace. Having come from poor countries, many of them are glad to take a job for even the most minimum of wages. That is understandable. We respect that. I am not criticizing them; I am talking about the policy of the U.S. Congress and the President of the United States.

CBO found that an increase of this kind, if the bill that passed the Senate had become law, would do a number of things. No. 1, it would depress wages among low- and high-skilled native-born workers—depress wages, further, across the entire economy. That is what they reported to us. That is their official analysis.

They went on to say, No. 2, it would raise the national unemployment rate and increase the number of people unemployed.

No. 3, it would slow the growth of per capita output.

There may be someone who says this isn't so and insists it is not so. But I would suggest if we bring more iron ore into America, the price of iron ore declines. If we bring in more cotton, the price of cotton declines. If we bring in more textiles, the price of textiles declines. And if we bring in more labor, the price of labor declines. That is what the facts are. It is a matter of economics. It hasn't been repealed. It is amazing to me that some of our CEOs and some of our free market geniuses don't understand that simple fact.

What about depressing wages? The Congressional Budget Office concluded, based on extensive academic evidence, that low- and high-skilled native-born workers would compete at a wage disadvantage with similarly skilled immigrant workers.

CBO wrote:

> Based on CBO's reading of that research, a 1-percent increase in the labor force attributable to immigration has tended to lower the relative wages for all workers with less than a high school diploma by roughly three-tenths of 1 percent . . . and to lower the relative wages for workers with at least a college degree by one-tenth of a percent.

CBO's analysis of S. 744, the bill that passed the Senate, shows that average wages across the entire economy are lower for the first 12 years of this policy change.

All right. So what CBO said: If we pass this bill that passed the Senate, it will lower wages across the entire economy for 12 years.

Is it not the deep, fundamental responsibility of the Members of this Senate to be attuned to and concerned about the wages of working Americans? And should we not immediately reject, at a time of low wages, declining wages, any policy our CBO tells us—certainly correctly—will pull down further the wages of American workers, at a time when we have record unemployment, record numbers of people outside the workforce? How simple is this for us to understand? I cannot comprehend what it is that this Congress is thinking.

Professor George Borjas, of Harvard, the leading expert in the world, I think, on immigration and wages, recently noted that immigration from 1960 through 2012, which is the last year he had data, has cost native-born workers an of $402 billion. Where did that money go, according to Professor Borjas? It went to the corporate profits in almost the exact same amount. He says that native-owned firms would gain $437 billion in income. So they would have their income increase and almost the entirety of that increase in income is paid for by the reduction in wages of their workers.

Right now, we have healthy profits but not healthy wages. Look at this chart which points that out. This growth in profits is directly caused by the advantage that accrues to a business out doing what it is supposed to do, which is try to produce widgets at the lowest possible price and make the best profits it can make for their stockholders, and pay people competitive wages. When there are a lot more

workers applying for jobs, they don't have to pay as high wages as they would if there weren't that many people applying for jobs.

I am not criticizing business. What I am saying is that as a matter of national policy, shouldn't it be our policy to listen to people such as Professor Borjas who studied this issue and tells us there is a direct relationship between declining wages and the number of immigrants we have coming into our country? I am not demeaning a single person who wants to come to America to work. I am just talking about facts.

In other words, Professor Borjas finds the increase for business is almost entirely paid for by the decline in wages for working Americans.

The problem today is declining wages for working Americans a lot more than it is about profits. I don't have any problem with corporate profits. I wish corporate profits were higher. But we should not be setting up economic factors and creating economic conditions that exacerbate an income problem that we have in America. That is all I am saying. I think American workers have a right to demand it, and they understand this. Maybe some of our geniuses don't understand it. Some have political gains they look for out of this. Some have economic gains they look for out of this. But somebody better be dealing with the concerns of the people in our country who are hurting.

Professor Borjas found that the impact of increased immigration from 1980 to 2000 resulted in a 3-percent decrease in the wage of average native workers and an 8-percent decrease in the wage of high school dropouts—those who don't have a high school degree. The poorest workers in America suffered the greatest amount during that 20-year period based on census data, empirical data, that he can defend.

As a matter of fact, this chart is a recent chart. Professor Borjas presented a paper to a large group of economists in June of last year—last summer—and to my knowledge, nobody challenged it then or since.

So a 10-percent increase in the size of a skill group—that is high school dropouts, for example—reduces the wages of that group significantly.

Professor Borjas wrote:

> Immigration has its largest negative impact on the wage of native workers who lack a high school diploma, a group that makes up a modest (and, in recent decades, shrinking) share of the workforce. These workers are among the poorest Americans. The children of these workers make up a disproportionate number of the children in poverty: 24.8 percent of all children of the native-born working poor live in households headed by a high school dropout.

That is what he said, not me. I think the economics has not been disputed and it is just common sense.

Professor Borjas is not alone in these findings. I would note Professor Borjas, I believe, was born in Cuba and came to this country as a young man, as an immigrant. Similar results were found by economists at the Federal Reserve Bank in Atlanta. They had a look at it. The prominent labor economist David Card of the University of California-Berkeley reached similar conclusions.

However, it is not only lower wages that working Americans have to bear, but it will be higher unemployment as well.

The rapid increase in the immigrant population, especially those in the low-skilled segment of the income distribution, will overwhelm the ability of the economy to produce jobs and increase wages. Thus, the Congressional Budget Office estimates that S. 744, the bill that passed the Senate, would raise the number of unemployed Americans during the first 5 years by an average annual number of 162,000, and that unemployment would ''remain elevated through 2020.''

This is a stunning conclusion, especially when compared with what CBO argued in its 2013 Outlook. In their Budget and Economic Outlook of February 2013—just last February—CBO projected—get this—in their projections last year about how many additional jobs would be created per month for the next 5 years, they projected we would only create 75,000 jobs a month.

I don't know what the future holds, but we are not seeing the kind of job growth we expected. This past December, the job growth was 74,000—well below the 200,000 or so we need to just have a modest increase in the number of working Americans. So CBO projects a 162,000 reduction annually in the number of people who would be getting jobs in America as a result of the passage of this bill, and we are only going to create 75,000 a month. That is a serious hammer blow to working Americans and their ability to get a job. In other words, CBO's estimated increase in unemployed Americans will equal about a full month of average employment gain for the first 5 years after enactment. At today's job growth rate, that additional unemployment is like losing about a month of job gains every year.

What about economic output? As one might expect, the lower wages and higher unemployment reflect an economy that is not growing fast enough to absorb all of the new workers we have in the country now who become workage eligible. While the size of the economy expands under the Senate's bill, because of the larger population, the growth rate is not fast enough to raise wages or lower unemployment. CBO estimates that GNP per capita will fall below baseline; that is, without passage of the immigration bill. So if we pass the immigration bill, the GNP—gross national product—of America per person, per capita, will be lower and stay lower until 2030, than it would be if the bill didn't pass at all.

President Obama, talked to us the other night about his concern over wages, and I would suggest the first thing he needs to do is to revise his commitment to the passage of the Senate immigration bill and quit pushing for it, because it is guaranteed to have a negative impact on jobs and GDP per capita in America. It just is. It is something I hope all of us will consider.

I know the House wants to do the right thing. I know they want to reach out and be a positive force in America. I know a lot of our Senators felt the same way. But they weren't focused on the realities and the impacts that the legislation, if passed, would have. It would lower wages, it would increase unemployment, and it would reduce the growth in the economy per person over the next almost 30 years.

This not what we can afford to do now, colleagues. So I urge all of us to be honest about this and do the right thing. I know there are big businesses that want this. I know there are political interest groups that want this. I know some of the Democratic leaders want this real badly, and we have special activist groups that have one reason or another to favor virtually open boarders in America.

We cannot go in that direction. It is not good for our constituents, for the people who sent us here to serve the national interests.

I will just propose that instead of taking steps that are guaranteed, documented to make things worse, let's do a few things to make things better, things that would make jobs better and more profitable in America, without adding to the debt of the United States, which in itself is hurting the American economy.

We need more American energy that creates good-paying jobs right here in America. We need a more competitive tax and regulatory code that allows businesses and workers to compete in the global marketplace. We need a good trade policy that increases our exports and expands domestic manufacturing and demands that U.S. manufacturers and workers have their products fairly competed with on a level playing field around the world—fair trade as well as free trade. We need an immigration policy that serves the interests of the American people, as I have just noted. We need to convert the welfare office from a check-delivering institution to a job-creating, job-training center to help move people into jobs and help them become employed at better wages.

We need to make the government of this country leaner and more accountable to the taxpayers so that it produces more for every tax dollar that is extracted from the American public. We have an obligation to produce for the money they give us, and we are not being very productive by any fair analysis. We need to restore economic confidence by continuing our effort to produce a balanced budget.

Madam President, I appreciate the opportunity to share these thoughts. I believe what I have said represents one of the most significant public policy issues facing our country today. We need to understand what we are doing.

We need to understand the impact of our legislation. If we take the time to do so, we will recognize that when we reform immigration, and it must be quite different from that which would be done if the Senate bill were to become law.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

GUN VIOLENCE

Mr. MURPHY. Madam President, since the failure of the gun bill on the floor of the Senate, I have tried to come to the floor every week or so to talk about the voices of the thousands of victims who have died from gun violence all across this country. About 30 people a day—not even counting suicides—die from gun violence. It is a travesty, it is a tragedy, it is a scourge on our country, and it is inflicting pain in our cities, in our suburbs, and the Senate and the House of Representatives—the most deliberative, the most representative bodies in the history of the world—are doing absolutely nothing about it.

If you want to know why it continues, we can give a long list of reasons. There is no one panacea to solve the problem of gun violence. It is about tightening our gun laws. It is about better mental health programming, more funding. It is about addressing a culture of violence. But it is also about a signal that we send here, a signal of complicity.

Our silence essentially sends a message to young men and women all across this country that we must be OK, we must be all right with epidemic levels of gun violence if the numbers continue to spiral upwards and we do absolutely nothing about it.

The statistics alone tell you we should step to the plate and change our laws, address the problem, give new resources. But seeing that those numbers and that data have not really moved the Senate to action, maybe the voices of the victims will.

A lot of attention here in the greater Washington area was paid to a seemingly random shooting without apparent motive in a suburban Maryland mall on Saturday, January 25.

A gunman came in, a 19-year-old with a shotgun, and sprayed bullets into a Zumiez store, which is a store that sells clothing and merchandise for skateboarders and snowboarders.

He killed Brianna Benlolo and Tyler Johnson, two people he apparently had no connection to.

Brianna was 21 years old, and she left behind a little 2-year-old boy Elijah. Her friends who worked at the mall with her said Brianna was ''really proud of her job.'' They spoke about how positive she was. One friend said ''she never seemed like she had any negativity.'' She left behind a little notebook that she had filled with fanciful drawings and phrases from pop culture. She was a really, really happy young woman who was raising a really, really happy little boy. Little 2-year-old Elijah is never going to get to see his mother again because of a seemingly random, unprovoked act of violence in another mass shooting.

Tyler Johnson had had a tough life. He had had a history of substance abuse. But he had been clean from drugs and alcohol for 2 years, and he had pretty much completely turned his life around. He was working, earning a paycheck at this store at the mall. But then, after work, he had become a board member at a local 12-step recovery house called the Serenity Center in Columbia, and he was now all about the business of mentoring other young people to make sure they would not fall into the same cycle of abuse of drugs and alcohol that he had.

The president of Serenity Center said:

> I thought he was a remarkable young man. I don't see a lot of young people stepping up like that. I just thought he was an up-and-coming leader.

We are desperate in this country to have these kinds of role models such as Tyler Johnson—somebody who had struggled with dependence and had not only conquered it for himself but then had gone out and set himself about being a role model.

The difference that Tyler Johnson could have made—Tyler was 25 years old. Tyler was not even halfway through his life, and he had decided he was going to spend his life turning people's lives around. He had decided he was going to go back and get a degree that would help him become a counselor for young people.

We lost maybe 50 years of life transformations because Tyler Johnson is gone. Tyler Johnson was going to help turn kids' lives around, to get them back on the straight and narrow path like he did, but we do not get that benefit any longer because of another mass shooting at a Maryland mall.

When you read these obituaries and horrific newspaper articles about shooting after shooting, as I have since I became so personally connected to this issue in the wake of the shooting in Sandy Hook that took Dylan Hockley's life and Daniel Barden's life and Jesse Lewis's life and Ben Wheeler's life, you see how casual the violence is. Chad Oulson lost his life on January 13 of this year in Wesley Chapel, FL.

Chad was going to see a new movie. I have not seen it, but I have heard it is pretty good: ''Lone Survivor.'' He was texting his 3-year-old daughter, as the previews were playing. One of the movie patrons did not like the fact that Chad was texting during the previews of the movie. So he confronted Chad about it. They had an argument. They had an altercation. This guy left the theater to go get a security guard. When he returned, he came back alone. He took out a gun, and he shot Chad.

Chad was struck in the chest and died. His wife was hit in the hand and suffered injuries. An off-duty police officer and two nurses who happened to be in the theater ensured there were no more shots fired. They tried to resuscitate Chad until the paramedics arrived.

His family members said he was just a good all-around guy. He was the father of a beautiful little girl—a girl he was texting with at the time of his murder. ''You'd be hard-pressed to find somebody who didn't like him,'' somebody said. ''He was a friend to everybody, whoever he met.''

Two days later, in Dallas, TX, Trinidad Salazar was killed over a dispute about roof shingles. There was a dispute as to whether he owned these shingles or whether another guy owned the shingles, and this 38-year-old guy decided the best way to resolve the dispute over who owned these roof shingles was to shoot 33-year-old Trinidad Salazar. A .40 caliber Glock pistol was pulled out. He fired one warning shot into the ground, and then fired one shot directly into Trinidad, and Trinidad, at 30 years old, is no longer with us.

The casualness and the randomness of this gun violence makes it even harder to take. It is not that you can ever defend this kind of carnage. But when no one can see it coming, when it becomes the result of simple arguments over housing materials or nuisances in movie theaters or items of clothing, it just makes it even more absurd that we do not step to the plate and do something about it.

In 2013—the year after Sandy Hook happened—we paid even more attention to school shootings. So when one came across our transom, when we saw evidence or reports of shootings on TV, we all paid attention. Over the course of 2013, there were 28 school shootings. Madam President, 28 school shootings happened in 2013—the year after Sandy Hook. That is a lot.

We are 28 days into 2014, and in those 28 days we have had 11 school shootings. We had 28 in all of 2013. We have had 11 school shootings in just the first month of 2014 alone. We are on pace—we are on pace—to have over 120 school shootings this year.

On January 9, in Jackson, TN; on January 13, in New Haven, CT; on January 14, in Roswell, NM; on January 17, in Philadelphia, PA; on January 17, in Albany, GA; on January 20, at Widener University; on January 21, at Purdue University; again on January 21, at Wakefield Elementary, in Turlock, CA; on January 24, at South Carolina State University; on January 27, in Carbondale, IL; on January 28, in Honolulu, HI—luckily, each one of them—''luckily,'' that is a terrible word to use—in each one of these school shootings there have only been one or two or three people shot or injured. But it is

just a matter of time before there is another Sandy Hook. When you are having school shootings at the rate of one every two school days, it is just a matter of time before somebody continues to pull that trigger over and over or someone does not intervene as quickly as they intervened in these situations.

If we do not recognize the trend that is developing, if we do not at least send a message that the Senate and the House do not condone with our silence these acts, then it will just continue to happen.

I am not suggesting that there is a magical act of Congress that we can pass that is going to end gun violence in this country or, frankly, that is going to stop people with deep psychological illnesses from walking into malls and churches and schools occasionally and firing weapons.

But we can take steps to make sure it does not happen as often. We can take steps to make sure the carnage is not as bad or as significant when someone decides to walk into a crowded place and do that kind of damage. That is within our power. That is something on which Republicans and Democrats should be able to agree.

I will continue to come down to the floor to tell the stories of the voices of the victims until we can find the ability to reach across party lines and do something to at least send a message that the Senate stands against the developing, awful, terrible trend of mass violence in this country.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. MARKEY). The Senator from Missouri.

Mr. BLUNT. Mr. President, I want to talk about the farm bill that will be on the floor—is on the floor, that we will vote on sometime next week. I would also predict that this is the last farm bill that will not be driven by the new realities of people who want their food needs met in new ways. These food needs are going to be greater, but we are going to be less concerned, I would expect, 5 years from now about farm surpluses and what happens if we grow too much than we are about how we meet the growing food needs of the world, partially because of population, partially because people, once they get better food, want the better food. Once you have got the variety of food, once you have had the experience of better food, nobody wants to go back to the food they used to have. We are going to see that driving this debate more over the next few years than we have up until now.

Agriculture in many States, including my State of Missouri, is the No. 1 industry. Sixteen percent of our workforce is directly involved in agriculture. It continues in State after State where the Presiding Officer and I both hear that every Senator represents an agricultural State. I think every Senator represents a State where agriculture is a significant part of what we do, as it has always been part of what we do. Fewer people participate directly on the production end of agriculture, but, of course, everybody participates on the consumption end of agriculture.

In America, agriculture directly supports 16 million jobs which are just involved in how we grow and process what we have. Farm families in Missouri, farm families nationwide, work each and every day to feed the country. More and more are focused on what it takes also to feed the world.

For 2 years now we have been in a temporary farm bill. In some cases, the assistance that government has given and will give again with the passage of this bill has not even been there for the last 2 years. When I talk in a few minutes about livestock disaster, that program went away in 2011 as we were facing some of the most difficult times in a long time.

The drought has been worse in many States than anytime since the 1950s. Programs that would deal with that have not dealt with that. But the investment in this bill will reaffirm our commitment to being at the forefront of productive agriculture. It will provide rural communities the ability to compete both here and abroad. Certainly, it is not perfect. I think while it may not be the best possible bill, I would say as I said 2 years ago when I voted for that interim bill, it is the best bill possible right now.

As we all know, the leaders on the agriculture committees in the House and the Senate have spent a long time trying to bring this bill together. If it were easy, they would have done it quicker. They did not come back earlier than everybody else did during the recent break because they wanted to be back early; they came back because that discussion had not brought itself to a final bill yet.

But this is the bill. It does some good things. It provides a certainty and a safety net for farm families. Very few farm families at some point in the productive cycle of a year do not have to go to the banker and say: We need to borrow some money to make something possible in this planning year that we could not do without borrowed money. Here is how we are going to pay it back. Well, ''here is how we are going to pay it back'' is a whole lot better if you say: Here is the safety net. Here is what happens if things that we do not expect to go wrong go wrong. Here is what happens if we have to actually use the crop insurance. Here is how we will pledge to you that we will, of course, have crop insurance when you make this loan. So this bill provides that and gives a 5-year place to look.

My mom and dad were dairy farmers. I have some sense of understanding how farm families work and think. Knowing how you can look at the rules and regulations 5 years in advance is a whole lot better than looking 5 months in advance or 2 years in advance. We have gone through a period where farm families have not known for a long time now what the long-term government commitment to agriculture is. When we pass this bill, we are going to have that longer commitment for the first time in a while.

This supports our export opportunities. It finds ways that allow us to get more easily into markets that the people in those countries want us to be in, because what we produce is something they need, they want, they know they would like to have. ''USA'' stamped on a truck, on a bin, on a container, is a seal of approval all over the world.

This expands bioenergy production, not for the bioenergy things that are out there already in a proven way, but expanding bioenergy in places we know it needs to be expanded. This is the bill that we invest in rural communities.

Eighty percent of this bill is now in nutrition programs that affect people in the most urban parts of our country and in rural parts of our country. But the 20 percent that includes the crop insurance and other programs—I think crop insurance is about 4 percent of the entire bill here. We see people who are critical of how government is doing too much to help farm families, although they usually say—they usually assume that all farm families are big corporate farmers. But just 4 percent or so of the bill is that.

In the 20 percent that deals with rural America, it is things such as economic development that allow people to continue to compete and be in rural America. This gives our colleges and universities and the land grants principally, but the nonland grants who have an agricultural mission, the things they need, the tools they need, and research.

I think researchers were trying to figure out how to be sure that our products are as healthy and helpful to the people who consume them as possible. That is good. This bill does that by securing at the same time some real cost savings. There is about $23 billion of deficit reduction because of the reforms in this bill, that which we have done in the past that we no longer believe we have to do for farm families to be competitive. I think 5 years from now we can look at this again and assume that the world marketplace allows us to look at farming in a new way.

I would like to discuss a couple of important issues that are addressed in this bill. One is research; the other is livestock disaster assistance. In 2012, about 80 percent of the agricultural land in America experienced a drought. It was the most extensive drought in our country since the 1950s.

In Missouri, all 114 counties were declared disaster areas because of that drought. Many with those persistently dry conditions were ranked among the very worst in the country. We grow lots of livestock in our State—lots of livestock of all kinds, particularly cattle, beef and dairy cattle. We have livestock, we have other livestock that is a

little easier to both categorize and contain and know everything you would want to know about.

But these industries did not have the kind of risk management programs they needed. For whatever reason, in the last farm bill, the livestock assistance programs, the livestock disaster programs—that is all they are; they are not to help in good times, they are purely to help in bad times. Those programs expired in 2011, just at the time when we had some of the worst livestock conditions we have had in over 50 years. So there was nothing there for those livestock producers. They were forced to liquidate their herds, resulting in the lowest cattle numbers since 1952.

What does that mean, the lowest cattle numbers since 1952? It means we have fewer cattle, obviously. But it also means that the replacement of the herd is going to be harder, not as many mother cows, not as many calves. Beef shelves in grocery stores will reflect these cattle numbers for a long time because people had to sell their herds.

In our State alone, there were 300,000 fewer cattle than there were a couple of years ago. It is the lowest number of cattle, in fact, single-year decline since the mid-1980s. It takes a long time to come back from that decline and have the numbers of cattle available for feedlots, for buyers, and eventually for the grocery store shelves than we would have had otherwise.

I am pleased the farm bill makes these programs permanent, but, again, they are permanent programs that only occur if you have extraordinary disaster circumstances that make them occur.

Thanks to smart investment in research, we have the safest, most affordable and abundant food supply in the world. We make smart investment in research. This is not a new commitment by the Federal Government. It goes back to 1862 when President Lincoln signed the bill that created the Department of Agriculture. One of the principal purposes for the Department of Agriculture was research that could be shared so that every farmer or every State or every community did not have to do their own research but research would be shared by the Department of Agriculture, encouraged by the Department of Agriculture, done in a way that met the needs of the whole country.

Research continues to produce great results. In 1940, 1 farmer fed 19 people. This year, 1 farmer feeds about 155 people. By 2050, global food demand is expected to increase by about 70 percent, and to double shortly after that. The American farmer is the best farmer in the world at producing quality products that are desired to meet that growing food need. If world food needs double between now and some date shortly after 2050, that means we need to produce as much food in the second half of this century in any given year as we have produced—if 10,000 years of agricultural research has brought us to what we produce today, we need to double that in about the next 50 years.

It is incumbent upon us to make sure we have the tools available to do that. As the ranking member of the agricultural appropriations Committee, certainly research has been critical to our committee. I am glad the farm bill authorizes these research programs and allows us to continue to encourage research that will enable us to do what we need to do to meet our own food needs and world food needs.

Agricultural research lets us have more efficient production, ways to eradicate pests and disease. It addresses the adverse weather conditions the crops grow in. Africa as a continent is not in the food production role it needs to be, if by 2050 the projection is half of the people in the world will live in Africa. It is in our best interest to see them produce more food as well.

Of course, it is in our best interests to maintain a safe food supply. Agricultural research can aid small farmers. We can see ag research that adds value to staple crops and adds nutrients to staple crops in countries that grow a lot and have a lot of it, but, frankly, it may not have much food value, even though it may be most of what people eat.

The Danforth Plant Science Center in St. Louis conducts critical research to do just that, to look at a staple crop in a developing country and figure how that crop can be changed in a way that is beneficial to people who are used to it, who can grow it, but need to figure out how to select the best of those plants to replant next year.

Research into nutrient fortification, drought resistance, disease, and other things is important. The farm bill takes that step.

The chairwoman of the committee and the ranking member of the committee, our friends the Senators from Michigan and Mississippi, have worked hard to bring this bill forward.

I close by saying again, I predict that as world food needs and 21st century opportunities for agriculture change, that is going to define the debate 5 years from now, well below what we are likely to anticipate. It is no longer going to be a world that is driven about how do we sell the crops we grow, it is going to be much more driven by how do we grow the crops the world needs and Americans need, and how do we connect that result to the market that needs it.

American farmers for a long time have struggled with how productive they were in a world that maybe didn't need everything we could grow. That is not going to be the case in the very near future. I believe by the time we get to the end of this 5-year farm bill, we are going to have a very different discussion about how we meet our own food needs, world food needs, and the great opportunity in agriculture, agriculture business, and competition—that nobody does better than the American farmer.

I intend to support this bill next week.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Arizona.

Mr. MCCAIN. I ask unanimous consent to address the Senate as in morning business.

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

IRAQ

Mr. MCCAIN. I attended, as did all of my colleagues, the President's State of the Union Message the night before last. Obviously, as always, the President delivers an excellent speech.

I must say that in the years I have attended the President's State of the Union Message, I have never seen a message on national security and foreign policy as disconnected from reality as the President's speech. Obviously it had minor importance by the amount of time that was taken in the speech, but what was most interesting was the President portrayed a Middle East, in particular, that has little relation to the reality today and the ongoing tragedies, deaths, and sacrifice because of a failure of American leadership.

In interesting polling data today, a Pew Research poll indicates:

> More Now See Failure than Success in Iraq, Afghanistan
>
> Little Partisan Gap in Views of Whether U.S. Has Reached Goals.

It continues:

> After more than a decade of war in Iraq and Afghanistan, the public does not think the United States has achieved its goals in either country. About half of Americans (52%) say the U.S. has mostly failed to achieve its goals in Afghanistan while 38% say it has mostly succeeded.

Opinions about the U.S. war in Iraq are virtually the same; 52 percent say the United States has mostly failed in reaching its goals there while 38 percent say it has mostly succeeded.

Continuing:

> In both cases, evaluations of the wars have turned more negative in recent years. In November 2011, as the U.S. was completing its military withdrawal from Iraq, a majority (56%) thought the U.S. had achieved its goals there.

So the American people, despite the rhetoric from the administration—some of it incredibly bizarre—have figured out that after many years of sacrifice, expenditure of American blood and treasure, we are looking at and staring failure in the face.

I will quote from the President's speech the night before last.

On Iraq, the President said:

> When I took office, nearly 180,000 troops were serving in Iraq and Afghanistan. Today, all our troops are out of Iraq.

Yes, that is a correct statement. But what the President didn't go on to say was that Iraq is now collapsing under the weight of sectarian violence that now has exceeded that of 2008, one of the most dangerous years of the war. What the President didn't say was that there is sectarian violence, Sunni and Shia, initiated largely by President

Maliki, which is causing attacks throughout Iraq—bomb detonations, IEDs, attacks on various institutions. President Maliki has driven his own vice president out of the country. The list goes on and on.

I say to my colleagues, there is no greater example of our failure in Iraq than Fallujah today. In the second battle of Fallujah, in 2007, the United States of America lost 96 marines and soldiers killed, over 600 wounded. Today, vehicles are driving through the streets of Fallujah flying Al-Qaeda flags. Al-Qaeda is now in charge in Fallujah.

I wonder what we tell families of those brave soldiers and marines who were killed and wounded in the first and second battle of Fallujah. Because in the words of General Petraeus, who was the architect of the surge—which most of my colleagues, including the President of the United States, said would fail, when actually there were many of us who knew that it would and did succeed: We won the war but lost the peace.

We lost the peace because the United States of America did not leave a residual force behind, thereby allowing the situation to deteriorate to where it is today with Al-Qaeda now in charge of the city of Fallujah, Ramadi—the Syria-Iraq border now being the headquarters and staging areas of Al-Qaeda in both Syria and Iraq. Their black flags now fly over cities where brave Americans, marines and soldiers, sacrificed their lives and their well-being.

Gen. James Conway, who commanded the marines in the first battle of Fallujah in April 2004, commenting on failures of the administration's policies in Iraq stated: ''In some ways, the al-Qaeda grand strategy is vindicated.'' He deplored U.S. policies, appeared weak and confused in the wake of how hard we fought to get those cities back in the first place.

What did the President of the United States say? Did he mention Fallujah? Of course not.

He said:

> When I took office, nearly 180,000 troops were serving in Iraq and Afghanistan. Today, all our troops are out of Iraq.

Yes, the troops are out of Iraq and the place is going to hell in a hand basket.

Don't think that these people, Al-Qaeda and Al Nusra, are not intent on pursuing their goals of radical Islam right to the United States of America. This should concern every one of my colleagues and every American citizen.

Yesterday there was a hearing in the Senate Intelligence Committee:

> Al Qaida faction in Syria contemplating U.S. attack, intelligence officials warn.
>
> Senate hears Nusra Front has ''aspirations for attacks on the homeland'' amid concern over civil war's terrorism implications.
>
> Intelligence officials have claimed that a faction linked to al-Qaida in Syria has a desire to launch a domestic attack on the US, an assertion that underscored the growing importance of the Syrian civil war to global terrorism.
>
> The Nusra Front, one of the jihadist factions in Syria, that aligns itself with al-Qaida, ''does have aspirations for attack on the homeland,'' James Clapper, the US director of national intelligence, told the Senate Intelligence Committee on Wednesday, yesterday.

We know that with Al Nusra, Al-Qaeda, and other radical Islamist organizations, which, by the way, are attracting young men from all over the world, including Europe, is now one that is contemplating attacks on the United States of America.

I want to again mention General Conway, who commanded the marines during the first battle of Fallujah in 2004.

At the Heritage Foundation he said:

> ''We fought and died taking those cities,'' Conway said Wednesday at the Heritage Foundation. Conway became the Marine Corps commandant before retiring as a four-star general.
>
> A blunt-talking general who rarely seeks the spotlight, Conway described his reaction to recent events in stark terms during his brief remarks.
>
> It causes Iraqi and U.S. policies to look a little weak and confused in the wake of how hard we fought to get those cities back in the first place.

Continuing:

> ''In some ways, the al-Qaeda grand strategy is vindicated,'' Conway said, referring to the organization's desire to wait out American forces.

Why did they wait out American forces? They waited out American forces because as soon as President Obama took office he announced we were leaving. He didn't announce a strategy for success. He didn't say we have to reach certain goals before we leave. He told everybody we were leaving.

It is very clear, when we look at electoral history, that his vote against the resolution concerning military action in Iraq was one of the factors that led him to the Presidency. But for him to stand before the American people and say:

> When I took office, nearly 180,000 Americans were serving in Iraq and Afghanistan. Today, all our troops are out of Iraq.

This is, at best, a very incomplete depiction of what has happened since all of those troops are out of Iraq.

Finally, General Conway said:

> Those who lost people, those wounded, I think, are now stripped of a coping mechanism, Conway said. ''If you have a young Marine or soldier sitting with his legs missing, he could at least previously say, 'Well what we did was the right thing. Iraq is better for it, and we won.' '' I'm not sure that same individual sitting in that chair is thinking those things these days. That's truly sad.

I have talked to and heard from so many of these brave young Americans who feel exactly as General Conway described. They don't know and they don't understand after the enormous sacrifices that they made that somehow now black Al-Qaeda flags are flying over Fallujah.

On Afghanistan, the President said:

> More than 60,000 of our troops have already come home from Afghanistan. With Afghan forces now in the lead for their own security, our troops have moved to a support role. . . .
>
> After 2014, we will support a unified Afghanistan as it takes responsibility for its own future. If the Afghan government signs a security agreement that we have negotiated, a small force of Americans could remain in Afghanistan with NATO allies to carry out two narrow missions: training and assisting Afghan forces, and counterterrorism operations to pursue any remnants of Al Qaeda. For while our relationship with Afghanistan will change, one thing will not: our resolve that terrorists do not launch attacks against our country.

On the one hand, the President said there would be two narrow missions and yet our goal is still that terrorists don't launch attacks against our country. Again, he failed to put forward a true proposal for our strategy in Afghanistan and once again avoided offering any specifics on troop numbers. Why did we not leave a troop presence behind in Iraq? Because they would never give a troop number. Anybody who tells you the problem was not getting it through the Iraqi Parliament is not telling you the truth.

Senator GRAHAM, Senator Lieberman, and I were in Erbil when President Barzani said: I will go to Baghdad. When we met with Allawi, he said: I will sit with Maliki. We went to Maliki and Maliki said: I will agree to have a force of troops in my country. How many? We could not give him an answer nor would the administration give him an answer.

In the words and testimony of our Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, the number cascaded down to 3,500, and that would have been a force that spent its time defending itself. Therefore, we did not leave a troop force behind in Iraq, and I have just described the consequences.

The same thing is happening in Afghanistan. The President will not say the force level he wants left behind in Afghanistan. Why is it he will not?

I want to point out that President Karzai of Afghanistan is a paranoid individual, and he has been incredibly unhelpful. It has been terribly disappointing to me—and I have known him for 14 years—that he is behaving as he is. But President Karzai's paranoia is somewhat understandable when he does not know whether the United States will remain, he doesn't know whether he can count on the United States, and he knows he has to stay in the neighborhood and accommodate for the likelihood now that the United States leaves completely. So his paranoia, to some degree, is much more understandable.

On our last trip to Afghanistan in early January, we saw firsthand the progress that has been made by American and Afghan forces, and such progress is a true testament to the positive impact our troops have had and the long-term benefits of our partnership with the Afghan people. The Afghan people, though, and military will need our continued support. If we pull out, if we see the Iraq movie again,

we will see the same thing happen in Afghanistan that is now happening in Iraq, and it doesn't take a lot of smarts to know that.

So now we turn to Syria. In Syria ''we will support the opposition that rejects the agenda of terrorist networks.'' What does that mean?

Despite promise after promise, the administration has refused to provide aid to the moderate opposition forces in Syria who are committed. It was 2 years ago when the President of the United States said: It is not a matter of whether Bashar al-Assad will leave office, it is a matter of when. It was over 2 years ago, at the Senate Armed Services Committee, when Secretary of Defense Panetta and the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff said in answer to my question: Sir, it is inevitable, it is inevitable that Bashar al-Assad will leave office.

Does anybody believe that now?

Our failure to help the Free Syrian Army over time was negated and overwhelmed by the presence of 5,000 Hezbollah sent in by the Iranians, the Iranian Revolutionary Guard, planeload after planeload of weapons that now land at the Damascus Airport from Russia, while they are loaded onto Russian-built helicopters, and barrel bombs, which are explosives packed with all kinds of nuts and bolts and other metals, are dropped out of those helicopters on men, women, and children.

But not to worry—not to worry—because the chemical weapons are leaving, apparently, according to the President, because he said: American diplomacy, backed by the threat of force, is why Syria's chemical weapons are being eliminated, and we will continue to work with the international community to usher in the future the Syrian people deserve, a future free of a dictator, terror, and fear.

The chemical weapons he is hailing as a success—how much has been accomplished? The Syrian Government has delivered less than 5 percent of its deadliest chemical weapons agents to international authorities so far. This is a quote from an L.A. Times story:

> Syria unlikely to meet deadline on its deadliest chemical agents. President Bashar Assad's government has delivered less than 5 percent of its deadliest chemical weapons agents. The deadline is next week.

So even this claim about chemical weapons being removed does not bear scrutiny. But far, far, far more important—far more important, I say—is that if we got rid of the chemical weapons Bashar al-Assad had, that would not change the equation on the ground. I am sure a Syrian mother cannot differentiate very well if her child is killed by a chemical weapon, a barrel bomb or is starved to death, as 120,000 men, women, and children have met that fate.

It is unbelievable. Now we are watching a charade take place in Geneva, and that of course has turned into a farce. Anybody who believes that Bashar al-Assad is going to willingly leave office, when he is winning the battle on the ground, obviously has no idea of the nature of Bashar Assad.

Again, the slaughter goes on, and one of the huge aspects of this happens to be the fact that it is no longer a civil war. I would remind my colleagues this conflict began because in homes there were some children who wrote some anti-Assad graffiti on the wall. They were rounded up by Assad's police and were tortured and beaten, and that began an Arab spring in Syria. That spread throughout the country and now has spread throughout the region.

As I just said, the Iraq-Syria border is now Al Qaeda. It is now controlled by them. The Iranians are all in, with 5,000 Hezbollah; Lebanon is destabilized; Jordan is overwhelmed by refugees; Turkey is even under strain; 100,000-some refugees are even in Kurdistan. It has turned into a regional conflict and one which, sooner or later, will finally erupt into a major conflict which is going to affect the United States of America.

The President of the United States may want to leave the Middle East alone, but I can assure my colleagues the Middle East will not leave America alone. Look at the statement made just today by our Director of National Intelligence who said that al-Nusra, an affiliate of Al Qaeda, is planning attacks on the United States of America.

The President said: Finally, let's remember that our leadership is defined not just by our defense against threats but by the enormous opportunities to do good and promote understandings around the globe, and no one is better positioned to take advantage of those opportunities than America.

I couldn't agree more. But when the United States is viewed by the world, particularly the Middle East, as weak, withdrawing, no longer involved or trying to disengage, then I am not sure we can have the effects the President outlined in his State of the Union speech.

I think it is very clear that a seminal moment, as far as the entire Middle East is concerned, was when the President of the United States said that because Bashar Assad had crossed the red line in the use of chemical weapons—there was indisputable evidence that 1,400 men, women, and children had been killed in chemical weapons attacks—we were going to have to enact strikes against Bashar Assad in Syria. A few days later, our Secretary of State, in one of the more incredible statements I have ever heard—said: Yeah, but the strike will be ''unbelievably small.'' I am not making that up. He said the strike would be ''unbelievably small.''

That must have really frightened the Syrians when they heard that any military strikes would be ''unbelievably small.''

The President of the United States then, without informing our allies—specifically the Saudis—according to published reports, took a 45-minute walk with his Chief of Staff and then decided he would go to the Congress of the United States for permission or for ratification of any attack he might make, and, obviously, that wasn't going to happen.

I say to my colleagues, I travel a lot in the Middle East. I can tell you—and I would even name names but not on the record—that at that moment our allies lost confidence, they lost belief in the United States. We are now watching countries in the region openly stating—for example, the Saudi Arabians refusing a seat on the National Security Council of the United Nations—and this is published everywhere—they no longer believe in the United States of America.

By the way, one of the other aspects of this, and there are many, is a Washington Post story of this morning:

> Europeans are flocking to the war in Syria. What happens when they come home?

The story is about a couple of people who went from England.

> The distress among security officials is pervasive in European capitals and in Washington. U.S. Intelligence Chief James R. Clapper, Jr. told a congressional panel Wednesday that the Syrian war had attracted about 7,000 foreign fighters from as many as 50 nations and that at least one of the main jihadist groups in Syria aspires to carry out an attack in the United States. But Europe is a far closer and more accessible target. The International Center for the Study of Radicalization estimated last month that nearly 2,000 Western Europeans had traveled to Syria to fight and that the number was rising fast.

Continuing to quote from the article:

> French officials say 700 came from France. French Interior Minister Manuel Valls asserted this month that returning fighters represent ''the biggest threat the country faces in the coming years.'' The anxiety has been especially acute in Britain, where memories are still fresh of the July 2005 transit bombings. These attacks, which claimed 52 lives, were carried out by homegrown radicals, at least two of whom had received training in Pakistan. ''The penny hasn't dropped. But Syria is a game-changer,'' Richard Walton, who leads counterterrorism efforts at Scotland Yard, told the Evening Standard newspaper. ''We are seeing it every day. You have hundreds of people going to Syria, and if they don't get killed they get radicalized.''

So we are in a situation of failed leadership over the last 5 years and the chickens, unfortunately, are beginning to come home to roost. When the President of the United States, in his address to the Nation, describes things in the Middle East as he did, I think it is very, very, very unfortunate because that does not comport with the actual facts on the ground.

I say to my colleagues, the American people no longer believe our mission in Iraq and Afghanistan was the right thing to do. I can tell my constituents that in 2008 things were very different. The surge had worked. We were gradually withdrawing from Syria. We had the Taliban in Afghanistan largely under control. In Syria, Bashar Assad was losing. Now the terrain throughout the Middle East is dramatically different.

As much as I regret to say, it is my obligation to tell my constituents my view; that is, we have very, very difficult times ahead. I do not like to predict that bad things are going to happen, but right now I don't see how they can be avoided.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from North Dakota.

Ms. HEITKAMP. Mr. President, the number one priority for any Senator from North Dakota is the passage of a 5-year farm bill.

When I was campaigning across North Dakota, I reminded my constituents that in spite of this wonderful energy renaissance we have going on in North Dakota, over 90 percent of all the land in my State is engaged in production agriculture.

It makes this farm bill so critically important to the economy not only of my State but the economy of this country. Sixteen million jobs depend in this country on the passage of a farm bill which provides producers with risk management opportunities that make their farm work sustainable and make their continuation in production agriculture economically possible.

So it is a good week for North Dakotans. Today we passed the flood insurance bill which will prohibit draconian and very dramatic increases in flood insurance prices from affecting my State. But also we are on the cusp and terribly close to doing something we have waited so long to do, and that is to pass a 5-year farm bill.

I will talk in general about some of the things this farm bill does, but I wish to focus my attention on two areas not a lot of people have come to the floor to talk about, and those are the provisions for beginning farmers and ranchers and the importance of the livestock provisions in the farm bill.

The farm bill achieves the goals that put our agricultural system in a strong position to continue this country's role as a world leader in production agriculture. This is achieved through an effective farm program for growers, livestock disaster coverage for ranchers and livestock producers, enhanced crop insurance offerings, expanded agricultural research, and increased export promotion for agricultural products.

We have been void in our balance of trade by the inclusion of agricultural products and by what we do on the farm that has made a difference to that trade deficit: critical investments in biofuels which help build a stronger, more vibrant, and more resilient energy policy in our State; renewal of a sugar program to prevent excess imports of unfairly subsidized imported and foreign sugar; and targeted conservation assistance to tackle unique challenges, particularly in my State and the Red River Valley and in Devil's Lake. But I will tell a little story.

For years I have been going to farm producer meetings. During my time as a State official in North Dakota, I spent a lot of time at the Farm Bureau, a lot of time at the Farmers Union, with corn growers and soybean growers, and getting to know and understand agricultural work on tax and regulatory issues. I always felt as if I was the youngest person in the room that whole while, and I was in my 30s and 40s. I would walk into a room and feel young. That has really been true.

I had a really wonderful experience when I was back home this last trip. I went to something called Precision Agriculture, which is a special conference the Farmers Union hosts for North Dakota's NDSU Extension, where they look at using different kinds of new technologies, whether they are application technologies to be more efficient in how we use fertilizers and seeds or whether it is finding an ap that gives us more information for marketing. You name it. The Precision Agriculture conference has gotten bigger and bigger.

But why I point that out and talk about it is that as I stood at the podium and took one look, I said: I want everybody under the age of 45 to stand up. Well over half of my audience stood up. That has never before happened in the 30 years I have been involved in public policy in North Dakota.

Young farmers are coming back to the farm. Young farmers are engaging at levels with technological developments and techniques that heretofore were not available and really weren't trusted maybe by an older generation.

So now we have this new generation of producers who are going to do one of the most important things that we do in this country, which is to feed our people and literally to feed the world. They are willing to do that. They are willing to risk and make incredible investments on the farm, whether it is land prices or equipment prices or whether it is betting the entire farm that you are not going to get hailed out. This farm bill is critical, first and foremost, to making sure that risk is mitigated by a crop insurance program which works for those young farmers.

I will outline just very briefly what those beginning farmer and beginning rancher programs are in this farm bill.

While this is changing, according to the Department of Agriculture's most recent census, the average age of American farmers is 57 years old; a quarter of American farmers are over the age of 65. Now, in North Dakota that dynamic is changing, as I have just outlined. But the 2014 farm bill makes critical investments to ensure that this next generation of farmers has an opportunity to enter the field by overcoming the high capital constraints and low production histories that make those early years the most difficult.

The program continues and funds the beginning farmer and rancher development program which develops and offers education, training, outreach, and mentoring programs to ensure the success of the next generation of farmers. The bill expands eligibility to include military veterans who wish to begin a career in agriculture.

The 2008 farm bill had $75 million for this program with 5 years mandatory. The 2014 bill ups that amount to $100 million, recognizing the need that we have to create that next generation of producers.

The 2014 farm bill prioritizes beginning farmers across USDA programs. The Department of Agriculture is required to prioritize beginning farmers to ensure they have access to USDA programs. The bill continues to set aside loan funds for both the beginning and socially disadvantaged farmers who struggle to find credit someplace else.

There are also 5-percent set-asides in the environmental quality incentive program and the conservation stewardship program to make sure that beginning farmers and ranchers have fair and equitable access to conservation programs.

This new farm bill increases access to capital for new farmers and ranchers. The bill makes significant strides in increasing lending to beginning farmers by expanding eligibility, removing term limits on guaranteed lending, and strengthening microloan programs that serve those beginning farmers.

This farm bill encourages older farmers to help beginning farmers through conservation. The bill reauthorizes the Conservation Reserve Program Transition Incentive Program, which gives 2 extra years of CRP to retiring farmers who transition their expiring CRP lands to beginning farmers. This program has seen great success with retiring farmers who want to help the next generation get started.

This new farm bill helps beginning farmers buy land. The bill reauthorized the contract land sales program, which guarantees loan payments to retiring farmers who sell their cropland to beginning farmers. It also continues the down payment loan program which allows young farmers without much money to start investments and down payments on a farm or a ranch. The borrower makes a cash down payment of at least 5 percent of the total cost, and the government provides a low-interest loan for 45 percent of the payment.

This new farm bill invests in value-added strategies that are especially important to these new farmers, value-added grants encouraging independent producers to process raw products into marketable goods, adding value and increasing farm income. Beginning farmers will continue to be given a high priority in this program.

It helps beginning farmers plan in the early years. The bill continues the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Individual Development Accounts, which are designed to help new farmers finance their agricultural pursuits.

So this is for the next generation who looks and says: Is there opportunity in being a farmer? Can farmers not only work there, but can they own

the land and continue our rich and strong tradition of family farming?

I think the answer is yes. This is a farm program that offers them that opportunity that says: Yes, the United States and its people are willing to invest in your future.

Finally, I wish to talk about the importance of the livestock provisions. Livestock production is hugely important to North Dakota. Are we the largest livestock producer in the United States of America? That would not be true. But for my ranchers out west, this is a critically important program. This is a program which says to the ranchers: We recognize that not everybody who is engaged in production agriculture is engaged in producing crops or specialty crops. Those who herd cattle and work cattle and work as hard as any group of people I know deserve some attention in this farm bill.

If there ever was an example of where we needed to do something more for our beginning ranchers, the early snow storm of 2013 is it, where people literally lost their entire herd. For those who maybe don't have a lot of expertise, understand this: One cow is not interchangeable. Many of these families over the years, through genetics and through selective breeding, have in fact built the herd—built a herd unique to their ranch—and they lost it all.

When they turned to us and said: What is there to help us? We had to say: Nothing.

If you get hailed out and have crop insurance, there is help. If you have a major disaster and can't plant, there is help.

But what is there for us? We had to say ''nothing,'' because we hadn't done a farm bill on a timely basis, and there was no help for those farmers.

This farm bill is retroactive. It is going to help those farmers who not only experience loss in the future but who have experienced loss since October of 2011. We are on our way to fulfilling the commitment that all of us made who came to the floor in October and talked about that terrible storm.

The 2014 farm bill includes exactly the type of pro-rancher policies I wanted Washington to produce. Not only does the bill include important livestock disaster programs; the bill also continues the widely popular and beneficial program called country of origin labeling—or COOL—policy which for years has been fought for by ranching families in North Dakota.

Additionally, the farm bill allows USDA in future years to move forward with livestock competition rules to provide transparent pricing for cow-calf operators in my State and elsewhere.

Finally, the farm bill provides targeted conservation and research programs for the support of cattle, pork, and poultry industries so they can better assess the challenges facing livestock production.

I get a lot of questions even in my State. Why should anyone support the farm program? Aren't things pretty good out there on the farm? I will say, over 4 million acres in North Dakota alone could not be planted this last crop season because of high water. That means the difference between a family farmer staying in business and not staying in business. But importantly, for all of America, this means we have a crop production system which feeds our country.

I tell people, let's think about things from the standpoint of value-added. What does that mean? New wealth doesn't come when you go to the retail store and buy a shirt or a new coat. That is not new wealth. We are just taking money which has been generated someplace else and circulating it in the economy. New wealth is created particularly in extractive industries such as oil and gas, coal mining, and it is created in agriculture. It is the quintessential new wealth creator. From the hard work of those producers in America grows an entire economy that fuels the opportunity for 16 million jobs.

In my State of North Dakota, I was recently talking to a plant worker who works at the KSHI plant who explained to someone that his top priority for his workers was the passage of a farm bill. They said: Why would you care about the passage of a farm bill?

He said: Don't you get it? If the farmers aren't doing well, we aren't producing tractors. We are not producing what we need to produce.

I want everyone to understand that this is not a farm bill just for States such as North Dakota and Minnesota. This is a farm bill for the entire world—to feed the entire world. It is also a farm bill that provides new wealth creation that encourages the growth of 16 million jobs.

I will close with one final thought. We talk about food, fiber, and fuel—the three things we talk about when we talk about agricultural products. But we know that in the applied research we see in those great land-grant colleges—and our State has one of the best. It is called NDSU. They have the best football team in the history of forever. But let me tell you, it is also a great extension program and great agricultural research center.

They are doing amazing work at NDSU in polymer research. They are looking at biodegradable coatings and paints. We know that advanced manufacturing is the next step we are going to make in agriculture, and we are going to do everything we can to make sure that those products are sustainable and that those products are safe to use for our people and for our animals.

I encourage all of my colleagues to support this farm program so we can make sure we keep 16 million people working and that we have that next generation of beginning farmers and beginning ranchers who are producing food for our country and food for the world.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. HIRONO). The Senator from Alabama.

Mr. SESSIONS. Madam President, I thank the Chair and thank Senator KLOBUCHAR for allowing me to go ahead of her. I ask to be notified after 10 minutes.

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

YUCCA MOUNTAIN

Mr. SESSIONS. Madam President, I wish to talk about recent rulings in the Yucca Mountain repository litigation. I am ranking member of the Environment and Public Works Subcommittee on the Clean Air and Nuclear Safety. This is a matter I have followed closely. Our committee had a hearing this morning with the entire Nuclear Regulatory Commission and its new Chairman. These decisions are not simply political decisions, of course, they are legal decisions that adjudicated certain legal disputes that have been simmering for a number of years. The court's judgments were founded on law, not politics or nuclear policy. It adjudicated certain contested legal matters. From my perspective, it was an affirmation of plain law against plain defiance of law, and the court made that clear.

Last August the DC Circuit—in the case of in re: Aiken County—rendered a decision that provided a clear legal victory to proponents of nuclear energy in America. More important, it was a victory for the rule of law and the U.S. taxpayer and a victory for the rightful power of Congress to adjudicate and legislate on energy policy. The judgment also rendered a resounding defeat for the policies advocated by the current administration, the majority leader of the Senate, and other politicians who have worked for years to thwart the law by refusing or blocking actions to implement the Nuclear Waste Policy Act, which is the law of the land.

More recently, in November of 2013, the DC Circuit issued another ruling in the case of the National Association of Regulatory Utility Commissioners v. United States Department of Energy. These Commissioners around the United States sued the Department of Energy. These Commissioners represent our States. That court found that the current administration—the Obama administration—has been ignoring the Nuclear Waste Policy Act.

The DC Circuit ordered the Energy Department to stop charging U.S. ratepayers $750 million a year in nuclear waste fees until the Federal Government complies with the Nuclear Waste Policy Act.

As a result, on January 3, just a few weeks ago, the Secretary of Energy was forced to formally submit a proposal to Congress to reduce the nuclear waste fee to zero—to end the fee—while at the same time asking the DC Circuit to reconsider the ruling it has rendered, which I don't think it will.

Taken together, these two rulings vindicate the concerns that many of us have raised since 2009 about the lawless

actions of this administration in failing to deal with our Nation's nuclear waste in the manner required by law.

I hear from people all the time who wonder how in the world the President doesn't comply with the law. He amends the health care act and does other things that most Americans are just taken aback by. They can't imagine how he is not bound by law like everyone else, and, of course, he is. Indeed, he takes an oath to ensure that the laws of the United States are faithfully carried out.

I am currently serving as the Ranking member of the Senate Subcommittee on Clean Air and Nuclear Safety, which has oversight jurisdiction with respect to the Nuclear Regulatory Commission, and I have been looking closely at this matter. The Administration's lawless actions regarding nuclear energy, supported by the Senate Majority Leader, are deeply disturbing and contrary to a sound national energy policy. No one Senator, no matter how prominent, can overrule established law.

The background: Over 30 years ago Congress passed the Nuclear Waste Policy Act to require the Federal Government to accept nuclear waste from commercial nuclear reactors around the country with the objective of safely storing it in a single, permanent, geologic repository that is safe and secure.

A recent report entitled ''Yucca Mountain: A Post-Mortem'' in The New Atlantis provides some important statistics. It is estimated that, today, the U.S. has accumulated over 65,000 metric tons of spent nuclear fuel, which is enough waste to ''cover one football field to a depth of approximately 20 feet.'' That number is expected to more than double by 2055. This nuclear waste is currently stored at 75 sites spread across 33 states. The 8 states with the most spent nuclear fuel are Illinois, Pennsylvania, North Carolina, New York, Alabama, California, Florida and South Carolina.

This report also recognizes that ''there is broad consensus among scientists from around the world'' that geologic disposal is ''the best available option for permanent disposal of spent nuclear fuel and high-level radioactive waste . . . '' This is not a surprising conclusion, as Congress determined decades ago that it is in the national interest to safely and securely dispose of nuclear waste deep underground far from populated areas. It is difficult to imagine a better location for such a repository than Yucca Mountain, NV, the remote site that has been selected by Congress.

Congress also created the Nuclear Waste Fund to collect the fees that were extracted from the nuclear power electric-generating companies. Money is taken from them, which they take from the ratepayers, and that money was to be used to cover the cost of this program. So far the Federal Government has collected $25 billion for this fund at a rate of about $750 million a year.

In 1987, the Congress passed—and President Reagan signed—a law that amended the Nuclear Waste Policy Act by officially designating Yucca Mountain, NV, as the Nation's geologic repository for spent nuclear fuel.

In July of 2002, Congress overrode Nevada's objections. Their representatives didn't like it, although I would note the area of Nevada where this facility is to be in place strongly supports it and they opposed Nevada leaders who opposed building it.

Congress overrode the objections and passed a joint resolution that said:

> Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, that there hereby is approved the site at Yucca Mountain, Nevada, for a repository. . . .

An extensive scientific evaluation process ensued, culminating in the Energy Department determination, in an Environmental Impact Statement, that Yucca Mountain is an appropriate site for the safe, long-term geological storage of nuclear waste. Yucca Mountain is perhaps, according to a 2006 report by the Senate Committee on Environment and Public Works, ''the most studied real estate on the planet.''

In 2008, the U.S. Energy Department submitted to the Nuclear Regulatory Commission an 8,600-page application for authorization to construct the repository. It discussed every possible complaint and concern that could be raised, analyzing all the issues.

Section 114 of the act states that once the application is received by the Nuclear Regulatory Commission, it ''shall issue a final decision approving or disapproving the issuance of a construction authorization not later than the expiration of 3 years after the date of the submission of such application. . . . '' That was in 2008, and they have not rendered a decision since.

This means the NRC is under a clear legal duty—as set out in statute, passed by Congress, signed by the President—to promptly complete the licensing process for Yucca.

Regrettably, in 2009, the Obama administration and its allies orchestrated a complex scheme to ignore the law, to control the Nuclear Regulatory Commission, and shut down the Yucca mountain process.

How was this done? Here is how the Federal circuit court judge—Judge Raymond Randolph—described the administration's scheme. This is dramatic and crystal clear language. It blows the whistle on one of the most significant obstructions of law that I have seen during my time in Washington.

This is what the judge ruled:

> Former (NRC) Chairman Gregory Jaczko orchestrated a systematic campaign of noncompliance. Jaczko unilaterally ordered commission staff to terminate the [Yucca] review process in October 2010; instructed staff to remove key findings from reports evaluating the Yucca Mountain site; and ignored the will of his fellow commissioners.

That is a dramatic indictment of Mr. Jaczko's leadership. I would note parenthetically that Mr. Jaczko was the choice of Majority Leader REID. He worked on Senator REID's staff, and he insisted that Mr. Jaczko be made the Chairman of the Commission.

Here is how the Board of County Commissioners of Nye County, Nevada—where Yucca Mountain is located and which strongly supports completion of the repository—explained it. They wrote in a recent letter that the Yucca repository has been ''hijacked by the politics of a single powerful senator and what some view as complicity by the NRC Chairman [Mr. Jaczko].''

Beginning in 2009, now former Chairman Jaczko was able to effectively block any further progress on Yucca Mountain; that is, until the DC Circuit finally ruled in August of last year that those actions were in clear violation of the law, which was an important victory for the rule of law and for the power of Congress.

In its ruling, the DC Circuit determined that ''the [NRC] has continued to violate the law governing the Yucca Mountain licensing process.''

The court then highlighted that the NRC had gone well beyond missing the statutory deadline for completing its review of the licensing application. Recognizing that ''Congress has not altered the legal landscape''; that is, Congress has not amended the Nuclear Waste Policy Act; the court explained that the Nuclear Regulatory Commission is ''simply flouting the law.''

The court also observed that, under Article II of the Constitution, ''the President must follow statutory mandates so long as there is appropriated money available and the President has no constitutional objection to the statute . . . '' The court stated that ''the President may not decline to follow a statutory mandate or prohibition because of policy objections . . . '' That is, ''absent a lack of funds or a claim of unconstitutionality that has not been rejected by final Court order, the Executive [and its agencies] must abide by statutory mandates and prohibitions.''

The court further explained: ''It is no overstatement to say that our constitutional system of separation of powers would be significantly altered if we were to allow executive and independent agencies to disregard federal law in the manner asserted in this case by the NRC.'' On this basis, the court granted the request of the plaintiffs in the case for a ''writ of mandamus against the NRC.'' This is a writ that is rarely issued that orders a governmental body to comply with the law. It held that the NRC ''must promptly continue with the legally mandated licensing process.'' This was an important victory for the American constitutional order.

Completing Yucca has big implications for the Federal budget. As the ranking member of the Budget Committee, I believe we need to watch every dime we raise and spend. We have already spent, amazingly, $15 billion—

according to the Government Accountability Office—evaluating Yucca and other sites and doing work at the site.

We have already paid $2 billion as of January 2012 for claims resulting from the Government's failure to deal with the waste issue; in other words, people have sued and made claims against the government for not fulfilling its obligation to build this site, and we have already paid out $2 billion. It is a shame people can't be held individually responsible for obstructing the law and causing the Federal taxpayers to pay out $2 billion.

According to the Congressional Research Service, the Federal Government's total liability for breach of contract claims from the failure to resolve the waste issue could reach $50 billion. The government agreed and set up a method to receive this waste. The electric utility companies that generate nuclear power are now being forced—for decades—to keep the waste onsite at great expense, even though they paid billions of dollars into the fund to make sure it is taken care of at a single site.

With this important court victory, we may hope and expect that the Nation's nuclear waste program can be put back on track, and it is hurting right now. The costs are real, and they fall on virtually all Americans.

On October 28, the DC Circuit denied the NRC's petition for rehearing en banc. So the writ of mandamus stands. And, on November 19, 2013, the DC Circuit rendered another important decision in this arena. The court found the Energy Department in non-compliance with the Nuclear Waste Policy Act and ordered the Secretary of Energy to ''submit to Congress a proposal to change the [nuclear waste] fee to zero until such a time as either the secretary chooses to comply with the [Nuclear Waste Policy Act] as it is currently written, or until Congress enacts an alternative waste management fee.''

In response, on January 3, 2014, the Energy Secretary submitted a proposal to Congress to zero-out the nuclear waste fee. Pursuant to the Nuclear Waste Policy Act, 42 U.S.C. Section 10222(a)(4), this proposal ''shall be effective after a period of 90 days of continuous session have elapsed following the receipt of such transmittal . . .''

Now an important question is, how will the NRC respond? Our nation derives almost 20 percent of the electricity needed to drive the economy through nuclear power, which is a clean, safe, and affordable source of energy. The failure of this Administration to deal with the issue of nuclear waste disposal over the last 5 years has posed a serious threat to the future viability of nuclear power. As a recent report by the Heritage Foundation, entitled ''Obama Administration: No Confidence in Nuclear Energy,'' explains:

> President Obama's decision to abandon plans for removing the waste to the Yucca Mountain repository in Nevada creates an uncertainty that could be a barrier to the expansion of nuclear power.

So, this issue is critical to the future of nuclear power in America. We need to get this waste repository issue settled, and I believe the NRC should expeditiously proceed with the Yucca license proceeding in an independent manner worthy of the important task they have been assigned. I am hopeful that if we do so, we may have turned a final corner.

I received a letter dated October 23rd from the current NRC Chairman, Dr. Allison Macfarlane, providing a copy of the NRC's first monthly status report concerning compliance with the DC Circuit ruling and explaining that the NRC ''will deliberate and determine the various activities that might compose the agency's response to the court's decision.'' A day later, on October 24th, I was joined by Senate EPW ranking member DAVID VITTER and all Republican subcommittee members in sending a letter to Dr. Macfarlane, urging the NRC to ''comply expeditiously'' with the DC Circuit's decision and explaining that ''the next step in this legally mandated licensing process is for the NRC to complete the [Safety Evaluation Reports]'' for the Yucca site.

On November 18, 2013, the NRC approved an order directing the NRC staff to implement the DC Circuit ruling by completing the Safety Evaluation Reports for Yucca Mountain. This is an important and crucial step in the process. I have, since, received other NRC reports dated December 18, 2013, and January 24, 2014, describing activities related to Yucca Mountain. The NRC has asked the Energy Department to prepare the supplemental environmental documents that are needed to move forward with the licensing process. It is my expectation that the Secretary of Energy will act promptly to provide the necessary information and support and to avoid the kinds of political schemes and unlawful acts that have previously derailed the Yucca process.

According to the NRC, the Energy Department has more than $15 million in funds that could be used to support Yucca-related efforts, and an additional $18 million that could potentially become available for these purposes. The most recent report from the NRC explains that ''completion of the [Yucca Mountain safety report] is scheduled to take approximately 12 months, ending in January 2015,'' and that available funds are sufficient to complete this task.

The NRC Chairman and other Commissioners must follow the law in this matter. During her confirmation process earlier this year, Dr. Macfarlane affirmed a strong commitment to the ''independence'' and ''impartiality'' of the NRC and pledged to defend those principles. For instance, in her responses to my questions during her confirmation process, she unequivocally agreed with me that the NRC ''should not allow political meddling from Congress or other parts of the executive branch to interfere with the NRC's independent decision-making processes.'' She committed to ''zealously guard the independence of the NRC and oppose any efforts to undermine it.''

During her confirmation, she also correctly recognized that the ''responsibility for establishing a nuclear waste policy resides with Congress,'' and she acknowledged that the ''NRC currently has approximately $11.1 million in unobligated carryover funds (and $2.5 million in obligated, unexpended carryover funds) appropriated from the Nuclear Waste Fund'' and that these funds ''could be used for a variety of activities related to the Yucca Mountain project, including the completion of the technical licensing review.''

We will be watching this process closely. I know that the leadership in the House of Representatives will be watching as well. In a letter dated August 23, 2013, the House Energy & Commerce Committee Chairman, FRED UPTON, and Environment & Energy Subcommittee Chairman, JOHN SHIMKUS, wrote to the NRC, stating:

> [I]t is our expectation that the NRC's first action to implement the Court's decision will be to diligently resume its review of the license application, complete the [Safety Report], and issue it publicly. Our country has invested 30 years and $15 billion in determining whether Yucca Mountain would be a safe repository. The NRC is this nation's nuclear safety regulator and its reputation for independence and objectivity rests on its transparency in this matter. As such, NRC's objective, scientific findings regarding the safety of Yucca Mountain would provide the public an independent, authoritative assessment of this important project.

I agree with Chairman UPTON and Subcommittee Chairman SHIMKUS. In particular, the NRC should know that Congress will watch closely to make sure that costs associated with completing the safety report for Yucca Mountain are appropriate and in line with earlier estimates.

Importantly, the NRC should already have all documentation necessary for this process ready and available. In December 2011, I joined Senator MARK KIRK and eight other Senate colleagues in a letter to the NRC and Energy Department about Yucca Mountain. That letter—sent over 2 years ago—was out of a deep concern that we had that the Administration was purposefully jeopardizing the ability for future consideration of the Yucca Mountain application by failing to adequately preserve scientific information and other records. We explained that ''preserving the historical records and all scientific documents relating to Yucca Mountain is important to the nation's long-term goal of achieving a permanent solution to our nation's accumulating nuclear waste.''

In that letter, we also explained:

> Yucca Mountain is one of the most extensive research and development investments this country has ever undertaken. More than

$14 billion of taxpayer money and nearly 25 years of scientific research, data collection, geological characterization and evidence was collected to study the Yucca Mountain facility.

In March 2012, former NRC Chairman Gregory Jaczko responded to our letter, stating: ''The NRC documents relating to the Yucca Mountain Program . . . will continue to be retained as permanent records . . .''

I will note that the members of the board are good people, and I think the new chairman, Dr. Macfarlane, is going to try to do a much better job. But it was unbelievable how the former Chairman was able to obstruct Federal law.

The NRC should be able to proceed promptly with completing the licensing process. But if they fail to do so, the NRC Chairman, or the entire Commission, could be held in contempt of court and appropriate sanctions could be issued by the court, and should be, if they fail, and that was discussed this morning at the hearing. The Commission says they are going to move forward. They say they don't have as much money as they would like to have. They haven't asked for more money. They have a duty to fix this problem and deal with it, and if they need more money, they should ask Congress for it.

After all of these years and the money spent, a contempt citation would be a colossal failure and a tremendous embarrassment, and it would be the result of a willful failure to follow the clear responsibility of law.

In conclusion, I believe the DC Circuit's recent rulings concerning the Nuclear Waste Policy Act have made an important contribution to the Rule of Law in the United States and to the future of nuclear power. In Congress, there is strong bipartisan support for completing the Yucca license review process. In 2012, the House voted overwhelmingly, 326–81, in favor of appropriating the funds necessary for the NRC to continue the Yucca licensing process. Then, in July of 2013, the House soundly defeated an amendment offered by a member from Nevada that would cut funding for the Yucca licensing process. That amendment failed by a vote of 335–81.

Last July, Representatives FRED UPTON (R–MI) and JOHN DINGELL (D–MI), chairman and chairman emeritus, respectively, of the House Energy and Commerce Committee, authored an editorial entitled ''Decision on Yucca Mountain Overdue.'' They wrote:

> Congress passed the Nuclear Waste Policy Act of 1982 to establish a deliberate, collaborative and mandatory process to site, license, build and operate a national permanent nuclear waste repository. The act obliges the federal government to safely dispose of high-level nuclear defense waste and commercial spent fuel from power plants. Electricity consumers and taxpayers have paid approximately $15 billion to determine if the Yucca Mountain site in Nevada would be a safe repository. The [NRC] owes them an answer.

I couldn't agree more. With the benefit of the DC Circuit rulings in August and November of last year, which so clearly stated the Administration's duties under law, Congress must not accept any further delay in the Yucca Mountain license process.

I thank the Chair, and I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Minnesota.

LUGER NOMINATION

Ms. KLOBUCHAR. Madam President, I thank my colleague from Alabama for making his remarks a bit briefer, and I thank him as well for accompanying me to the State of the Union Address 2 nights ago.

I rise today to urge a vote in the U.S. Senate to confirm the nominee to be Minnesota's next U.S. attorney. I see my colleague and friend from Iowa here, Senator GRASSLEY, who has been working hard on his good nominee as well for Iowa, and we have been working on this together.

When we look at the extraordinary circumstances under which the U.S. Attorney's Office for the District of Minnesota has been operating, it will be clear why a vote on this nomination and getting this done is so important.

For 2½ years—883 days—Minnesota has not had a full-time U.S. attorney. During those years, from August 2011 to August 2013, Todd Jones was responsible for doing two jobs as the Minnesota U.S. attorney and as the Acting Director of the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives. I would note, as Senator GRASSLEY has pointed out, it has been a difficult time in the office. While they continue to do good work, in part because the U.S. attorney's office in Minnesota has great prosecutors, they did not have a full-time manager during this time, pending the approval of the ATF job and during the appointment time.

Over the summer, the Senate, as the Presiding Officer knows, confirmed Todd Jones as the Director of the ATF—the first permanent Director in 7 years—leaving the Minnesota U.S. attorney's position open. Senator FRANKEN and I, in consultation with getting a recommendation from a bipartisan U.S. Attorney Advisory Committee, which included the former Republican-appointed U.S. attorney under both the first George Bush and the second George Bush, who served on our advisory board, we recommended Andy Luger, a respected litigator and former assistant U.S. attorney, to fill the position. We recommended him 191 days ago.

It has now been about 6 months—183 days—since Director Jones left and we still do not have a permanent, full-time U.S. attorney. Minnesota needs a full-time U.S. attorney. It is a major jurisdiction. Andy Luger has the experience and know-how necessary to do this job well.

From his days fighting white-collar crime as an assistant U.S. attorney to his work with Minnesota law enforcement to help improve their gang-fighting strategy, Andy has earned the respect of the legal and law enforcement communities. Throughout his career, he has proven to be a tireless advocate for the people of Minnesota.

As an assistant U.S. attorney, he successfully prosecuted organized crime, drug and white-collar cases. This included the prosecution of a $150 million national real estate and investment fraud case, leading to the longest white-collar sentence in the United States at that time. In 2009, he was appointed by the Minnesota Commissioner of Public Safety to lead an investigation into the Metro Gang Strike Force and uncovered a series of problems with the unit. He recommended that the unit be disbanded and replaced by other law enforcement efforts and it was, in fact, abolished.

In fact, a Star Tribune editorial said that Andy's review of the strike force made ''smart recommendations about The Twin Cities' next generation gang-fighting strategy'' and that his report included ''welcome measures to begin the long process of rebuilding the public's trust.''

Andy is well respected in the law enforcement community. I can tell my colleagues that after we made the recommendation to the President, I got nothing but positive words from police chiefs and others who are excited about him in this job. He is committed to building and maintaining strong working relationships and partnerships between Federal and local law enforcement.

In addition to his many years as a Federal prosecutor, Andy has had a distinguished career in private practice. He is currently a partner at the Greene Espel law firm where he is well regarded as a highly skilled trial lawyer focused on business litigation, representing businesses and white-collar defense. He has been selected as one of Minnesota's Top 100 ''Super Lawyers'' for the past 10 years and as one of the ''Best Lawyers in America'' for the past 4 years. He clearly has the experience, character, and drive to lead such a premier law enforcement agency as the Minnesota U.S. attorney's office.

The Minnesota U.S. attorney's office represents the United States with professionalism, high ethical standards, and an unwavering commitment to the safety of our community. These prosecutors work to protect public safety by focusing on the offenders who do the most harm to the community—terrorists, the ''worst of the worst'' violent criminals, drug traffickers, and major financial fraudsters. They also work closely with local law enforcement to ensure local and Federal resources are used efficiently and effectively.

I personally know this after having served as the chief prosecutor for Minnesota's largest county, Hennepin County, for 8 years, and I worked daily with our U.S. attorney. We would discuss which office would handle cases. During the Moussaoui investigation, as people recall, we got in Minnesota the hijacker who survived, the guy who

threatened to learn how to down a plane and was caught and imprisoned, and that came out of Minnesota immediately after 9/11. The office was very focused on the terrorism investigation and my office stepped in and took some major white-collar cases to help out. We have a tradition of working together throughout the years, and that is why this office is so important to me.

Example: The office won a conviction in a $3.65 billion Ponzi scheme, the second biggest Ponzi scheme in U.S. history. It has an ongoing terrorism investigation that has led to charges against 18 people for aiding the terrorist organization Shabaad, 8 of whom have been convicted, some receiving sentences of up to 20 years in prison. If one can imagine this, they are conducting major terrorism investigations and prosecutions, and we need a full-time U.S. attorney to make decisions and to be in charge.

Other major accomplishments include Operation Highlife, which was a major drug trafficking investigation involving more than 100 local, State, and Federal law enforcement officers and resulted in 26 indictments, 25 guilty pleas, and sentences up to 200 months in prison.

Operation Brother's Keeper was a successful investigation and prosecution of a RICO case involving a regional 200-member gang, which took 22 dangerous criminals off the street.

Operation Malverde received national attention with the prosecution of 27 defendants associated with a Mexican drug cartel, including the apprehension of the cartel regional leader, and sentences as high as 20 years in prison.

The office also recently played a key role in shutting down a major synthetic drug seller in Duluth. This head shop was a huge problem. The perpetrator has been convicted and is awaiting sentencing. They literally found over $700,000 in his bathroom hidden in small plastic bags. They went after this head shop. They prosecuted that guy. They won that case. They deserve a leader.

Andy Luger is the right person for this job. The Judiciary Committee agreed and reported out his nomination without objection on January 9. I appreciate the service of the Presiding Officer as well as Senator GRASSLEY, who is here, on our Judiciary Committee, and I appreciate the support for his nomination.

I also supported the nomination of the U.S. attorney from Iowa, and we know how important that job is as well.

This position of U.S. attorney was regarded by the Founders as so vital that they created it during the very first Congress; a position so crucial that it was born in the same law as the structure of the U.S. court; a position so necessary that President Zachary Taylor filled it within 2 days of Minnesota becoming a State.

In our case, for a variety of reasons—a variety of reasons—we have now gone 883 days without a full-time U.S. attorney. This is our moment. We need to move ahead on this nomination.

Again, I appreciate Senator GRASSLEY's help in moving these nominations forward. We have two U.S. attorneys, two Federal marshals. I can say that Andy is a dedicated public servant whose breadth of experience, strength of character, and commitment to justice make him a well-qualified candidate to serve as Minnesota's next U.S. attorney.

I don't think there are any objections to his nomination, but I urge my colleagues to support his confirmation and give this office the leader it deserves, as well as the district of Iowa.

Thank you very much, Madam President. I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Iowa.

THE FARM BILL

Mr. GRASSLEY. Madam President, I had a chance to listen to the Senator from Minnesota, and I come to speak on another subject, but I wish to assure her that we will get these two nominees and others across the finish line so the U.S. attorney for Minnesota can go to work, hopefully before we get many more days added to the 800 she has already talked about.

The farm bill process has been very long, very hard, and no doubt frustrating for all who have been involved. Some of us on the Senate agriculture committee have participated in two committee markups and two floor debates for this bill, and that is over a period of two Congresses. I voted for and supported the bill at every one of those junctures.

I believe our country needs a good farm policy, which means, of course, an adequate and yet limited safety net for farmers, because so much about farming is beyond the control of the farmers, and I am not talking just about natural disasters. Without a doubt, our farmers then face real, uncontrollable risks every year. The farm bill provides farmers, then, with a number of programs to mitigate risks.

Agriculture remains a changing industry. Unbelievable technological advancements are taking place right before our eyes. Farmers can now control irrigation equipment and monitor grain bins on the phone from the other side of the world. Agricultural technology is progressing so quickly. Five years from now, when we debate the next farm bill, autonomous tractors may well be doing a considerable amount of the field work in America.

Farm policy has also changed over time. Unfortunately, the majority of farm program benefits have started going to a concentrated number of farmers. The fact is 10 percent of the farmers—and those obviously would be the wealthy farmers—get 70 percent of the benefits from a farm bill. One reason for this is that the current farm policy offers farmers essentially unlimited subsidies if they hire the right lawyers. As a farmer, a citizen, and a legislator, I believe it is wrong to expect or even to allow the government to give unlimited support to my farm or any farm, especially since our country has a record $17 trillion national debt.

During the first full Senate farm debate in the summer of 2012—so the last Congress—my payment limit reforms were adopted by a vote of 75 to 24 here on the floor of this very body. During the first round of floor debate in the House in this Congress, Mr. FORTENBERRY from Nebraska offered the same reforms and they were adopted there in the House by a vote of 230 to 194. Congress has spoken, then, and overwhelmingly agrees in both bodies with my commonsense approach of limitations on the amount that one farming operation can get.

Wouldn't anyone think that policy, which is widely supported in both bodies of Congress and which saves taxpayers nearly $400 million, would be untouchable when it comes to a conference committee? The rules of this institution, the Senate, outline that. Senate rule XXVIII, if anyone would like to look it up. However, once again, behind closed doors, Washington decided to intentionally screw up common sense.

This conference bill increases the payments available through the countercyclical program—now called price loss coverage or PLC for short—by 150 percent compared to what this Congress had already agreed upon. I have yet to hear anyone tell me a single legitimate reason why that change could be made.

Additionally, the powers that be in this town have proven they learned nothing from the World Trade Organization Brazil cotton case. That dispute has resulted in the United States paying a $143 million fine per year to Brazilian cotton farmers because our farm program for cotton does not meet the rules of international trade. This farm bill doubles down on the same market distorting principles that brought us that very same trade dispute.

The original payment limit reforms that this Congress approved also eliminated abuses through what is commonly know as the ''actively engaged loophole.'' To sum up this loophole, it makes it very easy for nonfarmers to get farm subsidies—probably those who go to the extent to hire a lawyer. This results in the largest 10 percent of the farms then, as I said before, getting 70 percent of the farm program's benefits, as I have already mentioned.

Yet the conference committee, in another brazen act of manipulation, eliminates my simple enforceable reform. I happen to think that one nonfarming manager per entity is more than generous and over the years it has been much violated. So we just simply say it ought to be one nonfarm manager per farm and no more. But it has been a lot worse, and my language—the language accepted by this body—reformed that. But as I have indicated a

couple times, the conference committee took it out.

The language in the bill now says—instead of the way it passed the Senate and passed the House on the floor of the House—USDA will have the opportunity to review and fix the actively engaged loophole but only if they should choose so; in other words, the Secretary of Agriculture does not have to.

I happen to know that Secretary Vilsack is sympathetic to what I have been trying to accomplish, so maybe he will be able to make something good out of what I think is a very bad provision in this bill that might actually make it very difficult for him to do that.

Under this provision, USDA could have fixed this problem—or even under existing law, I should say—USDA could have fixed this problem at any point, since it is the result of their rulemaking. So giving, as the compromise does, the USDA power they already have and claiming reform happens to be a true—and true too often—example of a Washington hat trick.

The conferees did not stop at just kicking the decision over to the Department, they also tied the USDA's hands with unnecessary requirements that must be met before action can even be taken. That is why I say it is going to be difficult for Secretary Vilsack. I hope he can find ways to accomplish what I want to accomplish. As I said, I think that is where his heart is.

So I hope Secretary Vilsack, and I can even say the Obama administration, finally uses this authority to produce a strong, enforceable rule regarding the number of people who can be eligible for farm subsidies from taxpayers; in other words, people who are actually farming. I am certainly going to offer them my thoughts on this issue.

Maybe I should explain why I said even the Obama administration, beyond Secretary Vilsack. Because in this President's budget more than once and in the Bush budget more than once, Presidents—including this President—have suggested these reforms to save money. This year I said about $400 million. Actually, according to CBO, it is $387 million.

The Government Accountability Office released a report in October of 2013 that clearly outlines the problems with the actively engaged loophole. One farming partnership they highlighted was composed of 22 LLCs, with 20 different owners and 16 managers who got their eligibility through the actively engaged loophole.

So you understand why the bill that passed the Senate and the House said one manager. At least four of the managers I have referred to from that operation even live out of the State, while several others live in cities around the State well outside of commuting distance.

Additionally, just yesterday, it was reported that a large farming operation in the State of Illinois is being fined $5.3 million because they were exploiting taxpayers for farm subsidies. In this case, the government determined their business structure was intentionally designed to evade those payment limitations that are even in existing law with the exact fake entity structures my provisions would have nearly eliminated.

I wish to quote U.S. attorney Jim Lewis, who handled that case:

> We are pleased with this favorable resolution of the government's claims of misuse of farm subsidy programs. These programs are designed to help farmers withstand market price volatility and the intrinsic risks associated with farming from year to year. Any attempt to exploit the system to take more than one's fair share is an improper use of government funds that erodes the public confidence in such programs and threatens their continued viability.

End of comment of U.S. Attorney Jim Lewis, who won that case against these farmers, and they will be fined that $5.3 million.

I wish that U.S. attorney could have been part of the farm bill conference committee. His logic and expertise would have helped.

If a farm's business model depends on lawyers setting up complicated Mickey Mouse legal structures just to get more government subsidies, perhaps the owners of that entity are in the wrong business.

So my provisions would have limited subsidies going to a few thousand people who are very well off and, quite frankly, do not need unlimited farm payments from the government—and probably are not even involved with dirt under their fingernails—especially since, by definition, they would be people then who do not actually work on farms.

If we cannot cut subsidies that go to nonfarming millionaires, how will we ever find the courage then to fix other great entitlement problems we have in this country?

With all that said, there are a few things this bill does that are good.

The dairy provisions have ended up more market oriented than where we started, which I believe is very good. I am glad the Crop Insurance Program will remain strong for farmers across the country, and the nutrition program reforms are welcomed.

In the end, I have to make a judgment of the bill as a whole. Every Member of this Senate has to. I believe this bill, sadly, is a missed opportunity. The Congressional Budget Office says the final savings in this bill are only $16.6 billion. That is a pretty small amount compared to the fact that it will spend nearly $1 trillion.

I think my colleagues know I am a person who plays by the rules. So I played by the rules with these reforms that were adopted 2 years ago 75 to 24—not debated or voted on this year because they were part of the bill that passed the Senate and then went to the House of Representatives and were voted on there 230 to 194.

So we played by the rules. A majority of both bodies support these reforms. Yet, in the end, just a small group of people, with a single-minded intent to keep unlimited farm subsidies flowing out the door, proved that Congress deserves its 12-percent approval rating.

I want to be clear. I strongly support the business of agriculture. I have been involved in farming my whole life. My son Robin operates our family farm. I understand the industry. Growing wholesome foods to feed the world has always been one of the noblest occupations, in my opinion.

But if I were to vote yes on the bill, it would be an endorsement of the egregious manipulation of my payment limitation reforms behind closed doors. I cannot in good conscience do that. Therefore, I will oppose the Agricultural Act of 2014.

Just to kind of clarify, do you understand. I hope everybody understands we had the moral authority of a majority of the Senate, the moral authority of a majority of the House of Representatives, the moral authority of a majority of the people of this country—who I believe would say it is a good thing to save $387 million—and yet that moral authority was avoided by conferees who thought: To heck with the majority of the Senate or a voting majority of the House of Representatives of 230 to 194. It does not mean anything. We can do whatever we want to do. We can waste that $387 million. We can continue to give farm payments to people who are not farming. We can continue to let 10 percent of the biggest farmers get 70 percent of the benefits of the farm program, which, in the end, then helps subsidize big farmers getting bigger. There is nothing wrong with big farmers getting bigger, but you should not subsidize it. It drives up the price of farmland, it drives up the price of cash rent, so our young farmers cannot get started farming. If you want to preserve the family farm, that is one of the things that is very important.

So I have said my part. I hope I am around 5 years from now so I can try this once again because I do not intend to give up on this process. Five years from now is the next farm bill probably. Maybe there will be opportunities between now and then. I intend to take advantage of those opportunities.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Arkansas.

Mr. BOOZMAN. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that I be able to speak as in morning business.

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

MILITARY RETIREE CUTS

Mr. BOOZMAN. Madam President, I am here today as a voice for our veterans and career military servicemembers.

Since I came to Congress in 2001, I have served on the Veterans' Affairs Committee, both in the House and the

Senate, and have continuously fought to uphold the promises we have made with the men and women who served on behalf of our Nation. I am continually looking for opportunities to improve the lives of our veterans who have served honorably and have sacrificed, sometimes with their lives, in support of our country.

They deserve every benefit they earned and what we have promised them, but they have suffered a grave injustice in this body. Late last year the Senate, without my support, agreed to a budget that cut retirement benefits of our veterans, reducing the cost-of-living adjustment. I certainly could not support this provision.

Veterans and the American people are rightly upset. I want to share some of the letters I have received from our veterans and other Arkansans. David Mullins from Jonesboro wrote:

> I am a 20 year veteran of the United States Army. I retired as a Sergeant First Class and I am currently drawing military retirement. I joined the Army when I was 18 years old and I wouldn't do anything different. Even though it was very hard at times, I know that was what I was supposed to be doing. Less than 1% of the American population serves in the military and of those only about 13% actually retire with 20 years or more of service. So we are talking about less than .02 percent of the population. It is really appalling that, after sacrificing my freedoms to protect those of my fellow citizens, this is how we are treated. America is out of touch.

I agree with David. In a letter I sent to the Armed Services Committee leadership in the House and Senate, I equated retirement compensation cuts to reaching into these individuals' retirement accounts and taking that money from them. This is unconscionable.

Diane from Hot Springs, AR, said in a letter:

> I am truly disgusted by the new deal that cuts military pensions but doesn't touch benefits for any of the politicians. I would have no problems if it was an across the board cut. This is the best example of what is wrong with our government. Cut benefits for those that make real sacrifices for their country. They take lower pay and separation from family.

I agree with Diane. It is not fair. Our veterans should not be the ones bearing the burden for irresponsible spending. We need to cut spending and put our country on the path of fiscal responsibility, but it should not come at the expense of our Nation's military retirees. These are the only Americans who are being asked to sacrifice under the budget agreement. It is wrong to single out our servicemembers for what amounts to $6 billion over 10 years, representing a .02-percent reduction. We need to right this wrong so our military retirees and their families have one less thing to worry about.

Terry Williamson from Jacksonville, AR, wrote:

> I just retired from 26 years of active duty serving my country in the Air Force. I must say I was shocked and disappointed to learn that the pay of retirees are being offered up to be reduced by 1% cost of living as part of the budget deal. I feel that I have lived up to and beyond my part in serving my country. I have not even received my first retirement check and yet already my government is short changing my and all veterans who have served and fulfilled their end of the deal, defending this great nation. I ask you to do what you can to not allow this to happen to a small portion of society that gave more to their country than most.

Terry, we are working to make sure you get the full retirement you earned. We are seeking ways to undo this cut and fully restore military pay.

In January Congress took the first step toward restoring veterans' COLAs with the passage of the Omnibus appropriations bill. This exempted medically retired disabled veterans and survivors from the COLA reductions. But there is more work to do. The good news is we are on your side.

Senator AYOTTE introduced the Keeping Our Promises to Our Military Heroes Act that repeals the COLA reduction for all military retirees. I am certainly proud to support that legislation.

Arkansans want Congress to fully restore military retiree benefits as soon as possible. I am committed to raising this priority at every possible opportunity until justice is realized for these military families. While there has been much discussion about restoring these benefits in future legislation, this should be done at the earliest opportunity in order to provide certainty for our military retirees' financial future.

To our Nation's military retirees, I am committed to this fight. You have earned these benefits. Congress must correct the wrong and restore your full retirement pay. As always, thank you for your service to our country.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. 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 proceed to a period of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

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

HILL FARMSTEAD BREWERY

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, Vermont is home to hundreds of world-class small businesses, each of which dots our economic landscape with their unique and often award-winning offerings. Our reputation for quality has made the ''Vermont brand'' one that is valued and sought after by consumers across the Nation—and increasingly also across the globe. One burgeoning industry in Vermont is that of craft beer. In fact, the State is becoming almost as well known for its craft beers as it is for its maple syrup.

One such successful small brewery, the Hill Farmstead Brewery, was featured in the January 18, 2014, edition of the New York Times. After a planned expansion next year, the brewery's owner, Shaun Hill, plans to cap production at 150,000 gallons per year. His successful business model, and highly sought after brew, as the article states, ''offers lessons in how limiting production can bring success.''

Vermont's small-State appeal attracts business owners large and small. The Hill Farmstead Brewery is just one example of the successes Vermont's economy boast. I ask unanimous consent that a copy of ''Craft Beer, the (Very) Limited Edition,'' from the January 18 New York Times be printed in the RECORD.

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

[From the New York Times, Jan. 18, 2014]

CRAFT BEER, THE (VERY) LIMITED EDITION

(By Claire Martin)

Two weeks ago, a beer drinker in Fresno, Calif., called Hill Farmstead Brewery in Vermont to ask where he could buy its craft beers. ''You have to drive to the airport, get a ticket, fly to Burlington, rent a car and drive an hour and a half to the brewery,'' the owner, Shaun Hill, replied with a laugh. But he wasn't joking.

Hill Farmstead, in the hamlet of Greensboro, produces just 60,000 gallons of beer annually. The beer is available for purchase only at the brewery and in roughly 20 Vermont bars. In addition, Mr. Hill sends 12 kegs to distributors in New York City and Philadelphia a few times a year.

Next year, after several buildings are expanded and new equipment is installed, Mr. Hill plans to cap production at 150,000 gallons a year—forever. (For context, the Russian River Brewing Company, a craft brewery in California, made 437,100 gallons last year, and Dogfish Head Craft Brewery in Delaware produced 6.3 million gallons.)

Hill Farmstead is one of at least three Vermont craft breweries that are churning out small batches of highly sought-after beers and have owners with firm plans to keep the operations small. Mr. Hill's story offers lessons in how limiting production can bring success.

Mr. Hill, 34, has been honing his brewing technique for nearly 20 years. He first learned to make beer for a high school science-fair project, then started a homebrew club in college and later worked as the head brewer at two other Vermont breweries, the Shed and the Trout River Brewing Company, as well as one in Copenhagen, Norrebro Bryghus.

Two beers created during Mr. Hill's tenure at Norrebro Bryghus won gold medals in 2010 at the World Beer Cup, an international beer competition, and a third earned a silver medal.

Several months before these accolades, Mr. Hill returned to Vermont to begin construction on Hill Farmstead Brewery on a former dairy farm that he and his brother, Darren, a woodworker, inherited from their grandfather. ''I wanted to make beer, I wanted to live in this place and I wanted to help my family and make sure I had the finances available to take care of this land in perpetuity,'' Mr. Hill says.

This wasn't his first attempt at starting a brewery, but it was the first time he was able to obtain financial backing. ''Ten years ago or even still five years ago,'' he says, ''it was very difficult to find private investment or to convince banks to loan money to a start-up.''

In the past decade, craft beer production has thrived, attracting investors with deep pockets. In 2012, national retail sales for craft beer were $11.9 billion, according to the most recent figures from the Brewers Association.

While Mr. Hill was in Denmark, where American craft beer was starting to become popular, he was able to borrow $80,000 from a small group of European and American lenders who he felt respected his vision and abilities.

From the start, his philosophy has been to make the best beer possible without pursuing what he calls ''infinite, boundless growth.'' He operates under the belief that beer is a perishable item, ''just like lettuce or broccoli,'' he says, and should be consumed locally, not shipped long distances.

Mr. Hill has a staff of six, including two assistant brewers who harvest yeast and transfer beer into kegs, but he personally makes all of the brewery's offerings—pale ales, stouts and porters—using modern stainless steel tanks and traditional wooden barrels, like those used in winemaking.

The beers are known for having ''a sense of balance that isn't common in a lot of new breweries,'' says Jeff Baker, the bar manager of the Farmhouse Tap and Grill in Burlington, which serves the beers. ''They're hoppy, but they're not super-bitter and they don't exhaust your palate.''

For entrepreneurs who measure success in more than just financial terms, it's still crucial to have a viable business, says Bo Burlingham, author of ''Small Giants: Companies That Choose to Be Great Instead of Big.'' ''The challenge for a lot of small companies who have nonfinancial goals is that you can't let that get in the way of having a very financially solid business,'' Mr. Burlingham says. ''You'd better have a sound business model, steady gross margins, a healthy balance sheet and margins you protect.''

For Mr. Hill, financial stability came quickly. He says the brewery began turning a profit after just one year.

Demand surged last February when users of the beer-review site Ratebeer.com deemed Hill Farmstead the best brewery in the world—after having anointed Mr. Hill as the best new brewer in 2010.

Now Mr. Hill says he fields questions like the one from the Fresno caller every day. He estimates that thousands of people have made long-distance beer runs to Hill Farmstead Brewery, some traveling from as far as New Zealand, Norway and Japan.

Customers wait in line for one to four hours to buy bottles and two-liter growlers of the beers, many of which are named for Mr. Hill's ancestors (Edward, Abner, Florence). The brewery once sold an entire batch of beer—500 gallons—in one day.

As his beer's popularity has risen, he has sometimes worked 18-hour days. Some small-business owners who have achieved financial stability choose to delegate a significant portion of their work to employees, but Mr. Hill says he won't be doing that.

And the notion of moving production to an industrial park, where craft breweries are commonly found, holds no appeal for him. He has decided to invest in infrastructure and better equipment that will make his current operation more efficient.

''I didn't start this brewery so I could keep growing and move it away from here; that wasn't the point,'' he says. ''It wouldn't be fun anymore. It wouldn't have purpose or meaning.''

FAIRNESS IN DISASTER DECLARATIONS ACT

Mr. DURBIN. Madam President, this week, Senator KIRK and I introduced the Fairness in Federal Disaster Declarations Act. It is designed to ensure fairness in FEMA's consideration of whether a community will be granted Federal assistance after a disaster.

This legislation is necessary because the way FEMA evaluates whether to declare an area a Federal disaster is not working. It works against States with large populations.

From 2002 to 2012, Illinois was denied Federal disaster assistance six times. Texas was denied 11 times—for damage caused by everything from wildfires to tropical storms. Florida was denied Federal disaster assistance six times during that 10 year period, and California, New Jersey, and New York were each denied four times. FEMA's formula does not work for large, populous States, particularly those with a concentrated urban area, like Illinois.

It is not enough just to talk about the numbers, though. Each one of these disasters devastated communities. In each one of these disasters, people saw their homes and their towns destroyed.

This past November, tornadoes swept through Illinois, killing six people and destroying whole towns in my State. The cities of Washington, Gifford, and New Minden, IL, experienced some of the worst tornado damage I have ever seen. Power lines were down and public infrastructure was decimated, but because Illinois did not meet one of FEMA's criteria, we were denied Federal public assistance.

Governor Pat Quinn is going to appeal that denial, and he has Senator KIRK's and my full support for that appeal.

Illinois also was denied Federal disaster assistance after tornadoes destroyed the towns of Harrisburg and Ridgway in 2012. Eight people died after tornadoes with winds up to 200 miles per hour splintered homes, businesses, churches, and public infrastructure in those two towns. Nevertheless, the State was denied public assistance. FEMA said because Illinois has a large population, we should be able to absorb those recovery costs. When similar tornado damage happened in neighboring Joplin, MO—which has a smaller population—Federal assistance was granted.

It is not just tornado damage in Illinois that has resulted in denials from FEMA for Federal assistance, and it is not just the State's per capita that has been used as FEMA's justification for the denials. Counties with a high population also have been denied. Last April, Illinois experienced major flooding both along the Mississippi River and resulting from flash flooding due to major storms.

Many communities in Cook County, including Chicago and its suburbs, experienced unprecedented flooding. But because the damage in Cook County did not meet FEMA's per capita requirement, Cook County was denied individual assistance. All of the neighboring counties were approved. Cook County was denied.

When questioned about these decisions, FEMA pointed to the factors it considers when determining if a Federal declaration is warranted. One of these factors has to do with the population of the State. If a State has a large population—more than 10 million people—it is analyzed differently than if it were smaller. The thinking is that large States have the resources necessary to absorb the recovery costs. Well, I can tell you—Illinois does not have the resources to absorb the costs of these tornadoes and flooding. Whole towns were devastated in these disasters.

The bill Senator KIRK and I introduced assigns a value to each of the six factors considered in the disaster declaration analysis. When FEMA considers individual assistance—help for people to rebuild their homes and pay for temporary housing—it will use the same, consistent factors, no matter where the disaster strikes.

The population of the State will constitute 5 percent of the analysis. Consideration of the concentration of damages will be 20 percent. The amount of trauma to the disaster area will be 20 percent. The number of special populations—such as elderly or unemployed people—will be 20 percent of the analysis. The amount of voluntary assistance in the area will be 10 percent. And the amount of insurance coverage for the type of damage incurred will be 20 percent of the analysis.

Our bill also adds a seventh consideration to FEMA's metrics—the economics of the area, which will receive 5 percent consideration. This includes factors such as the local assessable tax base, the median income as it compares to that of the State, and the poverty rate as it compares to that of the State. It is reasonable that FEMA should take into consideration the size of the State, but as the regulations stand, large States are being penalized. Assigning values to the factors will ensure that the damage to the specific community weighs more than the State's population.

After the tornadoes hit Harrisburg and Ridgway, the head of the Illinois Emergency Management Agency, Jonathon Monken, worked with locals and people from the FEMA regional office to determine if the State could apply for public assistance—money to help Mayor Gregg and others pay for the overtime accrued by all the people working around the clock to help the community dig out of the destruction. What Director Monken and the others discovered was that it would have been a waste of the State's time and resources to even apply for Federal public assistance. We did not meet FEMA's threshold.

Currently, FEMA multiplies the number of people in the State by $1.35 to determine a threshold of the amount of damage a state would have to have incurred to be considered for public assistance. In Illinois, that figure is about $17 million. Well, Harrisburg, Ridgway, and the surrounding communities had about $5.5 million in public assistance damages, and $5.5 million is a lot of loss, particularly in a rural area, but not enough to qualify for Federal assistance under FEMA's rules.

In the same way this bill assigns values to the factors FEMA considers for individual assistance, it assigns values to the six factors the agency considers for public assistance. The per capita consideration will be 10 percent of the analysis. Localized impacts of the disaster will make up 40 percent of the analysis. The estimated cost of the assistance needed will constitute 10 percent of the analysis. The insurance coverage in force will be 10 percent. The number of recent multiple disasters will be 10 percent. And an analysis of the other Federal assistance for the area will make up 10 percent of the evaluation.

The bill also would add a seventh consideration for public assistance—the economic circumstances of the affected area—which would be considered at 10 percent of the analysis. This would include the same information as it would for individual assistance—the local assessable tax base, the median income of the area as it compares to that of the State, and the poverty rate as it compares to that of the State.

Illinois is a relatively large State, geographically, and has a concentrated urban area. The State—particularly downstate—is being punished for this fact. If the cities of Washington and Gifford—and Harrisburg and Ridgway—do not qualify under FEMA's current criteria for federal assistance, something is wrong.

These towns were struck by category 4 and category 3 tornadoes, respectively, and the damage is devastating. The people of these communities are being punished for living within a populous State. Let's fix the metrics FEMA uses to make this analysis so that they are fair to every state.

BUDGETARY REVISIONS

Mrs. MURRAY. Madam President, section 114(d) of H.J. Res. 59, the Bipartisan Budget Act of 2013, allows the chairman of the Senate Budget Committee to revise the allocations, aggregates, and levels filed on January 14, 2014, pursuant to section 111 of H.J. Res. 59, for a number of deficit-neutral reserve funds. These reserve funds were incorporated into the Bipartisan Budget Act by reference to sections of S. Con. Res. 8, the Senate-passed budget resolution for 2014. Among these sections is a reference to section 313 of S. Con. Res. 8, which establishes a deficit-neutral reserve fund for a farm bill. The authority to adjust enforceable levels in the Senate for a farm bill is contingent on that legislation not increasing the deficit over either the period of the total of fiscal years 2013 through 2018 or the period of the total of fiscal years 2013 through 2023.

I find that the conference agreement on H.R. 2642, the Agricultural Act of 2014, as reported on January 27, 2014, fulfills the conditions of the deficit-neutral reserve fund for a farm bill. Therefore, pursuant to section 114(d) of H.J. Res. 59, I am adjusting the budgetary aggregates, as well as the allocation to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

I ask unanimous consent that the following tables detailing the revisions be printed in the RECORD.

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

BUDGETARY AGGREGATES—PURSUANT TO SECTION 111 OF THE BIPARTISAN BUDGET ACT OF 2013 AND SECTION 311 OF THE CONGRESSIONAL BUDGET ACT OF 1974

$s in millions	2014	2014–18	2014–23
Current Budgetary Aggregates:			
Spending:.			
Budget Authority	2,924,837	n/a	n/a
Outlays	2,937,094	n/a	n/a
Revenue	2,311,026	13,699,478	31,095,742
Adjustments Made Pursuant to Section 114(d) of the Bipartisan Budget Act:*			
Spending:.			
Budget Authority	3,243	n/a	n/a
Outlays	2,124	n/a	n/a
Revenue	5	51	104
Revised Budgetary Aggregates:			
Spending:.			
Budget Authority	2,928,080	n/a	n/a
Outlays	2,939,218	n/a	n/a
Revenue	2,311,031	13,699,529	31,095,846

n/a = Not applicable. Appropriations for fiscal years 2015–2023 will be determined by future sessions of Congress and enforced through future Congressional budget resolutions.

*Adjustments made pursuant to section 114(d) of the Bipartisan Budget Act of 2013, which incorporates by reference section 313 of S. Con. Res. 8, as passed by the Senate. Section 313 establishes a deficit-neutral reserve fund for a farm bill.

REVISIONS TO THE BUDGET AUTHORITY AND OUTLAY ALLOCATIONS TO THE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE, NUTRITION, AND FORESTRY PURSUANT TO SECTION 111 OF THE BIPARTISAN BUDGET ACT OF 2013 AND SECTION 302 OF THE CONGRESSIONAL BUDGET ACT OF 1974

$s in millions	Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry		
	Current Allocation	Adjustments*	Revised Allocation
Fiscal Year 2014:			
Budget Authority	12,852	3,243	16,095
Outlays	11,862	2,124	13,986
Fiscal Years 2014–2018:			
Budget Authority	68,964	−3,906	65,058
Outlays	66,695	−5,310	61,385
Fiscal Years 2014–2023:			
Budget Authority	141,305	−15,034	126,271
Outlays	137,659	−16,504	121,155

*Adjustments made pursuant to section 114(d) of the Bipartisan Budget Act of 2013, which incorporates by reference section 313 of S. Con. Res. 8, as passed by the Senate. Section 313 establishes a deficit-neutral reserve fund for a farm bill.

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE SELECT COMMITTEE ON ETHICS

Mrs. BOXER. Madam President, the Honest Leadership and Open Government Act of 2007, the act, calls for the Select Committee on Ethics of the United States Senate to issue an annual report not later than January 31 of each year providing information in certain categories describing its activities for the preceding year. Reported below is the information describing the committee's activities in 2013 in the categories set forth in the act:

(1) The number of alleged violations of Senate rules received from any source, including the number raised by a Senator or staff of the Committee: 26. (In addition, two alleged violations from the previous year were carried into 2013.)

(2) The number of alleged violations that were dismissed—

(A) For lack of subject matter jurisdiction or in which, even if the allegations in the complaint are true, no violation of Senate rules would exist: 19.

(B) Because they failed to provide sufficient facts as to any material violation of the Senate rules beyond mere allegation or assertion: 7.

(3) The number of alleged violations for which the Committee staff conducted a preliminary inquiry: 2. (This figure includes one matter from the previous calendar year carried into 2013.)

(4) The number of alleged violations for which the Committee staff conducted a preliminary inquiry that resulted in an adjudicatory review: 0.

(5) The number of alleged violations for which the Committee staff conducted a preliminary inquiry and the Committee dismissed the matter for lack of substantial merit: 1.

(6) The number of alleged violations for which the Committee staff conducted a preliminary inquiry and the Committee issued private or public letters of admonition: 0.

(7) The number of matters resulting in a disciplinary sanction: 0.

(8) Any other information deemed by the Committee to be appropriate to describe its activities in the previous year:

In 2013, the Committee staff conducted 12 new Member ethics training sessions; nine Member and committee office campaign briefings; 13 employee code of conduct training sessions; eight public financial disclosure clinics, seminars, and webinars; 28 ethics seminars and customized briefings for Member DC offices, state offices, and Senate committees; three private sector ethics briefings; and eight international briefings.

In 2013, the Committee staff handled approximately 8,073 telephone inquiries and 1,980 inquiries by email for ethics advice and guidance.

In 2013, the Committee wrote approximately 755 ethics advisory letters and responses including, but not limited to, 608 travel and gifts matters (Senate Rule 35) and 104 conflict of interest matters (Senate Rule 37).

In 2013, the Committee issued 3,246 letters concerning financial disclosure filings by Senators, Senate staff and Senate candidates and reviewed 1,760 reports.

REMEMBRANCE AND RESOLVE

Mr. LEVIN. Madam President, every January brings hope that the New Year will be a happy and safe one. But, sadly, 2014 has already been marred by gun violence.

To cite just a few examples, on January 9, a 16-year-old student at Liberty Technology Magnet High School shot a classmate in the thigh with a pistol. On January 14, a 12-year-old in New Mexico walked into his middle school's gym and opened fire with a shotgun, injuring two of his classmates as they waited to go to class. And on the evening of January 15, a man used a semi-automatic handgun to murder two people at an Indiana grocery store. He was about to kill another person just before police officers shot and killed him.

Sadly, our Nation's epidemic of gun violence continues. The National Center for Injury Prevention and Control has estimated that around 30,000 people in the United States die from gunshot wounds every year, and more than 60,000 people are injured by guns every year. A study also has shown that the firearm homicide rate in our Nation is 20 times higher than the combined rate of 22 other countries comparable in population.

We live in a country where almost every week a community is wracked by a mass shooting, defined as an incident that claims at least four lives. In 2013, our Nation witnessed at least 25 such shootings. These occur all over our Nation, in places like Oklahoma City, where last August a man who had been diagnosed with schizophrenia stopped taking his medication and shot his mother, sister, niece, and nephew; in Ottawa, KS, where last April a man who had served prison time for attempted second-degree murder shot and killed 4 people; in Washington, DC, where a mentally deranged individual killed 12 and injured 8 at Washington's Navy Yard.

Last December, just one day before the anniversary of the tragic Newtown school shooting which stole the lives of 27 people, 20 of them children, another school shooting occurred in Arapahoe, CO. This time, the perpetrator was an 18-year-old high school senior who entered his high school near Denver armed with 125 rounds of ammunition, a pump-action shotgun, a machete, and three incendiary devices. He critically injured a classmate, who has since tragically passed away, before taking his own life. While this may not qualify as a mass shooting, it is no less troubling. It is a testament to how disturbingly numb to gun violence our society has become that the sentiment ''it could have been worse'' is some form of relief.

Today, America is a nation where parents are nervous to send their children to schools, shopping malls, and movie theaters because they are genuinely afraid that their kids might not come back. We live in a nation where toddlers find unsecured handguns in their family's homes and accidentally take lives. We live in a society where arguments and disputes turn into tragedies, all with one ill-considered pull of a trigger. Is this the kind of environment we want to live in? Is this what we want to leave for the next generation?

Mr. President, it is my hope that this year, the procession of gun tragedies will begin to end. It is my hope that we will not be submerged this year in the horror of a mass shooting. But this hope will only be realized if Congress takes action to stop the gun violence plaguing our country.

I urge my colleagues not to accept the status quo, where convicted felons, domestic abusers, and the mentally ill can get their hands on a deadly weapon at any time. I urge my colleagues to take steps toward ending this violence by passing commonsense legislation, supported by 90 percent of the American people, that would enact background checks on all gun sales. I urge my colleagues to work to ensure that our homes, our families, and our neighborhoods become safer.

ASHLAND UNIVERSITY

Mr. PORTMAN. Madam President, I rise today to congratulate Ashland University for addressing the challenging issue of skyrocketing tuition. After serious consideration, Ashland has dramatically reduced its tuition for the 2014–2015 school year by 37 percent. Ashland hopes this important step will improve access to higher education at affordable prices while keeping the university financially competitive.

Ashland University, which is located in Ashland, OH, has a proud history of providing quality education since its founding in 1878. The university offers undergraduate, masters, and doctorate degrees and has been nationally recognized and ranked in the ''Top 200 National Universities'' by U.S. News & World Report for the last 2 years.

Madam President, I would like to congratulate Ashland University for addressing the affordability and accessibility of higher education.

TRIBUTE TO MYRON BELKIND

Mr. PORTMAN. Madam President, I rise today to recognize Cleveland native Myron Belkind, who was named president of the National Press Club on January 25, 2014. Mr. Belkind grew up in Lyndhurst, OH, where he began his career in journalism writing as a student and then for the Cleveland Plain Dealer and the Cleveland Press.

During Mr. Belkind's 42-year career with the Associated Press, he covered many world leaders and headed up Associated Press bureaus in Kuala Lumpur, New Delhi, London, and Tokyo. He served as president of several foreign press associations and as a journalism instructor at the George Washington University in Washington, DC. He has received the Distinguished Alumni Awards from the Ohio State University School of Communications and Columbia University Graduate School of Journalism.

As a foreign correspondent in the 1970s, Belkind covered major international news stories and was nominated for a Pulitzer Prize for his coverage of the breaking news that Prime Minister Gandhi's government had declared a state of emergency on June 26, 1975, suspending civil liberties, arresting thousands of political opponents, and imposing restrictions on the national and international press.

He is the first National Press Club president with an extensive international background in foreign correspondence. In his new role, he has vowed to continue his work promoting worldwide freedom of the press and will

continue to strive for professional development and excellence in journalism.

Mr. President, I would like to congratulate Myron Belkind, a fellow Buckeye, as he begins this new chapter in his distinguished career.

REMEMBERING MARSHA OGILVIE

Mr. RISCH. Madam President, I rise today to pay tribute to Marsha H. Ogilvie, a loyal and steadfast mayor of Sandpoint, ID. On January, 8, 2014, Mayor Ogilvie lost a valiant battle with cancer and my State lost a good friend, a champion for women and children and a tireless public servant.

Mayor Ogilvie, who was born at March Air Force Base in Southern California, moved to the great State of Idaho in 1994. In the 20 years she made Idaho her home, she distinguished herself in service to others. As she once said, and many in Sandpoint now say, she won the hearts and minds of the people in Sandpoint.

Elected mayor just 2 years ago and having served the two previous years on the city council, Mayor Ogilvie, leaves a giant hole in those hearts and the broader community. The business and professional experience Mayor Ogilvie brought was wide and varied and earned her the respect of many. Early in her career, she served in restaurant and retail management. When she and her husband Francis arrived in Sandpoint, they opened a couple of small businesses—The Candy Cottage and the All Smiles gift shop. But Marsha Ogilvie was not just about business. She cared deeply about the health, welfare and success of women and children.

Soon after moving to Idaho and well before entering public service, she established Kinderhaven, a nonprofit community organization which is dedicated to supporting children in crisis. Founded in 1996 and under the vision and compassionate care of Marsha Ogilvie, more than 1,300 children have found the all-important help they needed in times of their greatest distress. So important to the Sandpoint community, Kinderhaven was named the grand prize winner in the 2002 Governor's Brightest Stars Awards. In addition, Mrs. Ogilvie, who crossed paths with many women serving as volunteers in the Sandpoint community, started Women Honoring Women. It was designed to be a one-time event but has evolved since 1999 into an annual event to recognize and honor women in Bonner County who are 65 or older and working to make a difference in the lives of others, who love learning and exhibit qualities of leadership. Marsha Ogilvie recognized these qualities in others because she, too, possessed them. . .well, all but one—she was only 64 when she passed away.

If these achievements were not enough, Marsha Ogilvie joined with three friends to co-author a children's book, which was just recently published. Gigi's Enchanted Forest was a way to honor the life of a mutual friend of theirs who shared their hope for and love of children and a dedication to community service.

Mayor Marsha H. Ogilvie personified a life of giving and caring. Her unparalleled legacy of hard work, reaching out to her community and recognizing those who help others in volunteer service is indelibly etched on the many hearts and minds of those she served in Sandpoint, ID, and far beyond the city limits. May God bless her husband, her family and the hundreds of Idahoans who will miss her passion, exuberance and spirit of joy.

FISHER'S TECHNOLOGY

Mr. RISCH. Madam President, a small business faces a constant threat to its bottom line when the products they sell grow obsolete. Years of expertise and business relationships can be rendered meaningless without the ability to adjust in an ever changing and technologically advancing marketplace. There is no better example of adaptation than Fisher's Technology in my home State of Idaho.

Fisher's Technology was founded in Boise, ID in 1936, during the worst years of the Great Depression, as a specialty typewriter sales and repair shop. In 1985, Gary Mahn purchased the company and, since then, Fisher's Technology has expanded its inventory to become Idaho's largest office supply firm. This would not have been possible had Fisher's remained narrowly focused on typewriters. In a continuing business evolution, Mr. Mahn sold the office supply portion of the company to another local Boise company. This allowed Fisher's Technology to maintain and grow the remaining office equipment division.

Today, Fisher's Technology has four locations across Idaho, offering a variety of office hardware and software products along with IT services. After a 78 percent increase in sales revenue, topping $13 million, Fisher's was named to Inc. Magazine's 5,000 fastest-growing companies in the Nation. Fisher's has made this list four of the last 5 years, a testament to the Fisher's Technology team's hard work and commitment to customer satisfaction. At a time when America's economy has struggled to add jobs, Fisher's Technology has boosted its payroll from 46 employees in 2009 to 66 today representing a 43 percent increase in hiring.

Not only has Fisher's Technology helped businesses across Idaho meet their equipment needs, but its employees are also active members of their communities and strive to give back in any way that they can. For example, the company sponsors the Blue Cross ''Blue Cruise'' bicycle race, which benefits local charities in Idaho's Treasure Valley.

I commend everyone at Fisher's Technology on their continued growth, resilience, and determination, and wish them another 78 years of success.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

TRIBUTE TO DAVID MELINCOFF

• Mr. SANDERS. Madam President, I rise today to recognize a remarkable Vermonter, David Melincoff, who is carrying on the tradition of providing a good meal and fostering a sense of community each Thanksgiving.

As many Vermonters continue to struggle to make ends meet in the wake of the most severe recession to hit the United States in generations, Mr. Melincoff marked the 24th year his Burlington, VT restaurant has offered a traditional Thanksgiving dinner at no cost. Nearly 1,000 dinners were given away this past Thanksgiving. Since the Thanksgiving Community Dinner started 24 years ago at Sweetwaters American Bistro, Mr. Melincoff estimates that more than 20,000 meals have been served free of charge.

The dinner, a traditional Thanksgiving meal of turkey, stuffing, and mashed potatoes, offers the same experience a diner would have eating at the restaurant on any other night, including wait service provided by volunteers. The fundamental difference is that the meal is free of charge—and the sense of community this generosity inspires is undeniable.

It is not only those who are having financial difficulties who attend the Thanksgiving Community Dinner. As Mr. Melincoff noted, ''Sometimes it's an emotional need.'' Often, people who have lost a loved one attend in order to share in the company and fellowship of others. The dinner provides an opportunity where people, regardless of their economic status, can sit and break bread together. ''Here, they just feel equal. That's the part that always gets me,'' Mr. Melincoff said. ''It's about self-respect.''

The meal itself is just one part of the day-long event. A coat donation drive was added as another effort to serve 4 years ago. Hundreds of coats are collected in advance by the Windjammer Restaurant in South Burlington, and this year roughly 700 coats were provided to individuals in need.

Local residents and members of the business community also pitch in to make the Thanksgiving Community Dinner a success. Everyone benefits from this event, whether it is from the food provided or the satisfaction of giving back to the community. For the volunteers, Mr. Melincoff noted, ''it puts things into perspective about what you should be grateful for.''

Mr. President, I wanted to take this opportunity to commend Mr. Melincoff for his commitment and service to others and applaud his efforts to reach to out those in need.•

MESSAGES FROM THE PRESIDENT

Messages from the President of the United States were communicated to

the Senate by Mr. Pate, one of his secretaries.

EXECUTIVE MESSAGES REFERRED

As in executive session the Presiding Officer laid before the Senate messages from the President of the United States submitting sundry nominations and two withdrawals which were referred to the appropriate committees.

(The messages received today are printed at the end of the Senate proceedings.)

MESSAGE FROM THE HOUSE

At 10:03 a.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Mr. Novotny, one of its reading clerks, announced that the House agree to the report of the committee of conference on the disagreeing votes of the two Houses on the amendment of the House to the amendment of the Senate to the bill (H.R. 2642) to provide for the reform and continuation of agricultural and other programs of the Department of Agriculture through fiscal year 2018, and for other purposes.

The message further announced that pursuant to 22 U.S.C. 2761, and the order of the House of January 3, 2013, the Speaker appoints the following Members on the part of the House of Representatives to the British-American Interparliamentary Group: Mr. MCINTYRE of North Carolina and Mr. DELANEY of Maryland.

MEASURES READ THE FIRST TIME

The following bill was read the first time:

S. 1977. A bill to repeal section 403 of the Bipartisan Budget Act of 2013, relating to an annual adjustment of retired pay for members of the Armed Forces under the age of 62, and to provide an offset.

PETITIONS AND MEMORIALS

POM–193 and POM–194 originally appeared without text in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD of Wednesday, January 29, 2014.

POM–193. A resolution adopted by the Senate of the Northern Mariana Commonwealth Legislature petitioning the United States Congress to amend the Radiation Exposure Act of 1990; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 18–04, S1

Whereas, the United States Government and the Atomic Energy Commission together with the United States Armed Forces conducted testing of atomic nuclear weapons on Eniwetok and Bikini Atolls in the Marshall Islands, South Pacific, from 1946 to 1962; and

Whereas, a total of 67 atomic and thermonuclear bombs/devices were detonated with a total yield of 108,492.2 kilotons which resulted in fallout across a wide area around the Marshall Islands in the Pacific; and

Whereas, no less than ten of those detonations yielded between five to ten megatons of radioactive material from the center of the explosion to the height of between 12 to 55 miles into the jet-stream; and

Whereas, on October 31, 1952, Operation Ivy was conducted on Elugelab Island (''Flora'') in the Enewetak Atoll, in which the first true thermonuclear hydrogen bomb (a 10.4 megaton device) code name Mike was detonated, destroying the entire island leaving behind a 6,240 feet across and 164 feet deep crater in its aftermath; and

Whereas, in 90 seconds the mushroom cloud climbed to 57,000 feet into the atmosphere and within 30 minutes had stretched 60 miles in diameter with the base of the mushroom head joining the stem of 45,000 feet; and

Whereas, radioactive fallout is the after effect of the detonation of a nuclear bomb where radioactive particles and earth debris, which comprise the mushroom cloud, are released into the atmosphere and remain in the atmosphere for about 24 hours before descending back to earth; and

Whereas, before the decend back to earth, these radioactive particles can be carried through jet-steams in the atmosphere to locations over a thousand miles away from the actual test site and settle into the environment causing multiple health and environmental problems; and

Whereas, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands are located approximately 1,230 miles directly west of the test sites; and

Whereas, the radioactive dust particles travelled through the westward flowing jet-streams from the Marshall Islands to Guam and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands; and

Whereas, due to the deleterious effects of the nuclear radiation, on October 5, , 1990, the United States Congress passed the Radiation Exposure Compensation Act (''RECA'') which established new programs for persons physically present in areas near the Nevada nuclear test site during atomic testing at the site. Atmospheric testing of atomic devices—important to national security during the darkest days of the ''cold war''—ended in 1963 when, under President Kennedy, the United States signed and ratified the limited Test Ban ''Treaty''. Prior to the Treaty, the United Stated detonated over 200 atomic devises in the open air in both the South Pacific and in Nevada. The RECA provides compassionate payments to persons with specified diseases who fear that their health were harmed because of fallout from atmospheric atomic testing at the Nevada test site, regardless of whether causation can be scientically established; and

Whereas, on July 10, 2000, Public Law 106–245, the Radiation Exposure Compensation Act Amendments of 2000 was passed, adding two new claimant categories, providing for, among other things, additional compensable illnesses, removing certain lifestyle restrictions, and adding additional geographic areas to the ''downwinder'' claimant category; and

Whereas, although RECA coverage has been expanded, it still does not provide relief to all Americans affected by fallout, particularly residents of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands and the Territory of Guam; and

Whereas, there is no doubt that the Territory of Guam has received radioactive debris from fallout during the nuclear weapons testing in the Pacific Ocean to such an extent that in March 2004, Congresswoman Madeleine Z. Bordallo spoke before the Committee to Assess the Scientific Information for the Radiation Exposure Screening and Education Program to request that they include an assessment of Guam for ''downwinders'' and ship decontamination as part of their congressionally mandated study; and

Whereas, because the islands in the CNMI are in close proximity to the Territory of Guam, separated by a scant 30 miles, and both are affected by the same win, weather and ocean current patterns, it logically follows that radiation which affects the Territory of Guam necessarily affects the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands; and

Whereas, as a result, the Nuclear and Radiation Studies Board (''NSRB'') published in 2005 its report entitled ''Assessment of the Scientific information for the Radiation Exposure Screening and Education Program''; and

Whereas, because fallout may have been higher for the people outside RECA-designated areas, the NRSB recommended that all residents of the continental US, Alaska, Hawaii, and overseas US territories who have been diagnosed with specific RECA-compensable diseases and who may have been exposed to radiation from U.S. nuclear-weapons testing fallout be compensated; and

Whereas, the United States Congress has the authority to amend RECA to include residents of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands affected by radiation as eligible ''downwinder'' claimants; and

Whereas, the failure of the United States Congress to amend RECA in such a way as to compensate affected residents of the Commonwealth of the Northern Islands will cause the people of the Commonwealth to bear a disproportionate burden in defending the United States of America; and

Whereas, we, the people of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, United States of America, humbly request that the Commonwealth be included in RECA with the same criteria that was made for Nevada test site in 1990 for compassionate payments: Now, therefore be it

Resolved, on behalf of the people of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands by the Eighteen Northern Marianas Commonwealth Legislature, That the United States Congress is hereby respectfully petitioned to declare that all Americans shall be given the same consideration when it comes to compensation for exposure to radiation from U.S. nuclear testing; and be it further

Resolved, That the United States Congress is hereby respectfully petitioned to amend the Radiation Exposure Compensation Act of 1990, Public Law 101–426, as amended by Public Law 101–510, 3139 (43 U.S.C. 2210) and Public Law 106–245, to include the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands in the jurisdiction ''downwinders'' covered by the Act; and be it further

Resolved, That the United States Congress is hereby respectfully requested to include the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands similarly as the Territory of Guam and be granted RECA ''on site'' status; and be it further

Resolved, That the affected population previously and currently in the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (those residing who have been exposed to radiation from the Atomic Energy Commission tests in the Marshall Islands) be recognized as being ''downwinders'' of such test; and be it further

Resolved, That the President of the Senate and the Speaker of the House of Representatives shall certify, and the Senate Legislative Secretary and the House Clerk shall attest to the adoption of this joint resolution, and thereafter the Senate Clerk shall transmit a certified copy to the Honorable Barack Obama, President of the United States of America; to the Honorable John Boehner, Speaker of the United States House of Representatives; to the Honorable Patrick J. Leahy, President Pro Tempore of the United States Senate; to the Honorable Nancy Pelosi, Minority Leader, United States House of Representatives; to the Honorable Mark Chuck Grassley, ranking member,

Committee of the Judiciary United States Senate; to the Honorable Mark Udall, United States Senate; to the Honorable Tom Udall, United States Senate; to the Honorable Martin Heinrich, United States Senate; to the Honorable Mike Crapo, United States Senate; to the Honorable James Risch, United States Senate; to the Honorable Michael Bennet, United States Senate; to the Honorable Tom Harkin, Chairman, Committee on Health, Education, Labor and Pensions, United States Senate; to the Honorable Michael B. Enzi, ranking member, Committee on Health, Education, Labor and Pensions, United States Senate; to the Honorable Robert Menendez, Chairman, Committee on Foreign Affairs United States Senate; to the Honorable Bob Corker, ranking member Committee on Foreign Affairs United States Senate; to the Honorable Barbara Mikulski, Chairwoman, Committee on Appropriations United States Senate; to the Honorable Ben Lujan, member of Congress, United States House of Representatives; to the Honorable Lamar Smith, Chairman, Committee on Judiciary United States House of Representatives; to the Honorable John Conyers, Jr., ranking member, Committee on Judiciary United States House of Representatives; to the Honorable Fred Upton, Chairman, Committee on Energy and Commerce, United States House of Representatives; to the Honorable Henry Waxman, ranking member, Committee on Energy and Commerce, United States House of Representatives; to the Honorable Hal Rogers, Chairman, Committee on Appropriations United States House of Representatives; to the Honorable Nita Lowey, ranking member, Committee on Appropriations, United States House of Representatives; to the Honorable Ed Royce Chairman, Foreign Affairs Committee, United States House of Representatives; to the Honorable Eliot Engel, ranking member Foreign Affairs Committee, Unites States House of Representatives; to the Honorable John Kline, Chairman, Committee on Education and the Workforce, United States House of Representatives; to the Honorable George Miller, ranking member, Committee on Education and the Workforce, United States House of Representatives; to Attorney General Eric H. Holder, Jr., Attorney General of the United States; to Mr. RJ Ritter, National Commander, National Association of Atomic Veterans; to Mr. Bob Kilthau, Hawaii State Commander, National Association of Atomic Veterans; to the Honorable Madeleine Z. Bordallo, Member of Congress, United States House of Representatives, Territory of Guam; to the Honorable Gregorio ''Kilili'' Camcho Sablan, CNMI Delegate to the United States Congress; to the Honorable Eloy S. Inos, Governor, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands; to the Honorable Judith T. Won Pat, Speaker, 32nd Guam Legislature, Territory of Guam; to the Honorable Edward B. Calvo, Governor, Territory of Guam and to Mr. Robert N. Celestial, Atomic Veteran from Guam and President of the Pacific Association for Radiation Survivors.

POM–194. A resolution adopted by the House of Representatives of the Northern Mariana Commonwealth Legislature requesting the United States Congress to eliminate Section 2109 of S. 744 and similar legislation which will allow thousands of alien workers, their families, and persons of other ethnic origin who are in the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands to become permanent residents and subsequently become U.S. citizens; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

HOUSE RESOLUTION NO. 18–34

Whereas, the Chamorro and Carolinian people of the Northern Mariana Islands, in the exercise of their inalienable right of self-determination, negotiated the Covenant Agreement which established the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands in a Political Union with the United States of America. And, in a plebiscite called by the United States on June 17, 1975, they approved the Covenant Agreement by 78.8 per centum. And, with the approval of the Covenant (U.S. Public Law 94–241; 90 Stat. 263) by the 94th United States Congress in a Joint Resolution (H. J. Res. 549) on March 24, 1976 and approved by the President of the United States on October 24, 1977, the Chamorro and Carolinian people of the Northern Mariana Islands finally realized their aspiration to be freed from foreign dominations, and to be recognized as a people of the Northern Mariana Islands, with the ''the right of local self-government and to govern themselves in accordance with a Constitution of their own adoption'' as agreed upon and guaranteed pursuant to Article 1, Section 103 of the Covenant; and

Whereas, this desire of the Chamorros and Carolinians of the Northern Mariana Islands is not unique, and serves as a basic tenet that guides indigenous peoples around the world who wish to be protected and secure in their homeland, and to exercise their right to self-government. These include the Filipinos, led by national hero and icon Jose Rizal; the Native Americans of North America; the indigenous Fijians, outnumbered at one point by ethnic Indians; the Aborigines of Australia; the Maori of New Zealand; and the Native Hawaiians; and

Whereas, the debate on immigration reform issues is now before the 113th United States Congress, and in particular, the passage of Section 2109 (Long-Term Legal Residents in the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands) of S.744 by the Senate, that is now before the House of Representatives, if approved and becomes a law, will make thousands of alien workers, their families and people of other ethnic origin in the Commonwealth eligible to become U. S. permanent residents five years from its enactment, and five years thereafter, they will be eligible to become U. S. Citizen; and

Whereas, the CNMI's 2010 census data shows that there were 53,883 people in the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands. Of that figure, 2,461 were Carolinians and 12,902 were Chamorros, representing a combined total of 15,363 persons of Northern Marianas descent. The 2010 census reported other ethnic groups as follows: 19,017 Filipino; 2,253 Korean; 3,659 Chinese; 1,979 other Asian persons; 1,343 persons of other ethnic origin; 6,832 persons of two or more ethnic origins; and 3,437 persons of native Hawaiian or Pacific Islanders. These groups of people represent a total of 38,520 or 71 percent of the total population of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, compared to only 15,363 or 29 percent of Chamorro and Carolinian people of Northern Marianas descent. Undoubtedly, the alien workers, their families and people of other ethnic origin have already outnumbered the population of the Chamorro and Carolinian people of Northern Marianas descent; and

Whereas, the U. S. Senate, in introducing S. 744 with the added Section 2109 (Long-term Legal Residents of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands), failed to recognize and respect the spirit and sanctity of the Covenant Agreement; the fundamental provisions delineated in Article I, Section 105 of the Covenant, namely, Articles I, II, and III and Sections 501 and 805; and in particular, Article I, Section 103, which guarantees the indigenous Chamorros and Carolinians of the Northern Mariana Islands their right of local self-government and to govern themselves with respect to internal affairs in accordance with a Constitution of their own adoption; and

Whereas, S. 744, Sections 2109 B(i), (ii), (iii), (v)(I), (V), and (C) will allow the alien workers, their families and people of other ethnicity to become permanent residents and eventually become U. S. citizens upon it becoming law. According to the 2010 census these foreign people represent a combined total of 38,520 or 71 percent of the Commonwealth's population. Such data clearly depicts a great disparity in the population profile of the Commonwealth, where the people of Northern Mariana descent represent only 15,363 or 29 percent of the total population of 53,883. As a consequence, the Chamorros and Carolinians of the Northern Marianas Islands will ultimately become powerless and minority voice in their homeland. Their social, economic, and political rights and all that they have aspired, bargained and worked hard to achieve, pursuant to the Covenant Agreement; including their rights under the Northern Mariana Islands Constitution, which they wrote, adopted, and approved by the President of the United State of America on October 24, 1977, will undeniably be taken away from them; and

Whereas, Article V, Section 506 of the Covenant, which the Chamorro and Carolinian people of the Northern Mariana Islands agreed to, and approved, hold the same provisions as those found in Section 2109 of S. 744. Sub-section (II) of Section 2109 permits such alien who was, on May 8, 2008, and continues to be as of the date of the enactment of this paragraph, a permanent resident (as defined in section 4303 of this title 3 of the Northern Mariana Islands Commonwealth Code, in effect on May 8, 2008); and (III), is the spouse or child (as defined in section 101(b)(1) of the Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C. 1101(b)(1))), of an alien described in sub-clauses (I) or (II); and (IV), was, on May 8, 2008, an immediate relative (as defined in section 4303 of title 3 of the Northern Mariana Islands Commonwealth Code, in effect on May 8, 2008, of a United States citizen, notwithstanding the age of the United States citizen, and continues to be such an immediate relative on the date of the application described in subparagraph (A); and (V), is the spouse or child (as defined in section 101(b)(1) of the Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C. 1101(b)(1))), of the alien guest worker described in sub-clause (V) and is presently resident under CW–2 status. The intent of these provisions are already permitted under Section 506 of Article 5 of the Covenant Agreement, notwithstanding Sections 2109B(i), (ii), (iii), (v)(I), (V), and (C) (Long-term Legal Residents of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands) of S.744; and

Whereas, Section 2109 ((Long-Term Legal Residents of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands) of S. 744 is amending Article V, Section 506 of the Covenant by including Section 2109 B(i), (ii), (iii), (v)(I), (V), and (C) to allow alien workers, their families, and people of other ethnic origin, who were counted and described in the CNMI's 2010 Census, to become permanent residents and eventually become U. S. citizens. Clearly, this Act violates the fundamental provisions delineated in Article I, Sections 105 and other provisions of the Covenant; and

Whereas, the House of Representatives of the 18th Northern Marianas Commonwealth Legislature recognizes the importance of granting improved status to the few stateless persons who were born in the Northern Mariana Islands between January 1, 1974 and January 9, 1978 (Section 2109 B(v)(I)); however, the granting of permanent resident status to foreign persons delineated in Section 2109 B(i), (ii), (iii), (V), and (C) of S.744,

should and must go through the established process, pursuant to the Immigration and Nationality Act. Therefore, the Northern Marianas Commonwealth Legislature disagrees with and is strongly opposed to the inclusion of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands in S.744, under Section 2109 (Long-Term Legal Residents of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands); and

Whereas, Article V, Section 503(a) of the Covenant authorizes the United States Congress to make applicable to the Northern Mariana Islands the immigration and naturalization law of the United States after the termination of the Trusteeship Agreement. This was accomplished when the U.S. Congress enacted the Consolidated Natural Resource Act of 2008 (Public Law 110–229). However, such authority given to the United States Congress under the said Article V, Section 503(a) does not necessarily mean that the U.S. Congress can unilaterally and arbitrarily enact immigration laws and/or other bills or legislations for the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands that contradicts and infringes on the fundamental provisions delineated in Article 1, Section 105 and other provisions of the Covenant; particularly, outlined in Article 1, Section 103, which guarantees the indigenous people of the Northern Mariana Islands the right of local self-government and to govern themselves with respect to internal affairs in accordance with a Constitution of their own adoption; and

Whereas, Article 1, Section 105 of the Covenant states: ''The United States may enact legislation in accordance with its constitutional processes which will be applicable to the Northern Mariana Islands, but if such legislation cannot also be made applicable to the several States the Northern Mariana Islands must be specifically named therein for it to become effective in the Northern Mariana Islands. In order to respect the right of self-government guaranteed by this Covenant the United States agrees to limit the exercise of that authority so that the fundamental provisions of this Covenant, namely Articles I, II and III and Sections 501 and 805, may be modified only with the consent of the Government of the United States and the Government of the Northern Mariana Islands''; and

Whereas, Section 2109 (Long-term Legal Residents of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands) of S. 744 contradicts U.S. Public Law 110–229 (Consolidated Natural Resources Act of 2008) which mandates the alien worker population of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands to be zeroed out when the transition period ends on Dec. 31, 2014. U.S. Public Law 110–229 (Consolidated Natural Resources Act of 2008) seeks to help create jobs for the many unemployed indigenous Chamorro and Carolinian people and U.S. citizens who are residents in the Northern Mariana Islands, who have been actively searching for work in the job market. Section 2109 of S. 744, on the other hand, will deprive the Chamorro and Carolinian people of Northern Marianas descent and U.S. citizens who are residents of the Commonwealth of employment opportunities, as alien workers and people of other ethnic origin will continue to occupy and fill the positions in the job market; and

Whereas, alien workers who are recruited for employment purposes, should not, irrespective of the length of their employment in the Commonwealth, be automatically entitled to full social, economic, and political rights, because such benefits and privileges of United States citizens were never promised, bargained, entered, and/or agreed upon in their employment contracts, which were approved by them and the Government of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands; nor were discussions made or suggested for alien workers, their families, and persons of other ethnic origin to become permanent resident during the negotiation of Covenant Agreement between the indigenous people of the Northern Mariana Islands and the United States of America, notwithstanding Section 506 of Article V of the Covenant; and

Whereas, the enactment of Section 2109 (Long-term Legal Residents of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands) of S. 744, and/or any similar Act by Congress, will dramatically change the social, economic, and political landscape in the Commonwealth to the advantage of the thousands of alien workers, their families and people of other ethnic origin or race upon them becoming U.S. Citizens. This will have a devastating effect on the social, political and economic livelihood of the Chamorro and Carolinian people of the Northern Mariana Islands. It will give birth to a new form of foreign domination on the indigenous people once again, but this time, sadly, it evolves from within the Commonwealth by way of Section 2109 (Long-term Legal Residents of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands); and

Whereas, the enactment of Section 2109 of S. 744, and/or any similar legislations by Congress will place the Carolinian and Chamorro people of the Northern Mariana Islands back in time, trapped under a new form of foreign domination once again, and a direct violation of the Covenant Agreement, and the mandates of the Trusteeship Agreement which was agreed upon by the United States and the United Nation Security Council, including the Charter of the United Nation which obligates the United States ''to promote the development of the people of the trust territory toward self-government or independence as may be appropriate to the particular circumstances of the trust territory and its peoples and the freely expressed wishes of the peoples concerned''. The enactment of Section 2109 and/or other similar act or legislations by Congress is a direct contradiction to the freely expressed wishes of the Chamorro and Carolinian people of the Northern Marianas Islands when they exercised their inalienable right of self-determination and negotiated the Covenant Agreement with the United States of America—to be free from foreign domination, and to be recognized as a people of the Northern Mariana Islands, with ''the right of local self-government and to govern themselves in accordance with a Constitution of their own adoption; and

Whereas, Section 2109 of S. 744, and/or any similar Act currently before both houses of the U.S. Congress for consideration, or are being proposed will create alarming concerns to the Chamorro and Carolinian people of the Northern Mariana Islands, thus affecting the relationship between them and the United States; therefore, the 18th Northern Marianas Commonwealth Legislature urged the U.S. Congress that any and all propose legislations that infringes upon the social, economic and political rights of the indigenous Chamorro and Carolinian people who are of Northern Marianas descent, who called for, negotiated, and voted favorably in support of the Covenant, must be addressed pursuant to Article 1, Section 105 and Section 902 of the Covenant; and

Whereas, Section 902 of Article IX states in part: ''The Government of the United States and the Government of the Northern Mariana Islands will consult regularly on all matters affecting the relationship between them''. . . ''to consider in good faith such issues affecting the relationship between the Northern Mariana Islands and the United States as may be designated by either Government and to make recommendations with respect thereto'': Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the House of Representatives of the 18th Northern Marianas Commonwealth Legislature respectfully request and urge the House of Representatives of the 113th United States Congress to eliminate Section 2109 (Long-Term Legal Residents of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands) of S. 744, and any similar legislation that is currently before both houses of the U.S. Congress undergoing review for consideration until such legislative intent for the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands is discussed pursuant to Article 1, Section 105 and Article IX, Section 902 of the Covenant to Establish the Commonwealth of the Northern Marianas in Political Union with the United States of America; and to recognize, respect and take into serious consideration the mandates of the Trusteeship Agreement which was agreed upon by the United States; and the United Nation Security Council, including the United States obligation under the Charter of the United Nation as stipulated in the House Joint Resolution No. 549—to approve the ''Covenant To Establish a Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands in Political Union with the United States of America''; and be it further

Resolved, That the Speaker of the House shall certify, and the Clerk of the House shall attest to the adoption of this resolution. The Clerk of the House shall transmit a certified copy of this Resolution to the Honorable Joseph R. Biden, Jr., President of the Senate, 113th United States Congress; the Honorable John Boehner, Speaker of the House, 113th United States Congress; the Honorable Gregorio ''Kilili'' Sablan, CNM1 Delegate to the 113th United States Congress; the U. S. Department of Interior Secretary Sally Jewell; the Secretary of U.S. Department of Homeland Security; the Honorable Eloy S. Inos, Governor, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands; the Honorable Ralph DLG Torres, President of the Senate; 18th Northern Marianas Commonwealth Legislature; the Honorable Donald P. Flores, Mayor of Saipan; the Honorable Ramon M. Dela Cruz, Mayor of Tinian and Aguigan; the Honorable Melchor A. Mendiola, Mayor of Rota; and the Honorable Tobias C. Aldan, Mayor of the Northern Islands.

EXECUTIVE REPORT OF COMMITTEE

The following executive report of a nomination was submitted:

By Ms. CANTWELL for the Committee on Indian Affairs.

*Vincent G. Logan, of New York, to be Special Trustee, Office of Special Trustee for American Indians, Department of the Interior.

*Nomination was reported with recommendation that it be confirmed subject to the nominee's commitment to respond to requests to appear and testify before any duly constituted committee of the Senate.

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. ROBERTS:

S. 1974. A bill to amend the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 to prohibit Federal education mandates, and for

other purposes; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mrs. GILLIBRAND:

S. 1975. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to provide an above-the-line deduction for child care expenses, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. ROCKEFELLER (for himself, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, Mr. PRYOR, and Mr. NELSON):

S. 1976. A bill to protect consumers by requiring reasonable security policies and procedures to protect data containing personal information, and to provide for nationwide notice in the event of a breach of security; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

By Ms. AYOTTE (for herself, Mr. GRAHAM, Mr. WICKER, and Ms. COLLINS):

S. 1977. A bill to repeal section 403 of the Bipartisan Budget Act of 2013, relating to an annual adjustment of retired pay for members of the Armed Forces under the age of 62, and to provide an offset; read the first time.

By Mr. UDALL of New Mexico:

S. 1978. A bill to increase access to primary care services through training and accountability improvements; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. HARKIN (for himself and Mr. BROWN):

S. 1979. A bill to provide for USA Retirement Funds, to reform the pension system, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

SUBMISSION OF CONCURRENT AND SENATE RESOLUTIONS

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

By Mrs. MURRAY (for herself, Ms. COLLINS, Mr. LEVIN, Mr. CORNYN, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Mr. CARDIN, Ms. LANDRIEU, Mr. COCHRAN, and Mr. DURBIN):

S. Res. 342. A resolution designating February 3 through 7, 2014, as ''National School Counseling Week''; considered and agreed to.

ADDITIONAL COSPONSORS

S. 41

At the request of Ms. CANTWELL, the name of the Senator from Washington (Mrs. MURRAY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 41, a bill to provide a permanent deduction for State and local general sales taxes.

S. 84

At the request of Ms. MIKULSKI, the names of the Senator from West Virginia (Mr. ROCKEFELLER) and the Senator from South Dakota (Mr. JOHNSON) were added as cosponsors of S. 84, a bill to amend the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938 to provide more effective remedies to victims of discrimination in the payment of wages on the basis of sex, and for other purposes.

S. 289

At the request of Ms. LANDRIEU, the name of the Senator from Washington (Ms. CANTWELL) was added as a cosponsor of S. 289, a bill to extend the low-interest refinancing provisions under the Local Development Business Loan Program of the Small Business Administration.

S. 526

At the request of Mr. BAUCUS, the name of the Senator from Iowa (Mr. HARKIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 526, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to make permanent the special rule for contributions of qualified conservation contributions, and for other purposes.

S. 862

At the request of Ms. AYOTTE, the name of the Senator from Delaware (Mr. COONS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 862, a bill to amend section 5000A of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to provide an additional religious exemption from the individual health coverage mandate.

S. 865

At the request of Mr. WHITEHOUSE, the name of the Senator from Oregon (Mr. MERKLEY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 865, a bill to provide for the establishment of a Commission to Accelerate the End of Breast Cancer.

S. 1235

At the request of Mr. TOOMEY, the name of the Senator from Kansas (Mr. ROBERTS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1235, a bill to restrict any State or local jurisdiction from imposing a new discriminatory tax on cell phone services, providers, or property.

S. 1410

At the request of Mr. DURBIN, the name of the Senator from Texas (Mr. CRUZ) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1410, a bill to focus limited Federal resources on the most serious offenders.

S. 1431

At the request of Mr. THUNE, the name of the Senator from Kansas (Mr. ROBERTS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1431, a bill to permanently extend the Internet Tax Freedom Act.

S. 1456

At the request of Ms. AYOTTE, the names of the Senator from Kentucky (Mr. MCCONNELL), the Senator from Louisiana (Mr. VITTER), the Senator from Texas (Mr. CORNYN), the Senator from Mississippi (Mr. WICKER), the Senator from Arizona (Mr. MCCAIN), the Senator from Arkansas (Mr. BOOZMAN), the Senator from Iowa (Mr. GRASSLEY), the Senator from Mississippi (Mr. COCHRAN), the Senator from Georgia (Mr. CHAMBLISS), the Senator from Wyoming (Mr. BARRASSO), the Senator from Idaho (Mr. RISCH), the Senator from Ohio (Mr. PORTMAN), the Senator from Nebraska (Mrs. FISCHER), the Senator from North Carolina (Mr. BURR) and the Senator from Oklahoma (Mr. COBURN) were added as cosponsors of S. 1456, a bill to award the Congressional Gold Medal to Shimon Peres.

S. 1587

At the request of Mr. MARKEY, the name of the Senator from California (Mrs. BOXER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1587, a bill to posthumously award the Congressional Gold Medal to each of Glen Doherty and Tyrone Woods in recognition of their contributions to the Nation.

S. 1596

At the request of Mr. TOOMEY, the name of the Senator from West Virginia (Mr. MANCHIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1596, a bill to require State educational agencies that receive funding under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 to have in effect policies and procedures on background checks for school employees.

S. 1654

At the request of Mr. REED, the names of the Senator from Montana (Mr. TESTER), the Senator from New Hampshire (Mrs. SHAHEEN) and the Senator from Vermont (Mr. SANDERS) were added as cosponsors of S. 1654, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to deny tax deductions for corporate regulatory violations.

S. 1704

At the request of Mr. DURBIN, the name of the Senator from Washington (Mrs. MURRAY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1704, a bill to expand the use of open textbooks in order to achieve savings for students.

S. 1709

At the request of Mr. KIRK, the name of the Senator from Iowa (Mr. HARKIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1709, a bill to require the Committee on Technology of the National Science and Technology Council to develop and update a national manufacturing competitiveness strategic plan, and for other purposes.

S. 1792

At the request of Mr. JOHANNS, his name was added as a cosponsor of S. 1792, a bill to close out expired, empty grant accounts.

S. 1814

At the request of Mr. MANCHIN, the name of the Senator from Pennsylvania (Mr. CASEY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1814, a bill to encourage, enhance, and integrate Silver Alert plans throughout the United States and for other purposes.

S. 1908

At the request of Mr. CORNYN, the name of the Senator from Wisconsin (Mr. JOHNSON) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1908, a bill to allow reciprocity for the carrying of certain concealed firearms.

S. 1909

At the request of Mr. SCOTT, the names of the Senator from Louisiana (Mr. VITTER) and the Senator from Florida (Mr. RUBIO) were added as cosponsors of S. 1909, a bill to expand opportunity through greater choice in education, and for other purposes.

S. 1923

At the request of Mr. VITTER, the name of the Senator from Wyoming (Mr. BARRASSO) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1923, a bill to amend the Securities Exchange Act of 1934 to exempt from registration brokers performing services in connection with the transfer of ownership of smaller privately held companies.

S. 1924

At the request of Mr. RISCH, the name of the Senator from Wyoming (Mr. BARRASSO) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1924, a bill to require a report

on INF Treaty compliance information sharing.

S. 1925

At the request of Mr. BARRASSO, his name was added as a cosponsor of S. 1925, a bill to limit the retrieval of data from vehicle event data recorders.

S. 1941

At the request of Mr. JOHANNS, the name of the Senator from Texas (Mr. CORNYN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1941, a bill to establish requirements for the adoption of any new or revised requirement providing for the screening, testing, or treatment of an airman or an air traffic controller for a sleep disorder, and for other purposes.

S. 1953

At the request of Mr. TESTER, the name of the Senator from Wyoming (Mr. ENZI) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1953, a bill to amend certain provisions of the Inspector General Act of 1978 and the Inspector General Improvement Act of 2008, and for other purposes.

S. 1956

At the request of Mr. SCHATZ, the names of the Senator from Washington (Ms. CANTWELL), the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. MURPHY), the Senator from California (Mrs. BOXER), the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. MENENDEZ), the Senator from New Mexico (Mr. HEINRICH), the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. BOOKER), the Senator from New York (Mr. SCHUMER) and the Senator from Massachusetts (Ms. WARREN) were added as cosponsors of S. 1956, a bill to direct the Secretary of Defense to review the discharge characterization of former members of the Armed Forces who were discharged by reason of the sexual orientation of the member, and for other purposes.

S. 1957

At the request of Mr. BENNET, the name of the Senator from Missouri (Mrs. MCCASKILL) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1957, a bill to establish the American Infrastructure Fund, to provide bond guarantees and make loans to States, local governments, and infrastructure providers for investments in certain infrastructure projects, and to provide equity investments in such projects, and for other purposes.

S. 1972

At the request of Mr. BLUMENTHAL, the names of the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. MENENDEZ) and the Senator from Ohio (Mr. BROWN) were added as cosponsors of S. 1972, a bill to prohibit discrimination in employment on the basis of an individual's status or history of unemployment.

S. RES. 333

At the request of Mr. TOOMEY, the name of the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. MURPHY) was added as a cosponsor of S. Res. 333, a resolution strongly recommending that the United States renegotiate the return of the Iraqi Jewish Archive to Iraq.

S. RES. 340

At the request of Mr. BLUMENTHAL, the names of the Senator from Florida (Mr. RUBIO), the Senator from Illinois (Mr. KIRK) and the Senator from Oregon (Mr. WYDEN) were added as cosponsors of S. Res. 340, a resolution expressing the sense of the Senate that all necessary measures should be taken to protect children in the United States from human trafficking, especially during the upcoming Super Bowl, an event around which many children are trafficked for sex.

S. RES. 341

At the request of Mr. PRYOR, the names of the Senator from Arkansas (Mr. BOOZMAN) and the Senator from Michigan (Mr. LEVIN) were added as cosponsors of S. Res. 341, a resolution observing the 100th birthday of civil rights leader Daisy Bates and honoring her legacy as an American heroine.

AMENDMENT NO. 2707

At the request of Mr. TOOMEY, the name of the Senator from Nebraska (Mr. JOHANNS) was added as a cosponsor of amendment No. 2707 proposed to S. 1926, a bill to delay the implementation of certain provisions of the Biggert-Waters Flood Insurance Reform Act of 2012 and to reform the National Association of Registered Agents and Brokers, and for other purposes.

STATEMENTS ON INTRODUCED BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

By Mr. ROCKEFELLER (for himself, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, Mr. PRYOR, and Mr. NELSON):

S. 1976. A bill to protect consumers by requiring reasonable security policies and procedures to protect data containing personal information, and to provide for nationwide notice in the event of a breach of security; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

Mr. ROCKEFELLER. Mr. President, today, I am introducing the Data Security and Breach Notification Act of 2014. I introduce this bill with my good friend, Senator FEINSTEIN, Chairman of the Intelligence Committee, as well as Senators PRYOR and NELSON, valued Subcommittee Chairmen on the Senate Commerce Committee. I want to express my particular gratitude to Senator PRYOR for his work on this issue. He has long been the champion of data security legislation on the Commerce Committee, and his well-known commitment and expertise on this issue, as well as his support of our current bill, have proven to be indispensable.

While the recent breaches at Target and Neiman Marcus have made headlines, these breaches are nothing new. Data breaches have happened before, and they will inevitably occur in the future. Understanding this, there is much more that can be done to prevent breaches and, when they occur, respond to them.

Similarly, the concepts in today's bill are not new and have been considered by Congress before. The bill that Senators FEINSTEIN, PRYOR, NELSON, and I introduce today is not a significant departure from the bill that Senator PRYOR and I introduced in the past two Congresses. Like the earlier bills, it is predicated on basic principles: companies should adopt strong security protocols to protect consumers' personal information; they should quickly notify affected consumers in the event of a breach; and the Federal Trade Commission, FTC, and State attorneys general should be empowered to fully enforce the law. With those principles as a framework, the bill we introduce today has four key elements.

First, it directs the FTC to promulgate rules establishing robust data security protocols that companies and nonprofits must adopt when collecting and storing consumers' personal information. These rules will be strong, but they will also be flexible. We recognize that security measures for a large multi-billion-dollar corporation may not be appropriate for a small business. As such, the Commission is required to consider the impact on small businesses and other mitigating factors in developing its rules.

Second, the bill requires breached companies to notify affected consumers unless there is no reasonable risk of identity theft, fraud, or other unlawful conduct. In so doing, the breached company must also provide those consumers with free credit reports. If companies adopt advanced technologies that render their personal data unreadable, indecipherable, or otherwise unusable, there is a rebuttable presumption that no risk to consumers exists. The FTC, in consultation with the National Institute of Standards and Technology, shall establish guidelines identifying the technologies that would qualify for this rebuttable presumption.

Third, the bill will establish a two-pronged enforcement system, whereby the FTC and state Attorneys General are afforded not only traditional equitable remedies but civil penalty authority as well. Moreover, the bill makes it a criminal offense for anyone to knowingly conceal a data breach.

Lastly, our bill will require companies to report data breaches to a designated Federal government entity as established by the Department of Homeland Security. This entity will serve as a central repository for information on all data breaches of a certain magnitude and will, in turn, notify other relevant Federal and law enforcement agencies, such as the Department of Justice, Secret Service, FTC, and affected State Attorneys General.

I would like to note that, while the impetus behind introducing this bill is to provide consumers with the strongest protections possible, the bill will also provide businesses with regulatory certainty—something they currently lack. Our bill will finally codify into regulation what the FTC is already doing; that is, the Commission has a long history of bringing enforcement

actions against companies for negligent data security practices as violations of the FTC Act's broad prohibition against ''unfair or deceptive acts or practices.'' Indeed, the Commission is currently embroiled in numerous data breach cases. The FTC's new data security rules mandated by our bill will finally provide more explicit detail to industry regarding the rules of the road. Importantly, the bill will create one set of Federal rules; it will preempt State laws with regard to data security and breach notification so that companies no longer have to operate under a patchwork of differing state laws.

Notwithstanding my frustration over Congress's decade-long failure to pass meaningful data security legislation, I remain hopeful that this year will be different. The American public is demanding that we do something about a problem that is only getting worse. As I noted earlier in my remarks, there will be more data breaches in the future—it is inevitable. And the consequences are not trivial. Not only do these data breaches impose potentially devastating financial consequences on consumers who are victimized by identity theft and other financial fraud, these breaches also threaten basic consumer privacy. Companies continue to collect, aggregate, and house an unfathomable amount of personal information about all of us. These same companies must guard that information with the highest of security standards. While I am not naive to think our bill will prevent all data breaches of the future, I am confident that it will go a long way towards pushing companies to do more—much more. And it will finally provide consumers with peace of mind that—when a breach does occur—they will be notified as soon as possible so they may take the necessary steps to protect themselves.

I thank Senators FEINSTEIN, PRYOR, and NELSON for helping me on this important bill.

SUBMITTED RESOLUTIONS

SENATE RESOLUTION 342—DESIGNATING FEBRUARY 3 THROUGH 7, 2014, AS ''NATIONAL SCHOOL COUNSELING WEEK''

Mrs. MURRAY (for herself, Ms. COLLINS, Mr. LEVIN, Mr. CORNYN, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Mr. CARDIN, Ms. LANDRIEU, Mr. COCHRAN, and Mr. DURBIN) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to.:

S. RES. 342

Whereas the American School Counselor Association has designated February 3 through 7, 2014, as ''National School Counseling Week'';

Whereas the importance of school counseling has been recognized through the inclusion of elementary and secondary school counseling programs in amendments to the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 6301 et seq.);

Whereas school counselors have long advocated for equal opportunities for all students;

Whereas school counselors help develop well-rounded students by guiding students through academic, personal, social, and career development;

Whereas personal and social growth results in increased academic achievement;

Whereas school counselors play a vital role in ensuring that students are ready for college and careers;

Whereas school counselors play a vital role in making students aware of opportunities for financial aid and college scholarships;

Whereas school counselors assist with and coordinate efforts to foster a positive school climate, resulting in a safer learning environment for all students;

Whereas school counselors have been instrumental in helping students, teachers, and parents deal with personal trauma as well as tragedies in their communities and the United States;

Whereas students face myriad challenges every day, including peer pressure, bullying, depression, the deployment of family members to serve in conflicts overseas, and school violence;

Whereas a school counselor is one of the few professionals in a school building who is trained in both education and mental health matters;

Whereas the roles and responsibilities of school counselors are often misunderstood;

Whereas the school counselor position is often among the first to be eliminated to meet budgetary constraints;

Whereas the national average ratio of students to school counselors is 471 to 1, almost twice the 250 to 1 ratio recommended by the American School Counselor Association, the National Association for College Admission Counseling, and other organizations; and

Whereas the celebration of National School Counseling Week will increase awareness of the important and necessary role school counselors play in the lives of students in the United States: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) designates February 3 through 7, 2014, as ''National School Counseling Week''; and

(2) encourages the people of the United States to observe National School Counseling Week with appropriate ceremonies and activities that promote awareness of the role school counselors play in schools and the community at large in preparing students for fulfilling lives as contributing members of society.

NOTICES OF HEARINGS

COMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND NATURAL RESOURCES

Mr. WYDEN. Mr. President, I would like to announce for the information of the Senate and the public that a hearing has been scheduled before the Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources on Tuesday, February 4, 2014, at 10 a.m., in Room SD–366 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building in Washington, DC.

The purpose of the hearing is to receive testimony on the nominations of Ms. Rhea S. Suh, to be Assistant Secretary for Fish and Wildlife and Parks, Department of the Interior, and Ms. Janice M. Schneider to be Assistant Secretary for Land and Minerals Management, Department of the Interior.

Because of the limited time available for the business meeting, witnesses may testify by invitation only. However, those wishing to submit written testimony for the hearing record should send it to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources, U.S. Senate, 304 Dirksen Senate Office Building, Washington, DC, 20510–6150, or by email to ian_nicholson@energy.senate.gov.

For further information, please contact Sam Fowler at (202) 224–7571 or Ian Nicholson at (202) 224–7143.

COMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND NATURAL RESOURCES

Mr. WYDEN. Mr. President, I would like to announce for the information of the Senate and the public that a hearing has been scheduled before the Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources. The hearing will be held on Thursday, February 6, 2014, at 9:30 a.m., in room SD–366 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building.

The purpose of this hearing is to receive testimony on S. 1784, the Oregon and California Land Grant Act of 2013, and S. 1966, the National Forest Jobs and Management Act of 2014.

Because of the limited time available for the hearing, witnesses may testify by invitation only. However, those wishing to submit written testimony for the hearing record may do so by sending it to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources, U.S. Senate, Washington, DC 20510–6150, or by e-mail to John_Assini@energy.senate.gov.

For further information, please contact Michele Miranda at (202) 224–7556 or John Assini at (202) 224–9313.

AUTHORITY FOR COMMITTEES TO MEET

COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE, SCIENCE, AND TRANSPORTATION

Mr. MENENDEZ. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation be authorized to hold a meeting during the session of the Senate on Thursday, January 30, 2014, at 10 a.m. in room 253 of the Russell Senate Office Building. The committee will hold a hearing entitled ''West Coast and Western Pacific Perspectives on Magnuson-Stevens Act Reauthorization.''

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection it is so ordered.

COMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND NATURAL RESOURCES

Mr. MENENDEZ. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate to conduct a hearing on Thursday, January 30, 2014, at 9:30 a.m., in room 366 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building. The purpose of this oversight hearing is to explore opportunities and challenges associated with lifting the ban on U.S. crude oil exports. For further information, please contact Todd Wooten at (202) 224–3907, Abigail Campbell at (202) 224–4905, or Lauren Goldschmidt at (202) 224–5488.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection it is so ordered.

COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENT AND PUBLIC WORKS AND SUBCOMMITTEE ON CLEAN AIR AND NUCLEAR SAFETY

Mr. MENENDEZ. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Environment and Public Works and the Subcommittee on Clean Air and Nuclear Safety be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on January 30, at 9:30 a.m., in room 406 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building to conduct a joint hearing entitled ''Oversight Hearing: NRC's Implementation of the Fukushima Near-Term Task Force Recommendations and other Actions to Enhance and Maintain Nuclear Safety.''

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection it is so ordered.

COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

Mr. MENENDEZ. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Finance be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Thursday, January 30, 2014, at 10 a.m., in 215 Dirksen Senate Office Building.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection it is so ordered.

COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS

Mr. MENENDEZ. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Foreign Relations be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Thursday, January 30, 2014, at 9:30 a.m., to hold a hearing entitled ''Section 123: Civilian Nuclear Cooperation Agreements.''

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

COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY

Mr. MENENDEZ. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on the Judiciary be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on January 30, 2014, at 10 a.m., in SD–226 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building, to conduct an executive business meeting.

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

SUBCOMMITTEE ON EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT, INTERGOVERNMENTAL RELATIONS, AND THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

Mr. MENENDEZ. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Subcommittee on Emergency Management, Interfovernmental Relations, and the District of Columbia of the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Thursday, January 30, 2014, at 2:30 p.m., to conduct a hearing entitled ''Shutdown: Examining Federal Government Closure Impacts on the District of Columbia.''

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

NATIONAL SCHOOL COUNSELING WEEK

Mr. REID. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the consideration of S. Res. 342.

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

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 342) designating February 3 through 7, 2014, as ''National School Counseling Week.''

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

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

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

The resolution (S. Res. 342) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

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

SIGNING AUTHORITY

Mr. REID. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that during the adjournment or recess of the Senate from Thursday, January 30, through Monday, February 3, the majority leader and Senators Warner and Rockefeller be authorized to sign duly enrolled bills or joint resolutions.

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

MEASURE READ THE FIRST TIME—S. 1977

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I understand there is a bill at the desk, and I ask for its first reading.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will read the bill by title for the first time.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 1977) to repeal section 403 of the Bipartisan Budget Act of 2013, relating to an annual adjustment of retired pay for members of the Armed Forces under the age of 62, and to provide an offset.

Mr. REID. I now ask for a second reading, and in order to place the bill on the calendar under the provisions of rule XIV, I object to my own request.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

The bill will be read for the second time on the next legislative day.

ORDERS FOR MONDAY, FEBRUARY 3, 2014

Mr. REID. I ask unanimous consent that when the Senate completes its business today, it adjourn until 2 p.m. on Monday, February 3, 2014; that following the prayer and pledge, the morning hour be deemed expired, the Journal of proceedings be approved to date, and the time for the two leaders be reserved for their use later in the day; that following any leader remarks, the Senate resume consideration of the conference report to accompany H.R. 2642, the farm bill, with the time until 5:30 p.m. equally divided and controlled between the two leaders or their designees.

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

PROGRAM

Mr. REID. The next rollcall vote will be 5:30 p.m. on the motion to invoke cloture on the conference report to accompany the farm bill.

ADJOURNMENT UNTIL MONDAY, FEBRUARY 3, 2014, AT 2 P.M.

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 5:57 p.m., adjourned until Monday, February 3, 2014, at 2 p.m.

NOMINATIONS

Executive nominations received by the Senate:

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE

MIRANDA A. A. BALLENTINE, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, TO BE AN ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF THE AIR FORCE, VICE TERRY A. YONKERS, RESIGNED.

MICHAEL J. MCCORD, OF OHIO, TO BE UNDER SECRETARY OF DEFENSE (COMPTROLLER), VICE ROBERT F. HALE.

BRIAN P. MCKEON, OF NEW YORK, TO BE A PRINCIPAL DEPUTY UNDER SECRETARY OF DEFENSE, VICE KATHLEEN H. HICKS, RESIGNED.

CHRISTINE E. WORMUTH, OF VIRGINIA, TO BE UNDER SECRETARY OF DEFENSE FOR POLICY, VICE JAMES N. MILLER, JR., RESIGNED.

FEDERAL MARITIME COMMISSION

WILLIAM P. DOYLE, OF PENNSYLVANIA, TO BE A FEDERAL MARITIME COMMISSIONER FOR A TERM EXPIRING JUNE 30, 2018. (REAPPOINTMENT)

FEDERAL ENERGY REGULATORY COMMISSION

NORMAN C. BAY, OF NEW MEXICO, TO BE A MEMBER OF THE FEDERAL ENERGY REGULATORY COMMISSION FOR THE TERM EXPIRING JUNE 30, 2018, VICE JON WELLINGHOFF, RESIGNED.

ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

ANN ELIZABETH DUNKIN, OF CALIFORNIA, TO BE AN ASSISTANT ADMINISTRATOR OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY, VICE MALCOLM D. JACKSON.

CHEMICAL SAFETY AND HAZARD INVESTIGATION BOARD

MANUEL H. EHRLICH, JR., OF NEW JERSEY, TO BE A MEMBER OF THE CHEMICAL SAFETY AND HAZARD INVESTIGATION BOARD FOR A TERM OF FIVE YEARS, VICE JOHN S. BRESLAND, RESIGNED.

INTER–AMERICAN DEVELOPMENT BANK

MILEYDI GUILARTE, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, TO BE UNITED STATES ALTERNATE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF THE INTER–AMERICAN DEVELOPMENT BANK, VICE JAN E. BOYER, RESIGNED.

DEPARTMENT OF STATE

SUZAN G. LEVINE, OF WASHINGTON, TO BE AMBASSADOR EXTRAORDINARY AND PLENIPOTENTIARY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO THE SWISS CONFEDERATION, AND TO SERVE CONCURRENTLY AND WITHOUT ADDITIONAL COMPENSATION AS AMBASSADOR EXTRAORDINARY AND PLENIPOTENTIARY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO THE PRINCIPALITY OF LIECHTENSTEIN.

DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY

L. REGINALD BROTHERS, JR., OF MASSACHUSETTS, TO BE UNDER SECRETARY FOR SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY, DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY, VICE TARA JEANNE O'TOOLE, RESIGNED.

FOREIGN SERVICE

THE FOLLOWING NAMED PERSONS OF THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE TO BE CONSULAR OFFICERS AND SECRETARIES IN THE DIPLOMATIC SERVICE OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA:

CHRISTOPHER DAVID FREDERICK, OF MINNESOTA
JULIE ANNE MORIN, OF VIRGINIA

JULIO MALDONADO, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

THE FOLLOWING NAMED MEMBERS OF THE FOREIGN SERVICE TO BE CONSULAR OFFICERS AND/OR SECRETARIES IN THE DIPLOMATIC SERVICE OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA, AS INDICATED:

SECRETARY IN THE DIPLOMATIC SERVICE OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA:

OFFICE OF THE UNITED STATES TRADE REPRESENTATIVE

JAMES BENJAMIN GREEN, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

CONSULAR OFFICERS AND SECRETARIES IN THE DIPLOMATIC SERVICE OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA:

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

CANDICE EVETTE PARKER BRUCE, OF GEORGIA
JENNIFER ARGUETA CLEVER, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
JOSHUA EMMANUEL LAGOS, OF TEXAS
LASHONDA V. MCLEOD, OF MISSISSIPPI
JOHN P. SLETTE, OF MINNESOTA
LINSTON WINSTON TERRY, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
ORESTES H. VASQUEZ, OF FLORIDA
ROBERT THOMSON WRIGHT, OF WASHINGTON
JEFFREY E. ZIMMERMAN, OF MINNESOTA

THE FOLLOWING NAMED CAREER MEMBER OF THE SENIOR FOREIGN SERVICE OF THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE FOR PROMOTION WITHIN THE SENIOR FOREIGN SERVICE TO THE CLASS INDICATED, EFFECTIVE JANUARY 27, 2013:

CAREER MEMBER OF THE SENIOR FOREIGN SERVICE OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA, CLASS OF CAREER MINISTER:

GEOFFREY W. WIGGIN, OF SOUTH DAKOTA

THE FOLLOWING NAMED PERSONS OF THE DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE FOR APPOINTMENT AS FOREIGN SERVICE OFFICERS OF THE CLASSES STATED:

FOR APPOINTMENT AS FOREIGN SERVICE OFFICER OF CLASS THREE, CONSULAR OFFICER AND SECRETARY IN THE DIPLOMATIC SERVICE OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA:

SCOTT THOMAS BRUNS, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
KEENTON CHIANG, OF CALIFORNIA
ALFRED LANDON LOOMIS, OF LOUISIANA
MIGUEL A. HERNANDEZ, OF CALIFORNIA
HENLEY K. JONES, OF FLORIDA

FOR APPOINTMENT AS FOREIGN SERVICE OFFICER OF CLASS FOUR, CONSULAR OFFICER AND SECRETARY IN THE DIPLOMATIC SERVICE OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA:

NICOLE DESILVIS, OF PENNSYLVANIA
KENNETH WALSH, OF MISSOURI

THE FOLLOWING–NAMED PERSONS TO BE CONSULAR OFFICERS AND SECRETARIES IN THE DIPLOMATIC SERVICE OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA:

FRED AZIZ, OF VIRGINIA
JOEL BLANK, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
TIMOTHY BROWNING, OF VIRGINIA
DAWN BRUNO, OF NEW YORK
JOSEPH CARREIRO, OF VIRGINIA
CALLIE H. CONROY, OF MARYLAND
THOMAS MUENZBERG, OF COLORADO
PAUL OLIVA, OF CALIFORNIA
WILLIAM QUIGLEY, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
MICHAEL ROGERS, OF MICHIGAN
ARTHUR ROY, OF CALIFORNIA
AISHA SALEM, OF FLORIDA
NATHALIE SCHARF, OF KANSAS
NATHAN SEIFERT, OF UTAH
REBECCA TORRES, OF FLORIDA
JANELLE WEYEK, OF WISCONSIN

THE FOLLOWING NAMED CAREER MEMBER OF THE SENIOR FOREIGN SERVICE OF THE UNITED STATE AGENCY FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT FOR PROMOTION INTO AND WITHIN THE SENIOR FOREIGN SERVICE TO THE CLASSES INDICATED:

CAREER MEMBER OF THE SENIOR FOREIGN SERVICE OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA, CLASS OF CAREER MINISTER:

SUSAN K. BREMS, OF VIRGINIA
SHARON LEE CROMER, OF NEW YORK
ROBERTA MAHONEY, OF MASSACHUSETTS
MARY CATHERINE OTT, OF MARYLAND
ANDREW B. SISSON, OF VIRGINIA

CAREER MEMBER OF THE SENIOR FOREIGN SERVICE, CLASS OF MINISTER–COUNSELOR:

JEFFREY W. ASHLEY, OF TEXAS
JOHN A. BEED, OF MARYLAND
ROBERT M. CLAY, OF VIRGINIA
LAWRENCE HARDY II, OF WASHINGTON
ELIZABETH ANN HOGAN, OF VIRGINIA
MARY ALICE KLEINJAN, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
PETER ANDREW MALNAK, OF NEVADA
DANA R. MANSURI, OF WASHINGTON
LAWRENCE A. MESERVE, OF VIRGINIA
HERBERT B. SMITH, OF DELAWARE

THE FOLLOWING NAMED CAREER MEMBERS OF THE FOREIGN SERVICE FOR PROMOTION INTO THE SENIOR FOREIGN SERVICE, AS INDICATED:

CAREER MEMBER OF THE SENIOR FOREIGN SERVICE OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA, CLASS OF COUNSELOR:

BRUCE ABRAMS, OF CONNECTICUT
REED J. AESCHLIMAN, OF WASHINGTON
R. DOUGLASS ARBUCKLE, OF FLORIDA
DOUGLAS HILLARY BALL, OF OREGON
ARTHUR W. BROWN, JR., OF MARYLAND
SEAN EDWARD CALLAHAN, OF NEW YORK
JAMES CARLIN CHARLIFUE, OF VIRGINIA
OSVALDO M. DE LA ROSA, OF FLORIDA
MARY EILEEN DEVITT, OF VIRGINIA
ALICIA D. DINERSTEIN, OF NEW YORK
POLLY C. DUNFORD–ZAHAR, OF NEW YORK
CHRISTOPHER WHEATLEY EDWARDS, OF FLORIDA
BRADEN W. ENROTH, OF VIRGINIA
CLAY WILLIAM EPPERSON, OF CALIFORNIA
JASON D. FRASER, OF FLORIDA
THEODORE VICTOR GEHR, OF OREGON
ANDREW MARC HERSCOWITZ, OF CALIFORNIA
MARCUS A. JOHNSON, JR., OF VIRGINIA
NADEREH C. LEE, OF NEW YORK
MARK ANDREW MEASSICK, OF FLORIDA
STEVEN GEHALE OLIVE, OF CALIFORNIA
KERRY A. PELZMAN, OF NEW HAMPSHIRE
KURT A. POPE, OF FLORIDA
MARIA RENDON LABADAN, OF FLORIDA
GARY ROBBINS, OF COLORADO
PAUL ANDREW SABATINE, OF OREGON
LITTLETON WALTER TAZEWELL, OF VIRGINIA
RYAN G. WASHBURN, OF FLORIDA
SARAH W. WINES, OF FLORIDA
ANN MARIE YASTISHOCK, OF PENNSYLVANIA

THE FOLLOWING NAMED PERSONS OF THE UNITED STATES AGENCY FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT FOR APPOINTMENT AS FOREIGN SERVICE OFFICERS OF THE CLASSES STATED.—

FOR APPOINTMENT AS FOREIGN SERVICE OFFICER OF CLASS ONE, CONSULAR OFFICER AND SECRETARY IN THE DIPLOMATIC SERVICE OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA:

JULIE ANN KOENEN, OF CALIFORNIA
MARCIA MUSISI NKAMBWE, OF ARIZONA
MILES F. TODER, OF VIRGINIA
PETER E. YOUNG, OF TENNESSEE

FOR APPOINTMENT AS FOREIGN SERVICE OFFICER OF CLASS TWO, CONSULAR OFFICER AND SECRETARY IN THE DIPLOMATIC SERVICE OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA:

ELISE AYERS, OF MASSACHUSETTS
SARAH DREYER, OF FLORIDA
LOUIS DUNCAN, OF FLORIDA
PAMELA L. FESSENDEN, OF NEW HAMPSHIRE
RONALD L. GLASS, OF FLORIDA
REBECCA A. HAMMEL, OF VIRGINIA
ZEINAH SALAHI, OF CONNECTICUT
CAROL JEAN WILSON, OF VIRGINIA
MARK C. WILT, OF MICHIGAN

FOR APPOINTMENT AS FOREIGN SERVICE OFFICER OF CLASS THREE, CONSULAR OFFICER AND SECRETARY IN THE DIPLOMATIC SERVICE OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA:

PATRICIA LYNN ALEXANDER, OF VIRGINIA
RICHARD TODD ANDREWS, OF FLORIDA
SHARLENE MANPREET KAUR BAGGA–TAVES, OF MICHIGAN
TAHALIA J. BARRET, OF NEW YORK
ALDER BARTLETT, OF OREGON
THOMAS GARY BAYER, OF RHODE ISLAND
SARA A. CALVERT, OF MARYLAND
ANGELA ORNELAZ CARDENAS, OF TEXAS
JUDY CHEN, OF NEVADA
RICHARD X. CHEN, OF FLORIDA
ROBERT D. CLINK, OF PENNSYLVANIA
DAVID COHEN, OF FLORIDA
ALICIA CONTRERAS, OF ILLINOIS
MATTHEW WILLIAM CORBIN, OF WASHINGTON
G. HEATH COSGROVE, OF ALABAMA
MOHAMED SANOUSSY DANSOKO, OF CALIFORNIA
DIANNA LYNN DARSNEY, OF NEW HAMPSHIRE
EILEEN SIOBHAN DERBY, OF NEW YORK
JENNA MICHELE DIALLO, OF MARYLAND
KATHERINE JOY DOW, OF WASHINGTON
SIMONE DUNCAN, OF FLORIDA
MICHELLE SHANA DWORKIN, OF NEW YORK
JOHN AARON EDGAR, OF WEST VIRGINIA
JO JEAN ELENES, OF ARIZONA
IOLI FILMERIDIS, OF CALIFORNIA
JOSEPH T. FOLTZ, OF MICHIGAN
AMANDA L. FONG, OF TEXAS
QING LUO FRANCIS, OF GEORGIA
EMILY GARDINER, OF VIRGINIA
BENJAMIN GOGGIN GARRETT, OF VIRGINIA
THEODORE L. GLENN, OF CALIFORNIA
LUIS EDUARDO GUZMAN, OF CALIFORNIA
BRYAN HIGHFILL, OF TEXAS
W. CULLEN HUGHES, OF COLORADO
SHELBY PATRICK HUNT, OF CALIFORNIA
MICHAEL L. JONES, OF NEW YORK
SHAWN ELIZABETH ALEXANDRIA JONES, OF NEVADA
ROOPA H. KARIA, OF OREGON
HAELEE KIM, OF NEW JERSEY
MARIA KIM, OF PENNSYLVANIA
BRADLEY KLINGSPORN, OF WISCONSIN
KY TU LAM, OF CALIFORNIA
ROBERT CHASE LAYNG, OF MAINE
LESLIE A. MACKEEN, OF NORTH CAROLINA
NORA MOON MADRIGAL, OF CALIFORNIA
LUIS ALFREDO MAES, OF NORTH CAROLINA
JERRY L. MARCUS, OF FLORIDA
ENILDA MARTIN, OF FLORIDA
DEBORAH R. MILLER, OF HAWAII
ANNE G. MURPHY, OF TEXAS
VERLA CLEOPATHRA LORETTA NATHANIEL, OF THE VIRGIN ISLANDS
TIMOTHY ONG, OF CALIFORNIA
PHILLIP NEIL PALMER, OF NEW YORK
MANDY M. PARHAM, OF MARYLAND
ESTHER PARK, OF CALIFORNIA
NATHAN B. PARK, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
LORENZO PERDIGUERRA, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
SHANLEY M. PINCHOTTI, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
ELIZABETH GEWURZ RAMIREZ, OF ILLINOIS
JILL RANDALL, OF NEW MEXICO
DAVID ALAN RATLIFF, OF CONNECTICUT
MICHAEL J. REILLY, OF MAINE
KATHERINE–ANN RENIERS, OF NEW YORK
ALEXANDRA L. RIBOUL, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
RYDER H. ROGERS, OF TEXAS
MARIELLA ELIZABETH RUIZ RODRIGUEZ, OF CALIFORNIA
KALONJI SAMUEL, OF NEW YORK
CHRISTOPHER N. SCHAFFER, OF TEXAS
AARON SCHUBERT, OF ALASKA
TARA TAYLOR SIMPSON, OF TEXAS
JENNIFER A. SLOTNICK, OF VIRGINIA
CRAIG A. SMITH, OF CALIFORNIA
JOSHUA J. SMITH, OF VIRGINIA
DANIELLE A. SPINARD, OF RHODE ISLAND
KARTIK SRINIVASAN, OF MICHIGAN
J. DAVID STOTT, OF FLORIDA
D. BENJAMIN SWARTLEY, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
JEANNETTE ELIZABETH VAIL, OF OHIO
SARAH WERTH, OF WASHINGTON
BRANDY WITTHOFT, OF NEW YORK
BRIAN KEITH WOODY, OF VIRGINIA

THE FOLLOWING NAMED PERSONS OF THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE TO BE CONSULAR OFFICERS AND SECRETARIES IN THE DIPLOMATIC SERVICE OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA:

KATHLEEN M. ADAMS, OF FLORIDA
CHARLES J. ADDISON, OF VIRGINIA
STERLING K. AINSWORTH, OF VIRGINIA
CLAUDIA A. ALVAREZ, OF VIRGINIA
NAVDEEP AUJLA, OF WASHINGTON
ROBERT N. BADENHOP, OF VIRGINIA
BETHANY BARRIENTEZ, OF VIRGINIA
KATHRYN M. BOSWELL, OF MARYLAND
ANNA MARIE BOULOS, OF NEW HAMPSHIRE
DORCAS D. BRANNOCK, OF VIRGINIA
DAVID BYRNES, OF VIRGINIA
JUAN C. CACERES, OF VIRGINIA
KARN L. CARLSON, OF TEXAS
CARRINGTON R. CARTER, SR., OF MARYLAND
FLACELIA CELSULA, OF VIRGINIA
TAMARA SAITO CHAO, OF CALIFORNIA
CHRISTOPHER M. CLOSE, OF VIRGINIA
KEVIN M. COATS, OF FLORIDA
CHIANA N. COLEMAN, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
KATHLEEN L. COLGAN, OF VIRGINIA
STEVEN CUPIC, OF VIRGINIA
MATTHEW T. DAVIS, OF VIRGINIA
MICHAEL DAVIS, OF VIRGINIA
BYRON H. DENNEY, OF VIRGINIA
MICHAEL R. DISNER, OF VIRGINIA
SEAN DOHERTY, OF VIRGINIA
COCO DOWNEY, OF VIRGINIA
LEON PAUL D'SOUZA, OF VIRGINIA
KEVIN Q. DUONG, OF VIRGINIA
FRANZ W. DURDLE, OF VIRGINIA
STACEY C. DUVALL, OF MARYLAND
KATHRYN EDWARDS, OF PENNSYLVANIA
KURT M. EILHARDT, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
THOMAS ELFMONT, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
RANDALL T. EVERS, OF MARYLAND
KAYLAN M. FILLINGHAM, OF MARYLAND
JACOB K. FISHER, OF FLORIDA
SARAH LINDSEY FLEWELLING, OF MAINE
DAVY E. FOGLER, OF VIRGINIA
RAPHAEL A. GARCIA, OF FLORIDA
JENNIFER K. GORMAN, OF VIRGINIA
KEVIN GRIFFITH, OF MARYLAND
LEKISHA R. GUNN, OF ALABAMA
ERIC C. HAMMARSTEN, OF OKLAHOMA
KINGSPRIDE HAMMOND, OF VIRGINIA
BRETT ETHAN HANSEN, OF VIRGINIA
JOSHUA D. HATCH, OF TEXAS
CALVIN HAYES, OF FLORIDA
GABRIEL LAVON HURST, OF NEW YORK
BRIAN JEFFREY HUSAR, OF ILLINOIS
CHEN–TZE GEORGE HWANG, OF VIRGINIA
GREGORY A. JENTZSCH, OF OREGON
DAMION R. JOHNSON, OF NEW YORK
BRANDON W. KAPPUS, OF VIRGINIA
KEVIN J. KELLENBERGER, OF VIRGINIA
KATHERINE KIGUDDE, OF CALIFORNIA
CAITLYN KIM, OF NEW YORK
AMY ELIZABETH KORNBLUTH, OF FLORIDA
JULIE A. LABORDE, OF NEVADA
MARIANNE E. LEE, OF FLORIDA
ADAM A. LUND, OF OREGON
JESSE LYNCH, OF FLORIDA
NICHOLE L. MADDEN, OF PENNSYLVANIA
TIMOTHY A. MILLER, OF VIRGINIA
CAROLYN I. MOORE, OF MISSOURI
KARA M. MOORE, OF VIRGINIA
JESSICA A. MORRIS, OF NEW YORK
KENT MULLEN, OF VIRGINIA
STEVEN MULLEN, OF MARYLAND
EMILY M. R. NELSON, OF NEW YORK
PHOEBE J. NEWMAN, OF MAINE
BRUNO E. NOJIMA, OF VIRGINIA
LAUREN FORBES O'DOHERTY, OF NORTH CAROLINA
ALEXANDER JOZEF PARCAN, OF PENNSYLVANIA
WILLIAM HAIGH PAYNE, OF VIRGINIA
MARY JO ANN PHAM, OF MASSACHUSETTS
ROBYN A. PUCKETT, OF GEORGIA
GREGORY W. QUICK, OF PENNSYLVANIA
SEONG HEON RA, OF VIRGINIA
VALERIE M. REED, OF VIRGINIA
EILEEN R. REQUENA, OF VIRGINIA
NATHAN W. RHOADS, OF VIRGINIA
AMANDA J. RIVERS, OF VIRGINIA
SARAH K. G. ROGERS, OF CALIFORNIA
JOSEPH AARON ROZENSHTEIN, OF NEW YORK
PATRICK RUMLEY, OF FLORIDA
WILBER N. SAENZ, OF VIRGINIA
SARA E. SAUKAS, OF VIRGINIA

ROBERT ALLEN SCOTT, OF IOWA
JOSEPH J. SENCHYSHYN, OF NEW YORK
JOSEPH F. SKRTIC, OF VIRGINIA
JOSEPH B. SOLLENBERGER, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
SUSAN SKODA SOLLENBERGER, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
ANDREA R. STARKS, OF MARYLAND
JOEL STEWART, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
DANIEL STREITFELD, OF TEXAS
ELLEN TAMARKIN, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
KIMBERLY S. TIGHEARNAIN, OF VIRGINIA
JEFFERY ALAN TOMASEVICH, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
VALERIE L. ULLRICH, OF NEW HAMPSHIRE
LAURA J. VERBISKY, OF MICHIGAN
ERIC WASHABAUGH, OF VIRGINIA
RYAN MICHAEL WAYE, OF GEORGIA
MICHAEL A. WELCH, OF VIRGINIA
MARK A. WELLS, OF VIRGINIA
REBECCA R. WHITE, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
JOHN F. WIEDOWER, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
DAVID LEE WILLEY, OF SOUTH DAKOTA
TIARA WILLIAMS, OF VIRGINIA
ODESSA M. WORKMAN, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
HAENIM YOO, OF CALIFORNIA
SEAN YOUNG, OF VIRGINIA

THE FOLLOWING NAMED PERSONS OF THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE TO BE CONSULAR OFFICERS AND SECRETARIES IN THE DIPLOMATIC SERVICE OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA:

KATE E. ADDISON, OF VIRGINIA
EHSAN A. ALEAZIZ, OF WASHINGTON
MARVIN J. ALLRED, OF VIRGINIA
JOSEPH A. ANDERSON, OF VIRGINIA
GINA M. ANDREWS, OF TEXAS
CAROLINA J. ASTIGARRAGA, OF VIRGINIA
KRISTIAN T. BARNEY, OF VIRGINIA
CHRISTINE BELL, OF VIRGINIA
JOHN TODD BELMEAR, OF COLORADO
CHARLES M. BENNETT, OF FLORIDA
LADISLAV BERANEK, OF WASHINGTON
ARVIN BHATT, OF NEW YORK
RICHARD BINDRUP, OF NEVADA
KENDALL S. BLACKWELL, OF TEXAS
SARAH M. BOMAN, OF UTAH
EDWARD P. BOUCHER, OF VIRGINIA
MARK J. BOUCHIE, OF VIRGINIA
MEGHAN M. BREEN, OF VIRGINIA
CHEYENNE BROWN, OF VIRGINIA
KATE E. BURNS, OF VIRGINIA
VERONICA CASTRO, OF CALIFORNIA
ALTHEA CAWLEY–MURPHREE, OF WASHINGTON
ANDREW CHIRA, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
SARAH O. CHO, OF VIRGINIA
JAMES P. CHYNOWETH, OF FLORIDA
NICHOLAS CORNELL COHEN, OF INDIANA
ROBERT M. CORNEJO, OF VIRGINIA
MARIA B. CORREA, OF TEXAS
RACHAEL CULLINS, OF INDIANA
MONICA LYNN DAVIS, OF VIRGINIA
EDWARD P. DE MAYE, OF VIRGINIA
JONATHAN L. DECANIO, OF VIRGINIA
MATTHEW P. DORR, OF VIRGINIA
GARY W. DUNCAN, OF VIRGINIA
HADY ELNEIL, OF CALIFORNIA
JESSICA A. FELDMAN, OF VIRGINIA
ROSS FELDMANN, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
RYAN E. FLORY, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
WILBUR C. FREDERICK, OF VIRGINIA
LAURA L. FREEMAN, OF VIRGINIA
JOSEPH GAI, OF VIRGINIA
ELIZABETH G. GAY, OF VIRGINIA
GREG GERARDI, OF VIRGINIA
ANTHONY GIARRIZZI, OF VIRGINIA
MARSHA GOLDING, OF VIRGINIA
CHRISTOPHER DANIEL GOOCH, OF UTAH
LYLE SCOTT GOODE, OF CALIFORNIA
GARRY E. GRABINS, OF ILLINOIS
SHAI E. GRUBER, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
MARK R. GUCWA, OF VIRGINIA
WILLIAM K. HAMBLIN, OF VIRGINIA
YOUNG MOK HAN, OF CALIFORNIA
TIMOTHY J. HANKO, OF VIRGINIA
RYAN MATTHEW HANLON, OF SOUTH DAKOTA
MAXWELL STEINBACH HARRINGTON, OF VIRGINIA
PATRICK BENNETT HARRINGTON, OF CALIFORNIA
CYNTHIA J. HARTMAN, OF VIRGINIA
JANET A. HEG, OF WASHINGTON
MICHELE L. HILTZ, OF VIRGINIA
CHADWICK HOUGHTON, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
SPENCER J. HUBBARD, OF VIRGINIA
JONATHAN JANKORD, OF VIRGINIA
TRAVIS WILLIAM JONES, OF MARYLAND
SETAREH S. JORGENSEN, OF MARYLAND
MARY F. KEFFER, OF VIRGINIA
DEBORAH ANN KERSHNER, OF COLORADO
CHRIS J. KUCHARSKI, OF CALIFORNIA
PATRICK A. LAUGHLIN, OF VIRGINIA
WINSTON LE, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
JENNIFER CARMEN LEE, OF VIRGINIA
JOHN F. LESO, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
EMILY A. LEVASSEUR, OF NEW HAMPSHIRE
STACI K. MACCORKLE, OF OREGON
RICHARD L. MAHY, OF MARYLAND
SAID MAQSODI, OF VIRGINIA
KARON E. MASON, OF VIRGINIA
CHRISTOPHER MCKINNEY, OF TEXAS
JOHN J. MCLOONE III, OF VIRGINIA
DARREN MCMAHON, OF VIRGINIA
JAMES ROBB MCMILLAN, OF VIRGINIA
DAVID E. MERRELL, OF WASHINGTON
CARRIE A. MIRSHAK, OF OHIO
KAREN M. MONTAUDON, OF OREGON
MICHAEL C. MOORE, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
MARIA MORENO, OF CALIFORNIA
DEDRIC J. MORTELMANS, OF VIRGINIA
BRIAN D. MOUZON, OF VIRGINIA
ELISA M. MURPHY, OF VIRGINIA
JENNIFER K. NAMES, OF VIRGINIA
MAXXWELL DAVID NANSON, OF VIRGINIA
ANDREW NISSEN, OF VIRGINIA
ADAM B. NORTON, OF VIRGINIA
EVELYN A. OKOTH, OF MARYLAND
ANDREW JOHN OSORNO, OF CALIFORNIA
JEREMY N. PACE, OF LOUISIANA
SETH PEAVEY, OF NORTH CAROLINA
CHRISTOPHER H. PUHL, OF VIRGINIA
CYNTHIA L. RAPP, OF VIRGINIA
SAMANTHA A. RINGMACHER, OF TEXAS
DAVID ROBBIE, OF COLORADO
JAMES M. ROBINSON, OF WASHINGTON
DAVID A. RONDON, OF VIRGINIA
JEFFREY PAUL SAKURAI, OF CALIFORNIA
NISSA SALOMON, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
JOCELYN M. SMITH, OF VIRGINIA
SEAN Z. SMITH, OF MARYLAND
INGRID SPECHT, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
RICKY D. STROH, OF NORTH CAROLINA
ANNE C. STURTEVANT, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
LIAM O. TOOMEY, OF VIRGINIA
VALERIE M. VASS, OF VERMONT
CONOR M. WALSH, OF VIRGINIA
JESSE WALTER, OF WISCONSIN
MOLLY M. WEAVER, OF VIRGINIA
CHRISTINA C. WEST, OF TEXAS
LINDSEY S. WHITE, OF VIRGINIA
AMY M. WISER, OF VIRGINIA
MICHELE D. WOONACOTT, OF CALIFORNIA
MICHAEL B. WYATT, OF VIRGINIA
JOSEPH H. ZAMOYTA, OF MARYLAND
WILLIAM F. ZEMAN, OF CONNECTICUT

THE FOLLOWING NAMED CAREER MEMBERS OF THE SENIOR FOREIGN SERVICE OF THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE FOR PROMOTION INTO AND WITHIN THE SENIOR FOREIGN SERVICE TO THE CLASSES INDICATED:

CAREER MEMBERS OF THE SENIOR FOREIGN SERVICE OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA, CLASS OF CAREER MINISTER:

GERALD MICHAEL FEIERSTEIN, OF PENNSYLVANIA
ROBERT S. FORD, OF MARYLAND
DAVID M. HALE, OF NEW JERSEY
STUART E. JONES, OF VIRGINIA
LINDA THOMAS–GREENFIELD, OF LOUISIANA

CAREER MEMBERS OF THE SENIOR FOREIGN SERVICE, CLASS OF MINISTER–COUNSELOR:

RONALD D. ACUFF, OF FLORIDA
DOUGLAS A. ALLISON, OF VIRGINIA
MARJORIE ANN AMES, OF FLORIDA
WHITNEY YOUNG BAIRD, OF NORTH CAROLINA
ERICA JEAN BARKS–RUGGLES, OF VIRGINIA
KRISTEN F. BAUER, OF MASSACHUSETTS
PAUL S. BEIGHLEY, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
KATE M. BYRNES, OF FLORIDA
FLOYD STEVEN CABLE, OF NEW YORK
AUBREY A. CARLSON, OF TEXAS
ANNE S. CASPER, OF NEVADA
TODD CRAWFORD CHAPMAN, OF TEXAS
KAREN LISE CHRISTENSEN, OF VIRGINIA
SUSAN R. CRYSTAL, OF PENNSYLVANIA
KAREN BERNADETTE DECKER, OF VIRGINIA
KATHLEEN A. DOHERTY, OF NEW YORK
MARY DALE DRAPER, OF CALIFORNIA
MICHAEL J. FITZPATRICK, OF FLORIDA
ROBERT W. FORDEN, OF CALIFORNIA
JENNIFER ZIMDAHL GALT, OF COLORADO
THOMAS HENRY GOLDBERGER, OF NEW JERSEY
MARK A. GOODFRIEND, OF CALIFORNIA
ROBERT DANIEL GRIFFITHS, OF NEVADA
KELII J. GURFIELD, OF WASHINGTON
PETER DAVID HAAS, OF FLORIDA
DANIEL J. HALL, OF TEXAS
DENNIS B. HANKINS, OF VIRGINIA
KATHLEEN D. HANSON, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
CLIFFORD AWTREY HART, OF VIRGINIA
JENNIFER CONN HASKELL, OF FLORIDA
DONALD L. HEFLIN, OF VIRGINIA
LEO J. HESSION, JR., OF CALIFORNIA
CATHERINE M. HILL–HERNDON, OF PENNSYLVANIA
PERRY L. HOLLOWAY, OF SOUTH CAROLINA
JOHN F. HOOVER, OF VIRGINIA
CHRISTINE L. HUGHES, OF FLORIDA
THOMAS J. HUSHEK, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
MICHAEL JOSEPH JACOBSEN, OF TEXAS
JULIE LYNN KAVANAGH, OF VIRGINIA
MICHAEL STANLEY KLECHESKI, OF VIRGINIA
KENT D. LOGSDON, OF FLORIDA
MATTHEW ROBERT LUSSENHOP, OF MINNESOTA
MICHAEL WILLIAM MCCLELLAN, OF KENTUCKY
ROBIN D. MEYER, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
JONATHAN M. MOORE, OF ILLINOIS
WENDELA C. MOORE, OF VIRGINIA
KIN WAH MOY, OF NEW YORK
WARREN PATRICK MURPHY, OF VIRGINIA
JULIETA VALLS NOYES, OF FLORIDA
LARRY G. PADGET, JR., OF TEXAS
VIRGINIA E. PALMER, OF VIRGINIA
BETH A. PAYNE, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
MARY CATHERINE PHEE, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
CLAIRE A. PIERANGELO, OF CALIFORNIA
LONNIE J. PRICE, OF VIRGINIA
ROBIN S. QUINVILLE, OF CALIFORNIA
ELIZABETH H. RICHARD, OF TEXAS
ADELE E. RUPPE, OF MARYLAND
SUE ELLEN SAARNIO, OF VIRGINIA
CHRISTIAN J. SCHURMAN, OF VIRGINIA
KRISTEN B. SKIPPER, OF CALIFORNIA
PAUL RANDALL SUTPHIN, OF VIRGINIA
MARA R. TEKACH, OF FLORIDA
MICHAEL STEPHEN TULLEY, OF CALIFORNIA
DAVID A. TYLER, OF NEW HAMPSHIRE
THOMAS LASZLO VAJDA, OF VIRGINIA
JAMES E. VANDERPOOL, OF CALIFORNIA
PAUL DASHNER WOHLERS, OF WASHINGTON
STEVEN EDWARD ZATE, OF FLORIDA
TIMOTHY P. ZUNIGA–BROWN, OF NEVADA

THE FOLLOWING NAMED CAREER MEMBERS OF THE FOREIGN SERVICE FOR PROMOTION INTO THE SENIOR FOREIGN SERVICE, AS INDICATED: CAREER MEMBERS OF THE SENIOR FOREIGN SERVICE OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA, CLASS OF COUNSELOR:

KELLY ADAMS–SMITH, OF VIRGINIA
STEVEN P. ADAMS–SMITH, OF VIRGINIA
JORGAN KENDAL ANDREWS, OF VIRGINIA
VIRGINIA MEADE BLASER, OF VIRGINIA
SCOTT DOUGLAS BOSWELL, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
WILLIAM HARVEY BOYLE, OF ARIZONA
MATTHEW GORDON BOYSE, OF CONNECTICUT
BRIDGET A. BRINK, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
MARYKAY LOSS CARLSON, OF TEXAS
JAMES A. CAROUSO, OF NEW YORK
MELISSA CLEGG–TRIPP, OF WASHINGTON
THEODORE R. COLEY, OF VIRGINIA
KELLY COLLEEN DEGNAN, OF CALIFORNIA
LESLIE STEPHEN DEGRAFFENRIED, OF TEXAS
JILL DERDERIAN, OF MARYLAND
THOMAS M. DUFFY, OF CALIFORNIA
STUART ANDERSON DWYER, OF MAINE
ANDREW S. E. ERICKSON, OF CALIFORNIA
THOMAS R. FAVRET, OF PENNSYLVANIA
TARA FERET, OF VIRGINIA
PATRICIA L. FIETZ, OF VIRGINIA
FRANK JONATHAN FINVER, OF MARYLAND
DEHAB GHEBREAB, OF VIRGINIA
PAUL G. GILMER, OF CALIFORNIA
JOSHUA D. GLAZEROFF, OF VIRGINIA
ANTHONY F. GODFREY, OF VIRGINIA
KATHARINA P. GOLLNER–SWEET, OF VIRGINIA
FRANCISCO JAVIER GONZALES, OF NEW JERSEY
LAURA MARLENE GOULD, OF VIRGINIA
ERIC F. GREEN, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
ALLEN S. GREENBERG, OF TEXAS
MICHAEL NICHOLAS GREENWALD, OF CALIFORNIA
HENRY HARRISON HAND, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
TODD C. HOLMSTROM, OF MICHIGAN
HENRY VICTOR JARDINE, OF VIRGINIA
LISA ANNE JOHNSON, OF VIRGINIA
ELIZABETH JANE JORDAN, OF FLORIDA
GEORGE P. KENT, OF VIRGINIA
JOHN STUART KINCANNON, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
DOUGLAS A. KONEFF, OF MARYLAND
MICHAEL B. KOPLOVSKY, OF NEW YORK
STEVEN CHRISTOPHER KOUTSIS, OF MASSACHUSETTS
DALE A. LARGENT, OF WASHINGTON
LAURA ANNE LOCHMAN, OF NORTH CAROLINA
JAMES L. LOI, OF CONNECTICUT
THEODORE J. LYNG, OF CONNECTICUT
JEAN ELIZABETH MANES, OF FLORIDA
ANDREW COOPER MANN, OF WASHINGTON
CARLOS F. MATUS, OF MARYLAND
WAYNE AMORY MCDUFFY, OF VIRGINIA
DAVID SLAYTON MEALE, OF VIRGINIA
DAVID MEES, OF MARYLAND
CHRISTOPHER MIDURA, OF VIRGINIA
KEITH W. MINES, OF NEW YORK
SARAH CRADDOCK MORRISON, OF VIRGINIA
SUSAN BUTLER NIBLOCK, OF MARYLAND
KAREN L. OGLE, OF MICHIGAN
KEVIN MICHAEL O'REILLY, OF VIRGINIA
INMI KIM PATTERSON, OF NEW YORK
BRIAN HAWTHORNE PHIPPS, OF FLORIDA
THOMAS C. PIERCE, OF OREGON
JOHN MARK POMMERSHEIM, OF FLORIDA
JOHN ROBERT POST, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
LYNETTE JOYCE POULTON, OF CALIFORNIA
TIMOTHY JOEL POUNDS, OF NEVADA
JEAN E. PRESTON, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
MONIQUE VALERIE QUESADA, OF FLORIDA
DAVID J. RANZ, OF NEW YORK
DAVID REIMER, OF VIRGINIA
RICHARD HENRY RILEY IV, OF VIRGINIA
LYNN WHITLOCK ROCHE, OF VIRGINIA
ELIZABETH HELEN ROOD, OF VIRGINIA
KATHRYN M. SCHALOW, OF VIRGINIA
DAVID JONATHAN SCHWARTZ, OF VIRGINIA
DOROTHY CAMILLE SHEA, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
ADAM MATTHEW SHUB, OF MARYLAND
LYNNE P. SKEIRIK, OF NEW HAMPSHIRE
MICHAEL H. SMITH, OF NEW JERSEY
THOMAS D. SMITHAM, OF MARYLAND
ANDREW SNOW, OF NEW YORK
SEAN B. STEIN, OF IDAHO
JAMES KENT STIEGLER, OF CALIFORNIA
MARTINA A. STRONG, OF TEXAS
STEPHANIE FAYE SYPTAK–RAMNATH, OF TEXAS
GREGORY DEAN THOME, OF WISCONSIN
LAURENCE EDWARD TOBEY, OF NEW JERSEY
LAURIE JO TROST, OF VIRGINIA
LESLIE MEREDITH TSOU, OF VIRGINIA
JOHN MICHAEL UNDERRINER, OF OHIO
DENISE A. URS, OF TEXAS
PETER HENDRICK VROOMAN, OF NEW YORK
GARY S. WAKAHIRO, OF CALIFORNIA
JESSICA WEBSTER, OF DELAWARE
WILLIAM J. WEISSMAN, OF CALIFORNIA
ERIC PAUL WHITAKER, OF CALIFORNIA
FRANK J. WHITAKER, OF SOUTH CAROLINA
HENRY THOMAS WOOSTER, OF VIRGINIA
THOMAS K. YAZDGERDI, OF FLORIDA
PAUL DOUGLAS YESKOO, OF VIRGINIA
MARTA COSTANZO YOUTH, OF MARYLAND

CAREER MEMBERS OF THE SENIOR FOREIGN SERVICE, CLASS OF COUNSELOR, AND CONSULAR OFFICERS AND SECRETARIES IN THE DIPLOMATIC SERVICE OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA:

RAYMOND BASSI, OF VIRGINIA
MARK S. BUTCHART, OF MARYLAND
RICHARD A. CAPONE, OF VIRGINIA
JANET A. COTE, OF NEVADA
CAROLYN I. CREEVY, OF VIRGINIA
JILL E. DARKEN, OF ILLINOIS
LON C. FAIRCHILD, OF VIRGINIA
BARTLE B. GORMAN, OF VIRGINIA
ALEEN JANICE GRABOW, OF WISCONSIN
ROBERT ALLEN HALL, OF PENNSYLVANIA
RALPH A. HAMILTON, OF OHIO
ROGER A. HERNDON, OF PENNSYLVANIA
BRUCE J. LIZZI, OF MARYLAND
DAVID LEE LYONS, OF MARYLAND
MICHAEL M. MACK, OF VIRGINIA
KATHLEEN A. MCCRAY, OF VIRGINIA
ALEX G. MCFADDEN, OF FLORIDA
BEVERLY DOREEN ROCHESTER, OF NEVADA
THOMAS GERARD SCANLON, OF VIRGINIA
DEAN K. SHEAR, OF VIRGINIA

THE FOLLOWING NAMED CAREER MEMBER OF THE FOREIGN SERVICE OF THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE FOR PROMOTION WITHIN THE SENIOR FOREIGN SERVICE TO THE CLASS INDICATED, EFFECTIVE OCTOBER 12, 2008:

CAREER MEMBER OF THE SENIOR FOREIGN SERVICE OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA, CLASS OF CAREER MINISTER:

DAVID MICHAEL SATTERFIELD, OF MISSOURI

THE FOLLOWING NAMED PERSONS OF THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE FOR APPOINTMENT AS FOREIGN SERVICE OFFICERS OF THE CLASSES STATED.

FOR APPOINTMENT AS FOREIGN SERVICE OFFICER OF CLASS ONE, CONSULAR OFFICER AND SECRETARY IN THE DIPLOMATIC SERVICE OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA:

MATTHEW D. LOWE, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
MELISSA JO GARZA, OF TEXAS

FOR APPOINTMENT AS FOREIGN SERVICE OFFICER OF CLASS TWO, CONSULAR OFFICER AND SECRETARY IN THE DIPLOMATIC SERVICE OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA:

CHRISTIAN CHARETTE, OF FLORIDA
CYNTHIA ANNE EHRLICH, OF CALIFORNIA
ROGER CHANCE SULLIVAN, OF WASHINGTON

FOR APPOINTMENT AS FOREIGN SERVICE OFFICER OF CLASS FOUR, CONSULAR OFFICER AND SECRETARY IN THE DIPLOMATIC SERVICE OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA:

JUANITA LUCIA AGUIRRE, OF TEXAS
MICHAEL AHN, OF CALIFORNIA
REBEKAH DAVIS AHRENS, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
RYAN AIKEN, OF UTAH
R. ANDREW ALLEN, OF VIRGINIA
NAFEESAH ALLEN, OF NEW JERSEY
NATALIA ALMAGUER, OF FLORIDA
MAYRA ALEJANDRA ALVARADO TORRES, OF CALIFORNIA
MOLLY MCKNIGHT AMADOR, OF TENNESSEE
KRISTER BERNT ANDERSON, OF MARYLAND
REBECCA ARCHER–KNEPPER, OF VIRGINIA
JOHN S. ARMIGER, OF COLORADO
BRIAN P. ASMUS, OF FLORIDA
WILLIAM P. ASTILLERO, OF NEW JERSEY
KARA B. BABROWSKI, OF FLORIDA
ZACHARY BAILEY, OF MARYLAND
JUDITH E. BAKER, OF NEW HAMPSHIRE
TERESA SUSAN BALL, OF TENNESSEE
DAWN ELIZABETH BEAUPAIN, OF FLORIDA
ESTHER FALCON BELL, OF RHODE ISLAND
JESSICA ERIN BERLOW, OF FLORIDA
VIRGINIA ELEANOR BLAKEMAN, OF NEW YORK
CHELAN BLISS, OF WASHINGTON
AJA CITTRECE BONSU, OF TEXAS
ANTHONY JUNG BONVILLE, OF TEXAS
VIRGILE GEORGES BORDERIES, OF CALIFORNIA
ASHLEY CHANTEL BORDNER, OF PENNSYLVANIA
DAVID SEAN BOXER, OF CALIFORNIA
ANNE BRAGHETTA, OF CALIFORNIA
VIRGINIA CLAIRE BREEDLOVE, OF CALIFORNIA
BRIGETTE BUCHET, OF MARYLAND
RAVI FRANKLIN BUCK, OF MISSOURI
PETER BURBA, OF CALIFORNIA
MATTHEW A. BUSHELL, OF CONNECTICUT
WILLIAM A. CAMPBELL, OF WISCONSIN
CARINA R. CANAAN, OF FLORIDA
NATALIA DEL PILAR CAPEL, OF FLORIDA
ALYSSA M. CARALLA, OF GEORGIA
OMAR CARDENTEY, OF FLORIDA
MARCUS BLAIR CARPENTER, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
DANIEL C. CARROLL, OF HAWAII
MELISSA ANN RHODES CARTER, OF ARKANSAS
ANDREW NICHOLAS CARUSO, OF VIRGINIA
MICHAEL PATRICK CASEY, OF VIRGINIA
BETH M. CHESTERMAN, OF TEXAS
JONATHAN B. CHESTNUT, OF GEORGIA
SARAH JANE CIACCIA, OF TENNESSEE
ERIN JORDAN CLANCY, OF CALIFORNIA
TRAVIS JOHN COBERLY, OF KANSAS
JACLYN ANNE COLE, OF MARYLAND
DESIREE MICHELLE CORMIER, OF CALIFORNIA
CHRISTOPHER A. CRAWFORD, OF UTAH
CHRISTOPHER B. CREAGHE, OF COLORADO
ROBIN SLOAN CROMER, OF SOUTH CAROLINA
JUAN C. CRUZ, OF FLORIDA
GAETAN WILLIAM DAMBERG–OTT, OF NEW YORK
JESSICA RENEE DANCEL, OF COLORADO
SCOTT B. DARGUS, OF WASHINGTON
PETER JOHN DAVIDIAN, OF OHIO
JUSTIN E. DAVIS, OF GEORGIA
NEIL MICHAEL DIBIASE, OF FLORIDA
TRENTON BROWN DOUTHETT, OF OHIO
SADIE ELEN DWORAK, OF NEW HAMPSHIRE
JASON DYER, OF NEW MEXICO
CHRISTOPHER MICHAEL ELMS, OF NEW YORK
STEPHEN J. ESTE, OF TEXAS
MARCUS GEORGE FALION, OF TENNESSEE
JOHANNA L. FERNANDO, OF TEXAS
JOSEPH ANTON FETTE, OF VIRGINIA
KYLE FIELDING, OF WASHINGTON
ERIK T. FINCH, OF TEXAS
JESSE KYLE FINKEL, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
COLIN W. FISHWICK, OF WASHINGTON
JOAN H. FLYNN, OF VIRGINIA
PHILIP LOWELL FOLKEMER, OF MARYLAND
NICOLE LOKOMAIKA I' KIKUE PROBST FOX, OF HAWAII
MATTHEW A. FULLERTON, OF MARYLAND
AARON ELLIOTT GARFIELD, OF CALIFORNIA
GERALDINE B. GASSAM, OF LOUISIANA
JOSEPH GIORDONO–SCHOLZ, OF CALIFORNIA
ANGELA CARMEN GJERTSON, OF TENNESSEE
SARAH ELIZABETH GJORGJIJEVSKI, OF CALIFORNIA
CATHRYN MARGARET GLEASMAN, OF TEXAS
SAMUEL EVERETT GOFFMAN, OF ILLINOIS
HOLLYN J. GREEN, OF MASSACHUSETTS
CATHERINE PHYLLIS GRIFFITH, OF VIRGINIA
PRISCILLA GUZMAN, OF TEXAS
JAMES J. HAGENGRUBER, OF WASHINGTON
LAURA JANE HAMMOND, OF MINNESOTA
CHERYL HARRIS, OF VIRGINIA
DANIEL ROSS HARRIS, OF CALIFORNIA
NICHOLAS R. HARRIS, OF VIRGINIA
JANEL MARGARET HEIRD, OF MICHIGAN
PEPIJN M. HELGERS, OF NEW YORK
PATRICIA ADRIENNE HILL, OF MASSACHUSETTS
LAUREN D. HOLMES, OF NORTH CAROLINA
WILLIAM N. HOLTON, JR., OF CALIFORNIA
VERONICA HONS–OLIVER, OF FLORIDA
KATHLEEN INGRID HOSIE, OF THE VIRGIN ISLANDS
DONNA J. HUSS, OF INDIANA
MOUNIR E. IBRAHIM, OF NEW YORK
AMENAGHAMWON IYI–EWEKA, OF WISCONSIN
DANA MARIE JEA, OF VIRGINIA
JENNIFER JENSEN, OF CALIFORNIA
MATTHEW B. JONES, OF VIRGINIA
RYAN D. KARNES, OF WASHINGTON
JOANNA TRACY KATZMAN, OF NEW JERSEY
JENNIFER ANNE KELLEY, OF FLORIDA
CRAIG S. KENNEDY, OF WASHINGTON
JANET MARIE KENNEDY, OF FLORIDA
MORGAN WHITMIRE KENNEDY, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
WALTER ANTHONY KERR, OF CONNECTICUT
LAWRENCE J. KORB, JR., OF VIRGINIA
LORRAINE JEAN KRAMER, OF VIRGINIA
JACK C. LAMBERT, OF OREGON
BRENT JOSEPH LAROSA, OF MARYLAND
ELIZABETH E. A. LEE, OF WEST VIRGINIA
ALEXI LEFEVRE, OF FLORIDA
SCOTT HAMILTON LINTON, OF COLORADO
JONATHAN L. LOW, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
W. GARY LOWMAN, JR., OF FLORIDA
SCOTT C. LUEDERS, OF FLORIDA
AMANDA LUGO, OF TEXAS
IAN ROBERT MACKENZIE, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
ERIN RUTH MAI, OF VIRGINIA
NAVEED AHMED MALIK, OF TEXAS
MATTHEW R. MALOY, OF MONTANA
ARYANI ELISABETH MANRING, OF PENNSYLVANIA
NICHOLAS B. MANSKE, OF WISCONSIN
TARA L. MARIA, OF VIRGINIA
IZAAK MARTIN, OF WASHINGTON
JUAN D. MARTINEZ, OF NEW YORK
LAUREN D. MATACK, OF CALIFORNIA
TRISHITA MAULA, OF NEW YORK
KELLY JEAN MCANERNEY, OF PENNSYLVANIA
JAMES PATRICK MCCORMICK, OF ILLINOIS
JOHN B. MCDANIEL, OF TEXAS
GREGORY G. MCELWAIN, OF NEW MEXICO
KELLY A. MCGUIRE, OF TEXAS
RYAN EDWARD MCKEAN, OF WISCONSIN
GREGORY MEIER, OF MARYLAND
ROBERT E. MELVIN, OF TEXAS
MATAN MEYER, OF FLORIDA
AYSA MATTHEW MILLER, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
BEAU JUSTIN MILLER, OF MICHIGAN
BENJAMIN J. MILLS, OF NEW MEXICO
SEAN PATRICK MOFFATT, OF NEW YORK
JEREMY JASON MONKS, OF VIRGINIA
NAVARRO MOORE, OF FLORIDA
PATRICIA RENEE MORALES, OF TEXAS
ROBERT E. MORGAN, OF TEXAS
CHAD WILLIAM MORRIS, OF COLORADO
STEPHEN MRAZ, OF FLORIDA
MILESSA N. MUCHMORE–LOWRIE, OF TEXAS
CHARLES VINCENT MURPHY, OF CALIFORNIA
W. MARC MURRI, OF UTAH
KATHERINE MUSGROVE KETCHUM, OF KANSAS
MARK ROBERT NAYLOR, OF TEXAS
PATRICIA NEARY, OF VIRGINIA
LINDA A. NEILAN, OF NEW JERSEY
THOMAS ANDREW NIBLOCK, OF IOWA
JOHN DAVID NORDLANDER, OF COLORADO
ELIZABETH NORMAN, OF WASHINGTON
FREDERICK NICHOLAS NOYES, OF TEXAS
AUTUMN K. OAKLEY, OF WASHINGTON
ELIZABETH CURRAN O'ROURKE, OF ILLINOIS
ALEXANDER R. ORR, OF NEW YORK
MICHELLE R. OSADCZUK, OF FLORIDA
ANDREW J. PARTIN, OF NEW HAMPSHIRE
MARY LILLIAN PELLEGRINI, OF NEW HAMPSHIRE
XIXALA SANDRA PEREZ, OF VIRGINIA
LISA MARIE PETZOLD, OF NEW YORK
JULIAN I. PHILLIPPI, OF OHIO
CAITLIN S. PIPER, OF NEW HAMPSHIRE
RICHARD JOHN POLNEY, OF NEVADA
MARIA DEL PILAR QUIGUA, OF MASSACHUSETTS
RYAN M. QUINN, OF FLORIDA
THOMAS LEE RADKE, JR., OF MISSOURI
SCOTT R. RASMUSSEN, OF VIRGINIA
KATHERINE O. RAY, OF OREGON
NANCY FARQUHAR RHODES, OF TEXAS
LEA PALABRICA RIVERA, OF NEW YORK
LAURA AYLWARD ROBINSON, OF WASHINGTON
TANYA ELAINE ROGERS, OF TEXAS
TYLER J. ROGSTAD, OF MINNESOTA
DOUGLAS B. ROSE, OF MINNESOTA
SUSAN ROSS, OF NEW YORK
TERESA ROTUNNO, OF NEVADA
CAREY HALE RUDELL, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
LAUREN C. SANTA, OF NEW JERSEY
NADIA DINA SBEIH, OF CALIFORNIA
JANICE SCHILL, OF CALIFORNIA
KIMBERLY K. SCRIVNER, OF NEVADA
BEHRANG FARIAN SERAJ, OF CALIFORNIA
JAMES P. SHAK, OF ARIZONA
LAUREN C. SHELTON, OF VIRGINIA
LEVI W. SHEPHERD, OF VIRGINIA
AARON M. SINGLETERRY, OF WASHINGTON
MONICA AMELIA SLEDJESKI, OF NEW YORK
LAURENCE J. SOCHA, OF ILLINOIS
JEREMY DAVID SPECTOR, OF TEXAS
MATTHEW BOUTON STANNARD, OF CALIFORNIA
MATTHEW M. STEED, OF CALIFORNIA
DAVID S. STIER, OF NEW YORK
ANNA STINCHCOMB, OF VIRGINIA
DANETTE I. SULLIVAN, OF TENNESSEE
SHANNA DIETZ SURENDRA, OF MICHIGAN
ETHAN KENT TABOR, OF MARYLAND
VIOLETA D. TALANDIS, OF FLORIDA
VANESSA ANNE TANTILLO, OF NEW YORK
DANIEL J. TARAPACKI, OF NEW YORK
JAY B. THOMPSON, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
JULIE THOMPSON, OF FLORIDA
GRETCHEN L. TIETJE, OF TEXAS
PATRICK ALLARD TILLOU, OF VIRGINIA
NICOLE ANNE MARIE TOBIN, OF KANSAS
EMERITA F. TORRES, OF NEW YORK
MIRNA R. TORRES, OF NEW MEXICO
TIMOTHY TRANCHILLA, OF MISSOURI
MARY ELLEN TSEKOS–VELEZ, OF VIRGINIA
GREGORY J. VENTRESCA, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
DANIEL VILLANUEVA, OF FLORIDA
DOMINGO J. VILLARONGA, OF NEW YORK
NICHOLAS VON MERTENS, OF NEW HAMPSHIRE
DAMIAN GEORGE WAMPLER, OF NEW YORK
DARREN IBRAHIM WANG, OF CALIFORNIA
THOMAS CHARLES WEBER, OF TEXAS
BROOKE WEHRENBERG, OF TEXAS
JOE WELSH, OF CALIFORNIA
CHAD JACOB WESEN, OF WASHINGTON
JOHN NOEL WINSTEAD, OF WYOMING
SCOTT B. WINTON, OF MISSOURI
STACEY ELIZABETH–VERSIE WOOD, OF CALIFORNIA
THOMAS N. WOTKA, OF VIRGINIA
CHRISTIAN S. YUN, OF CALIFORNIA
RUSSELL A. ZALIZNIAK, OF FLORIDA
WILBUR G. ZEHR, OF NEW YORK

THE FOLLOWING NAMED PERSONS OF THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE FOR APPOINTMENT AS FOREIGN SERVICE OFFICERS OF THE CLASSES STATED.

FOR APPOINTMENT AS FOREIGN SERVICE OFFICER OF CLASS ONE, CONSULAR OFFICER AND SECRETARY IN THE DIPLOMATIC SERVICE OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA:

KEVIN TIMOTHY COVERT, OF MARYLAND
JANET WOODBURY MILLER, OF NEW YORK

FOR APPOINTMENT AS FOREIGN SERVICE OFFICER OF CLASS TWO, CONSULAR OFFICER AND SECRETARY IN THE DIPLOMATIC SERVICE OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA:

K. ANNA KOSINSKA, OF FLORIDA
YOLANDA A. PARRA, OF FLORIDA

FOR APPOINTMENT AS FOREIGN SERVICE OFFICER OF CLASS THREE, CONSULAR OFFICER AND SECRETARY IN THE DIPLOMATIC SERVICE OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA:

KATHERINE MARIE DIOP, OF MARYLAND
VANIA Z. GARCIA, OF VIRGINIA
JAHN FRANK JEFFREY, OF VIRGINIA
MICHAEL STELLARD OBRYON, JR., OF FLORIDA
NIKK SOOKMEEWIRIYA, OF VIRGINIA

FOR APPOINTMENT AS FOREIGN SERVICE OFFICER OF CLASS FOUR, CONSULAR OFFICER AND SECRETARY IN THE DIPLOMATIC SERVICE OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA:

KRISTEN ELIZABETH AANSTOOS, OF FLORIDA
BENJAMIN J. ABBOTT, OF NEW YORK
VANESSA GRACE ACKER, OF TEXAS
ZIA AHMED, OF MASSACHUSETTS
JOEL DUNIWAY ALLEY, OF OREGON
SYED MUJTABA ANDRABI, OF WASHINGTON
JEFFREY MICHAEL AUSTIN, OF FLORIDA
NATHAN DOUGLAS AUSTIN, OF WASHINGTON
MICHELLE E. AZEVEDO, OF CALIFORNIA
EMILY HARTER BALL, OF TEXAS
PATRICK BALL, OF TEXAS
JESSICA ROHN BANULS, OF VIRGINIA
GRAHAM GLYN BARKER, OF FLORIDA
JARI D. BARNETT, OF OKLAHOMA
JENNIFER ALAYNE BARR, OF INDIANA
AMANDA K. BECK, OF CALIFORNIA
MICHELLE NICOLE BENNETT, OF CALIFORNIA
ANDREW BERDY, OF NEW JERSEY
JOSEPH STEPHEN BERNATH, OF PENNSYLVANIA
RICHA SONI BHALA, OF ILLINOIS
ALISSA M. BIBB, OF NEW YORK
DUSTIN REEVE BICKEL, OF GEORGIA
MARQUIS MCLEMORE BOYCE, OF GEORGIA
RYAN G. BRADEEN, OF MAINE
MATTHEW MCMAHON BRIGGS, OF NEW HAMPSHIRE

BARRETT G. BRYSON, OF CALIFORNIA
SARAH A. BUDDS, OF SOUTH CAROLINA
JOHN P. CALLAN, OF WASHINGTON
JOSEPH CHRISTOPHER CARNES, OF OHIO
MAUREEN CHAO, OF CONNECTICUT
JESSICA CHESBRO, OF OREGON
W. JOSEPH CHILDERS, OF OHIO
MARJORIE E. CHRISTIAN, OF TEXAS
SARAH KATHLEEN CLYMER, OF MINNESOTA
CHRISTOPHER COLLINGTON, OF FLORIDA
BRIAN M. COMMAROTO–ROVERINI, OF NEW JERSEY
WILLIAM ROBERT COOK, OF CALIFORNIA
FAUSTO P. DEGUZMAN, OF WASHINGTON
JONATHAN MORRIS DENNEHY, OF MASSACHUSETTS
PHILLIP ANTHONY DE SOUZA, OF MARYLAND
JILL WISNIEWSKI DIETRICH, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
NOAH A. DONADIEU, OF PENNSYLVANIA
GIDEON T. DONOHO, OF NEW YORK
EMILY BOND DUNIVANT, OF TENNESSEE
GEORGE ANDREW DUSOE, OF NEW HAMPSHIRE
ALLISON D. DYESS, OF TEXAS
WILLIAM ECHOLS, OF WASHINGTON
KARIN MARIE EHLERT, OF MINNESOTA
JESSICA D. EL BECHIR, OF LOUISIANA
JEFFREY GORDON ELSEN, OF WISCONSIN
JENNIFER SUZANNE EMPIE, OF NEW YORK
MICHAEL A. ERVIN, OF WASHINGTON
CRAIG J. FERGUSON, OF OREGON
TIMOTHY J. FOLEY, OF FLORIDA
SONNET FERNANDEZ FRISBIE, OF TEXAS
SEAN MARIANO GARCIA, OF FLORIDA
LAUREN LEIGH GARZA, OF WASHINGTON
MAXIMILIAN ROBERT PEREZ GEBHARDT, OF NEW JERSEY
IVNA GIAUQUE, OF UTAH
JOHN GOSHERT, OF INDIANA
COLLIER F. GRAHAM, OF MISSISSIPPI
MARK OSTAPOVYCH GUL, OF VIRGINIA
MICHAEL L. GUNZBURGER, OF CALIFORNIA
RENE GUTEL, OF ARIZONA
TAMRA KAY HACKETT, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
CRISTINA–ASTRID HANSELL, OF CALIFORNIA
DAVID H. HASKETT, OF MARYLAND
NICKOLAUS HAUSER, OF TEXAS
ELAINE MARIE HENSLE, OF VIRGINIA
BENJAMIN D. HESPRICH, OF VIRGINIA
KATE ELIZABETH HIGGINS, OF VIRGINIA
SIRLI HILL, OF VIRGINIA
MARCIA E. HOUSE, OF GEORGIA
MARCUS RYAN JACKSON, OF FLORIDA
TIFFANY L. JACKSON, OF FLORIDA
JOSEPH V. JAMES, OF VIRGINIA
DANA EDWARD JENSEN, OF NEW YORK
RIAN L. JENSEN, OF WASHINGTON
ANNE DUDTE JOHNSON, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
LINDA MARIE JOHNSON, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
ALEX MICHAEL JONES, OF WISCONSIN
AARON JAMES KADKHODAI, OF NEW HAMPSHIRE
CHRISTEN DECKER KADKHODAI, OF NEW HAMPSHIRE
LISA K. KALAJIAN, OF FLORIDA
MARJON E. KAMRANI, OF TENNESSEE
STEPHANIE J. KANG, OF MISSOURI
JESSICA LEVY KANIA, OF NEW JERSEY
MATHEW KAWECKI, OF CALIFORNIA
MAX EDMUND KENDRICK, OF NEW YORK
SALMAN KHAN KHALIL, OF VIRGINIA
SHANA LEE KIERAN, OF MAINE
CARINA DEA KLEIN, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
ROBERT EDWARD KRIS, OF NEW YORK
KLAUDIA G. KRUEGER, OF FLORIDA
JAMES R. KUYKENDALL, OF OKLAHOMA
ATHENA KWEY, OF CALIFORNIA
KRISTINA D. LAW, OF VIRGINIA
ANDREW ROTHSCHILD LEDERMAN, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
MIKAEL DANIEL LURIE, OF OREGON
NATHANAEL MORRISON LYNN, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
ALEXANDER C. MACFARLANE, OF PENNSYLVANIA
ANDREW MALANDRINO, OF VIRGINIA
DAVID R. P. MARTINEZ, OF NEW MEXICO
EMMA OLWEN PAMELA MARWOOD, OF NEW YORK
ALAN DANIEL MCCARTHY, OF VIRGINIA
CHARLES ELLIOTT MCCLELLAN, OF ARIZONA
WILLIAM APPLETON MCCUE, OF MAINE
DANIEL E. MEHRING, OF CALIFORNIA
DOERING S. MEYER, OF TEXAS
LEONEL GREENE MIRANDA, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
MICHAEL WALTER MITCHELL, OF CALIFORNIA
MICHAEL J. MOODY, OF UTAH
YOON S. NAM, OF CALIFORNIA
PAUL W. NEVILLE, OF WASHINGTON
JENNIFER K. NILSON, OF WISCONSIN
RICHARD ANDREW O'NEAL, OF GEORGIA
ZENNIA D. PAGANINI, OF MARYLAND
REENA PATEL, OF TEXAS
DARIN ANN PHAOVISAID, OF ILLINOIS
GRANT G. PHILLIPP, OF ILLINOIS
ARCHANA PODDAR, OF MASSACHUSETTS
CHRISTOPHER THOMAS POLILLO, OF ILLINOIS
ADRIAN J. PRATT, OF FLORIDA
KARA LEE PREISSEL, OF FLORIDA
MICHAEL JOSEPH PRYOR, OF RHODE ISLAND
AARON DAVID RADER, OF MARYLAND
AMY NICOLE REICHERT, OF COLORADO
MICHAEL RICHARDS, OF FLORIDA
RITA ALICIA BUCK RICO, OF CALIFORNIA
JASON CORCORAN ROBERTS, OF VIRGINIA
BENJAMIN O. ROGUS, OF CALIFORNIA
MICHELE ROULBET, OF ILLINOIS
MACKENZIE L. ROWE, OF WASHINGTON
ALAN R. ROYSTON, OF FLORIDA
SUSAN A. RUSSELL, OF MASSACHUSETTS
CRAIG ANTHONY RYCHEL, OF CALIFORNIA
DAVID V. SALVO, OF PENNSYLVANIA
MICHAEL JAMES SCHARDING, OF VIRGINIA
NILESH KANTILAL SHAH, OF CALIFORNIA
GREGORY D. SIMKISS, OF GEORGIA
BARRY SMITH, OF WASHINGTON
LEVI RADMAN SMYLIE, OF FLORIDA
SAUNDRA M. SNIDER–PUGH, OF VIRGINIA
WILLIAM CATLETT SOLLEY, OF VIRGINIA
ADAM B. STERN, OF FLORIDA
STACEY D. SUTTON, OF GEORGIA
NATELLA V. SVISTUNOVA, OF OREGON
PETER J. SWEENEY, OF NEW JERSEY
HUMZA TARAR, OF FLORIDA
NATHANIEL TEK, OF NEW JERSEY
ROBERT EMIL TIBBETTS, OF SOUTH CAROLINA
SERGEY S. TROITSKY, OF FLORIDA
KEVIN A. VAILLANCOURT, OF WEST VIRGINIA
GARETH VAUGHAN, OF FLORIDA
JUSTINE ELIZABETH VEIT, OF MISSOURI
GEOFFREY DAVID LISLE WESSEL, OF NORTH CAROLINA
ERIN MARIE WILLIAMS, OF TEXAS
BRIAN K. WINGATE, OF WASHINGTON
ALEXIS SATHRE WOLFF, OF VIRGINIA
HSUEH–TING WU, OF CALIFORNIA
JOHN ANTHONY GERHARD YODER, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

THE FOLLOWING NAMED MEMBERS OF THE FOREIGN SERVICE TO BE CONSULAR OFFICERS AND SECRETARIES IN THE DIPLOMATIC SERVICE OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA:

GABRIELA R. ARIAS VILLELA, OF FLORIDA
SAYED FAHIM AZIZI, OF VIRGINIA
SUZANNE BALSAM, OF VIRGINIA
KATRINA MARIA BARNAS, OF NEW YORK
JUAN BARRAGAN, OF VIRGINIA
ASHLEY BARTLETT, OF FLORIDA
KATE BARTLETT, OF FLORIDA
YANIV BARZILAI, OF NORTH CAROLINA
ALEXANDER BENJAMIN BELLAH, OF VIRGINIA
EMMANIA R. BLUM, OF NEW YORK
EMILY ROSE BRANDT, OF TEXAS
JOHN CERABINO–HESS, OF CALIFORNIA
RYAN CLAY, OF VIRGINIA
TYLER E. CRUSE, OF GEORGIA
MICHAEL SEAN CULLINAN, OF SOUTH CAROLINA
MARCELINA M. DA SILVA, OF VIRGINIA
MARIA DAVYDENKO, OF ALASKA
DARSHANE M. DAWLEY, OF VIRGINIA
TERRI NATHINE FRANCES DAY, OF NORTH CAROLINA
JOSHUA ROBERT DELARA, OF NEW YORK
MARTHA J. DEMOS, OF FLORIDA
KATRINA NICOLE DRAYTON, OF MICHIGAN
ARTHUR DYMOND, OF VIRGINIA
JOSEPH A. DZMURA, OF VIRGINIA
ROBERT GEORGE EHRMANN, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
NASHWA N. ELGADI, OF MASSACHUSETTS
LOGHMAN FATTAHI, OF VIRGINIA
PERLA GABRIELA FERNANDEZ, OF KANSAS
SARAH GARDINER, OF CONNECTICUT
ANTHONY PETER GEORGIANNI, OF VIRGINIA
MATTHEW J. GOODMAN, OF VIRGINIA
KATY A. GORE, OF VIRGINIA
ERIC T. HAN, OF CALIFORNIA
GARRETT HARKINS, OF NEW YORK
STEPHEN CAREY HARRIS, JR., OF MISSOURI
KARI ELAYNE HATCHER, OF MICHIGAN
JOELY EILEEN HILDEBRAND, OF OHIO
DANIEL JOSEPH HOFFMAN, JR., OF TEXAS
NAHDER BRYANT HOUSHMAN, OF ILLINOIS
HUI JUN TINA HUANG, OF VIRGINIA
ANTHONY A. IPPOLITI, OF VIRGINIA
STANLEY N. JAREK, OF WASHINGTON
BRIAN C. JOHNSON, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
LESHAWNA R. JOHNSON, OF NEW YORK
NATHAN BENJAMIN JOHNSON, OF CALIFORNIA
DANIEL P. JOYCE, OF FLORIDA
RYAN T. JOYCE, OF VIRGINIA
STACEY S. KERNS, OF GEORGIA
GLORYA SING KEY, OF WASHINGTON
DONG WAN KIM, OF VIRGINIA
KENNETH M. LAM, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
EDITH HOPE LEE, OF WASHINGTON
HAI F., LI, OF VIRGINIA
DANIEL M. LISS, OF FLORIDA
TIMOTHY PETER LOCKWOOD, OF ARIZONA
CHRISTIAN MCCORMICK LOUBEAU, OF NEW YORK
MACIEJ JAN LUCZYWO, OF NEW YORK
SAMIRA MARR, OF VIRGINIA
JILLIAN AMBER MCCOY, OF MARYLAND
JONATHAN DEMETRIUS MCMASTER, OF MARYLAND
RACHEL B. MEHRAVARI, OF NEW YORK
STEPHEN C. MERCADO, OF VIRGINIA
SALLY MEYERS, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
TIFFANY MICHELLE MILLER, OF NORTH CAROLINA
SALVADOR CHAIDEZ MOLINA, OF CALIFORNIA
MICHAEL A. MORENO, OF VIRGINIA
TYLER S. MOSELLE, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
SARAH E. MOYER, OF NEVADA
CHRISTOPHER R. MULLIN, OF CALIFORNIA
EMILY Y. NARKIS, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
DOMINIC THUAN VINH NGUYEN, OF CALIFORNIA
THAO THI NGUYEN, OF MASSACHUSETTS
NATALIE ANN OLDANI, OF VIRGINIA
KABEER PARWANI, OF MASSACHUSETTS
MARYCLAIRE PEROUTKA, OF VIRGINIA
HOMER C. PICKENS, OF VIRGINIA
TREVA MARIE POWERS, OF COLORADO
JASON E. RASKIN, OF VIRGINIA
MARK J. REDMOND, OF CONNECTICUT
KRISTINA ROSALES KOSTRUKOVA, OF VIRGINIA
THOMAS ROSEN–MOLINA, OF CALIFORNIA
MALIKAT OLAMIDE RUFAI, OF ILLINOIS
LUIS ARMANDO SANCHEZ, OF VIRGINIA
VALERIE J. SANTOS, OF VIRGINIA
MARY SARGENT, OF VIRGINIA
MATTHEW C. SPADE, OF VIRGINIA
ABIGAIL M. SPENGLER, OF COLORADO
NORA T. STAAL, OF VIRGINIA
NICK STOJANOVICH, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
CAMERON D. THOMAS–SHAH, OF MICHIGAN
AARON M. THOMPSON, OF VIRGINIA
HARRY R. THOMPSON III, OF ILLINOIS
JULIA B. THOMPSON, OF VIRGINIA
MATTHEW V. TOMPKINS, OF CALIFORNIA
LARS TRAY, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
BRYANA K. TUCCI, OF VIRGINIA
JEFFREY L. UNDERCOFFER, OF MARYLAND
MARTIN VAUGHAN, OF IDAHO
IVAN VILELA, OF NEW JERSEY
DANIEL RICHARD WALKER, OF NEW YORK
ADAM MICHAEL WALLINGFORD, OF NEBRASKA
PHILLIP JAMES WALSKY, OF CALIFORNIA
RANDY R. WANIS, OF VIRGINIA
KRISTEN ELIZABETH WEAVER, OF CALIFORNIA
DAMON A. WILLIAMS, OF CALIFORNIA
THOMAS G. WINSTON, OF VIRGINIA
PAUL WULFSBERG, OF MASSACHUSETTS

THE FOLLOWING NAMED PERSONS OF THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE FOR APPOINTMENT AS FOREIGN SERVICE OFFICERS OF THE CLASSES STATED.

FOR APPOINTMENT AS FOREIGN SERVICE OFFICER OF CLASS THREE, CONSULAR OFFICER AND SECRETARY IN THE DIPLOMATIC SERVICE OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA:

BEATA ANGELICA, OF CALIFORNIA
BELGIN JENNIFER VANDERPLOEG, OF CALIFORNIA

FOR APPOINTMENT AS FOREIGN SERVICE OFFICER OF CLASS FOUR, CONSULAR OFFICER AND SECRETARY IN THE DIPLOMATIC SERVICE OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA:

ANTONIO GABRIELE AGNONE, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
CLAYTON ALEXANDER ALDERMAN, OF CALIFORNIA
LEAH GRACE ALLEN, OF ARKANSAS
ERIC P. ANDERSEN, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
NATHAN ANDERSON, OF TEXAS
ANDREA LYNNE AQUILLA, OF MARYLAND
EMILY M. ARMITAGE, OF VIRGINIA
ERIC TRANSFELDT ATKINS, OF WASHINGTON
MARK MADISON ATKISSON, OF NEW JERSEY
JOSEPH BAGGA–TAVES, OF MICHIGAN
BARRY MICHAEL BELKNAP, OF MINNESOTA
JEREMY R. BERNDT, OF MASSACHUSETTS
ELIZABETH J. BLUMENTHAL, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
DOUGLAS R. BOUDREAU, OF VIRGINIA
CHARITY L. BOYETTE, OF VIRGINIA
MEGHAN EILEEN BRADLEY, OF VIRGINIA
JODI R. BREISLER, OF MINNESOTA
ALAN Z. BRINKER, OF OHIO
JOHN S. BROWN, OF WASHINGTON
CIERA DAWN BURNETT, OF MASSACHUSETTS
MARGARET CATHERINE CAMPBELL, OF VIRGINIA
LEANNE R. CANNON, OF VIRGINIA
NOAH CLARK, OF WASHINGTON
REBECCA MARIE DANIS, OF MISSOURI
GIANGHIA NAR DAO, OF CONNECTICUT
SANDYA LAKSHMI DAS, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
CHRISTOPHER A. DAVENPORT, OF VIRGINIA
ALISON EVANS DAVIS, OF MARYLAND
EUGENIA WALKER DAVIS, OF OHIO
ANDREA JO DE ARMENT, OF OHIO
GABRIEL DEL BOSQUE, OF TEXAS
DANIEL A. DEL CASTILLO, OF FLORIDA
JAMES BUTLER DEWEY, OF WASHINGTON
JUAN DOMENECH CLAR, OF PUERTO RICO
CHRISTOPHER M. DUMM, OF VIRGINIA
THOMAS ELAND EDWARDSEN, OF WASHINGTON
BRETT ANDREW EGGLESTON, OF TEXAS
BENJAMIN HARRIS ELLIS, OF VIRGINIA
JOSEPH FARBEANN, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
PETER RICHARD FASNACHT, OF NEW JERSEY
T'ERRANCE ELLIOTT FAVORS, OF COLORADO
JOHN P. FER, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
JOSHUA N. FINCH, OF WYOMING
DOUGLAS L. FLITTER, OF PENNSYLVANIA
MICHAEL KENT FOGO, OF GEORGIA
TARA EILEEN FOLEY, OF MASSACHUSETTS
MARY FRANGAKIS, OF NEW YORK
NEIL STEVEN GIPSON, OF NEBRASKA
EMILY ANNE GODFREY, OF ARIZONA
RAFAEL ANCHETA GONZALEZ, OF TENNESSEE
EMILY R. GREEN, OF VIRGINIA
SARA D. GREENGRASS, OF FLORIDA
CHRISTOPHER M. GRELLER, OF WYOMING
TRAVIS A. GROUT, OF OHIO
TOMAS ANDRES LEVY GUERRERO, OF VIRGINIA
CRAIG ACTON HALBMAIER, OF NEW HAMPSHIRE
ADAM C. HALVERSON, OF COLORADO
CHRISTOPHER THADDEUS WESTON HARTFIELD, OF GEORGIA
TIMOTHY F. HAYNES, JR., OF NEW YORK
LISA RAY HECHT-CRONSTEDT, OF FLORIDA
HOLLY M. HECKMAN, OF ALABAMA
NEIL HELBRAUN, OF ILLINOIS
ANTHONY J. HENDON, OF MICHIGAN
JACQUELINE BRETT HERNANDEZ, OF FLORIDA
MARK HERRUP, OF MARYLAND
SHANNON PIPER HILL, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
ANA ELIZABETH HIMELIC, OF ARIZONA
AMY SERINA HIRSCH, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
ELIZABETH A. HOLCOMBE, OF FLORIDA
DANIEL J. HORNING, OF OHIO
KRISTEN J. HUGHES, OF MICHIGAN
JASON RAY HUTCHISON, OF FLORIDA
BRANDON JOVAN JACKSON, OF FLORIDA
JINANSHU CHINMAY JAIN, OF PENNSYLVANIA
HUGO A. JIMENEZ, OF VIRGINIA
AMANDA JOHNSON MILLER, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
MARK RICHARD JORGENSEN, OF MINNESOTA

STEVEN COLLAT KAMENY, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
NAHAL KAZEMI, OF CALIFORNIA
JONATHON A. KENT, OF IOWA
SAMANTHA Y. KUO, OF CALIFORNIA
PAEBO KURIAN, OF CALIFORNIA
JEFFREY L. LADENSON, OF NEW HAMPSHIRE
CHRISTINA T. LE, OF TEXAS
ELEESHA M. LEWIS, OF VIRGINIA
LI PING LO, OF VIRGINIA
ANGELA ITOGE MANALO, OF CALIFORNIA
PATRICK MARTINO, OF WISCONSIN
KUROSH MASSOUD ANSARI, OF VIRGINIA
AMIT MATHUR, OF VIRGINIA
SARAH LOSS MATHUR, OF VIRGINIA
CASH LEE MCCRACKEN, OF TENNESSEE
CHRISTOPHER PAUL MEADE, OF VIRGINIA
RACHEL SUZANNAH MIKESKA, OF VIRGINIA
JAMES THOMAS MOFFITT, OF NEW MEXICO
FARID ABBAS MOHAMED, OF MAINE
ERIN M. MOLNAR, OF NEW YORK
ANDREW R. MOORE, OF MICHIGAN
CATHERINE ELIZABETH MULLER, OF FLORIDA
NEAL SHAUN MURATA, OF HAWAII
STEPHEN JOHN MURPHY, OF MASSACHUSETTS
COURTNEY C. MUSSER, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
SELENA NELSON-SALCEDO, OF MINNESOTA
KATHLEEN M. NUTT, OF VIRGINIA
CHINWE OBIANWU, OF TEXAS
JOHN BURTON O'BRIEN, OF FLORIDA
MORGAN J. O'BRIEN III, OF NEW YORK
WILLIAM JOHN O'CONNOR, OF CALIFORNIA
KEVIN JAMES OGLEY, OF CALIFORNIA
AAMOD OMPRAKASH, OF NEW YORK
JEFFREY M. O'NEAL, OF TEXAS
KATHERINE IVES ORTIZ, OF CALIFORNIA
MICHAEL OSE, OF IOWA
MATTHEW J. PASCHKE, OF OHIO
VIRSA Y. PERKINS, OF TENNESSEE
MATTHEW LAWRENCE PETIT, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
LANCE L. POSEY, OF TENNESSEE
ELIZABETH POWERS, OF MINNESOTA
ANDREW J. PUBLICOVER, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
MICHAEL J. QUIGLEY, OF VIRGINIA
KATHERINE N. RAFANIELLO, OF NEW YORK
DANIEL RAKOVE, OF CALIFORNIA
ROSELYN Y. RAMOS, OF MARYLAND
JUDNEFERA A. RASAYON, OF VIRGINIA
PENNY SUE RECHKEMMER, OF IOWA
KATRINA ROSE REICHWEIN, OF TEXAS
WENDY A. REJAN, OF FLORIDA
JEREMY STEWART RICHART, OF VIRGINIA
BRIAN P. ROGERS, OF PENNSYLVANIA
EBONY ROSE ROSEMOND, OF MARYLAND
JESSICA ALEAH ROWLAND, OF FLORIDA
JOHNATHAN MICHAEL ROY, OF TEXAS
LURA ELIZABETH RUDISILL, OF NORTH CAROLINA
AMY UNANDER RULE, OF ILLINOIS
AMELIA R. RUNYON, OF OREGON
PRESTON RAPHAEL SAVARESE, OF WYOMING
EMILY ANNE SCHUBERT, OF VIRGINIA
MELISSA L. SCHUMI JONES, OF FLORIDA
JOSHUA SHEN, OF CALIFORNIA
MONICA SHIE, OF NEW YORK
GURDIT SINGH, OF KANSAS
ANGIE SMITH, OF OHIO
JASON P. SPELLBERG, OF COLORADO
DANIEL SPOKOJNY, OF MICHIGAN
TAMARA N. STERNBERG, OF WYOMING
REBECCA L. STRUWE, OF PENNSYLVANIA
JOHN DAVID STUBBS, JR., OF NORTH CAROLINA
KATHRYN MICHELLE STUHLDREHER, OF TEXAS
TIMOTHY WILLIAM SWETT, OF ILLINOIS
SONIA SMYTHE TARANTOLO, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
JESSUP L. TAYLOR, OF NORTH CAROLINA
BEVERLY A. THACKER, OF OREGON
CHARLES ARTHUR THOMAS, OF TEXAS
TEDDE HOLDEN THOMPSON, OF FLORIDA
AQUEELAH S. TORRANCE, OF PENNSYLVANIA
JUSTINE OVEN TREADWELL, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
ERIN J. TRUHLER, OF MINNESOTA
LYNN MARIE VACCA, OF CALIFORNIA
CARLY NICOLE VAN ORMAN, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
JOSEPH WILLIAM WADE, OF UTAH
SHIRAZ U. WAHAJ, OF FLORIDA
ANNE WAN, OF CALIFORNIA
MATTHEW DANIEL WARIN, OF VIRGINIA
BRIANA M. WARNER, OF MAINE
DAVID W. WARNER, OF VIRGINIA
DAVID AUSTIN WESTENHOFER, OF KENTUCKY
MARK THOMAS WHITEHEAD, OF VIRGINIA
ANDREA TOLL WHITING, OF VIRGINIA
ERIC C. WILLIAMS, OF VIRGINIA
KIMBERLY ELIZABETH WILLIAMS, OF VIRGINIA
JONATHAN E. WOLFINGTON, OF FLORIDA
MARK W. ZANOLLI, OF PENNSYLVANIA
KIMBERLY D. ZAPFEL, OF MINNESOTA
HOLLY HOPE ZARDUS, OF WASHINGTON
RACHAEL ZASPEL, OF TEXAS
THOMAS S. ZIA, OF FLORIDA
JEFFREY ERIC ZINSMEISTER, OF CALIFORNIA
ALEKS ZITTLE, OF FLORIDA
LINDSEY MICHELLE ZULUAGA, OF VIRGINIA

THE FOLLOWING NAMED MEMBERS OF THE FOREIGN SERVICE TO BE CONSULAR OFFICERS AND SECRETARIES IN THE DIPLOMATIC SERVICE OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA:

JORGE ALBERTO ABUDEI BURGER, OF GEORGIA
DANIEL C. ACKER, OF NORTH CAROLINA
MICHELLE L. ANDERSON, OF COLORADO
RAFAEL ANDRADE-RAVELO, OF PUERTO RICO
ALEX FRANCIS ANDREW, OF TENNESSEE
CYRUS A. ATTIA, OF VIRGINIA
ELENA CHRISTINA AUGUSTINE, OF WASHINGTON
JEFFREY SEAN BARRUS, OF UTAH
BENJAMIN JOSEPH BAUGHMAN, OF ILLINOIS
CHRISTOPHER BEALOR, OF VIRGINIA
BLAIRE E. BINGHAM, OF VIRGINIA
KATHRYN ELIZABETH BOLOGNA, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
STEPHEN G. BOWEN, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
ELIZABETH LAUREEN EVANS BRADY, OF VIRGINIA
KEVIN L. BRENDLE, OF FLORIDA
ANDREW GARY BURTON, OF VIRGINIA
SARAH M. CARLSON, OF VIRGINIA
RANA KANAAN CASTEEL, OF VIRGINIA
RODERICK ZANE CHAMBERS, OF TEXAS
MOLLY PATRICIA CHINCHILLA, OF ALASKA
EVA COFFEY, OF TEXAS
STEPHANIE G. COHEN, OF VIRGINIA
MATTHEW J. CONLEY, OF VIRGINIA
CHRISTOPHER E. CONNELL, OF VIRGINIA
STEPHEN R. COOK, OF VIRGINIA
KELLY A. COSTELLO, OF VIRGINIA
PAUL C. COX, OF VIRGINIA
CHARLES D. CRISP, OF VIRGINIA
ERIN I. CURTIS, OF VIRGINIA
BRIAN M. DANATZKO, OF VIRGINIA
TINA KAREEMA DAUOD-AKGUC, OF DELAWARE
TUCKER D. DAVIS, OF VIRGINIA
ZACHARY DEBORD, OF VIRGINIA
RAMON DELGADO, OF VIRGINIA
REQUEL A. DELL-ORSO, OF VIRGINIA
KEVIN C. DENNEHY, OF CONNECTICUT
RISHI PRAFUL DESAI, OF WEST VIRGINIA
JOANNA L. DETAMORE, OF VIRGINIA
ZACHARY E. DOBOZE, OF VIRGINIA
ROBERT ALAN DOLLINGER, JR., OF VIRGINIA
JESSICA DORCUS, OF VIRGINIA
M. DAVID DOWD, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
JOHANNA M. DUROCHER, OF VIRGINIA
BLAKE D. EDWARDS, OF FLORIDA
EDWARD ANTHONY EICHLER, OF MAINE
NELS H. ERICKSON, OF VIRGINIA
JENNIFER A. FALLON, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
KAREN S. FANG, OF MARYLAND
MELONY FLETCHER, OF MARYLAND
ERIC FONG, OF CALIFORNIA
WESLEY C. FREDERICKS, OF VIRGINIA
ROBERT E. FULTON, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
LILIANA GABRIEL, OF VIRGINIA
MARINA GALKINA, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
KEVIN P. GALLAGHER, OF VIRGINIA
JAMES S. GARDINER, OF TEXAS
KENNETH C. GARDNER, JR., OF PENNSYLVANIA
MICHAEL R. GARNER, OF MARYLAND
MATTHEW AARON GLENN, OF VIRGINIA
KATHRYN A. GONZALES, OF VIRGINIA
PAMELA K. GREENLEAF, OF VIRGINIA
JACOB L. GUNSCHEL, OF MASSACHUSETTS
COLIN T. HALE, OF VIRGINIA
JACOB ANTHONY HALL, OF CALIFORNIA
RUSSELL C. HEADLEE, OF NEBRASKA
JOSEPHINE GIA HINMAN, OF NEW JERSEY
AMY E. HIRSCHAUER, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
ANDREW BLAYNE HOLTZ, OF NEW YORK
KATHERINE M. HOLTZ, OF VIRGINIA
KATHERINE HOOPS, OF MINNESOTA
STEPHANIE JEAN HOOSTAL, OF MINNESOTA
CHRISTOPHER B. HULICK, OF VIRGINIA
HEATHER YANG HWALEK, OF MAINE
TEUTA IDRIZI, OF VIRGINIA
OWEN JOHNS, OF ARIZONA
TIMOTHY NILS JOHNSON, OF NEW YORK
DANIEL NICHOLAS KANIGAN, OF UTAH
SEAN KEITH, OF OREGON
ELAINE VICTORIA KELLEY, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
KATHERINE A. KERR, OF OHIO
ELIZABETH E. KEVERN, OF VIRGINIA
HYEJU J. KIM, OF VIRGINIA
JOYCE KIM, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
BRANIGAN M. KNOWLTON, OF UTAH
KEVIN A. KRIMM, OF VIRGINIA
SANJAI KUMAR, OF VIRGINIA
JAMES P. LACEY, OF SOUTH CAROLINA
ERIK A. LARSEN, OF VIRGINIA
AMY FULING LEE, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
JOY LEE, OF VIRGINIA
ROBERT A. LEE, OF VIRGINIA
GRIFFIN PATRICK LENOIR, OF TEXAS
AMELIA M. LIEBHOLD, OF VIRGINIA
ERIC R. LITTLE, OF VIRGINIA
MEGHAN HEALY LUECKE, OF CALIFORNIA
BENTON S. LUSK, OF VIRGINIA
MOHINI A. MADGAVKAR, OF TEXAS
CHARLES MALINAK, OF NEW YORK
RUBY VERGARA MARCELO, OF MARYLAND
AMBER L. MAREZ, OF VIRGINIA
DANIEL E. MARTIN, OF MARYLAND
CHARLES ALBERT MATACK, OF CALIFORNIA
COURTNEY M. MAZZONE, OF NEW YORK
JERMEL K.L. MCGASKEY, OF VIRGINIA
CONOR MCNAMARA, OF VIRGINIA
CHRISTOPHER MERRIMAN, OF VIRGINIA
JAMES MIKULEC, OF VIRGINIA
MICHELLE ABREU MILARDO, OF NEW YORK
CHRIS R. MILLER, OF VIRGINIA
ROBERT MIRANDA, JR., OF VIRGINIA
CHRISTOPHER MARK MOHRMAN, OF VIRGINIA
DANIEL A. NALEPA, OF VIRGINIA
ROSS EDWARD NEADING, OF COLORADO
LISA LYNN NESSELROAD, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
TIFFANY M. NEWMAN, OF VIRGINIA
ANDREW YOONTAK NHO, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
CLARE E. NICHOLSON, OF PENNSYLVANIA
HELEN YOUNG NO, OF CALIFORNIA
MARK D. NORRIS, OF VIRGINIA
MARTIN C. OH, OF VIRGINIA
CHRISTIAN R. OLSEN, OF MARYLAND
CINDY L. OTIS, OF VIRGINIA
MARK STEVEN PADGETT, JR., OF VIRGINIA
KRISTI H. PATTON, OF VIRGINIA
EDWARD C. PERRY, OF TEXAS
NORMAN R. PFLANZ, OF NEBRASKA
VIRGINIA B. PIERSON II, OF VIRGINIA
ERICA M. PINERO, OF VIRGINIA
JAMISON FRANK PIXLEY, OF MASSACHUSETTS
AMY C. POLISHUK FUCHS, OF VIRGINIA
CHRISTOPHER M. POTHOVEN, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
ANSSI I. PULKKINEN, OF VIRGINIA
SARAH M. PURCELL, OF VIRGINIA
RYAN JEFFREY PURNELL, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
CYRUS PYUN, OF VIRGINIA
ADAM K. RASMUSSEN, OF VIRGINIA
LUIS E. REINOSO, OF VIRGINIA
LAKESHIA M. ROBINSON, OF VIRGINIA
JACOB ROCCA, OF MINNESOTA
CATHERINE ANN RODEN, OF ALABAMA
JAMES C. ROSS, OF COLORADO
GLENN R. RUDOLPH, OF VIRGINIA
LAURA W. RUSS, OF CALIFORNIA
SARITAH SABB, OF VIRGINIA
JOSEPH FRANK SAHID, OF VIRGINIA
JENNIFER NICOLE SANOW, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
NATHAN R. SCHMIDT, OF VIRGINIA
ETAN SCHWARTZ, OF NEW JERSEY
DONALD SCOTT, OF VIRGINIA
EILA M. SEPULVEDA, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
PAYAL SHAH, OF VIRGINIA
JOSHUA SHIPP, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
HOLLY R. SISK, OF VIRGINIA
SARAH L. SMYTHERS, OF VIRGINIA
ELISABETH SOCOLOW, OF NEW YORK
LATHDA SOULATHA, OF HAWAII
LISA A. SPINK, OF VIRGINIA
MARIA STAVROPOULOS, OF MASSACHUSETTS
PAUL STILLEY, OF ARIZONA
CHARLES A. STINGER, OF MARYLAND
ROCHELLE STOCK, OF VIRGINIA
JAY M. STROHM, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
ERIC JOSEPH SULLIVAN, OF FLORIDA
JAMIE L. SUTTER, OF OHIO
ERIC S. SWINN, OF VIRGINIA
MICHAEL J. TAYLOR, OF VIRGINIA
BRIAN W. TEPLICA, OF VIRGINIA
LAURA THEISSEN, OF MISSOURI
JEFFREY A. TISINGER, OF VIRGINIA
CODY GLEN TITENSOR, OF OREGON
JONATHAN TO, OF ARKANSAS
CHRISTIAN EDWARD TORRES, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
LINDA TOTH, OF VIRGINIA
VANESSA TOUFAILY, OF TEXAS
MARK TROCINSKI, OF COLORADO
RITA E. TROTTER, OF VIRGINIA
THOMAS PATRICK TRUXES, OF VIRGINIA
ADRIENNE M. TYGENHOF, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
BELGIN JENNIFER VANDERPLOEG, OF CALIFORNIA
SHAWN R. VASQUEZ, OF VIRGINIA
JOHN ANDREW VOIGHT, OF VIRGINIA
DAVID WACKER, OF COLORADO
ALEXANDER TED PUHK WALD, OF CONNECTICUT
PAULETTA M. WALSH, OF CALIFORNIA
JERUSHA C. WALZER, OF VIRGINIA
JOHN G. WARD, OF VIRGINIA
ALLISON R. WELCH, OF CALIFORNIA
LAUREN PATRICIA WELCH, OF NEW YORK
MICHAEL M. WILDMAN, OF VIRGINIA
JARED E. WOLFE, OF ILLINOIS
KAREN E. WRIGHT, OF VIRGINIA
TIMOTHY WRIGHT, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
LAUREN M. WYGANT, OF VIRGINIA
JOSEPH YACKLEY, OF ILLINOIS
SUE H. YEH, OF VIRGINIA
EMILY VALENTINE ZEEBERG, OF NEW YORK
RICHARD H. ZIELINSKI, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
W. GREY ZIMMERMAN, OF VIRGINIA

THE FOLLOWING NAMED CAREER MEMBER OF THE FOREIGN SERVICE OF THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE FOR PROMOTION INTO THE SENIOR FOREIGN SERVICE TO THE CLASS INDICATED, EFFECTIVE JANUARY 1, 2012: CAREER MEMBER OF THE SENIOR FOREIGN SERVICE OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA, CLASS OF COUNSELOR:

DANIEL MENCO HIRSCH, OF MARYLAND
BENJAMIN BEARDSLEY DILLE, OF MINNESOTA

IN THE MARINE CORPS

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS RESERVE TO THE GRADE INDICATED UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 12203:

To be major general

BRIG. GEN. WILLIAM T. COLLINS
BRIG. GEN. JAMES S. HARTSELL

IN THE NAVY

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES NAVY TO THE GRADE INDICATED WHILE ASSIGNED TO A POSITION OF IMPORTANCE AND RESPONSIBILITY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 601:

To be admiral

VICE ADM. MICHAEL S. ROGERS

IN THE AIR FORCE

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE RESERVE OF THE AIR FORCE UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 12203:

To be colonel

WILLIAM E. DICKENS, JR.
RICHARD R. GIVENS II

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE RESERVE OF THE AIR FORCE UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 12203:

To be colonel

KYLE WILLIAM BLASCH
DARRIN DANIEL LAMBRIGGER
ANDREW T. MACCABE

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE RESERVE OF THE AIR FORCE UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 12203:

To be colonel

LUAN TRAN LE
DARON C. PRAETZEL
DAVID C. SCHAEFER

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE RESERVE OF THE AIR FORCE UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 12203:

To be colonel

CYNTHIA B. CAMP
MARK EDWARD GIVENS
ERNEST VASQUEZ
BRYAN M. WINTER

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE RESERVE OF THE AIR FORCE UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 12203:

To be colonel

LAURA I. FERNANDEZ
KAREN LYNN HECKER
MARTIN J. HINDEL
ELIZABETH HOUSER LICKLITER
AVIS MAUREEN MCALLISTER
PAULA B. MCCARRON
STEPHEN J. MCMANUS
KATHLEEN V. E. REDER
ALBERT C. REES

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE RESERVE OF THE AIR FORCE UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 12203:

To be colonel

DIANE M. DOTY
ANITA L. FLIGGE
CHERYL R. GATES
COLLEEN MAY KELLY
CHRISTOPHER J. MATLACK
KIMBERLY A. MCCUE
DAWN LYNN MOORE
ANGELA L. MORTON
MICHAEL NICHOLSON
EDWARD D. RONNEBAUM

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE RESERVE OF THE AIR FORCE UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 12203:

To be colonel

RICHARD L. ALLEN
JEFFREY SCOTT BEERY
WILLIAM L. BRAY
JOHN E. BUTERBAUGH
GREGORY L. CANDELL
MICHAEL S. CHESSER
JAMES P. DOLAN
JULIANNE FLYNN
JAMES E. FRAME
JEFFRY L. HUFFMAN
ERNEST C. LEE
EDWIN C. NEWMAN III
SCOTT M. STRAYER
ANDREW O. TODD
SANDRA R. VOLDEN

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE RESERVE OF THE AIR FORCE UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 12203:

To be colonel

CONNIE L. ALGE
FRANK J. ANCONA
BRIAN A. ANDERSON
CHRISTOPHER R. ANDERSON
RALPH ANTON ANTHENIEN, JR.
JEFFREY JOHN ARMENTROUT
MARK DOUGLAS ARNHOLT
SCOTT W. BANNING
RUSSELL D. BARILE
STEVEN C. BARNETT
ERIC RANDOLPH BENTS
STEVEN L. BEYER
DAVID A. BIGGS
AMANDA SUE BIRCH
JENNIFER A. BLOCK
MICHAEL REMI BORBATH
KAREN D. BOSKO
JOHN CHRISTOPHER BOSTWICK
FRANK L. BRADFIELD III
RICHARD A. BRIGGS
JIMMIE P. BROOKS
GERALD Q. BROWN
CHARLES CASTLEMAN BULGER III
BRETT M. BURAS
JOSEPH E. BURGENER
TRAVIS S. CAUGHLIN
SUSAN BETH CHAMBERLAIN
IAN V. CHASE
ALLYSON C. CHAUVIN
JOHN D. CHERRY
KYLE J. CIOFFERO
CHRISTOPHER J. CLAY
NATHAN BEDFORD CLINE
JAMES K. CLUTTER
EARLE B. COMBS IV
CHARLES D. CORNELIUS
LISA M. CRAIG
MARK K. CUMBEE
JENNIFER L. CUMMINGS
JEFFREY W. DAVIES
ALLAN R. DAVIS
PAUL R. DELMONTE
JAMES R. DEVERE
JAMES M. DOOLIN
CRAIG W. DRESCHER
DENNIS PATRICK DUFFY
PATRICK J. DULANEY
MATTHEW T. DURHAM
STAN T. DUVALL
RICHARD J. ECCHER
DAVID S. EDWARDS
KIMBERLY S. ELLE
ROBERTA D. ERNEST
RICHARD A. ERREDGE
PETER G. FERGUSON
STEVEN A. FISCHER
GORDON E. FORNELL, JR.
BRIAN S. FREEMAN
HIRAM P. GATES III
BRETT J. GENNARELLI
JEFFERY A. GREEN
STEPHANIE S. GREEN
RODERICK T. GRUNWALD
THOMAS C. GUERRA
DOUGLAS E. GULLION
DAVID W. HALE
KENT D. HANSEN
MITCHELL A. HANSON
DOUGLAS R. HASSEBROCK
BRYAN A. HERRICK
PAUL B. HROMANIK
RICHARD L. INGRUM
KENDALL B. JAMES
WILLIAM G. JAMES
JEFFREY L. JANICIK
LAURA ROSEMARY JENKINS
ANNE C. JOHNSON
LISA M. JOHNSON
CONSTANCE C. JOHNSONCAGE
SCOTT F. JOKERST
SHELLEY B. KAVLICK
JOHN E. KEELER
ROBERT A. KIRBY
ELIZA S. KNUTSON
KEVIN S. LANE
STEPHEN L. LANIER
MICHAEL V. LOFORTI
SHANE D. LOHMAN
TIMOTHY L. LOHOF
RAYMUNDO LUEVANOS
JOHN W. LYONS
BEENA N. MAHARAJ
GERARD PHILLIP MALLOY
MICHAEL J. MALONE
BARBARA D. MANOUSE
DARRYL L. MARKOWSKI
LYNN M. MARSHALL
FRED L. MASSEY
WILLIAM A. MATNEY
KEVIN R. MENSING
LEE E. MERKLE
BRENT A. MERRITT
JODY A. MERRITT
DOUGLAS B. MEYERS
MITCHELL D. MIGLIORI
ERIC L. MIKKELSON
MICHAEL M. MOEDING
DAVID PAUL MOORE
TIMOTHY D. MOORE
BRIAN J. MORK
JAMES L. MORRISS III
DONALD MOSES, JR.
WILLIAM D. MURPHY
BRIAN D. NEAL
JOHN G. NIAKAROS
JOHN R. NOWAK
BRANDON K. NUGENT
HUGH E. OROURKE
KENNETH J. OSTRAT
KATHERINE M. PALLOZZI
PATRICIA ANN PETTINE
BENJAMIN D. PHILLIPS
DEAN PHILLIPS
CHARLAN A. POIRSON
LEWIS E. POORE, JR.
DALE R. PUDWILL
JESSICA P. A. RAINES
DONALD P. RICE, JR.
CHARLES L. RICH
MITCHELL D. RICHARDSON
DONALD W. RICHEY
WILLIAM S. RIEHL
MICHAEL L. ROBBINS
MAUREEN B. RODRIGUEZ
KEVIN J. ROETHE
KENNETH N. ROSE
RICHARD L. ROSS, JR.
MICHAEL F. ROTHERMEL
NATHAN W. ROUGHT
WALTER C. RUMAN
BRYAN L. RUNION
MICHAEL K. SANDER
DANIEL J. SARACHENE
RANDALL JOHN SAUER
HEIDI L. SCHEPPERS
EDWARD A. SCHINDLER
CHRISTINE B. SCHLACTER
CRAIG T. SCOTT
DAVID A. SCOTT
JULIE CATHERINE SCOTT
DAVID M. SEARS
DAVID WILLIAM SKOWRON
STEPHEN E. SLADE
JOHN S. SMIGLA
KELLI B. SMILEY
BRIAN PHILIP STAHL
ROGER R. STOECKMANN
CHRISTOPHER B. STOKES
JUDE R. SUNDERBRUCH
RICHARD W. TATEM
LAURA CHAMPION TAYLOR
GARIN P. TENTSCHERT
HOLLY E. THOMPSON
ROBERT R. TOFIL
RICHARD S. TUBBS
EDGAR K. TUCKER
LARRY E. TYER, JR.
DEBORAH LASOCKI VAN CASTER
TROY N. VONADA, JR.
LORI P. WALDEN
STEPHEN DAYLE WALKER
DAVID S. WEBB
RICHARD R. WEBSTER
JAMES C. WHITMIRE
RICHARD A. WILLIAMS
WAYNE M. WILLIAMS
SCOTT A. WINNER
TIMOTHY W. WOLLMUTH
RIPLEY E. WOODARD
KENNETH E. YEE

IN THE ARMY

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR REGULAR APPOINTMENT IN THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES ARMY MEDICAL CORPS UNDER TITLE 10, U.S. C., SECTIONS 531, 1211 AND 3064:

To be lieutenant colonel

SUN Y. KIM

IN THE NAVY

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES NAVY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 624:

To be lieutenant commander

LEON M. LEFLORE

WITHDRAWALS

Executive Message transmitted by the President to the Senate on January 30, 2014 withdrawing from further Senate consideration the following nominations:

LESLIE BERGER KIERNAN, OF MARYLAND, TO BE REPRESENTATIVE OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO THE UNITED NATIONS FOR U.N. MANAGEMENT AND REFORM, WITH THE RANK OF AMBASSADOR, WHICH WAS SENT TO THE SENATE ON JANUARY 6, 2014.

LESLIE BERGER KIERNAN, OF MARYLAND, TO BE ALTERNATE REPRESENTATIVE OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO THE SESSIONS OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE UNITED NATIONS, DURING HER TENURE OF SERVICE AS REPRESENTATIVE OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO THE UNITED NATIONS FOR U.N. MANAGEMENT AND REFORM, WHICH WAS SENT TO THE SENATE ON JANUARY 6, 2014.