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House of Representatives

The House met at 10 a.m. and was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. MASSIE).

DESIGNATION OF SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

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

WASHINGTON, DC,
March 25, 2014.

I hereby appoint the Honorable THOMAS MASSIE to act as Speaker pro tempore on this day.

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

MORNING-HOUR DEBATE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the order of the House of January 7, 2014, the Chair will now recognize Members from lists submitted by the majority and minority leaders for morning-hour debate.

The Chair will alternate recognition between the parties, with each party limited to 1 hour and each Member other than the majority and minority leaders and the minority whip limited to 5 minutes, but in no event shall debate continue beyond 11:50 a.m.

AFGHANISTAN

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. JONES) for 5 minutes.

Mr. JONES. Mr. Speaker, I am on the House floor today to bring attention to an article from the World Affairs Journal, titled, ''Money Pit: The Monstrous Failure of U.S. Aid to Afghanistan.'' This is an eight-page article documenting case after case of American tax dollars being wasted in Afghanistan.

I would like to bring one specific example to your attention, keeping in mind that many more months have now passed since this article was published and these figures are now even larger.

In a recent quarterly report, the U.S. Inspector General for Afghan Reconstruction said that when security for aid workers is figured, the total amount of nonmilitary funds Washington has appropriated since 2002 is ''approximately $100 billion''—more than the United States has ever spent to rebuild a country.

Since then, Congress has appropriated another $16.5 billion for ''reconstruction.'' And all that has not brought the United States or the Afghans a single sustainable institution or program.

As I traveled through the Third District of North Carolina last week, I spoke on this subject many times and was met with frustration from the audience at the waste of taxpayer money in Afghanistan.

When I went on to explain that the Afghan Parliament was able to vote on the bilateral strategic agreement that we are in the process of finalizing with Afghanistan, but we have not even debated the issue in the House, the individuals with whom I spoke were incredibly disappointed in Congress.

Mr. Speaker, we cannot blame the American people for wanting a vote on this agreement, which will spend billions of American dollars in Afghanistan with little to no accountability over at least the next 10 years.

This is not a partisan issue. Congressman JIM MCGOVERN and I have signed a letter asking the leadership of both parties for a debate on the expenditure of tax dollars to prop up the corrupt nation of Afghanistan.

To further explain why this debate is necessary, I will briefly read two more examples from the ''Money Pit'' article.

The Special Inspector General's office, widely known as SIGAR, noted that for the 2012 and 2013 fiscal years the United States has been providing Afghanistan, practically the most corrupt nation on Earth, with $1.1 billion in fuel for the Afghan military—even though the United States has made no effort to determine how much fuel the military actually requires.

The article goes on to cite a GAO report, stating that for $130,000, Afghan contractors built a large shower/bathroom facility, ''without holes in the walls or floors for plumbing and drains.'' What's more, the walls were constructed of ''crumbling cinder blocks.'' The report named insufficient oversight.

Mr. Speaker, it is time that we bring to a close the era of waste, fraud, and abuse of the United States' resources overseas and in Afghanistan.

Mr. Speaker, I hope the leadership of both parties will allow this Congress to debate whether we should stay in Afghanistan for 10 more years. If the Parliament in Afghanistan can have that debate, why can't the United States House of Representatives?

In closing, I would like to ask God to please bless our men and women in uniform and their families.

I will close by saying we have spent enough blood and treasure on this failed policy in Afghanistan. Let's debate the issue and stop spending the taxpayers' money in Afghanistan.

SPECIAL IMMIGRANT VISAS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. BLUMENAUER) for 5 minutes.

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, this morning's New York Times had a jarring reminder of the fate for those Afghans who put their trust in the United States when they decided to help us as interpreters, as guides, providing a variety of services that made the American mission possible. Indeed, our soldiers, our diplomats, countless Americans have put their lives in the hands of these brave partners. There was a promise, that we would be there for them, just as they were there for us.

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Sadly, this is a promise that has been broken time and time again. For the last 10 years, I have been working on an initiative to have the special immigrant visas to allow these trusted partners, whose lives are now at risk, to escape to safety and freedom in the United States.

Too often we have had a program mostly in name only. Visas were authorized, but through lack of attention, resources, commitment, focus, the paperwork languished. People have been in a bureaucratic hell, impossible conditions created, and to be met by despair and too often threats, injury, and, sadly, death of the people who trusted us. During the height of the government shutdown, we were nonetheless able to come together to bring the program back to life, or at least put it on life support.

I deeply appreciate the staff of Majority Leader CANTOR and Minority Whip HOYER. Their key staff members worked with a bipartisan coalition. Special thanks to ADAM KINZINGER and TULSI GABBARD, two new Members of Congress who served in theater in the Middle East, who know what the problems are and our commitment to those who helped us.

Because of this team we were able not only to keep it alive, we secured some real advances in the Defense Authorization Act. We are hearing noises from the administration and the many bureaucracies involved: the State Department, Homeland Security, FBI. There are lots of places for the system to break down, yet there appears to be some greater commitment but still not enough action.

Again, this morning, there is a reminder of the reality of our government having failed to deliver. For too many of us, it is a story in The New York Times. But for the Iraqis and the Afghans left behind, they don't need a story in a foreign newspaper, except the people who are featured in these stories miraculously often get their cases expedited. For the rest of these poor souls, they have a daily reminder of the threats, the assaults, of what it means to be left in the tender mercies of al Qaeda and the Taliban.

Next month, I will be introducing legislation for the next steps. I would strongly urge my colleagues to remember that brief moment when we came together during the shutdown to keep the program alive.

Please join me in cosponsoring the legislation because it is not enough just to keep the program alive. Let's come together to make the program work so those partners of America in Afghanistan and Iraq themselves can be kept alive.

THE MEDICAL EVALUATION PARITY FOR SERVICE MEMBERS ACT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. THOMPSON) for 5 minutes.

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, despite the recent military drawdown, our Nation continues to rely upon qualified and well-trained volunteers joining the military in order to regenerate our Armed Forces. Now, some of these young men and women have prepared their entire lives for service, while others found the call to duty some years later. All have chosen to serve their country in uniform and do so with honor and bravery.

When joining the service, new recruits must undergo comprehensive medical and physical examinations in order to certify they are both fully fit and capable of performing the range of rigorous and demanding jobs our military must carry out. However, Mr. Speaker, despite comprehensive physical and medical evaluations, there is no similar examination for mental health competency; meaning, we thoroughly examine knees, backs, eyes, and even the heart, yet leave the most important part of the body—one's mind—off-limits.

Now, this is certainly cause for concern and what some view as a serious gap in recruitment evaluation, especially as the military continues to address issues of behavioral health, posttraumatic stress disease, traumatic brain injury, and suicide. According to a recent Army study, nearly one in five Army soldiers enter the service with a psychiatric disorder, and nearly half of all soldiers who tried suicide first attempted it before enlisting. Additionally, the Journal of the American Medical Association found that a large percentage of suicides in the military were individuals who had never been deployed in a combat role.

Mr. Speaker, as policymakers, we have a responsibility to address this challenge. And this week, Ohio Congressman TIM RYAN and I plan to call on our colleagues to do just that and to join as cosponsors of the Medical Evaluation Parity for Service Members, or MEPS, Act. This bipartisan bill will institute a preliminary mental health assessment at the time recruits are first joining the military.

Keeping individual privacy in mind, the MEPS Act will follow all HIPAA guidelines and cannot be used in consideration for promotion or assignments. Additionally, the Congressional Budget Office has found the MEPS Act to have no budgetary effect.

In addition, this legislation requires the National Institute of Mental Health, in conjunction with the Department of Veterans Affairs and other experts, to report their recommendations on the assessment to ensure best practices are done. Now, this commonsense proposal seeks to bring mental health to parity with physical health and recruitment evaluations and will ensure that our incoming troops are both physically and mentally fit to serve.

Additionally, the bill has the support of the American Psychological Association, the Veterans of Foreign Wars, the National Guard Association of the United States, the Reserve Officers Association, the Reserve Enlisted Association, and the Association of the U.S. Navy.

Mr. Speaker, the MEPS Act is not, alone, the magic silver bullet to solve all of the behavioral health issues the military faces, but it is an important step in better understanding the scope of the challenge that we face. Now, I encourage my fellow colleagues to join us in this effort to protect the safety and security of those in uniform by becoming a cosponsor of the Medical Evaluation Parity for Service Members Act. These brave men and women deserve as much.

THE AMERICAN WAY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON LEE) for 5 minutes.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, this morning I want to take a few moments to share thoughts with my colleagues on a number of items that I believe we should be focused on.

Before I do that, I want to join my friends and colleagues from the great State of Washington to express my concern and my sympathy for the people of Darrington and Oso on Highway 530 that have experienced this terrible devastation of a mudslide. To the families of those who lost their loved ones, we mourn and pray for you; and to those who are still missing, we thank the first responders and pray for their accuracy in discerning and finding those that are alive.

As a member of the Homeland Security Committee, and as we have a hearing this morning on emergency preparedness, I am asking that all of the resources that the delegation from Washington request, and, as well, the Governor of that State, that all of us will embrace them, stand as Americans, unite behind them and provide the resources as we do for our fellow brothers and sisters in this country because it is the American way that we never leave a lonely person along the highway of despair. We always provide for them. And I want those people in Darrington and the city of Oso to know that we will not leave you along the highway of despair.

□ 1015

I want to now challenge this Congress, the other body, as they proceed to move on what actions should be taken in Ukraine. We know that Americans are war-weary, but if we have principles of democracy, if we believe there is an international world order, we cannot sit idly by and not act. So I am grateful that the President has strongly denounced Russia's actions and has begun to move on strong sanctions. I would argue that there should be more.

We should ensure that the new Ukrainian Government that wants to cling to aspects of democracy and

wants to associate with a democratic Europe, that they be allowed to strengthen themselves. We cannot have a timidness on behalf of Europe, so busy worrying about their pocketbook that they will stamp on their principles. Some European countries are now wavering about sanctions. I would suggest to them that they are dangerously providing an opportunity for Russia to continue its aggressive and illegal acts.

You must have principles. You must provide the strength to sanction. One can travel through the years of history in the 20th century and be reminded of those who get one step of aggression and watch as they march across Europe. I am very glad that there will be no meeting of G8 in Sochi, and I would ask that we continue to isolate Russia. Russia violates the human rights of its own people. It does not even recognize the LGBT community, and they are persecuted. What more do we have to hear from Russia and its head of government to not know that they must suffer the consequences of their acts.

I stand with the people of Ukraine because I believe in democracy, I believe in peace and human dignity, and I believe America has those values that we can ensure through the world family that Russia understands that they are not part of the world order of democracy and the freedom of people.

I might also add, Mr. Speaker, as a senior member of the Homeland Security Committee, all of us have watched, some with intenseness the Malaysian aircraft. With great disappointment and sadness, we are told, without all of the facts, not knowing what the recent announcements have been, that this aircraft, this airliner may be lost. But it opens our eyes to the crisis of airline security and technology.

I call upon the aviation industry to stop hiding behind costs and how much it costs and start ensuring that our pilots and our customers, our flying public are safe. Why do we have the capacity to dismantle the transponders? Why wasn't the emergency call already in place that automatically signals when an aircraft goes off its designated destination as relates to its flight pattern? Why does it have to be done manually? The mysterious turn. Homeland Security will be having a hearing on the false passport.

Finally, Mr. Speaker, it is overdue for us to pass comprehensive immigration reform, and I will continue that discussion.

COERCIVE CONTRACEPTION MANDATE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Tennessee (Mrs. BLACKBURN) for 5 minutes.

Mrs. BLACKBURN. Mr. Speaker, there is no shortage of issues here in Washington, and I find it so interesting when people come to our offices and ask: What is going on today?

As you will hear, whether it is talking about foreign affairs, the job issues, the budget, the issues that are of such concern to our constituents, there is always something that is on the front burner, and today is one of those days. The Supreme Court will hear yet another legal challenge to one of the many unconstitutional aspects of ObamaCare, and that is the HHS contraception mandate. Of course, this isn't the first time that the Affordable Care Act, the President's health care law, has been pulled into the Supreme Court, and it is probably not going to be the last, but today the hearing is on the contraception mandate.

No American should have to choose between feeding their family and abiding by their faith. I have to tell you, that is what we see happening right now. It is precisely what this coercive contraception mandate is doing to millions of hardworking people of faith, like the Hahns and the Greens, who simply want to run a business and practice their faith. These family businesses want to take care of their employees and provide them with quality health care coverage. All they ask is to not be forced to pay for the life-ending contraceptives that violate their religious convictions.

Now, ObamaCare's unreasonable mandate has placed them in a bind: violate the tenets of their faith or be fined, fined by the Federal Government, fined by ObamaCare, fined $100 per employee per day. That is what the fine works out to be. Unbelievably, it would be cheaper to strip their employees of health care coverage altogether and pay a single $2,000 fine per employee per year. That is what you find in the 20,000 pages of regulation, in the 2,700 pages of the President's health care law.

That is not what these family businesses want to do. They really want to do the right thing and take care of the hardworking men and women who are in their employment.

If these family businesses are forced to close or drop health care for their employees, it will be the employees and their families who are made to suffer.

This mandate is just another flawed part of a terribly flawed law, and Americans are growing tired of having to cope with it. Fifty-nine percent of the country opposes the contraception mandate because they know what the Greens and the Hahns know. This is a country founded on religious liberty, and that freedom of conscience is a cherished American tradition. The American people know that and they value that; they value that liberty and they value that tradition.

The Obama administration has already doled out special exemptions to 100 million health care plans from this mandate, and for every reason under the sun except religious liberty. In fact, the HHS mandate only explicitly contains a religious exemption for churches and their affiliates. The Obama administration even expects hospitals and religious nonprofits to abide by the mandate without complaint, as if the very founding principles of these organizations aren't outright violated by paying for life-ending contraceptives.

Unless it is a religious institution, the Obama administration seems to think no organization, not even a charity, is allowed to exercise the right of conscience, unless it is granted a special waiver from the administration, of course. The administration: What the government gives, the government can delay, and the government can take away. That is their plan.

It is my hope the Court will act to uphold the protections inherent in the First Amendment, respect America's long-held tradition to right of conscience, and let these families operate their businesses in accordance with their religious beliefs and tenets.

END HUNGER NOW

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. MCGOVERN) for 5 minutes.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, earlier this year the House voted on the farm bill conference report, legislation that reauthorizes our Nation's agriculture policies as well as the preeminent antihunger program known as SNAP. I voted against the conference report both as a conferee and when it came before this House because it contained an $8.6 billion cut to SNAP. Even worse, it was the second major cut to SNAP in less than 6 months.

I strongly believe in our Nation's antihunger programs. Unfortunately, there are about 49 million hungry people living in our great Nation. Technically known as food insecurity, the truth is that these are low-income people who don't know where their next meal will come from. America's antihunger programs, led by SNAP, provide food to people who otherwise would have difficulty finding it, if they were able to find access to food at all.

For years, I have talked about how SNAP works, and over the past year, I have led these End Hunger Now speeches about how SNAP and other antihunger programs are working to reduce hunger in our country. That is why these two SNAP cuts, the cut in November 2013 and the cut in the farm bill, were not just disappointing, but they were actually damaging. We saw real cuts to real people.

For example, look at Luis Marin, who was profiled in the New York Daily News:

> Food stamp cuts have dealt a double blow to Luis Marin and his family. Marin's hours have been cut from 30 to 20 hours a week at Red Apple Deli Supermarket in uptown's Hamilton Heights, where his boss, Ramon Murphy, is losing business because of the food stamp cutbacks. And Marin, 56, his wife, and their two little girls—who subsist on his $8-an-hour income—also saw their food stamps benefits drop to $397 a month in November and have had to change their eating habits.

It is not just low-income families in our urban areas; military families are using SNAP more than ever. In fact, military families used food stamps more in fiscal year 2013 than in any other year. Members of the military redeemed almost $104 million worth of food stamps over that time, about $5 million more than the previous year.

The thing many of my colleagues don't seem to understand is that cuts to SNAP don't just change the amount of money the Federal Government spends. As you can see from the case that I highlighted with Mr. Marin, these cuts hurt real American people. We are taking food away from children and away from poor families.

That is why I am pleased that seven of our Nation's Governors are taking the courageous stand that this Congress wouldn't take. The cut included in the farm bill was harmful, but it only affected 17 States. That is because it only dealt with a program called Heat and Eat, a program that linked LIHEAP and SNAP together. The farm bill changed the way States could continue participating in that program. Essentially, States could continue if they increased the State contribution from $1 to $20 in LIHEAP benefits. These seven States—Connecticut, Massachusetts, Montana, New York, Oregon, Pennsylvania and Rhode Island—are playing by the new rules Congress established in the farm bill, and thankfully, they are saying that they are not going to let low-income food insecure people in their State feel the pain of these cuts, even if Congress is going to cruelly and cowardly cut SNAP in the name of deficit reduction.

I sit on the Agriculture Committee, and I remember when the committee didn't have the votes to abolish the Heat and Eat Program entirely. The $20 level was supported by the chairman of the committee and is now the law of the land. Yet the distinguished Speaker of this House continues to say that States are somehow cheating when all they are doing is following the law that he shepherded through this House. Perhaps he didn't read the bill, or perhaps he doesn't understand the fact that there are millions and millions of people in this country who are hungry.

I want to commend the Governors of these States, including the Republican Governor of Pennsylvania and the Governor of my home State of Massachusetts, for doing the right thing and taking action to prevent these cuts from taking effect and preventing their citizens from going hungry.

I am grateful to these Governors and the Governors of 10 other States who are still working to enact this change in law, and for taking the actions that many in this Congress simply did not take. I say ''thank you'' to the Governors for preventing hunger from getting worse in those States. Hopefully, they can be an example for all of us in Congress.

Mr. Speaker, we were elected to help people. These cutbacks in SNAP and other nutrition programs have hurt our fellow citizens. These cuts are unconscionable. They are a rotten thing to do. We in this Congress and the leadership of this Congress have to stop beating up on poor people, have to stop diminishing their struggle. Surely we can come together in a bipartisan way and agree that hunger is not acceptable in the richest country in the history of the world. We need to end hunger now, not make it worse. So let's come together and end hunger now.

CELEBRATING 193RD ANNIVERSARY OF GREEK INDEPENDENCE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Florida (Mr. BILIRAKIS) for 5 minutes.

Mr. BILIRAKIS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to celebrate the 193rd anniversary of Greek independence. Citizens of Greece have always been a proud people in body, mind, and spirit.

□ 1030

From Pericles, Greek statesman and general, dubbed the first citizen of Athens; to Plato, who laid a groundwork in philosophy so vast that the entirety of European philosophical tradition is said to simply be a footnote to his work; to Count Ioannis Kapodistrias, the first head of state of an independent Greece, Greeks have been exceptional, Mr. Speaker.

I am almost certain that Thomas Jefferson cast an eye across the Atlantic towards Greece when he uttered these words in 1821, when Greece declared their independence:

> The flames kindled on the 4th of July 1776 have not spread over much of the globe to be extinguished by the feeble engines of despotism—on the contrary, they will consume these engines and all who work them.

It is no coincidence that the Feast of Annunciation, a commemoration of the conception of Jesus Christ, was chosen to ignite the action for independence.

I am blessed to be of two cultures that have been beacons of liberty for all of civilization, the place of my birth, the land of the free, and the home of the brave, the United States of America; and the land of my ancestors, the birthplace of democracy, the Hellenic Republic.

Many Greeks fought for years, clutching to the heritage, culture, and faith. Bishop Germanos of Patras raised the emblem of freedom for Hellenes, the flag bearing a white cross and nine blue and white stripes representing the nine letters in Eleftheria, which means freedom.

Eight years of bloodshed and battle led to the Treaty of Adrianople, the formal declaration of a free and independent Greece.

Greece was the world's first advanced civilization, one that provided a cultural heritage that has influenced the world. Firsts in philosophy, mathematics, politics, sports, and art all stemmed from a free Greece.

Liberty and justice, freedom to determine the path of one's own life, these are human desires and were embodied by Greece throughout their fight for independence.

Those unyielding Hellenes paid life and limb for those desires, and generations of Greeks—Americans of Greek descent as well—for decades to come owe their ancestors many thanks.

As George Washington once said:

> Liberty, when it begins to take root, is a plant of rapid growth.

This held true in Greece in 1821, as it did in America in 1776.

''Freedom or Death''—Eleftheria Thanatos—was the battle cry of the revolutionaries nearly 200 years ago. It rings true today. Freedom is a powerful and beautiful notion. The Greek people achieved that for themselves 193 years ago, and I am proud to celebrate in memory of those who fought bravely to shed the shackles of the Ottoman Empire.

Long live Greece—zito Hellas—and God bless America.

WOMEN'S HISTORY MUSEUM

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New York (Mr. TONKO) for 5 minutes.

Mr. TONKO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in celebration of Women's History Month. On March 13, my colleagues joined together on the House floor to call for the passage of H.R. 863, which would call for a commission to study the potential creation of a national women's history museum in our Nation's Capital.

They discussed the critical need for the museum and recognized the many women who have shaped our Nation. My colleagues are historic women in their own right. Today, I am proud to join them in voicing my support for H.R. 863.

H.R. 863 would establish a commission to study and recommend a plan of action for the establishment and maintenance of a national women's history museum here in Washington, D.C.

The National Women's History Museum will be the first of its kind to celebrate women's history and women's contributions to the United States. It will not cost the Federal Government a dime since every cent will be privately raised.

Why is it necessary? Well, from our Nation's founding, women have played a crucial role, providing numerous contributions to help create and reinforce this great foundation of our Nation. Women have changed the course of history, and we are long overdue in celebrating and recognizing them and their accomplishments.

Women's history is largely missing from textbooks, from memorials, from museum exhibits, and from many other venues. Of the 210 statues in the United States Capitol, only nine are of female leaders.

Less than 5 percent of the 2,400 national historic landmarks chronicle women's achievement, and a recent survey of some 18 history textbooks

found that only 10 percent of the individuals identified in the text were women.

What about New York and its role—my home State? Well, the women's suffrage movement had its roots in upstate New York that I proudly represent. Certainly, the start of what would become a nationwide movement for women's rights in the United States was staked in Seneca Falls, New York, and began in 1848.

Elizabeth Cady Stanton, Lucretia Mott, and Susan B. Anthony, all who have made their voices heard for the empowerment of women, claim New York as their home State. Let's make sure their stories continue to be told.

Countless outstanding women in the capital region have stories that every American should know. Let me cite one, Shirley Ann Jackson, in the capital region of New York that I represent.

Shirley Ann Jackson—Dr. Jackson, President Jackson of RPI—is a renowned American physicist, who in 1973 graduated from MIT with a Ph.D. in theoretical elementary particle physics, becoming the very first African American woman to receive a Ph.D. in MIT's history.

She currently serves as President of Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute, or RPI, and she continues to advocate on behalf of women and minorities in the sciences. Her story should be told.

There are countless stories that need to be told. I will continue to proudly support the creation of a national women's history museum and H.R. 863.

When visitors from the capital region of New York come to our Nation's Capital, they should have the opportunity to learn about, to celebrate, and, yes, to be inspired by women's history.

I thank the gentlewoman from New York, CAROLYN MALONEY, and the gentlewoman from Tennessee, MARSHA BLACKBURN, for their continued efforts on behalf of this endeavor.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until noon today.

Accordingly (at 10 o'clock and 37 minutes a.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1200

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. WOODALL) at noon.

PRAYER

Reverend John Rosenberg, Lutheran Church of the Good Shepherd, Olympia, Washington, offered the following prayer:

Holy one, we know You in an infinite variety of ways. By whatever name we call You, You are the one in whom we live and move and have our being.

We ask Your blessing upon the Members of this House as they carry on the business of our Nation at this critical time in our history.

Give them courage in the face of immense challenges, a spirit of cooperation despite their differences, and trust in Your divine guidance as they work together for the common good.

When the path ahead is unclear, remind them that throughout the ages, Your prophets and holy ones have shown us what is good; that You require nothing more of us—but nothing less—than to do justice, to have compassion for one another, and to walk humbly with You, the beginning and the end of all things.

Amen.

THE JOURNAL

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

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

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

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

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

Mr. CRAWFORD. Mr. Speaker, I object to the vote on the ground that a quorum is not present and make the point of order that a quorum is not present.

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

The point of no quorum is considered withdrawn.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

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

Mr. CRAWFORD led the Pledge of Allegiance as follows:

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

WELCOMING REVEREND JOHN ROSENBERG

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

There was no objection.

Mr. HECK of Washington. Mr. Speaker, it is my pleasure today to welcome to the Nation's Capital Pastor John Rosenberg of the Lutheran Church of the Good Shepherd in Olympia, Washington, where he is the lead pastor. He is my pastor; today it is personal with me.

Pastor Rosenberg is a graduate of Concordia Senior College of Luther Seminary and even has a graduate degree from one of my alma maters, Portland State University.

It is personal with me today because, in part, Pastor Rosenberg has announced his retirement on June 30. We will miss him greatly.

I have no fear for how he will spend his retirement time because he is an obsessive, compulsive fisherman, which is a good thing to be in the Pacific Northwest, as a matter of fact.

I deeply appreciate him for his presence here today. More importantly, for living the example of the Scripture which he quoted today, by far my favorite, that which I believe is the most holy and that which I believe is the wisest, and that is Micah 6:8: Do justly, love mercy, and walk humbly with your Lord.

All these things Pastor John Rosenberg does. Thank you so much for being here today, my good friend.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair will entertain up to 15 further requests for 1-minute speeches on each side of the aisle.

BETTY CLARK-DICKEY

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

Mr. CRAWFORD. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in recognition of National Women's History Month, honoring Arkansas' first female Supreme Court Chief Justice, Betty Clark-Dickey.

Born and raised within Arkansas' First Congressional District, Mrs. Dickey has served as an educator, attorney, prosecutor, commissioner, and chief legal counselor to the Governor.

In 2004, former Arkansas Governor Mike Huckabee appointed Dickey to fill the position of chief justice for the Arkansas Supreme Court, making her the first woman to ever occupy that position.

Mrs. Dickey has not only succeeded professionally, but she has done it all while raising a family. She reared four biological children and one foster child: John, Laura, Ted, Rachel, and Cindy; and she has 11 grandchildren.

Mrs. Dickey's son, Ted, called her a ''high achiever who is never afraid of big things,'' and said of his mother, ''She embodies love and justice simultaneously.''

A little more than a decade after Mrs. Dickey first took office, Arkansas will have its first Supreme Court female majority in 2015, further cementing Dickey's status as a pioneer in a multitude of areas in the State of Arkansas.

Mr. Speaker, please join me and the entire State of Arkansas in honoring

the service of all women, including Betty Clark-Dickey.

WELCOMING COMMISSIONER KERLIKOWSKE

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

Mr. HIGGINS. Mr. Speaker, I rise to welcome Gil Kerlikowske, recently confirmed as Commissioner of the United States Customs and Border Protection.

I am pleased to welcome a Commissioner who has an understanding of the needs of the northern border, as he previously served as police commissioner for the city of Buffalo. His firsthand experience comes at a critical time as we work to advance the United States-Canada Beyond the Border initiative.

In western New York, this cross-border relationship is especially critical to the local economy. I worked with Customs and Border Protection in the past to advocate for increased border staffing levels along the border. At the Peace Bridge, there is also a pre-inspection pilot currently underway that hopes to ease congestion and shorten wait times. In the coming year, we hope to continue moving forward on plans to construct a new border station at the Niagara Falls Air Reserve Base.

Mr. Speaker, I congratulate Commissioner Kerlikowske. I look forward to working closely with him and his staff on issues important to the Buffalo-Niagara region and the entire Nation.

NATIONAL DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES AWARENESS MONTH

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

Mr. MCKINLEY. Mr. Speaker, March is National Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month. Every year at this time we all bring attention and understanding to the needs and the potential of people with developmental disabilities.

As an individual with a hearing disability and a grandfather of a child who has CHARGE syndrome, I am very familiar with the hardships of overcoming these disabilities.

We must all think of ways that would be more inclusive, respectful for our communities, schools, and our workforce.

Interning for us in our Washington office we are fortunate to have a young woman who happens to have Down syndrome. She is also attending a local university. We look forward to those days we have her in our office. Her cheery disposition and her work ethic is infectious.

I encourage everyone to engage with people in our communities who have developmental disabilities and recognize their talents and abilities that will make this a better Nation.

WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH AND MINIMUM WAGE

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

Mrs. DAVIS of California. Mr. Speaker, Women's History Month is a time for us to reflect on what women have done for America and what America can do for its women.

If we really look at the history of women in this country, we see that they have done far more than we give them credit for. I am not just talking about extraordinary figures like Susan B. Anthony and Rosa Parks. I am talking about the countless women who have worked day in and day out since this country was founded.

The idea that women are new to working is a myth. The truth is women have always worked to better their families and their communities, but too often the work that they do is undervalued.

Almost two-thirds of minimum wage workers are women, and although more families than ever rely on female breadwinners, women's wages still lag behind men's. For these women it isn't about having it all; it's about having enough to get by.

This Women's History Month, let's give women and their families the raise they deserve. Let's show all Americans that their work is worth a living wage. After all, when women succeed, America succeeds.

HONORING THE MEMORY OF DEPUTY SHERIFF WILLIAM R. MAST, JR.

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

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the memory of Watauga County Deputy Sheriff William R. Mast, Jr. Deputy Mast was shot and killed while responding to a 911 call in Deep Gap, North Carolina, in 2012.

Deputy Mast was only 23 years old when he was killed 20 months ago, and his first child was born shortly thereafter.

Today, at a ceremony at the Perkinsville Baptist Church in Boone, the bridge spanning the south fork of the New River on U.S. Highway 421 will be named for Deputy Mast. This is a small token of gratitude from the community which Deputy Mast served so ably and honorably.

Our thoughts and prayers today are with Deputy Mast's widow, young son, and all those who continue to mourn his passing.

COMPREHENSIVE IMMIGRATION REFORM

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

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to address a question that the American people have been raising for more than a decade: When will we address the question of human dignity of so many who are in our country who desire the status of citizenship? When will we pass a sensible, reasonable immigration reform legislation or package? Will we combine our concern for national security with border security, along with human dignity?

The question is being asked by constituents from my 18th Congressional District in Houston. It is being asked by the American Jewish Committee. It is being asked by Cardinal DiNardo in the most eloquent and passionate way as they met last week to hear from voices of those who have not heard the answer. Or the 139 who showed up at a press conference some weeks ago, standing with me, demanding that people be given their human dignity. Or the leadership from Ireland who was here at a St. Patrick's Day luncheon who stood up and asked the Speaker, When are we going to put comprehensive immigration reform on the floor of the House.

This is a multicultural challenge to America. This is an economic challenge. This is from the Irish. This is from South Asians, from Asians. This is from people from Bangladesh, from Poland. It is all over America. Let's pass comprehensive immigration reform.

AMERICAN RED CROSS MONTH

(Mrs. BROOKS of Indiana asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mrs. BROOKS of Indiana. Mr. Speaker, March is Red Cross Month across the country, and as chairman of the House Committee on Homeland Security's Subcommittee on Emergency Preparedness, Response, and Communications, I would like to take some time to recognize the accomplishments of the American Red Cross and its volunteers, everyday heroes.

Last year, Red Cross and volunteers responded to over 60,000 emergencies and provided over 900 shelters to people forced from their homes. Following the Boston Marathon bombing last April, the Red Cross provided 500 units of blood products to Boston-area hospitals. They played a pivotal role in sheltering families in my district in Indiana during last year's winter holiday floods.

I visited the Red Cross national headquarters, where I toured the digital operations center and saw how they are utilizing social media in their operations.

I am grateful for their achievements in educating Americans on how to prepare for and respond to emergencies and disasters. This organization and their volunteers exemplify the everyday heroes as they lead the way in disaster preparedness and response, and we must all thank Red Cross. I urge my fellow Members to visit chapters and to follow them on Facebook and Twitter.

Please visit and thank them for all the work they are doing in our communities.

AFFORDABLE HEALTH INSURANCE

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

Mr. VEASEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise to remind Americans today to hurry: they have 6 days left to sign up for the Affordable Care Act through their Federal and State exchanges and marketplaces. Don't believe the hype from the Republicans. The Affordable Care Act is working to improve the lives of millions of Americans. More than 5 million Americans have signed up so far through the marketplace, and they will continue to do so.

This weekend, I hosted two enrollment events in my district, both in Dallas and Fort Worth, and attended two additional ones to ensure that constituents in my district get the affordable health care they deserve. What I saw when I visited those events were rooms filled with men, women, and children looking to provide insurance for their families, looking to ensure that they are protected from unforeseen sickness and health issues.

Let's stop playing politics with people's health care. Let's work together to get every American covered.

□ 1215

DEFENDING RELIGIOUS LIBERTY FROM THE ACA

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

Mr. BILIRAKIS. I rise today, Mr. Speaker, in support of religious liberty.

The Affordable Care Act, better known as ObamaCare, forces businesses to provide services like the morning-after pill as part of their health insurance. For businessowners who believe that life begins at conception, this aspect of the ACA violates their religious principles.

The First Amendment is sacred to Americans. At the time of its creation, the First Amendment was completely unique. God, not government, gave unalienable rights to women and men, including freedom to practice their religion without interference.

No individual should be forced to violate their religious beliefs. Opponents will say that this is restricting access to health care. I disagree. This is about ensuring the integrity of religious freedom for all Americans, regardless of religion. That is a founding American principle.

INVESTING IN SPACE EXPLORATION AND SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH

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

Mr. MCNERNEY. Mr. Speaker, the U.S. has always been the world leader in space exploration. We were the first and only nation to put humans safely on the Moon and the only nation to send unmanned ships to Mars, among other extraordinary missions.

In 2011, NASA flew its last space shuttle mission. Without any new human lift system ready, the U.S. has had to depend on Russia to send our astronauts to space. This arrangement has worked because of a sense of cooperation and mutual respect between our two great nations' space programs.

But American innovation cannot be stopped. Several private companies are working with NASA to ensure that Americans can once again fly on American spaceships.

As a Nation, we should support this effort and encourage private American companies to accelerate their programs. These public-private partnerships will ensure that the U.S. does not rely solely on Russian spacecraft.

I urge my colleagues to consider the long-term benefits of investing in space exploration and scientific research.

RECOGNIZING BRANDI BRULEY

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

Mr. RODNEY DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Ms. Brandi Bruley, principal of North Elementary School in my hometown of Taylorville, Illinois.

Ms. Bruley was recently named the Illinois Principals Association's 2014–2015 Elementary School Principal of the Year in recognition of her positive impact on her students and the entire educational community.

She has worked hard to improve communication between teachers and parents with a goal of raising student achievement. As a result of her efforts, North Elementary School has been awarded the Illinois State Board of Education's Spotlight Award for the last 3 years and made the ISBE Honor Roll in 2013.

Ms. Bruley has a long-standing and deep commitment to serving her students, faculty, and our entire community. Her experience and innovation enable her to bring creative ideas that focus on high standards for our local schools.

Congratulations and thank you to Brandi. This is a well-deserved award to recognize all that you do for our students and the entire Taylorville community.

IN HONOR OF THE ANNIVERSARY OF GREECE'S DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE FROM THE OTTOMAN EMPIRE

(Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to celebrate the 193rd anniversary of Greece's declaration of independence from the Ottoman Empire.

The ancient Greeks forged the notion of democracy. They believed in the right of self-governance, one of the foundations of our great Nation; yet, for centuries, the Greek people—the people whose ancestors inspired our own country's founding, the people who Thomas Jefferson called the light which led ourselves out of Gothic darkness, the Greek people were denied this right.

Today, Greeks celebrate March 25 as the day when the Greeks began the long, hard battle for independence.

I recently met with Ambassador John Koenig, ambassador to Cyprus, to discuss the latest on our Cyprus negotiations. He was hopeful that real progress could be made in unifying the island and stopping the illegal Turkish occupation.

The U.S. must also continue to work to find a mutually agreeable name for the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia.

Greece is an important ally to the United States. I am proud to stand with American Greeks today to celebrate their independence and aspirations.

HOBBY LOBBY

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

Mr. PETERS of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise to bring attention to the Hobby Lobby case, which is being argued today at the Supreme Court.

In this case, a for-profit company is refusing to cover the birth control of its female employees, citing the owners' personal religious objections.

In 2014, the idea that a woman has to fight for access to birth control is astonishing. Ninety-nine percent of American women will use contraception at some point in their lives.

As I have said before, all health care decisions, including birth control and women's reproductive rights, should be between a woman and her doctor, not involving her boss or a politician here in Washington, D.C.

The wide availability of birth control has been an enormous benefit for millions of women and the American economy, enabling generations of women to support themselves financially, complete their education, and plan for the right time to start a family.

It is a basic, preventative health care option. It should not be available only at the discretion of a woman's employer, nor should a woman have to choose between her job and her health.

As a husband of nearly 28 years and a father of two, it seems pretty simple to me. Women, not bosses, should be in charge of their personal health care decisions.

HOBBY LOBBY

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

Ms. HANABUSA. Mr. Speaker, today, the United States Supreme Court, just down the street, heard the arguments for Hobby Lobby, Inc., a for-profit corporation, which is refusing some or all contraceptive services in health plans offered to their employees.

The issue here is whether the religious beliefs of a shareholder, the owner, can dictate what type of contraceptive services a health plan will offer.

Note, this is not a religious institution or an employer like a church or a religious institution of any kind. It is a for-profit corporation.

The issue here is also whether an employer can pick and choose what type of services female employees can avail themselves of; and remember—remember—women in childbearing age actually pay 68 percent more for their medical coverage now—68 percent more. That is just not fair.

I hope the Supreme Court will reverse the Hobby Lobby decision and say that the Constitution and the laws of this great Nation support women.

HIDDEN TAXES INCLUDED IN THE AFFORDABLE CARE ACT

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

Mr. YODER. Mr. Speaker, you wouldn't know it by the weather, but it will soon be April, and tax day is right around the corner. As Americans scramble to gather their W–2s and other important tax documents, many are unaware of the extra hidden taxes included in the Affordable Care Act that will ultimately fall on them.

These hidden taxes will surprise and catch hardworking families and small businesses off guard and put a strain on family budgets that are already stretched thin.

A 3.5 percent tax on insurance premiums, a 2.3 percent medical device tax—raising the cost of pacemakers, prosthetics, stents, and more—a tanning tax, an investment income and Medicare payroll surtax, the list goes on and on; and all these costs are passed on to Americans and families in our communities.

That is hundreds and hundreds of billions of dollars leaving our communities, out of the pockets of hardworking families in States like Kansas and heading to Washington, D.C.

Mr. Speaker, with the many challenges Americans face today, the last thing they need this tax season is to carry a heavier government tax burden on their backs.

VIETNAM VETERANS DAY

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

Mr. LIPINSKI. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to remember and honor the more than 3 million Americans who served in the Vietnam war. This weekend, we will observe Vietnam Veterans Day to pay tribute to these brave Americans who were called to serve during one of our Nation's longest and most difficult conflicts.

Lasting more than a decade, Vietnam defined a generation. Over 58,000 Americans were killed, and those who did return home were not treated as the American heroes that they are.

In recent years, I am grateful that most Americans have been able to put aside their opinions about specific military missions and have an unwavering commitment to our courageous men and women operating in dangerous places around the world.

Vietnam Veterans Day is meant to reaffirm our respecting gratitude for those that served our Nation in that war and show a generation of soldiers our immense gratitude. I will be doing so this Saturday at the VFW Post in Lemont, Illinois.

I ask my colleagues to join me in doing the same, not just this weekend, but every day, because our Vietnam veterans, and all our veterans, deserve this.

IMMIGRATION REFORM

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

Mr. KILDEE. Mr. Speaker, for far too long, comprehensive immigration reform has been a low priority for the Speaker and for the Republican leadership. Americans have spoken loud and clear. They want comprehensive immigration reform.

Just last year, as the Senate was considering comprehensive reform, the Speaker implied that the House would take it up after the Senate did. The Senate acted in a bipartisan fashion and passed comprehensive reform on a vote of 68–32.

Then we were told that the House would take up comprehensive immigration reform after the Speaker brought to his conference his immigration reform principles. That happened at the end of January; yet nothing—nothing has been brought to the floor.

If there is not a reason for us to do this on the basis of the policy, which I think is clear, it is consistent with our national interest and our national values to institute comprehensive immigration reform.

I just would direct Members of the other side to take a look at the bipartisan CBO report that was published that shows that comprehensive immigration reform would reduce our national deficit by $900 billion.

It is the right policy, it is good economics, and we should bring it up right away.

CONGRESS MUST REVERSE GOP ELIMINATION OF CRITICAL LIFELINE FOR THE UNEMPLOYED

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

Ms. KAPTUR. Mr. Speaker, during Women's History Month, I rise to recognize and pay tribute to the life of Joyce Wise of Sandusky County, Ohio, a remarkable, sparkling, witty, intelligent, generous, and kind woman who loved her family, her community, and her country.

She was a political activist. Her indefatigable efforts improved our State, improved our community, and broadened representation for women and men across our country.

Joyce would have been the first person to speak up here on behalf of the 2 million American job seekers who have lost their unemployment benefits and the 72,000 Americans who lose their benefits every single week, one every 8 seconds due to Republican obstruction.

She would have been the first to point out it is the Republican's failure to extend unemployment insurance that has actually put millions and millions of our families out to sea.

If the Republicans want to limit unemployment benefits, they should start by creating more jobs. I am waiting for the first good jobs bill to come to this floor from the other side of the aisle.

Joyce Wise understood that every citizen matters and those who work hard for a living shall be respected. May her family and friends draw strength from her unbelievable spirit and may her legacy live on in fighting for justice for all.

UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE

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

Ms. BROWN of Florida. Mr. Speaker, you can fool some of the people some of the time, but you can't fool all of the people all of the time.

The Republicans have turned a blind eye to the plight of more than 2 million Americans whose unemployment benefits have been cut off.

In my State of Florida, we have over 100,000 Floridians struggling to find work and are unable to collect insurance, which has also led to nearly $130 million in lost revenue for the State of Florida; yet in spite of repeated attempts time and time again, Republicans in Congress have coldheartedly refused to restore this vital economic lifeline that helps people support their families and pay their bills while they look for a new job during this very difficult time, the worst time since the Great Depression.

To whom God has given much, much is expected. I urge my House and Senate Republican colleagues to look inside their hearts and do the right thing for the American people and pass an

unemployment insurance extension today.

□ 1230

ELECTING A MEMBER TO CERTAIN STANDING COMMITTEES OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Mrs. MCMORRIS RODGERS. Mr. Speaker, by direction of the House Republican Conference, I send to the desk a privileged resolution and ask for its immediate consideration by the House.

The Clerk read the resolution, as follows:

H. RES. 523

Resolved, That the following named Member be, and is hereby, elected to the following standing committees of the House of Representatives:

COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE—Mr. Jolly.

COMMITTEE ON VETERANS' AFFAIRS—Mr. Jolly.

Mrs. MCMORRIS RODGERS (during the reading). Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to dispense with the reading.

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

There was no objection.

The resolution was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

PREVENTING GOVERNMENT WASTE AND PROTECTING COAL MINING JOBS IN AMERICA

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on the bill H.R. 2824.

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

There was no objection.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to House Resolution 501 and rule XVIII, the Chair declares the House in the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for the consideration of the bill, H.R. 2824.

The Chair appoints the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. WOODALL) to preside over the Committee of the Whole.

□ 1231

IN THE COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

Accordingly, the House resolved itself into the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for the consideration of the bill (H.R. 2824) to amend the Surface Mining Control and Reclamation Act of 1977 to stop the ongoing waste by the Department of the Interior of taxpayer resources and implement the final rule on excess spoil, mining waste, and buffers for perennial and intermittent streams, and for other purposes, with Mr. WOODALL in the chair.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The CHAIR. Pursuant to the rule, the bill is considered read the first time.

The gentleman from Washington (Mr. HASTINGS) and the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. HOLT) each will control 30 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Washington.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

It is well-known the Obama administration has waged a long-running war on coal, which last year a White House adviser admitted ''is exactly what's needed,'' but this is not only a war on coal. It is a war on jobs, our economy, affordable energy, small businesses, and the household budgets of American families. Already faced with higher home heating costs, middle class families will be further squeezed if the Obama administration is successful in its attempts to shut down coal production.

One of the ways the administration has carried out this war on coal is through the reckless rewrite of a coal production regulation, the 2008 Stream Buffer Zone Rule. Shortly after taking office, the Obama administration discarded the 2008 rule that went through 5 years of extensive public comment and environmental review. Since then, the administration has spent over 10 million taxpayer dollars in working to rewrite this rule, including hiring new contractors, then only to dismiss those same contractors once it was publicly revealed that the administration's proposed rewrite would cost 7,000 jobs and cause economic harm in 22 States. A report released by our House Natural Resources Committee staff in September of 2012, following years of oversight and investigations, exposed the gross mismanagement of the rulemaking process, potential political interference, and widespread economic harm the proposed regulation would cause.

Earlier this year, the U.S. Department of the Interior's Office of Inspector General, or IG, released a report with similar findings. However, what is more troubling is that the IG has identified significant ongoing problems with the rulemaking process. To make matters worse, they are refusing to disclose those problems to us here in Congress. For example, there is an entire section of the report that we have received, entitled ''Issues with the New Contract,'' that have been almost completely blacked out. Despite our repeated requests, Deputy Inspector General Mary Kendall has refused to give Congress an unredacted copy of this report. In a letter, she states that the Department of the Interior decided that it should be withheld from the committee.

The IG is charged with being an independent watchdog for Congress. It is completely unacceptable and inappropriate for the IG to be taking orders from the Interior Department, especially about what information to withhold from us here in Congress.

Mr. Chairman, I don't take what I am going to say lightly. That is why, today, I have issued a subpoena to the Department's Inspector General Kendall for this information that she has withheld from us. If the IG discovered ongoing issues with the way the Department is currently conducting this rulemaking process, they have a responsibility and a duty to share that information with Congress now. The committee is not asking the IG for materials produced by the Department, but we are asking for materials and interviews produced by the IG's staff.

The Obama administration's rulemaking process has been and continues to be an unmitigated disaster. Despite having spent millions of taxpayer dollars, they have absolutely nothing to show for it and, to date, haven't even produced a draft. Meanwhile, States, industry, and America's coal miners are left in limbo, unsure of what the operating rules are on the ground. Without the 2008 rule, we are left with a rule that was put in place in 1983.

That is why we are here today—to consider H.R. 2824, the Preventing Government Waste and Protecting Coal Mining Jobs in America Act. This legislation will put an end to the years of ongoing waste and dysfunction. It will put in place a responsible process to ensure there is no rush to recklessly regulate.

First, Mr. Chairman, it stops the administration's unnecessary rewrite and implements the 2008 Stream Buffer Zone Rule that I mentioned took 5 years to put in place. It then directs the Department to responsibly study the impact of the rule for a prescribed period of time prior to initiating another new rule. This will provide certainty to the economy, to the individual States, and allow a clear examination of what may be needed and changed in the future. This bill will make certain that a new rule is written properly.

Now, some will attempt to criticize this bill for the fact that it puts in place the 2008 rule that was vacated on a very narrow technical ground by a Federal judge last month. There is really nothing new here, however, because this is the exact outcome that the administration has been seeking for over 5 years—to get rid of the 2008 rule. But let's be clear what the court ruling and, subsequently, the Department's actions really mean.

The court ruling strikes down the more protective 2008 rule and sets us back 30 years to a less restrictive 1983 rule. The 2008 rule is more modern and more protective in limiting the impacts of coal mining than the 1983 rule, but one Federal judge ruled that the 2008 rule must be set aside due to a narrow procedural technicality. This judge ruled, because the 2008 rule didn't have formal consultation with the Fish and Wildlife Service on possible impacts to endangered species, the entire rule

should be set aside and, thus, revert back to the 1983 rule.

Mr. Chairman, for the record, there were multiple meetings and discussions and consultations with Fish and Wildlife in proposing the 2008 rule regarding species when the 2008 rule was written, and it was done in a published and transparent fashion over a multiple-year period. Comments were taken and recommendations were made, but the bureaucratic process wasn't done precisely so, and as a result, this judge struck it down. Compare this conscientious effort, which was done to protect species in the 2008 rule, with the fact that there was absolutely zero consultation of protecting species in the 1983 rule.

What could be the responsible thing to do? Clearly, it would be to implement the more modern and protective 2008 rule. What does the Obama administration say? It says let's go back to 1983. Why should we go back? It simply makes no sense to discard a modern rule, where we know the ESA consultation took place, for a 30-year-old rule that we know had no ESA consultations.

Perhaps we should look to the people whom the Obama administration hired to write a rule of its own. In case notes that the committee obtained from the IG's office during their investigation, it quotes one of the current contractors, admitting, ''The 1983 rule was less restrictive than the 2008 rule.'' In the same case notes, it also states about the current contractor that, although she is a Democrat, the Stream Protection Rule appears to be an ''effort to kill coal mining.'' There you have it—straight from the mouth of the person who is working on the current rewrite—an admission that the new rule is an effort to ''kill coal mining.''

That is why we must take action today to stop this administration. Not only are they attempting to impose a new coal regulation that will destroy thousands of American mining jobs, but they have also wasted 5 years and over 10 million taxpayer dollars on a process that has been completely dysfunctional and misguided.

Enough is enough. Republicans want to create an America that works, and that requires access to affordable energy. If we do not stop the administration from implementing its new coal regulation, thousands of Americans will be out of work, and home heating costs for working middle class families will rise.

Let's pass this legislation to protect American taxpayer dollars, to protect American jobs, and to end this administration's reckless, wasteful rewrite by putting in place a responsible process that will allow a proper new rule to be written.

With that, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. HOLT. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I rise in strong opposition to this legislation that would ignore the poisonous environmental impacts of mountaintop removal mining and would attempt to force States to adopt a discredited and vacated midnight Bush administration rule.

Mountaintop removal mining is a serious environmental health threat in Appalachia. Companies literally blast the tops off of mountains, scoop out the coal, and dump what is left over—what used to be the mountaintop and the mining residue—into the valley below. In the process, landscapes are scarred; wild habitat is destroyed; mountain streams are buried; fish are killed; and the long-suffering people living in the valleys suffer as they are left with degraded water.

It is not simply my opinion or the warnings of a few fringe environmental groups. This is what the science tells us. In a paper published in the journal Science a few years ago—a preeminent scientific journal—dozens of scientists laid this out very clearly. Building on a wealth of recent scientific data from a variety of researchers, they wrote:

> Mountaintop mining in the valley fills revealed serious environmental impacts that mitigation practices cannot successfully address.

Now, the chairman today is talking about detailed procedural matters. He is wrong on that. The real point is the health of the people in the valleys. These scientists described:

> When streams are buried, water emerges from the base of the valley fills, containing a variety of solutes that are toxic and damaging to biota, and that the recovery of biodiversity in mining waste impacted streams has not been documented.

In other words, the recovery that they talk about does not exist in fact. It has not been shown to be possible.

□ 1245

Most frighteningly for the people who live with these impacts in their backyards, the scientists write:

> Adult hospitalizations for chronic pulmonary disorders and hypertension are elevated as a function of county-level coal production . . .

They know it comes from this.

To continue the quote:

> . . . as are the rates of mortality, lung cancer, chronic heart, lung, and kidney disease.

Hospitalizations, hypertension, lung cancer, heart disease, kidney disease, increased flooding. Water with dangerous concentrations of toxic metals? Yes. That is what the science says. And the destruction of forests and streams.

These are the impacts of mountaintop removal mining that Congress should be addressing today. This is what we should be holding hearings on and writing legislation about.

We should be making the protection of people and the environment of the Appalachian region our top priority and making the mining companies act responsibly, not just cheaply. But the Republicans, Mr. Chairman, don't seem to want to talk about any of these impacts. They prefer to keep their heads in the sand and the gravel and the toxic waste when it comes to this issue.

Instead of the real impacts of mountaintop removal mining, they are focusing on imagined impacts of a rule that hasn't even been released yet. They imagine a war on coal, they imagine a political conspiracy to subvert the rule that the Bush administration put in place in the last minutes of their administration, instead of seeking to guarantee clean water for all Americans.

So they spent years trying to uncover that conspiracy, all the while forcing the Department of the Interior to spend tens of thousands of hours of staff time and millions of taxpayer dollars in order to comply with their commands—and now their subpoenas. And they have come up empty.

The inspector general for the Department of the Interior confirmed in December there were no political shenanigans. There was no misconduct. There was a poor choice of contractors, yes, and a debate among career staff about the proper way to move forward.

Could it have been handled better? Maybe. But there was no misconduct.

Meanwhile, the rule put in place by the Bush administration—the very rule that this bill would force States to adopt—was thrown out by a Federal court 2 weeks ago because the real misconduct was from the Bush administration, which decided that it didn't even need to consider the effects that destroying streams and rivers would have on threatened and endangered species. They did not do the consultation that is required under the law.

So this bill would overturn the court's decision, forcibly enact a rule that was improperly developed in the first place, and forbid the Obama administration from actually doing something to protect the streams from being buried and to protect the people who live there.

This bill would forbid them from actually doing something to protect forests, fish, wildlife, and humans. It would forbid them from actually doing something to protect the health of the people in these communities. This bill would create its own reality through an amendment added at the last minute that would deem the 2008 rule to have met the requirements of the Endangered Species Act that the court said they did not meet.

Now ''deem'' is a word that is not in common use. It certainly is a strange word the way it is used here in Congress. By ''deem,'' they mean they would declare in legislation that the Endangered Species Act was observed and that consultation had taken place, even though it wasn't and it hadn't. That is preposterous.

I wish we could do the same thing to environmental destruction caused by mountaintop removal mining and to the contaminated water and to the health impacts by simply saying, by legislation, that contamination never

happened. Those people were never affected. Their health never deteriorated. They didn't die. But we can't do that.

This bill does nothing to protect people from the destructive impacts of mountaintop removal mining. It is strongly opposed by a coalition of environmental groups like the Southern Environmental Law Center, the Sierra Club, the League of Conservation Voters, the National Parks Conservation Association, and many more.

It is not just me standing here talking about it. It is not even just these scientists. It is many more.

Once again, I want everyone to understand that the real issue here today is not bureaucratic procedure. It is not even when a rule might have been issued and what went into making up that rule. What is at stake today is safe water for people, the health of the population, and an environment that can save us all.

I urge my colleagues to defeat this bill, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Mr. Chairman, I am very pleased to yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. LAMBORN), the subcommittee chairman of the House Natural Resources Committee dealing with this legislation.

Mr. LAMBORN. I thank the chairman.

Mr. Chairman, I rise in strong support of H.R. 2824, the Preventing Government Waste and Protecting Coal Mining Jobs in America Act. This critical piece of legislation, which was introduced by Representative BILL JOHNSON and myself, is designed to save taxpayer dollars and protect American jobs by putting the Office of Surface Mining on a responsible path forward for managing and regulating coal mining in America.

So far, the Obama administration has spent nearly 10 million taxpayer dollars rewriting a coal production rule and the 2008 Stream Buffer Zone Rule, but the 2008 rule was never fully implemented. The administration is conducting this rewrite without ever providing justification for the need for a new rule.

The $10 million does not include the money spent on attorneys fees and costly litigation or the internal costs borne by the agency. Even more critically, it does not include the costs to the families of the thousands of workers who have been displaced or seen work delayed by the regulatory inaction of the Department.

The legislation before us today is very simple. It would cripple the Obama administration's war on coal by ending their unnecessary rewrite and it would require the Office of Surface Mining to implement the 2008 Stream Buffer Zone Rule. This rule was developed over 5 years through an open, public, multimillion-dollar process and requires consultation on endangered species where necessary.

Under this legislation, H.R. 2824, once all the plans have been approved, the effects of the new regulations will be analyzed for a period of 5 years. On completion of this analysis, the Office of Surface Mining is required to report back to us on the effectiveness of the rule, impact on energy production, and to identify and justify anything that should be addressed through a new rulemaking process.

If the Obama administration had followed this process from the beginning, taxpayers would have 9 million more dollars, thousands of unemployed Americans would likely have jobs, and we would be far along in the process of understanding the impacts and environmental benefits of the 2008 rulemaking. Unfortunately, this administration's first act was to discard the rule and plunge head first into a failed, wasteful, and never-ending rulemaking process.

This legislation will stop the massive ongoing waste, saving the taxpayers money. It will stop the administration from continuing with a reckless rulemaking process and imposing a needless regulation that will directly cost thousands of hardworking American jobs and cause significant American economic harm.

This bill will also provide regulatory certainty for an important domestic industry—an industry that not only provides great family-wage jobs with good benefits, but also provides affordable energy for the American people and the Nation's manufacturing base.

I urge my colleagues to support this critical legislation.

Mr. HOLT. Mr. Chairman, I am pleased to yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. DEFAZIO), the ranking minority member of the Resources Committee.

Mr. DEFAZIO. I appreciate the gentleman's statement and leadership.

What are we doing here today? We are going to take a rule established by Ronald Reagan, the first modest attempt to protect water quality, stream quality, forests, and other environmental values in cases of strip mining mountaintop removal.

So the Republicans today are going to overrule the judgment of Ronald Reagan, preempt him with a rule that basically says it is okay to blow the top off a mountain, dump it into a stream, and it doesn't affect water quality because the stream doesn't exist anymore. Except there is a little problem. The water does still leach through all the toxic soils and it does cause problems downstream. But let's not worry about that too much.

Secondly, they are going to preempt states rights. Hey, the party of states' rights. They are all for local control. They hate those one-size-fits-all Federal rules, don't they? No, not today.

We are going to impose a Bush administration midnight rule which a court found to be laughable in terms of its compliance with Federal law. They are going to impose that on all the States of the United States of America as the law of the land. We are going to preempt the judgment of any State that wants to do more to protect water quality than allow the tops to be blown off mountains and mining waste dumped into streams and saying there is no problem. But we will study it for 5 years, as we heard previously. Okay, sure. How much harm will happen in that time?

So those are a few of the problems and the inconsistencies I see here today. We are preempting a Reagan rule that was quite modest and not overly burdensome on the industry. It should have been improved upon. The Bush administration tried to totally undo it. It was laughed out of court. The Obama administration fumbled and messed up writing a new rule with an incompetent contractor. And now we are going to impose the Bush rule on all the States.

They are going to deem, as we heard earlier—that is, pretend—that it meets the Endangered Species Act, and give that pretension the force of law. What they are saying is there were at least two or three people in the Bush administration who had a conversation. That meant they talked about the Endangered Species Act, so that meets the intention of the Endangered Species Act.

Finally, they are talking about a war on coal. We will hear from some well-intentioned people later here today who are going to talk about the potential job impact of this, and I appreciate that. There has to be a balance. But this is not a balance.

This is yet another imaginary war being waged by the Obama administration on coal. A war on Christmas, a war on coal, a war on jobs, a war on whatever. At least it is not an overseas war that is unnecessary in Iraq that cost us many thousands of lives and trillions of dollars.

But the war on coal? When the Obama administration came into office, there were 5,000 less jobs in coal mining than there are today.

The CHAIR. The time of the gentleman has expired.

Mr. HOLT. I yield the gentleman an additional 2 minutes.

Mr. DEFAZIO. The Obama administration leased out 2.1 billion tons of coal in the Powder River Basin in its first term. That is twice what the Bush administration leased in the 4 years before that. Recent accounts from the GAO lead us to believe that maybe they were a little too cozy with the industry and in fact that those deals were a little too sweet for that 2.1 billion tons of coal.

So that is a war on coal? No. What they are talking about is actually less coal is being used to produce electricity.

Now they are also the party of market forces and capitalism. Well, guess what? Market forces and capitalism have reduced the use of coal. Natural gas was really, really, really cheap a couple of years ago. Coal used to generate electricity. It totally tanked. It

had nothing to do with the Obama administration. It had to do with market forces, and they worship the market. I hope they are not trying to undo market forces here and have some kind of socialist dictate.

So what has happened is coal use has bumped up a little bit as natural gas has become a little bit more expensive. But that was about economics and not policy.

The bottom line here is should we allow, without any regulation, blowing the tops off mountains, dumping them into valleys, filling in streams, and pretend it has no impact on the environment. And I would say ''no.''

□ 1300

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Mr. Chairman, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. JOHNSON), the author of this legislation.

Mr. JOHNSON of Ohio. Mr. Chairman, today, I rise in strong support of H.R. 2824, the Preventing Government Waste and Protecting Coal Mining Jobs in America Act, legislation that I introduced with my friend and colleague, Congressman DOUG LAMBORN.

This important legislation addresses the administration's flawed, waste of taxpayer money, and job-killing rewrite of the Stream Buffer Zone Rule.

Immediately upon taking over in 2009, the administration began their efforts to rewrite the Stream Buffer Zone Rule, even though a new rule that took 5 years to codify had just been finished in 2008.

From the beginning, the Office of Surface Mining and the Department of the Interior fumbled the ball, and it has been a train wreck and lack of leadership over the past 5 years.

Nearly $10 million of taxpayer money has been wasted by the administration in their attempts to destroy thousands of direct and indirect jobs and cause electricity prices to skyrocket.

We know from the administration's own estimates that their preferred rule would cost 7,000 direct coal jobs and thousands more indirect jobs, not to mention that States like mine in Ohio would see their electricity prices skyrocket thanks to increased coal prices.

We also know, from the whistleblower contractors that worked on the rule, that the political appointees in the Office of Surface Mining tried to cover up these job loss numbers because they knew how politically damaging they would be in the runup to the 2012 election year.

In fact, a political appointee threatened the contractors that there ''would be consequences'' if the contractor refused to change the numbers.

Furthermore, a recent report from the inspector general at the Department of the Interior confirmed these findings and even quoted the President-appointed and Senate-approved Director of OSM, saying that we need to ''fix the job loss numbers.''

Is this the type of good government that the American people expect of our leadership, a rulemaking process that sees political appointees threatening contractors and cooking the books to get a preferred outcome?

Under the leadership of Chairman DOC HASTINGS, the Natural Resources Committee has been aggressively investigating the malfeasance and flawed rewrite of this rule. In a serious threat to the separation of powers spelled out in the Constitution, the administration has largely ignored requests and subpoenas for relevant documents.

This is just another example of a Presidency and administration ignoring the will of the people and abusing power.

That is why this legislation is so important, Mr. Chairman. It will ensure that my constituents in eastern and southeastern Ohio, along with other hardworking Americans employed by the coal industry all across the country, can keep their jobs and continue to mine and use the coal that powers our manufacturing engine here in America.

It directs the States to implement the 2008 rule, a rule that had tens of thousands of comments and was thoroughly vetted before being thrown aside by the incoming administration.

The CHAIR. The time of the gentleman has expired.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. I yield the gentleman an additional 1 minute.

Mr. JOHNSON of Ohio. After 5 years, the States would be asked to report back with a description in detail of any proposed changes that should be made to the rule.

This legislation ensures that the States that are directly impacted by the proposed rule would have an actual say-so in the process, instead of a topdown approach from the Office of Surface Mining.

Despite what some may say, it does not stop the administration from protecting waterways or the environment.

Mr. Chairman, the rewrite of this rule has cost the taxpayers nearly $10 million and threatens to shut down underground coal mining in America, killing thousands of jobs in the process.

I thank Chairman HASTINGS and Congressman LAMBORN for their leadership on this important issue, and I urge all of my colleagues to support this legislation.

Mr. HOLT. Mr. Chairman, I am pleased to yield 3 minutes to my friend from Kentucky (Mr. YARMUTH), a champion for people's health, for wildlife and the environment, an outspoken critic of destructive mining practices, and the sponsor of the Appalachian Communities Health—emphasis on health—Emergency Act, a bill on which I am pleased to join him as a cosponsor.

Mr. YARMUTH. Thank you, Mr. HOLT, for yielding.

Mr. Chairman, this bottle is filled with water from a well near a mountaintop removal mining site in eastern Kentucky. In case you can't see it, the water is orange.

This is what comes out of the taps in Appalachian communities where the water is contaminated by dangerous mine waste, which fills their wells and flows through the streams in their yards.

It is the result of an inadequate law that is failing to protect public health and safety near mountaintop removal mining sites; but today, rather than examining ways to strengthen that law and begin to address the public health crisis that accompanies mountaintop removal mining in Appalachia, we are debating a bill that would make it worse.

Mining communities already have more instances of chronic pulmonary disorders and hypertension, as well as higher mortality rates, lung cancer rates, and instances of chronic heart, kidney, and lung disease. Proximity to mountaintop removal mining operations also correlates with a higher risk of birth defects and damage to the circulatory and central nervous systems.

Yet, instead of finding ways to better balance public health and safety with coal mining—or at least working to prevent mining companies from turning our water supply this shade of toxic orange, we are debating a bill to roll back what little protection the Federal Government currently offers these Appalachian communities.

I sympathize with my colleagues' desire to protect jobs in the coal fields, and the loss of 75 percent of eastern Kentucky coal mining jobs due to mechanized mining over the past several decades has brought challenges; but a rule to protect waterways that has been in effect since 1983 is not the source of those challenges, nor is addressing the public health crisis that has unfolded in Appalachia as a result of mechanized mining.

No one here would risk their health by drinking this water. If any of my colleagues want to prove me wrong, I invite them to come have a sip.

It is bad enough that children who live in mining communities color their streams orange when they draw their environment, but it is tragic that the water they drink is denying them the healthy future they deserve.

We are risking the health of families in mining communities in Kentucky and throughout Appalachia by continuing to ignore the toxic orange water that pollutes their drinking supply.

I urge my colleagues to stand up for public health and vote against this legislation.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Mr. Chairman, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from North Dakota (Mr. CRAMER), a member of the Natural Resources Committee.

Mr. CRAMER. Mr. Chairman, I thank Chairman HASTINGS and Chairman LAMBORN and my friend from Ohio, Mr. JOHNSON, for introducing this important legislation.

I had the great honor, for nearly 10 years prior to coming to Congress, to be on the North Dakota Public Service Commission, where we carried the SMCRA laws and enforced the Federal SMCRA laws on behalf of our lignite coal industry that employs thousands of people.

We had a little over 100,000 acres under permit, mined 30 million tons of coal every year, and burned it to generate electricity, very low-cost electricity.

We had a great relationship with our Federal Government, our Federal partners. We did it in partnership. They appreciated and honored State primacy. We carried out the letter and the spirit of the law very well.

As a consequence, we have clean streams; clean water; clean air; good, rich topsoil; as well as the jobs that come with it.

We don't have mountains, so a rule that was designed by somebody to deal with mountain removal mining doesn't really match the prairie of North Dakota, which is always the problem with one-size-fits-all regulations; and that is what we find so offensive back home, is when the Federal Government tries to fix every problem with one piece of legislation or one regulation.

We were very familiar—I worked with the 2008 rule. It works just fine. It involved stakeholder involvement. It involved consultation with stakeholders. We are missing that in this particular case.

Quite honestly, I guess when you talk about the war on coal, and some might want to deny that one exists, you might believe that if it was just one rule occasionally; but in the context of the aggregate of all of the rules and regulations and laws coming down from this administration, it is hard not to believe that there is an attempt to unilaterally disarm our economy and the global marketplace with a war on coal.

I encourage my colleagues to join me in voting for this important piece of legislation.

Mr. HOLT. Mr. Chairman, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from West Virginia (Mr. RAHALL), my good friend.

Mr. RAHALL. I thank my dear colleague from New Jersey for yielding me the time.

Mr. Chairman, I do rise in support of the pending legislation, H.R. 2824; and to my good friend, the chairman of the committee, DOC HASTINGS, I commend him for bringing this bill to the floor of the House.

As he knows, I am the only Member left in this body that served on the original conference committee that wrote H.R. 2, which was enacted as the Surface Mining Control and Reclamation Act of 1977, otherwise known as SMCRA.

Due to the nature of my congressional district and my years of service on the Natural Resources Committee, I am very familiar with SMCRA and what it requires.

This law has numerous performance standards governing the coal surface mining and reclamation process. These standards govern everything from the handling of excess spoil to the period for which successful revegetation must take place prior to bond release.

One fundamental aspect of the performance standards is that the mine area be reclaimed to its approximate original contour, with one exception. The law is clear, and it provides for an exception from the approximate original contour requirement in the case of mountaintop removal operations if certain conditions are met.

A stream buffer zone rule is not included among the many SMCRA performance standards. Such a rule was not contemplated by the conferees on H.R. 2 back in 1977. This rule was a manifestation of the bureaucracy.

That is not to say that there should not be such a rule, but any such rule must work within the statutory framework of SMCRA.

The effort by the current administration to replace the 2008 stream buffer zone promulgated by the Interior Department does not meet that test. It is clear, at least to me, that the effort by the current administration to revise the 2008 rule is aimed at halting a mining practice that is specifically condoned by SMCRA.

Fundamentally, there is no question; this debate is about jobs. It is about good-paying jobs in West Virginia and other areas of the Appalachian region.

Mr. Chairman, it is about our economy, whether it be providing needed flat land for agriculture or industrial facilities or saving millions of dollars by providing a readymade roadbed for a new highway, as has been done, and is continuing to be proposed in Mingo County, in the congressional district I am honored to represent.

In conclusion, Mr. Chairman, I urge passage of the pending measure, the Preventing Government Waste and Protecting Coal Mining Jobs in America Act. I commend, again, the chairman of the committee, and I commend my colleague from Ohio (Mr. JOHNSON) for his introducing this bill as well.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Mr. Chairman, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. KELLY), a new Member, not necessarily a brand-new Member, but a newer Member.

Mr. KELLY of Pennsylvania. Mr. Chairman, I rise today in really strong support of H.R. 2824.

I think if we go back to the President's original candidacy, he said: Listen, if you want to continue to make electricity using coal-fired power plants, you can do it, but we are going to bankrupt you.

There is no question about the war on coal. It is factual. Now, we come here today, and I think that—the area of the country that I represent is western Pennsylvania. It is hard to look at a source that is so abundant, so accessible, so affordable, so reliant, and so sustainable that keeps our energy costs lower and creates thousands of jobs.

The administration's efforts have not only eliminated people who are mining coal, they have absolutely eliminated entire communities and wiped them off the face of the Earth.

Now, we look at a piece of legislation, and we say wait a minute. In 2008, we had a rule that received certification from the Environmental Protection Agency and complied fully with the Clean Water Act.

So the question becomes: How good does the coal energy have to become in order to receive a pat on the back from the administration?

The answer is they can never reach that level. They will never be accepted. It will never be part of our energy strategy. It will never lead America to be independent from every place else in the world.

All you have to ask yourself is: What in the world are we doing to the people we represent?

This is not a Republican strategy or a Democrat strategy. This is an American strategy. If it is truly about energy and about creating jobs and protecting our environment, it is all there, gentleman, and has been there for years.

□ 1315

Why would the administration spend $10 billion to get an answer that didn't comply with what they thought it was going to be? So automatically, the answer has to be: These folks didn't do the test the right way. They didn't come up with the results that we needed, so we are going to get rid of them and get somebody else in here.

Mr. Chairman, the lights are going out across this country. Our position in the world is being challenged right now, in a country that has been so blessed for so long with abundant, affordable, and accessible energy, and to sit back and say: You know what? They are getting better, but they are never going to be good enough for us; they are never going to quite reach that metric they have to reach.

In fact, the bottle of water the gentleman just showed, I have got to tell you: Take a bottle of Fiji water off the shelf; it won't comply either.

So we have got to start asking ourselves, where is it that they are going with this? Is this a way to prop up an agenda by the administration or is this a way to prop up the American success story? Are we going to go forward and truly achieve independence from energy from anyplace else in the world other than our own or are we going to continue to fight over things that don't make sense to the American people but yet somehow make sense in this House?

Listen, what we are doing today just makes sense. We have already run the traps on it. We have already run the tests. We have done all the metrics. Coal is good for America. Coal has always been good for America. Coal has

cleaned itself up incredibly and will continue to do so. These are the most responsible people. I would invite some of my friends who have never been down in a coal mine, travel with me to western Pennsylvania. Go down in the Bailey mine. Go down 700 feet and see how they are scrubbing coal, and then say to me that they are not doing it the right way.

The CHAIR. The time of the gentleman has expired.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. I yield an additional 30 seconds to the gentleman.

Mr. KELLY of Pennsylvania. Mr. Chairman, I really want to ask my colleagues today, let's take a real good look at this, at what we are doing. In a country that so badly now is looking for leadership across all phases so that we can retain our position in the world, let's take a look at where we are today with this coal strategy. If it is truly a war on coal and if it is truly a war we can't win, then I say that is not why we came here.

I strongly urge the passage of H.R. 2824.

Mr. HOLT. Mr. Chairman, I would like to yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. MORAN), a Member of this body who has been a leader on countless environmental issues, my friend from Virginia who knows the harmful effects that mountaintop removal mining has had in his own State and throughout the Appalachian region.

Mr. MORAN. I thank my very good friend from New Jersey for yielding to me, and I thank my very good friend from Arizona.

Mr. Chairman, I do rise in opposition to this so-called Preventing Government Waste and Protecting Coal Mining Jobs in America bill. I know that is what this bill's sponsors have tried to suggest, but the fact is that this promotes destructive mountaintop mining removal and it doesn't protect jobs.

The goal of this bill is to require all States to incorporate a now vacated 2008 rule that was issued in the very last days of the Bush administration and was then struck down by a U.S. Federal court. It was an eleventh-hour regulation that was designed to repeal Reagan-era protections for streams and waterways from the impacts of mountaintop mining by providing a buffer zone for waste disposal. Its vague and permissive language sets an alarmingly low bar when it comes to protecting communities and wildlife habitats near mountaintop mining operations.

The reality is that this midnight rulemaking of the Bush administration would only hasten further environmental destruction and increase the volume of toxic chemicals entering our water supply.

This bill before the House represents a transparent attempt to resurrect an already rejected rule by forcibly enacting it across this country, thereby putting communities nearby coal mining plants at risk while undoing necessary protections from pollutants.

But in addition to resurrecting this stream buffer zone rule, H.R. 2824 comes with a 5-year mandatory implementation period that conveniently prohibits the Department of the Interior from issuing any new regulations to protect streams.

So the public should be deeply troubled by what is a blatant disregard for public health. Americans living near coal mining operations are going to be harmed by this. Our legal process is jeopardized, and certainly the integrity of already fragile ecosystems will be put at risk.

The CHAIR. The time of the gentleman has expired.

Mr. HOLT. I would gladly yield an additional 1 minute to the gentleman from Virginia.

Mr. MORAN. I very much thank my good friend.

An environmental impact statement found that between 1985 and 2002, nearly 2,000 miles of streams were buried or destroyed by mountaintop removal. Not surprisingly, peer-reviewed scientific studies continued to confirm the devastation on the surrounding environment and wildlife habitats of the numerous toxic chemicals, like arsenic and mercury, that enter into streams as mountaintops are blasted and bulldozed away.

We found in a 2011 study that cancer rates were twice as high in communities exposed to the effects of mountaintop mining. In the journal Science, we found, likewise, chronic pulmonary disorders in coal country. A 2011 study of births in Appalachia from 1996 to 2003 found that counties near mountaintop mining areas had substantially higher rates of multiple types of birth defects.

Congress should welcome regulations that are going to save and enhance American lives, not put them in jeopardy; and unfortunately, this bill gives a green light to remove mountain summits and dump their waste into nearby valleys and streams.

The fact is that coal has been the mainstay of Appalachia's economy for more than 100 years, but it has yet to make the region prosperous. We are talking about jobs. We need healthy people, and we need healthier environments. So I urge a rejection of this legislation.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Mr. Chairman, I am very pleased to yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Louisiana (Mr. SCALISE).

Mr. SCALISE. I appreciate my colleague yielding.

Mr. Chairman, I rise in strong support of the Preventing Government Waste and Protecting Coal Mining Jobs in America Act introduced by my colleague from Ohio.

Mr. Chairman, there is a war on coal by the Obama administration. It is being carried out every day throughout this country in many ways through rules and regulations imposed by radical agencies like the EPA, and so what we are doing here is pushing back and saying: Enough is enough. Stop killing jobs in America, Mr. President. Stop increasing energy costs for American families, hardworking taxpayers who are struggling in this bad economy.

The President continues to pursue this global warming agenda. It is snowing outside of the Capitol right now as we speak in support of this bill, and they are still talking about global warming and imposing more regulations that are killing—killing—American jobs.

If you look at the sue-and-settle process that has brought us to this point, that really is the reason behind legislation like the bill we are bringing up today. The sue-and-settle process that the Obama administration is using through agencies like the EPA, in this case, has resulted in 7,000 lost jobs and is wreaking havoc in 22 States. Just one rule.

This isn't a bill that was passed through Congress. The President loves bragging about he has got a pen and a phone, yet he is using Federal agencies, not law passed by the people's House, debated in the open public view. Behind closed doors, they are going and trying to impose these radical regulations that are killing jobs in America. The President is going to spend days and days on the campaign trail, a campaign trail that never ends. He never leads and governs. He runs around campaigning, and his latest mantra is to talk about unemployment benefits. Mr. Chairman, the best unemployment benefit is a good job.

The American people don't want to be getting unemployment checks from the Federal Government—they want jobs—and yet this administration, through its war on coal and so many other radical regulations, is killing jobs in America. Enough is enough. This legislation helps to undo the damage that President Obama's radical policies are wreaking through our economy.

Again, I commend my colleague from Ohio for bringing this legislation forward. I think we will see a very strong bipartisan vote in support of helping get jobs back in our economy.

Mr. HOLT. Mr. Chairman, I would like to yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. GRIJALVA), my good friend and colleague from the Natural Resources Committee who has been a leader on standards and enforcement in mining and knows as well as anyone the time and energy that has been wasted in the committee's investigation of this stream protection rule, time that could have been spent protecting the environment and the people's health.

Mr. GRIJALVA. I thank my colleague from New Jersey for yielding me the time.

Mr. Chairman, it is our singular responsibility, as Members of Congress, to protect the health and well-being of the American people. Voting ''yes'' to this legislation would do just the opposite. H.R. 2824 is not only poisonous to

our pristine rivers and waterways, but harmful to the health and well-being of the American people.

H.R. 2824 is wrong at many levels. First, it seeks to lock in a 2008 Bush administration rule that virtually eliminates the buffer zone protecting streams from mine waste. Just last month, a Federal court ruled that the 2008 rule that this legislation seeks to lock in was unlawful because it risked the federally protected endangered and threatened species.

But the problem with this bill isn't limited to just endangered and threatened species. The bill would also violate the purposes and objectives of the Clean Water Act and those of the Surface Mining Control and Reclamation Act to minimize harm from surface mining. These are a few laws and regulations to protect rivers and waterways in our communities and ultimately ensuring public health and well-being. H.R. 2824 is about eliminating our environmental safeguards and deteriorating our public health to provide legal loopholes for private mining companies.

The effect of polluted waterways to our communities is catastrophic and costly. This year, we have already witnessed a few incidents. First, the chemical spill in Elk River in West Virginia in January. Then the coal spill in Dan River in North Carolina in February. While both these incidents remain unsolved and are being investigated, they have forced tens of thousands of residents to go without clean and safe water for weeks—and this legislation seeks to grant immunity to those violations.

The bill will not only pollute more rivers and waterways and risk millions of Americans being without clean and safe water, but worse, it will poison millions of Americans. The question I want to ask my colleagues in this Chamber is: What kind of government poisons its own people? Is that the government we are?

So with that, I urge Members who care about its people to oppose this poisoned legislation.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Mr. Chairman, I am pleased to yield 2 minutes, again, to the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. LAMBORN), the chairman of the subcommittee dealing with this legislation.

Mr. LAMBORN. I thank the full committee chairman.

Mr. Chairman, my colleagues on the other side seem to continue living in the past. This bill isn't about the Bush administration. This bill is about the rampant failure of the Obama administration and its inability to craft a reasonable rule on coal mining. They have spent 5 years and nearly $10 million on this rewrite. And for what? What have they produced? Absolutely nothing. Their waste-ridden, failed effort is apparently nothing more than a sham facade over a real agenda—to kill coal mining.

You don't have to take my word for it. This is a direct quote from an inspector general investigator's interview with a current DOI contractor working on the rule, Emily Medine. She said the rule appears to be ''an effort to kill coal mining.''

Also, the Department has continued to insist on falsifying the baseline to reduce the stated impacts of their rulemaking. As you can see from the interview with the current contractor, over here, OSM continues to insist that companies use the more restrictive but never implemented 2008 rule as a baseline in an effort to hide the real economic impacts of whatever rule they want to come up with. Again, don't take my word for it. Right here, OSM's own contractor says that by using the more restrictive 2008 rule, they will show fewer job losses.

That is our choice today: a rule fine-tuned over 5 years with a clear process for future rulemaking and certainty for jobs and affordable energy, which we have now, or, if we follow this path, a continued waste of taxpayer dollars to pursue an agenda to kill coal mining.

I choose jobs and affordable energy for American families. Please support H.R. 2824.

Mr. HOLT. Mr. Chair, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

This is an actual photograph of actual water coming from an actual mountaintop removal site. I hope that the camera captures the color of the green hills that used to be there and the orange water that is there now. A stream this orange might be good for dyeing Easter eggs but not for drinking.

Now, earlier, I referred to the studies by scientists that associated hospitalizations with these activities. I referred to hospitalizations, hypertension, lung cancer, heart disease, kidney disease, increased flooding, loss of habitat, damage to wildlife. The other side, the majority, keeps wanting to talk about procedures, so let's talk about procedures for just a moment.

□ 1330

The record is clear. These are the words of the Federal District Court. The record is clear. The 2008 rule may affect or threaten endangered species or critical habitat. Further, the court goes on, the errors in this rule constitute a—in their words—serious deficiency and not merely a procedural defect.

Mountaintop removal mining is a serious environmental and health threat in Appalachia. That is what we should be talking about today, not about creating legislation that will deem reality to be different than it actually is, that will declare this stream clear flowing, that will declare these mountains green and verdant, that will declare that the Endangered Species Act was observed when it wasn't, that will declare that this rule will protect the environment and human health when it won't.

No amount of legislative deeming will make this reality change. What will make this reality change would be good, strong regulations with good, strong enforcement with an emphasis not on speed and cheapness but on people's health and an environment that can sustain us. That is what we should be talking about.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Mr. Chairman, I am very pleased to yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. STUTZMAN).

Mr. STUTZMAN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I come to the floor to support H.R. 2824, the Preventing Government Waste and Protecting Coal Mining Jobs in America Act. I thank my colleagues Congressman JOHNSON and Chairman DOC HASTINGS for their hard work and leadership on this very important issue.

The Obama administration has consistently put mandates ahead of jobs and energy security. Instead of promoting the American-made energy that powers our factories, small businesses, warehouses, and offices, Washington bureaucrats have wasted nearly $10 million to overhaul coal mining regulation.

Three years ago, the Obama administration's own experts estimated that these unnecessary and sweeping changes could kill 7,000 jobs. The urge to issue mandates was too strong and, instead of listening to reason, the administration fired its own advisers and kept on pressing. That is no way to promote economic recovery.

Mr. Chairman, today's legislation would halt the Obama administration's haphazard and disastrous rulemaking. Hoosiers deserve an all-of-the-above energy plan, not a red tape agenda. So I would urge my colleagues to support this legislation.

Mr. HOLT. Mr. Chairman, I am pleased to yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. BLUMENAUER), a most thoughtful and strong spokesperson on protecting our environment and people's health.

Mr. BLUMENAUER. I appreciate the gentleman's courtesy as I appreciate his leadership.

Mr. Chair, there is nothing here in terms of what the administration has done that is ill-considered or reckless. I am sorry that there is opposition to protections that were put in place by the Reagan administration dealing with stream buffers, simple and common sense, which would indeed merit the support by virtually all of our colleagues.

We have seen that the last-minute efforts by the Bush administration to circumvent protections for mountaintop removal were rejected by the courts because they did not deal adequately with requirements of the Endangered Species Act. We are still facing the specter of taking the debris from mountaintop removal mining and putting it in our streams and waterways, and we would sentence our States to not be able to put in place

more effective and stringent protections if they wanted to but force them to follow this outdated and rejected proposal and wait until 2021 to be able to move forward.

Mr. Chairman, this is an expression, I think, of frustration on the part of some of my friends on the other side of the aisle for the fact that they are on the wrong side of history, they are on the wrong side of science, and they are on the wrong side of public opinion; and simply declaring that the administration is out of control or EPA is overreaching or there is a war on coal doesn't make it so.

People can see for themselves the devastation from mountaintop removal and the fact that we have been negligent as a country for years providing adequate protections.

The CHAIR. The time of the gentleman has expired.

Mr. HOLT. I yield the gentleman an additional 15 seconds.

Mr. BLUMENAUER. I would hope that the Chamber sees fit to reject legislation that is not going anyplace and that we stop the charade of initiatives that are conjuring up imaginary threats when we are not focusing on the clear and present dangers to the environment now, to community protection, and for health. Reject this legislation, and then let's get down to business on things that really will make a difference and that we can agree upon.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Mr. Chairman, I would advise my friend from New Jersey I am prepared to close if the gentleman is prepared to close.

Mr. HOLT. I am prepared to close, as well.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. HOLT. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

The other side speaks about technicalities. Is it a technicality to fail to consider the negative impact on wildlife and the environment? Is it a technicality to ignore the harmful health effects for people living in communities near mining operations? Is it a technicality that allows us to sacrifice people's clean drinking water so that large mining companies can save a few dollars as they blow up a mountain?

No. These are not technicalities. In fact, the U.S. district court a few weeks ago made it clear these were not technicalities. I will repeat, in their words: the way this was put together is a serious deficiency and not merely a strictly procedural defect. That is why the rule was vacated by the court. We should not be imposing that now. We should be looking after the health of our environment and the health of the people we were sent here to represent.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Mr. Chairman, how much time remains on my side?

The CHAIR. The gentleman has 2½ minutes remaining.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. I yield myself the balance of my time.

Mr. Chairman, to hear my friends on the other side of the aisle argue about this, they are making arguments that are pre-1977. Now, why do I say that? Because they are talking about their perception of mountaintop mining or surface mining probably in general. Well, it is precisely that argument that led to the Surface Mining Control and Reclamation Act of 1977 under the Carter administration—with a Democrat Congress, I might add. So that bill passed to allow for surface mining.

Now, there is always necessary rulemaking that comes after that, and the latest rulemaking prior to the turn of this century was in 1983 under the Reagan administration. So the Bush administration looked because of some court test that maybe we ought to rewrite this rule; and, Mr. Chairman, contrary to what my friends on the other side of the aisle said that that was a late-breaking rule, it took 5 years to put that together—5 years to put that together.

So, as a result, because of this court decision that ended up vacating because of the technicality of the 2008 rule, the issue before us is this: Do we put the 2008 rule in place, which is what the focus of this legislation is, and then look forward to further rulemaking, or do we vacate the 2008 rule and go back to 1983? That is what the choice is.

What I find that is so interesting about my colleagues on the other side of the aisle is that everybody acknowledges that the 2008 rule is more restrictive—more restrictive—but they want to go back to the 1983 rule. I find that hard to understand, but at least that is what appears to be their argument.

So, Mr. Chairman, we think the responsible way to do this is to take into consideration what the Bush administration did for 5 years, looking at proper rulemaking that, by the way, looked into the Endangered Species Act. That is something the '83 rule did not look at at all. So we think that is a better way to put that in place right now. It is a more restrictive rule that industry understands, the States understand, and it is probably better for energy certainty in this country.

So I urge my colleagues to vote for this legislation, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Chair, I rise in strong opposition to H.R. 2824, the so-called "Preventing Government Waste and Protecting Coal Mining Jobs in America Act."

I oppose the bill because it would misdirect limited resources and limit State discretion in regulating industries within their borders.

The bill would require State surface coal mining regulatory agencies to implement the discredited 2008 Stream Buffer Zone Rule—promulgated by the Bush Administration—for a mandatory implementation period, which inadequately protects drinking water and watersheds from strip mining.

H.R. 2824 replaces sensible Reagan-era protections for streams and communities in Appalachia from mountaintop mining with the flawed 2008 Bush rule that has been rejected by a federal court, most states, and the Administration.

The bill puts families at risk by stopping the current updating of federal rules, wasting time and money, while delaying development of a responsible stream protection rule for years.

The bill allows big coal companies—many of whom export their coal—to reap larger profits, while families in Appalachia pay the price through with degraded water, flooding, and health impacts.

In opposing this misguided legislation I stand with a broad range of conservation and environmental groups, including American Rivers, Environment America, Clean Water Action, League of Conservation Voters, National Parks Conservation Association, Natural Resources Defense Council, National Wildlife Federation, and Sierra Club.

Mr. Chair, waste from mountaintop removal coal mining has buried over 2,000 miles of streams throughout Appalachia. This practice destroys wildlife habitat, contaminates surface and drinking water, and leads to flooding.

As a number of new studies show, there is an increased incidence of cancer, birth defects, lung disease, and heart disease for those living and working near these mines.

In December 2008, the Bush Administration finalized a last-minute rule that weakened Reagan-era protections for streams from the impacts of mountaintop removal mining. The Bush rule was challenged in court and in February 2014, the D.C. Circuit Court vacated the rule, finding that the Bush Administration's refusal to consider the impacts of stream fills on threatened or endangered species in drafting the rule had been illegal.

The bill before us seeks to write the midnight Bush rule into law and require all states to incorporate it into their state mining regulations.

Mr. Chair, it makes no sense to require the states to adopt a vacated rule that has already been vacated by a federal court, especially when the Obama Administration is in the process of finalizing a new stream protection rule providing for responsible development while protecting our communities and environment.

This new rule will reflect the significant technological and scientific advances in mining practices that avoid, minimize, and mitigate environmental damage from coal mining.

Mr. Chair, I support the amendment offered by Congressman LOWENTHAL that would keep in place implementation of the Reagan Administration rule. I also support the amendment offered by Congressman CARTWRIGHT that would ensure that states retain the ability to issue their own stream buffer rules.

But I do not support the underlying bill. I urge my colleagues to vote "no" on H.R. 2824 and reject this misguided, irresponsible, and harmful legislation.

Then let us finally get to work on the issues the American people care about.

The CHAIR. All time for general debate has expired.

Pursuant to the rule, the bill shall be considered for amendment under the 5-minute rule.

It shall be in order to consider as an original bill for the purpose of amendment under the 5-minute rule, an amendment in the nature of a substitute consisting of the text of Rules Committee Print 113–41, modified by the amendment printed in part A of

House Report 113–374. That amendment in the nature of a substitute shall be considered as read.

The text of the amendment in the nature of a substitute is as follows:

H.R. 2824

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

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the ''Preventing Government Waste and Protecting Coal Mining Jobs in America''.

SEC. 2. INCORPORATION OF SURFACE MINING STREAM BUFFER ZONE RULE INTO STATE PROGRAMS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 503 of the Surface Mining Control and Reclamation Act of 1977 (30 U.S.C. 1253) is amended by adding at the end the following:

''(e) STREAM BUFFER ZONE MANAGEMENT.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—In addition to the requirements under subsection (a), each State program shall incorporate the necessary rule regarding excess spoil, coal mine waste, and buffers for perennial and intermittent streams published by the Office of Surface Mining Reclamation and Enforcement on December 12, 2008 (73 Fed. Reg. 75813 et seq.) which complies with the Endangered Species Act of 1973 (16 U.S.C. 1531 et seq.) in view of the 2006 discussions between the Director of the Office of Surface Mining and the Director of the United States Fish and Wildlife Service, and the Office of Surface Mining Reclamation and Enforcement's consideration and review of comments submitted by the United States Fish and Wildlife Service during the rulemaking process in 2007''.

''(2) STUDY OF IMPLEMENTATION.—The Secretary shall—

''(A) at such time as the Secretary determines all States referred to in subsection (a) have fully incorporated the necessary rule referred to in paragraph (1) of this subsection into their State programs, publish notice of such determination;

''(B) during the 5-year period beginning on the date of such publication, assess the effectiveness of implementation of such rule by such States;

''(C) carry out all required consultation on the benefits and other impacts of the implementation of the rule to any threatened species or endangered species, with the participation of the United States Fish and Wildlife Service and the United States Geological Survey; and

''(D) upon the conclusion of such period, submit a comprehensive report on the impacts of such rule to the Committee on Natural Resources of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources of the Senate, including—

''(i) an evaluation of the effectiveness of such rule;

''(ii) an evaluation of any ways in which the existing rule inhibits energy production; and

''(iii) a description in detail of any proposed changes that should be made to the rule, the justification for such changes, all comments on such changes received by the Secretary from such States, and the projected costs and benefits of such changes.

''(3) LIMITATION ON NEW REGULATIONS.—The Secretary may not issue any regulations under this Act relating to stream buffer zones or stream protection before the date of the publication of the report under paragraph (2), other than a rule necessary to implement paragraph (1).''.

(b) DEADLINE FOR STATE IMPLEMENTATION.—Not later than 2 years after the date of the enactment of this Act, a State with a State program approved under section 503 of the Surface Mining Control and Reclamation Act of 1977 (30 U.S.C. 1253) shall submit to the Secretary of the Interior amendments to such program pursuant to part 732 of title 30, Code of Federal Regulations, incorporating the necessary rule referred to in subsection (e)(1) of such section, as amended by this section.

The CHAIR. No amendment to that amendment in the nature of a substitute shall be in order except those printed in part B of the report. Each such amendment may be offered only in the order printed in the report, by a Member designated in the report, shall be considered read, shall be debatable for the time specified in the report equally divided and controlled by the proponent and an opponent, shall not be subject to amendment, and shall not be subject to a demand for division of the question.

AMENDMENT NO. 1 OFFERED BY MR. LOWENTHAL

The CHAIR. It is now in order to consider amendment No. 1 printed in part B of House Report 113–374.

Mr. LOWENTHAL. Mr. Chairman, I have an amendment at the desk.

The CHAIR. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

Page 1, beginning at line 16, strike ''December 12, 2008 (73 Fed. Reg. 75813 et seq.)'' and insert ''June 30, 1983 (48 Fed. Reg. 30312), except that this paragraph shall not apply to a State if the Governor of the State notifies the Secretary that such application would reduce stream protection from the level of protection achieved by the State program as in effect on the date of the enactment of the Preventing Government Waste and Protecting Coal Mining Jobs in America''.

The CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 501, the gentleman from California (Mr. LOWENTHAL) and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from California.

Mr. LOWENTHAL. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself such time as I my consume.

Mr. Chairman, my amendment is about protecting the health of those Americans who live near mountaintop removal coal mines. It is about keeping surface water from being contaminated; it is about keeping drinking water from being contaminated; and my amendment is about reducing the risk of cancer, birth defects, lung disease, and heart disease for families living near coal mines.

Mr. Chairman, all of these health problems have been conclusively linked to the mining practices of dumping the tops of mountains into streambeds. For example, in January 2010, the peer-reviewed journal Science published an article, entitled, ''Mountaintop Mining Consequences.'' And in that article, the authors, who were a dozen scientists from institutions across the country, concluded:

> Adult hospitalizations for chronic pulmonary disorder and hypertension are elevated as a result of county-level coal production, as are rates of mortality, lung cancer, and chronic heart, lung, and kidney disease.

Health problems are for women and men. So the effects are not simply the result of direct occupational exposure of predominantly male coal miners.

Mr. Chairman, in 1983, the Ronald Reagan administration completed rules that kept coal mining companies from dumping their overburden directly into streams. The rules required a buffer of 100 feet around waterways. The Reagan rule also allowed States to promulgate more protective rules, effectively creating a Federal floor of protection against stream contamination.

Right now, the Reagan rule is the regulation that the Office of Surface Mining Reclamation and Enforcement is operating under, and my amendment would keep the Reagan rule in effect.

So what does the majority bill do? It wipes away the Reagan rule and forces all States to adopt the 2008 Bush stream buffer rule. Instead of protecting streams, the Bush rule is a blank check for mining companies to dump their overburden directly into waterways. That's right. The Bush rule referenced in this bill has a gaping loophole that allows mining companies to dump mine waste into streams if avoiding disturbance of the stream is not reasonably possible.

And how is ''reasonable'' to be interpreted by the agency? Very loosely. An alternative to dumping mine waste into streams generally may be considered unreasonable, according to the agency, if its cost is substantially greater than the cost normally associated with this type of project.

Well, of course it is cheaper to dump mine waste into a nearby streambed than to properly treat and remove it elsewhere. Thus, given the agency's criteria, it will always be found cheaper and reasonable to dump coal mine waste into streams.

But it gets even better, Mr. Chairman. This is the same Bush rule that was struck down by the D.C. circuit court just this last month, and it is the same Bush rule that is really against the States' ability to promulgate stronger rules because it creates a ceiling that no State can exceed.

□ 1345

Mr. Chairman, my amendment would simply return to the Reagan rule to protect the health of families living near coal mines. I urge support of my amendment.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Mr. Chairman, I rise in opposition to the gentleman's amendment.

The CHAIR. The gentleman is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I find it hard sometimes to listen to this debate, especially when I hear my good friends on the other side of the aisle defending anything that the Reagan administration did. But they are doing it, so I will acknowledge that there is some substance there, but let me just go back to what I mentioned in my closing arguments.

SMCRA was passed in 1977. The Reagan rulemaking was 6 years after that. So there has not been an update on that rule—right now—for 30 years,

but it was more likely probably 20 years when the Bush administration thought it should be updated.

Now I want to get right to the heart of the matter and the reason that the environmental community does not like the 2008 rule and instead opts for the 1983 Reagan rule. They don't like it because the 2008 rule will provide clarity and certainty in the SMCRA process, which of course will free up job creation, meaning that there is going to be some certainty in coal production; rather, the environmental community would like to use loopholes that they found in the 1983 rulemaking to take people to court.

That is exactly why, from my perspective, that this amendment is offered, to go back to the Reagan times so there can be probably more litigation and less certainty in rulemaking of surface mining.

The gentleman mentioned, for example the 100-foot buffer zone. The Bush rule has a 100-foot buffer zone just like the Reagan rule. Nothing changed there. The only changes in the long run in rulemaking is certainty, and those who like to go to court don't like certainty. That is why I believe we have this improbable defense of anything that Reagan did, because they see that over a period of time there are ways that you can manipulate that to their advantage.

I think the Bush rule—which I said several times and is even acknowledged by the coal mining industry that it is more restrictive but has more certainty in it—is a better model, and it is precisely what this legislation does. It takes us to the 2008 rule.

This amendment takes us back to the 1983 rule, and I don't think that is a proper way to go. I urge rejection of this amendment.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. LOWENTHAL. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself such time as I may consume. I want to respond to one thing that was just said. The 2008 Bush rule is not more protective than the 1983 Reagan rule. I have explained that. The 2008 Bush rule has huge exemptions within it, and that is why it is important that we go back and we adopt my amendment to take us back to the reasonable 1983 Reagan rule.

I yield the balance of my time to the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. CARTWRIGHT).

Mr. CARTWRIGHT. Mr. Chairman, I thank the gentleman from California for yielding.

I rise in support of the amendment by the gentleman from California (Mr. LOWENTHAL) which seeks to reinstate the 1983 Stream Buffer Rule. While the Reagan administration rule is not perfect, the 2008 Bush rule inserted unnecessary loopholes in the law and takes us in the wrong direction.

This commonsense Lowenthal amendment from the Natural Resources Committee would simply keep the best option we currently have in place instead of forcing the adoption of the 2008 rule, which the courts have already struck down. Thus, I urge my colleagues to support the Lowenthal amendment.

Mr. LOWENTHAL. I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself the balance of my time.

Very briefly, and maybe we are caught here in semantics, but the issue—I have said several times and it has been acknowledged that the 2008 rule is more restrictive. My friend on the other side of the aisle and the author of the amendment said, ''Let me be clear, the 2008 rule is not as protective.''

I think when we are talking about protecting the environment, that ''restrictive'' and ''protective'' are probably synonymous in nature. So when we hear statements made by the industry that the 2008 rule is more restrictive, I take them at their word.

But, Mr. Chairman, I have to make this point and this point is very important because we need to have a certainty supply of energy in this country if we are going to have a growing economy. I am in favor of all of the above, and that certainly includes coal. Unless you have certainty in the regulations, you will not have an energy source.

As I have said right from the start—and as a matter of fact, many have acknowledged within the administration that this administration has a war on coal—this provides certainty. It is contrary to where the administration obviously wants to go because it does provide certainty with our energy production. So I would urge rejection of this amendment, which would take us back to a rule that would be more potentially litigious in nature to something that has certainty. With that, I urge rejection of the amendment.

I yield back the balance of my time.

The CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from California (Mr. LOWENTHAL).

The question was taken; and the Chair announced that the noes appeared to have it.

Mr. LOWENTHAL. Mr. Chairman, I demand a recorded vote.

The CHAIR. Pursuant to clause 6 of rule XVIII, further proceedings on the amendment offered by the gentleman from California will be postponed.

AMENDMENT NO. 2 OFFERED BY MR. CARTWRIGHT

The CHAIR. It is now in order to consider amendment No. 2 printed in part B of House Report 113–374.

Mr. CARTWRIGHT. Mr. Chairman, I have an amendment at the desk.

The CHAIR. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

Page 1, line 17, before the last period insert '', except that this subsection shall not apply to a State if, upon request from the Governor of the State, the Secretary finds that the State's existing program exceeds the standards established by such rule regarding excess spoil, coal mine waste, and buffers for perennial and intermittent streams''.

The CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 501, the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. CARTWRIGHT) and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Pennsylvania.

Mr. CARTWRIGHT. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

The underlying bill I seek to amend has been labeled today as Preventing Government Waste and Protecting Coal Mining Jobs in America. The true label for this bill ought to be the ''No Streams Protection'' bill.

Mountaintop removal coal mining is a process that has buried over 2,000 miles of streams throughout Appalachia, contaminating surface and drinking water, and destroying wildlife in Appalachia communities.

The practice is currently governed by a rule written by the Reagan administration. The Reagan rule needs to be updated, and this is what the Obama administration wants to set about doing. H.R. 2824 seeks to accomplish two things: to write into statute a stream buffer rule promulgated in December of 2008 by the Bush administration and then to prohibit the Obama administration from working on writing a new stream buffer rule for at least 5 years while precluding the States also from issuing their own more stringent rules.

Members ought to be aware that the Federal District Court of the District of Columbia handed down a decision on February 20, just last month, vacating the 2008 rule because the Bush administration refused to consider the impacts of coal mining on threatened or endangered species in writing the rule. As a result, the rule this bill would write into statute no longer exists.

It is also surprising that the Republicans would enact a bill that strong-arms States into forcibly adopting a Federal standard, completely preempting states' rights to enact their own rules.

That is why the amendment I am offering today protects states' rights by ensuring that all States are able to implement a stream buffer rule that can go beyond the national floor. States ought to have the ability to protect their natural resources at a level beyond the requirements of the Federal Government when they see that need. My amendment ensures that States maintain the ability to issue their own more stringent stream buffer rules, which this legislation is attempting to prohibit.

States should be able to maintain the ability to adequately protect their natural resources and health and safety of their local coal mining communities. Safe drinking water should be a right for everybody, and should not be subject to the Federal loopholes this bill would insert. States should have the right to close loopholes as they see fit.

It is important to remember that the amount of coal exported from this country is significant and growing. In fact, a record amount of coal was exported in 2012, over three times the amount exported one decade earlier. We don't need to relax our environmental and health protections for this industry. We don't need to jeopardize the health of the people and the once-pristine environment of Appalachia for the profits of these companies.

Finally, the claim that the Obama rule must be stopped because it is part of a so-called war on coal is obviously false. How can you make such a claim about a rule that doesn't even exist yet?

This bill is simply an attempt to resurrect a flawed 2008 Bush rule, rejected by a Federal court and the administration, which provides loopholes to the industry. It is poor public policy and a poor use of Congress' time given the pressing needs of this country.

My amendment protects states' rights from overreach by the Federal Government, protects Appalachia communities, protects our environment, and protects clean drinking water. My amendment allows States to do better by their citizens if they so choose, and I believe that is a goal that everybody ought to agree upon.

I urge Members to vote for this amendment.

Mr. Chairman, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from California (Mr. LOWENTHAL).

Mr. LOWENTHAL. I thank the gentleman from Pennsylvania for yielding me this time.

I strongly agree with my friend that States must be given the right to implement a stream buffer rule that works for them, given the fact that local conditions will vary from State to State. What we are saying is that States should have the ability to protect their natural resources at a level beyond the requirements of the Federal Government when they see the need. What we are saying is that the Federal Government sets a floor, and the States have a right to protect their citizens from public health crisis and illness by setting their own requirements.

H.R. 2824 keeps the States from tailoring stream safeguards and requires the States to waste taxpayer dollars by adopting a rule that has been vacated by a Federal court.

Mr. Chairman, for these reasons I urge support of the Cartwright amendment.

Mr. CARTWRIGHT. I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Mr. Chairman, I rise in opposition to the amendment.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Mr. Chairman, before I speak directly as to why we should not adopt this amendment, let me respond to the rhetorical question that my friend from Pennsylvania asked when he said:

How can you say that this administration rule, which hasn't been promulgated yet, will cost jobs?

Well, I would tell the gentleman, Mr. Chairman, that there were leaked documents of the first initial rewrite of the 2008 amendment, leaked documents that said that the contractor that was hired by the administration to rewrite the rule came back with the conclusion that 7,000 jobs would be lost in 22 States. So what was the response of the Obama administration? They fired the contractor; it was the wrong message.

Now they are still in the rulemaking process. But, Mr. Chairman, I have to tell you, I doubt that the philosophy has changed from that very way because they are trying to manipulate which rules to follow to minimize what we found out in the initial go-round.

So let me just talk about this amendment. This amendment is not only unnecessary, it is actually harmful to protecting states' rights. Under SMCRA of 1977, State regulations have to meet or exceed the new regulation issued by the Office of Surface Mining. The gentleman's amendment would eliminate the ability of States to meet these rules by mandating that States can only exceed the OSM rules. This ignores both the history of Federal-State regulations with regard to rulemaking but also the need for flexibility in the States to meet the OSM rules while protecting their own geology, hydrology, and community interests.

Again, States already have the ability to change regulations to meet or exceed Federal rules with regards to all aspects of the regulatory regime under SMCRA.

□ 1400

We should not limit the ability to have flexibility in meeting the new rules. This amendment would mandate that you could only change that by increasing it. I think, Mr. Chairman, that is the wrong way to go. I think the amendment is ill-advised.

I urge rejection of the amendment, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. CARTWRIGHT).

The question was taken; and the Chair announced that the noes appeared to have it.

Mr. CARTWRIGHT. Mr. Chairman, I demand a recorded vote.

The CHAIR. Pursuant to clause 6 of rule XVIII, further proceedings on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Pennsylvania will be postponed.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE CHAIR

The CHAIR. Pursuant to clause 6 of rule XVIII, proceedings will now resume on those amendments printed in part B of House Report 113–374 on which further proceedings were postponed, in the following order:

Amendment No. 1 by Mr. LOWENTHAL of California.

Amendment No. 2 by Mr. CARTWRIGHT of Pennsylvania.

The Chair will reduce to 2 minutes the minimum time for any electronic vote after the first vote in this series.

AMENDMENT NO. 1 OFFERED BY MR. LOWENTHAL

The CHAIR. The unfinished business is the demand for a recorded vote on the amendment offered by the gentleman from California (Mr. LOWENTHAL) on which further proceedings were postponed and on which the noes prevailed by voice vote.

The Clerk will redesignate the amendment.

The Clerk redesignated the amendment.

RECORDED VOTE

The CHAIR. A recorded vote has been demanded.

A recorded vote was ordered.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—ayes 188, noes 231, not voting 12, as follows:

[Roll No. 138]

AYES—188

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

NOES—231

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

NOT VOTING—12

Benishek
Camp
Campbell
Cohen
Duckworth
Hinojosa
Jackson Lee
Johnson (GA)
McCarthy (NY)
Miller, Gary
Olson
Schwartz

□ 1427

Messrs. TERRY, CULBERSON, and COLE changed their vote from ''aye'' to ''no.''

Messrs. MAFFEI and LARSON of Connecticut changed their vote from ''no'' to ''aye.''

So the amendment was rejected.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

AMENDMENT NO. 2 OFFERED BY MR. CARTWRIGHT

The CHAIR. The unfinished business is the demand for a recorded vote on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. CARTWRIGHT) on which further proceedings were postponed and on which the noes prevailed by voice vote.

The Clerk will redesignate the amendment.

The Clerk redesignated the amendment.

RECORDED VOTE

The CHAIR. A recorded vote has been demanded.

A recorded vote was ordered.

The CHAIR. This will be a 2-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—ayes 196, noes 225, not voting 10, as follows:

[Roll No. 139]

AYES—196

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

NOES—225

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

NOT VOTING—10

Benishek
Camp
Campbell
Cassidy
Duckworth
Hinojosa
McCarthy (NY)
Miller, Gary
Olson
Schwartz

□ 1435

Mr. WALBERG changed his vote from ''aye'' to ''no.''

So the amendment was rejected.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

Stated against:

Mr. CASSIDY. Mr. Chair, on rollcall No. 139, I was unavoidably detained. Had I been present, I would have voted "no."

The Acting CHAIR. The question is on the amendment in the nature of a substitute, as amended.

The amendment was agreed to.

The Acting CHAIR. Under the rule, the Committee rises.

Accordingly, the Committee rose; and the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. POE of Texas) having assumed the chair, Mr. WOODALL, Chair of the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union, reported that that Committee, having had under consideration the bill (H.R. 2824) to amend the Surface Mining Control and Reclamation Act of 1977 to stop the ongoing waste by the Department of the Interior of taxpayer resources and implement the final rule on excess spoil, mining waste, and buffers for perennial and intermittent streams, and for other purposes, and, pursuant to House Resolution 501, he reported the bill back to the House with an amendment adopted in the Committee of the Whole.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the rule, the previous question is ordered.

The question is on the amendment in the nature of a substitute, as amended.

The amendment was agreed to.

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

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

MOTION TO RECOMMIT

Mr. BERA of California. Mr. Speaker, I have a motion to recommit at the desk.

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

Mr. BERA of California. I am opposed to it in its current form.

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

The Clerk read as follows:

Mr. Bera of California moves to recommit the bill H.R. 2824 to the Committee on Natural Resources with instructions to report the same back to the House forthwith with the following amendment:

Page 3, after line 20, add the following:

SEC. ____. MAKING IT IN AMERICA AND PROVIDING JOBS FOR UNEMPLOYED WORKERS.

Nothing in this Act limits, restricts, or prohibits the Secretary of the Interior or any State program from giving priority to—

(1) hiring unemployed workers, including veterans, who are actively seeking work and for whom unemployment taxes were paid during prior employment; and

(2) utilizing equipment and materials manufactured in the United States in mining operations, where practicable.

Mr. JOHNSON of Ohio (during the reading). Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to dispense with the reading.

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

There was no objection.

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

Mr. BERA of California. Mr. Speaker, this is the final amendment to the bill, which will not kill the bill or send it back to the committee. If adopted, the bill will immediately proceed to final passage as amended.

Mr. Speaker, instead of voting on divisive bills that threaten communities and their water supply with toxic mining waste, we need to focus on creating jobs and getting unemployed Americans back to work.

Mr. Speaker, we have no more urgent mission than getting our veterans back to work. That is our priority. American families want their leaders to work together, Democrats and Republicans, to rebuild an economy that works for the middle class, not more partisan politics.

Today, over 2 million unemployed Americans have been waiting for Congress to restore Federal emergency unemployment benefits since December.

Among veterans who have served since 2001, the unemployment rate is 9 percent. This is disgraceful. During these tough economic times Americans need to focus and Congress needs to focus on getting Americans back to work.

This amendment would do just that, allowing priority hiring of veterans and those who have received unemployment insurance. To help create more jobs, we also need to make more products here in the United States. There is a greater opportunity for our people to make it in America if we make things in America.

That means we need to focus on creating the best conditions for American businesses to manufacture their products, to innovate, and to create jobs right here in the United States.

Already, more and more U.S. companies are bringing overseas manufacturing back home. Let's continue to encourage these U.S. companies to continue to bring those jobs back here and to build things here in America. We have seen the American auto industry come back, Apple computers, alternative energy companies, just to name a few. We need to continue to encourage these companies to make their products here.

□ 1445

That is exactly what this amendment does, and it will help set us on a solid path forward to a future of greater economic competitiveness, more jobs, and longstanding, long-term economic success.

Let's show the American people what our priorities are. It is about creating jobs and getting Americans back to work and, most importantly, getting our veterans back to work. That is exactly what this amendment does.

I urge the adoption of this important amendment.

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

Mr. JOHNSON of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, I rise in opposition to the motion.

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

Mr. JOHNSON of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, this is simple. There are two competing views on the floor right now about the future of America.

One side believes that the key to America remaining the leader of the free world starts with a robust American economy, led by a strong and stable energy market; an America that then leverages a healthy economy and a strong energy market to help allies across the globe like Ukraine, Japan, and others; an America that can go toe-to-toe with the Russians as they leverage their energy resources to try and achieve their political ambitions; an America that creates energy jobs here at home in a way that balances the dual needs of a vibrant economy and a healthy environment.

Now, that other competing view would rather see American manufacturers and hardworking middle class families pay more for their electricity.

Mr. Speaker, that is not fair. The other side talks a big game about being for an all-of-the-above energy policy, but at every turn, it tries to shut down our fossil fuel production and use.

The other side would rather shut down our cheapest and most reliable form of energy and the thousands of jobs that go with it, in favor of taxpayer-subsidized windmills to heat our homes on cold days like today.

The other side's apparent unwillingness to leverage America's energy abundance to influence geopolitics is unwise. America's rivals and adversaries are watching.

Mr. Speaker, like I said, this is simple. What side of the coin do we want to stand on? The one that shoots ourself in the foot or the one that embraces our God-given energy advantage and leads?

To me, the choice is clear. I urge all of my colleagues to vote against this motion and to vote for final passage.

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

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

There was no objection.

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

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

RECORDED VOTE

Mr. BERA of California. Mr. Speaker, I demand a recorded vote.

A recorded vote was ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 and clause 9 of rule XX, this 5-minute vote on the motion to recommit will be followed by 5-minute votes on passage of the bill, if ordered, and agreeing to the Speaker's approval of the Journal, if ordered.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—ayes 197, noes 224, not voting 10, as follows:

[Roll No. 140]

AYES—197

Barber	Beatty	Bishop (GA)
Barrow (GA)	Becerra	Bishop (NY)
Bass	Bera (CA)	Blumenauer

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

NOES—224

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

NOT VOTING—10

Benishek
Camp
Campbell
Duckworth
Hinojosa
McCarthy (NY)
Miller, Gary
Olson
Schock
Schwartz

□ 1454

So the motion to recommit was rejected.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

MESSAGE FROM THE SENATE

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

H.R. 3771. An act to accelerate the income tax benefits for charitable cash contributions for the relief of victims of the Typhoon Haiyan in the Philippines.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER

The SPEAKER. The Chair wishes to reiterate the announcement of February 26, 2013, concerning floor practice.

Members should periodically rededicate themselves to the core principles of proper parliamentary practice that are so essential in maintaining order and deliberacy in the House. The Chair believes that a few of these principles bear emphasis today.

Members should refrain from trafficking the well when another, including the presiding officer, is addressing the House.

Members should wear appropriate business attire during all sittings of the House, however brief their appearance on the floor might be.

Members who wish to speak on the floor should respectfully seek and obtain recognition from the presiding officer, taking the time to do so in proper form, including 1-minutes. The proper form would be to ask unanimous consent to address the House for 1 minute.

Members should take care to yield and reclaim time in an orderly fashion, bearing in mind that the Official Reporters of Debate cannot properly transcribe two Members simultaneously.

Members should address their remarks in debate to the presiding officer and not to others in the second person or to some perceived viewing audience.

Members should not embellish the offering of a motion, the entry of a request, the making of a point of order, or the entry of an appeal with any statement of motive or other commentary, and should be aware that such utterances could render the motion, request, point of order, or appeal untimely.

Members should attempt to come to the floor within the 15-minute period as prescribed by the first ringing of the bells. Members should be advised that if they are in the Chamber attempting to vote, the Chair will try to accommodate them. But as a point of courtesy to each of your colleagues, voting within the allotted time would help with the maintenance of the institution.

Following these basic standards of practice will foster an atmosphere of mutual and institutional respect. It will ensure against personal confrontation, among individual Members or between Members and the presiding officer. It will facilitate Members' comprehension of, and participation in, the business of the House. It will enable accurate transcriptions of proceedings. In sum, it will ensure the comity that elevates spirited deliberations above mere argument.

The Chair appreciates the attention of the Members to these matters.

□ 1500

PREVENTING GOVERNMENT WASTE AND PROTECTING COAL MINING JOBS IN AMERICA

The SPEAKER. Without objection, 5-minute voting will continue.

There was no objection.

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

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

RECORDED VOTE

Mr. CARTWRIGHT. Mr. Speaker, I demand a recorded vote.

A recorded vote was ordered.

The SPEAKER. This is a 5-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—ayes 229, noes 192, not voting 10, as follows:

[Roll No. 141]

AYES—229

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

NOES—192

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

NOT VOTING—10

Benishek
Camp
Campbell
Duckworth
Hinojosa
Lummis
McCarthy (NY)
Miller, Gary
Olson
Schwartz

□ 1506

Mr. PAYNE changed his vote from ''aye'' to ''no.''

So the bill was passed.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. FLEISCHMANN). The unfinished business is the question on agreeing to the Speaker's approval of the Journal, which the Chair will put de novo.

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

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

CONGRATULATING FIU COLLEGE OF ENGINEERING AND COMPUTING ON ITS 30TH ANNIVERSARY

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

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise to congratulate the College of Engineering and Computing at my alma mater, Florida International University, known as FIU, on its 30th anniversary of proven excellence in producing high-quality graduates.

The college was established with one mission in mind: to provide public access education to those interested in these fields and to serve as an instrument for economic development in our vibrant south Florida community. They have accomplished that and much more. From using nanotechnology to improve human health to building superior bridges, people's lives across the country are impacted each and every day in a positive way through FIU's STEM graduates.

FIU has also created many programs to encourage young students to pursue careers in STEM fields. Their latest innovative approach was to create an Accelerated Technology Magnet Program that would prepare low-income high school students for employment and educational options in computer science and information technology. I am certain FIU will continue to lead and produce more skilled professionals in these fields.

Go, FIU. Go, Golden Panthers.

193RD ANNIVERSARY OF GREEK INDEPENDENCE

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

Mr. SARBANES. Mr. Speaker, I rise today, March 25, to celebrate the 193rd anniversary of Greek independence. In Greek, we say ''Long Live Greece, Long Live Freedom''—Zito Ellada, Zito Eleftheria—in recalling the day that the Greek people threw off the yoke of the Ottoman Empire and established modern Greece as a free and independent nation.

America's Founding Fathers drew upon the example of the ancient Greeks in forming our constitutional Republic, and modern Greece has been a staunch and dependable ally of the United States. Our relationship is based on shared democratic values and respect for individual freedom.

The spirit that guided the Greek people in securing their freedom nearly 200 years ago resides within them still. It is the reason I am confident that Greece will overcome the economic and humanitarian crisis that it faces today. The United States must and will stand as a strong partner in Greece's efforts to regain its footing, to take full advantage of new opportunities that are emerging in the eastern Mediterranean, and to move forward as a vital economic and cultural resource for a critical region of the world.

Knowing that America and Greece will stand together allows us to proclaim that both democracies will continue to live in freedom. Long Live Greece, Long Live America, Long Live Freedom—Zito Ellada, Zito Ameriki, Zito Eleftheria.

SELL AMERICAN NATURAL GAS TO UKRAINE

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

Mr. POE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, the Napoleon of Siberia, Putin, controls Ukraine and other European countries by holding their energy needs hostage. Russia uses gas as a political and economic weapon to manipulate its neighbors.

This does not have to be, and the United States can change that.

By selling European countries our oil and gas, we can reduce their dependence on imperialist Russia. We have more gas than we can use here in the United States, and we could sell the gas we don't need to our allies in Europe. That would create jobs here in America and help our allies overseas.

The same goes for crude oil.

Mr. Speaker, my amendment that passed the House Foreign Affairs Committee today would require the State Department to submit a report to Congress within 90 days on the effect our increased natural gas and crude oil exports would have on Russia's economic and political influence over Ukraine and other European nations.

Ukraine has to get their oil and gas from someplace. Let's have them buy American and make the Russian bear Putin and his energy irrelevant.

And that's just the way it is.

NATIONAL AGRICULTURE DAY

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

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, as a member of the House Agriculture Committee, I rise in support of the goals of National Agriculture Day, which is today, March 25.

Agriculture remains the number one industry in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, supporting upwards of 63,000 family farms, generating more than $67 billion in economic impact, and one in seven residents of Pennsylvania works in the agriculture sector.

While a good portion of America's population does not see firsthand where our food supply comes from, a wise man once told me that we shake hands with a farmer at least three times a day. This saying truly illustrates the importance of supporting agriculture, but equally the importance of supporting the future of agriculture and our future food security.

I had the pleasure of meeting with two officers of the Pennsylvania chapter of the Future Farmers of America earlier this morning. I commend them for their outreach efforts here in Washington to promote the goals of National Agriculture Day. Their advocacy in engaging the next generation to become farmers is crucial to ensuring our country has the most affordable, the highest quality, abundant, and safest food supply in the world.

CELEBRATING THE 100TH ANNIVERSARY OF NORMAN BORLAUG'S BIRTH

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

Mrs. BACHMANN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in celebration of National Agriculture Day. But also, today marks the 100th anniversary of the birth of a man who literally changed the world. His name is Norman Borlaug. He was born in an upstairs bedroom in northeast Iowa 100 years ago today. He went to the University of Minnesota, where he received a Ph.D. degree in plant biology.

While he was in a class dealing with plant genetics and the future options of increased food production, Norman Borlaug had that moment of divine genius. That is when he applied himself to work. And Norman Borlaug, because of 6,000 experiments in very difficult terrain, created a grain of wheat that literally changed the world.

Norman Borlaug is rightly credited with saving the lives of over 1 billion people, 1 billion people on this Earth because he dedicated his life and persevered to create strains of wheat which would grow in India, Pakistan, Africa, and places that never before could be able to uphold a grain of wheat. He did that in East Asia with rice.

Today we honor and recognize and celebrate the life of one American who did so much for 1 billion people across the world.

□ 1515

OUR FIRST FREEDOM

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

Mr. GOHMERT. Mr. Speaker, this is an important day right across the street at the U.S. Supreme Court Building. It has been interesting. In the past, most of the time that I am aware of, when there was a matter coming before the Supreme Court, they observed what is called reciprocity, just as if a U.S. Senator wants to come down here and observe—they can't speak on the floor—but they can come to the House floor. In the same way, we have reciprocity with the Senate. We can go down to the Senate and stand in the Chamber and be there in person, as I have done when RAND PAUL was doing what amounted to a filibuster and when TED CRUZ was doing what amounted to a filibuster.

With the Supreme Court, normally, if there are Members of Congress that are going to be coming, they will reserve a bench. There have been a couple of times that the bench was full and other Members of Congress filled those spaces before I got there; but it has been an observation that, since this body is charged with funding the Supreme Court and providing what they need and determining what they don't really need, it is part of reciprocity that they provide those places to observe what is happening.

I have been rather ambivalent. I can see both sides of the issues of cameras in the courtroom, because as a judge, murder trials, other things of interest, networks would want to come film. I had one case that went for 10 weeks. We have very strict rules. We only allow one camera in the courtroom. It could never be worked on during anything that was going on, and it could never be a distraction at all. But I saw how cameras could work in the courtroom without being any problem at all.

Here in Congress, I have fairly much taken the position that if a camera is going to be in the courtroom, leave it up to the courts. But with the United States Supreme Court, as I have seen this week, there would be no harm in having a camera somewhere in the courtroom where people didn't notice so that Americans could see—since we moved the Supreme Court toward being an oligarchy—we could see what they are doing, whether they are sleeping, whether they are participating, or whether they are asking stupid questions.

I went over, and since I am sworn in as a member of the Supreme Court Bar, I was allowed to be in the overflow room and hear what was going on; so it was kind of difficult to really tell who was addressing what during the case that the Supreme Court was hearing this morning that I heard oral arguments on. This is an extremely critical case, and I couldn't tell which judge asked the questions, but when the Supreme Court is, in effect, expressing concern through their questions that a corporation, a for-profit corporation, could not possibly have firmly held religious beliefs, then it occurred to me, for Heaven's sake, this Justice Department doesn't seem to have a problem indicting corporations. So, if the Justice Department can indict a corporation and say they have an intent to violate the law, well, if that corporation can have intent with regard to violations of the law, it certainly ought to be able to form the intent to have firmly held religious beliefs.

It was shocking as I listened to questions from some of the Supreme Court Justices today, when that is compared with the history of the United States of America and Roger Williams, for example, whose statue has been moved last week, but how he formed Rhode Island because of his firmly held religious beliefs and his beliefs that there should be freedom of religion in America where the government does not interfere in any way.

You compare the beliefs of the Pilgrims who came from Holland to England and then here—they wanted religious freedom so they could serve the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob;

they could follow their Christian beliefs without being persecuted or without having a government say that you don't have any right to practice those beliefs—compared with the Supreme Court Justices, in effect, saying, gee, they could just pay the fine and it would be a lot cheaper than $475 million in penalties they will have to pay. Actually, one Justice had the nerve to say: I believe that was called a tax and not a penalty.

Paul Clement was doing a great job. My immediate thought was, well, no, the Supreme Court at page 15 of the majority opinion said that clearly the mandate was a penalty. Congress called it a penalty. It clearly was a penalty. It is only assessed if you don't do what the bill requires people to do, so clearly it is a penalty. And since it is a penalty, they said at page 15, then we do have jurisdiction to go forward because, the Supreme Court pointed out, if that mandate were a tax, then under the anti-injunction statute, the Supreme Court would not have jurisdiction to have proceeded when they did and the plaintiffs that brought the case would not have had standing to bring the case. But they said, since this is clearly a penalty and not a tax, then we can go forward, because if it is a tax, then the Anti-Injunction Act kicks in, and we don't have jurisdiction at this time.

But on page 15, the Supreme Court called it a penalty. And they, in that opinion, apparently to the ignorance of at least one of our Supreme Court Justices, the Supreme Court called it a penalty at page 15, because they quoted the Congress calling it a penalty in ObamaCare, and they said, clearly, it is a penalty. We have got jurisdiction, and we will go ahead and determine the rest of the case.

Then you go over about 40 pages, and then they determine, okay, now that we are hearing this because it is a penalty and not a tax, we determine it is a tax and therefore it is constitutional.

We know under the rules of this House that Supreme Court judges would not do anything inappropriate, but, Mr. Speaker, I can tell you that opinion was indecent. It was a travesty. It was hypocritical, that decision was. How you can call it a penalty at page 15 and then, with a straight face, 40 pages later, say now it is a tax so it is a constitutional, and then sit as they were today and have a Justice say, kind of snidely: Well, we didn't call it a penalty. I mean it was called a tax. It depends on where you look in the majority opinion as to whether it is a penalty or a tax, but Congress clearly called it a penalty.

I am very concerned. We had someone who was in a position with the executive branch when ObamaCare was put together and pushed here in Congress, and in her position with the executive branch, at that time, she had to either be incompetent and failed to give the executive branch any advice on its most important bill that they took up or there was a lie told that no advice was ever given about this bill. Either way, that Justice should not have been allowed to hear this case as a member of the Supreme Court because, clearly—and I think the questions that were apparently asked by her today show—she was an advocate, is an advocate now and most likely was an advocate then in this administration.

So this country is in trouble.

I yield to my dear friend from Minnesota (Mrs. BACHMANN) for any comments she might have.

Mrs. BACHMANN. Well, I want to thank the gentleman from Texas for allowing me to participate in this discussion, because this really is the issue of our day.

People on a political level are talking about ObamaCare and how ObamaCare is destroying our economy. It is hurting job prospects, and it is not allowing us to move into the robust growth we would be in without ObamaCare. But it is even more fundamental; and I think the gentleman from Texas, as a judge and as a lawyer, has been laying out, really, his broken heart over what he observed today at the Supreme Court.

I share that same level of heartbrokenness because this really is the whole game. This is the whole ball of wax. Because if you look at what America was founded upon and why we were founded in the first place, it was so that we could be a free land made up of free people who are allowed to exercise our own moral conscience—and not just in the realm of belief, freedom of belief, but also freedom of speech and freedom of expression. But even one step further, it is the exercise of our religious liberties.

There was a case that the gentleman from Texas would remember. It was during the Vietnam war era. It was called Tinker v. Des Moines, and the very famous holding out of that Supreme Court decision was this: students did not have to check their constitutional rights at the schoolhouse door. Today, the Supreme Court is taking up this question: Will the American employer and will the American employee have to check their religious liberties at their church door so they can only exercise their religious faith within the confines of their religious house of worship or maybe even so far as in their home, but certainly, according to the Obama administration, not in the workplace?

Think about it for a moment. The author of the Constitution of the United States, James Madison, and the other Founders specifically wrote the Constitution and, in particular, the First Amendment to the Constitution to guarantee that it wasn't just behind closed doors in our church or behind the confines of our home that we would be entitled to religious liberty of freedom of belief and freedom of expression and walking out our faith, because isn't that what most churches and synagogues and mosques advocate during the time of worship, that we live our faith, that we don't have a dead faith but an alive faith that we practice?

This is really the key, and this is the issue. We are here in the most lively place on the planet for speech—the House of Representatives. Representative GOHMERT is standing in the well. There is no other piece of real estate on this Earth that allows for greater freedom of speech and expression than right here. In fact, we are protected by law. We can't be arrested while we are coming here to cast a vote. We can't be dragged off to a court because of the speech that we enjoy here on this House floor.

Just merely steps from here, if you pass through Statuary Hall and into the rotunda—Representative GOHMERT has given probably more tours of this building than any other Members of Congress, and I know when he gives that tour he points to one of the seminal paintings that hangs in the rotunda. That painting is called the ''Embarkation of the Pilgrims,'' and it shows our ancestors, the Pilgrims, as they bowed on their knees before a holy God, the Bible in front of them on their lap turned to the New Testament. And on the sail of the ship it says, ''God with us,'' hanging in the rotunda just in yonder Hall.

The Pilgrims left their surroundings not because they didn't like England and not because they didn't like Holland. They came to the United States because their religious liberties were being infringed upon. They weren't allowed to believe and act on their belief in such a way where they truly felt free.

□ 1530

So they came to the United States of America. That was in 1620 when the Pilgrims first came, and it wasn't until later in 1776 when the Declaration of Independence was passed, and then later in 1789, I believe, or '87 when the Constitution of the United States was passed, but the author of the Constitution, James Madison, wrote, and I just the week before last saw the First Amendment to the Constitution. It was written in James Madison's hand. I bent over and read in that beautiful calligraphy script, and James Madison scratched out the original words that he was going to put in the First Amendment. It was full toleration of religious expression, meaning we tolerate your belief. Instead, what he wrote in was ''free exercise.''

So that not only was our government saying that it is nonnegotiable, there is no negotiating away these rights. These were fundamental rights every American enjoyed just because we are Americans—freedom of religious belief and freedom of free exercise, expression of those beliefs.

That is what is on trial today before the Supreme Court. It should have never gotten there because our liberties shouldn't be up for sale. That is

part of the problem. We believe there should be equal treatment under the law for every American—Black, White, whether or not you are male, female, poor, rich—everybody should be treated equally under the law. Is that true under ObamaCare? According to the Becket Fund, they say over 100 million Americans who are politically connected to this administration are exempted or waived from some of the requirements under the Affordable Care Act. But Americans who have religious objections to providing drugs or devices that would take the life of innocent Americans, they are being denied the exercise of their religious liberties.

So just think of that: over 100 million people, whether they belong to a union or maybe they work for a university, but somehow they are politically connected to this President and this administration, they are waived, but the people who aren't politically connected, they have a different kind of justice that they have to come under. That is wrong, and that denies equal treatment under the law.

Mr. GOHMERT. I would say to the gentlelady, I was not aware of the line that was scratched out by James Madison, but obviously if he scratched out ''tolerate'' and added in ''free exercise,'' it was intended to be more than just tolerant. This was a bedrock principle. I know the gentlelady, I doubt there is anybody else in all of Congress or even the Senate that has a master's in tax law, as the gentlelady from Minnesota does, but I know we have both heard during our professional lives that the power to tax is the power to destroy.

I don't have the exact words, and I haven't seen the transcript or heard any replay since I was at the Supreme Court building this morning, but to hear a Supreme Court Justice of this country say to the litigants' attorney, in essence:

> Why don't you just pay the tax, the penalty, and then you can have your religious beliefs?

Staggering.

Mrs. BACHMANN. Could we talk about that?

Mr. GOHMERT. I yield to the gentlelady. I doubt you were aware that in essence that question was asked:

Why don't you just pay that tax?

Mrs. BACHMANN. Let's talk about the reality as an employer and an employee of how egregious this tax is.

The employers that were in front of the Supreme Court today, and there were two employers before the Supreme Court today, they could pay the tax. They could do that, and then enjoy their religious liberty. This is what the tax is: it is over $36,000 per employee per year. So we are talking about a company that has 16,000 employees. They offer a very generous health care package. The employer wants to provide health insurance for their employees. In fact, they already offer 16 different contraceptives. They just don't believe, because it violates their moral belief, that they should supply four different contraceptives because it takes the life of a innocent human being. So they fully pay for health insurance, but if this employer decided they didn't want to offer health insurance, then they would pay the government a $2,000 fine per person. So they can either choose to offer health insurance and pay over $36,000 a year, which would effectively shut the company down. They would have to go out of business.

Mr. GOHMERT. And apparently it is phenomenal insurance. The employees love it.

Mrs. BACHMANN. Yes, it is very, very high, wonderful insurance that they already offer. Or they offer no insurance and they pay the government a $2,000 fine, and the employees don't get any health care, by the way. Or they can choose to violate their moral conscience. Or they can just close their doors and go out of business. This is freedom under the Obama administration? This is freedom for the American people?

I think the gentleman would agree that the supreme irony of all of this is that we have a President today who under article II is given executive power, and he has made a decision apparently that he is going also to arrogate to himself the power that is given to Congress under article I, which is to make the laws, because this President is currently making his own law, even as we speak every day. But it is also arrogating to himself the powers of article III of the judicial system when he and our Attorney General said they don't agree that the Defense of Marriage Act is a constitutional law, so they are not going to uphold it, in violation of article II, which says the President must faithfully execute the laws of the land.

So we have a President who, ironically, is taking power that wasn't granted to him, and by this law today he is taking away fundamental guaranteed rights from the American people. The President is giving himself power unconstitutionally, but he is taking away from the American people power that belongs to them.

That to me is a part of gangster government. We talked about gangster government early on when the President issued 3,400 pink slips to automobile dealerships all across America. He shut them down virtually overnight because he said so. Now we have a President who is giving a pink slip to anybody who wants to exercise their religious liberty rights.

We are here to say, Mr. Speaker, to the President of the United States—I hope he is listening—that our First Amendment rights, our Second Amendment rights, all of our rights are nonnegotiable because they are guaranteed by the Constitution of the United States. That is why this matters, and that is why the gentleman from Texas is dead-on today to talk about this issue because this is it. If we lose political speech and expression and religious liberty, it is game over for the American people. It is game over.

Mr. GOHMERT. I would like to ask the gentlelady a question, knowing our American history as well as you do: Can you imagine if King George had sent a decree that said pay a $2,000 penalty or tax and then you can observe your religious beliefs, what would the gentlelady think would be the response of Patrick Henry, John Adams, James Madison, Thomas Payne, and all of those people? Thomas Payne was not a very religious man, but he was big on rights.

Mrs. BACHMANN. We know exactly what they would say. Patrick Henry said:

> Give me liberty or give me death.

They were willing to put their lives, their honor, their sacred fortune on the line to fight for exactly what the Obama administration has been eager to deny to the American people, which is political speech and expression, and also religious liberty. We know that is what they would do.

They would do far more than dump some boxes of tea into Boston Harbor in one of the first tea parties there is. If they thought the Tea Party was strong now, you ain't seen nothing yet, because we are going to see the American people rise up in force. They are unwilling to put duct tape willingly over their mouths. They are unwilling to put duct tape over their moral conscience. They are unwillingly to put duct tape over their hearts, to have a heart for God.

People will stand for freedom. It is written in our DNA as Americans. It is what we do for a living. We get up in the morning and we fight for liberty. It is who we are. The Obama administration can pass an unconstitutional bill, which ObamaCare is, but the American people won't stand for it. That is why we are here today in this Chamber, where we still retain free speech, to hopefully continue to give free speech and religious liberty to every American so they don't have to check their religious liberty at the doors of their church or their synagogue or their home.

Mr. GOHMERT. If it came down to this, the Federal Government, of course using the IRS under ObamaCare to enforce the law, the Federal Government comes and says, the gentlelady from Minnesota must either pay a $2,000 fine, penalty, tax, whatever they may wish to call it today, or you cannot observe your religious beliefs, what would the gentlelady's reaction be?

Mrs. BACHMANN. Fundamentally what they are doing in this legislation, and apparently the question that the Supreme Court Justice asked today, that is what the Justice was saying. That is that you pay a fine of over $36,000 a year per employee, and then that is the price for exercising your religious liberty. So you can have religious liberty, but it is at a very steep price. Since when did it become for sale? That is the issue. That is what is

unconstitutional about this bill. No one has to pay for speech. Are we going to start charging the printing presses? What about local TV? What about bloggers and what about all of the mainstream media, usually called ''Team Obama.'' What if they have to start paying for the privilege of being able to publish? Then where would they be in their defense of the administration?

Mr. GOHMERT. Well, it is going to be interesting, and this is a bit of a tangent, but because of what the gentlelady has pointed out, this President has indicated he is going to turn over control of the Internet away from where it is now to an international confab that has been champing at the bit to have a chance to control the Internet. They have been hoping desperately that some day they would have something that everybody wanted to use so they could begin taxing it, charging fees to use the Internet. And once they could do that, then the international entity, like the U.N., wouldn't have to go begging to the different countries that make up its membership. They could require taxes and penalties to be paid in order to publish on the Internet, in order to send an email on the Internet. You could rack up taxes, and then they will be a permanent entity from now on once we give control of the Internet over to an international group that will have authority to tax those who want to publish online.

So we are talking about the disaster that ObamaCare is, but that is where it is going.

Mrs. BACHMANN. The gentleman is exactly right because if you have an international body, whether it is the U.N. or some other international body—we know that the largest bloc in the U.N. is the OIC, the Organization of Islamic Cooperation. And the number one agenda item of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation is to criminalize speech, any speech that they consider as an insult to their prophet.

So we would see across the world again a silencing of freedom of speech and expression dictated in all likelihood by this large bloc at the U.N., which takes us back to religious liberty here in the United States.

As the gentleman asked in his original question, what about this idea of the government being able to tax us for religious speech? I believe that if we lose this case, this will set the precedent that the government will then be able to dictate and decide any practice that touches our religious belief.

So, for instance, if you are in a doctor's office or if you are in a counselor's office or a therapist's office, the government could conceivably then dictate to the therapist what the therapist can say or not say in that office; or likewise, a doctor, what they can say or not say.

□ 1545

Let's remember, again, what this is. This isn't a company imposing its beliefs on employees because employees are free to buy whatever they want to buy in health care.

This is the government. This is government censorship. This is our government forcing government's politically correct beliefs and religious ideas down the throats of every American—every American company, every American employer, every American employee.

Do we see where this is leading? It is here right now. It is government-enforced coerced speech. I want to say that again. This is government-enforced coerced speech—speech and religious practice.

Now, the Federal Government is going to have the power to force you and me and everyone listening to us today, the government gets to choose, the government gets to decide what our speech is, what our religious expression is. That is not America.

You see, that is it. That is the entire game right there. That is why I say it is game over if we lose on this issue. That is how central and important the issue is that the gentleman from Texas is bringing up today.

Mr. GOHMERT. I just can't avoid thinking in these terms the conclusion when, ultimately, you follow the logic of at least one of the Supreme Court justices.

In essence, what is being implied by the question is if you want to avoid paying to kill a child in the womb, then just pay the tax, and we will allow you to observe your conscience, your firmly held religious beliefs.

It is staggering that anybody, any justice on the United States Supreme Court, would have rationalized to the point that—could ever even dream of saying: just pay the fine penalty tax, and then you don't have to pay for killing children in utero.

Mrs. BACHMANN. The gentleman is absolutely correct because in that statement lies the premise. The premise that the justice is embracing is that you don't have a guaranteed right to religious expression and to religious thought; you don't have that right. That is our right. We will sell it. The only question at this point is how much and can you afford it.

Now, for people who are poor people, will the government be subsidizing them so that they can buy their indulgence from the government?

Is that what it will be? We have to buy indulgences from the government now?

Mr. GOHMERT. It is protection.

Mrs. BACHMANN. Protection money.

Mr. GOHMERT. From the government.

Mrs. BACHMANN. That is why I call it a gangster government. It is a gangster government when you have to buy protection from your own government. In this instance, it is over $36,000 per year, per employee.

In fact, the fine is in excess of what the wage is for some of the employees that are being provided full generous health insurance.

Mr. GOHMERT. The gentlelady brought up something that I don't recall being mentioned during the entire argument. Hobby Lobby, because of their Christian beliefs, not only wants to provide compensation, they want to provide an excellent health care policy.

What I don't believe was brought up in the entire oral argument was that the employees can buy supplemental insurance to cover those four drugs that will kill children in utero, and nothing is denying them that opportunity.

Mrs. BACHMANN. And can I tell you at what price?

Mr. GOHMERT. Certainly.

Mrs. BACHMANN. This is how inexpensive it is. This doesn't deny any employee to go out and purchase a drug that would kill their child in the womb.

You can purchase it at one retailer for $4 a month and another retailer—all of these retailers are widely available across the United States—for $9 a month, so this is well within the grasp of any employee.

The one employer from Oklahoma that you mentioned pays a starting wage of over $14 an hour. There is a lot of Americans listening right now who would love to have a job at $14 an hour—in fact, I think it is $14.61 per hour, I think that is their starting wage—plus very generous health insurance benefits.

So why in the world would the Obama administration deny to 16,000 employees scattered across the United States potentially their job, their livelihood? It is either you agree with our administration's view of religion and morality or you forfeit your company.

This is a pretty big deal. This is about as big as it gets. This to me shows a stunning arrogance of power by the Obama administration, that they would force people to give up and yield their religious liberty and freedom of expression rights or pay for that right.

Mr. GOHMERT. One of the justices—and, again, since we don't have cameras in the courtroom yet, I will be fighting for that in the future, I could only listen to the audio—but one of the justices, again, tried to belittle Paul Clement's comment that they have a choice.

The gentlelady has pointed out accurately that you can pay $2,000 or $36,500; but he was indicating that, when you add up, with all the employees they have, the total cost, they either pay $475 million, or they can drop the insurance, leave the employees in a real dilemma to have to go buy ObamaCare insurance that, other than those four contraceptives that bring about abortion, they provide them far better insurance than what ObamaCare requires.

So when he said it is either $475 million or $26 million, she was insisting that you could just pay the $2,000 fine and was virtually in unbelief that it actually amounted to $26 million when

you add up all the people they would have to pay for.

So that was his position before the Supreme Court: to follow our religious beliefs, we either pay $475 million or we pay $26 million.

Mrs. BACHMANN. In fines, in fines to the government, and nobody gives anything. In fact, you give up the health insurance you have today. That is why people are so upset, and rightly so, across the country because more people have lost health insurance, we are told, than have gained health insurance under ObamaCare.

Again, all across my district—I am sure you have the same stories, it breaks your heart—people whose deductibles quadrupled, people whose premiums quadrupled if they still have insurance. This is real.

Then you have got the spectre, as the Becket Fund said, of over 100 million Americans who are politically well connected enough to this administration under what I call gangster government that they were able to be waived out of the ObamaCare requirements.

Does that mean that they get to exercise their religious liberties, but if you are a business that has, what, Christian-held beliefs, then you are going to lose those beliefs?

This is insanity. We have to have freedom in this country, and we have to have equal application of justice under the law. That is who we are. It is a good thing. It is what builds us up. That is worth fighting for.

Mr. GOHMERT. That is who we have been. The question now before the Supreme Court is: Is that who we will continue to be?

We know that at least one justice of the Supreme Court seems to think that it is okay for the government to tax you $2,000. Just pay the tax, and then you can observe your religious beliefs, even though it keeps you from providing the great health care that you have been providing.

I will tell you that this is a seminal point in our history. ObamaCare, that decision broke my heart because I thought so much of Chief Justice John Roberts. Then when you read the decision, the decision is so poorly written, so pitifully reasoned, so hypocritical within the decision itself.

Yes, it is a penalty, so we have got jurisdiction, and now that we have got jurisdiction, it is a tax, so it is constitutional. I mean, it is totally at odds with itself.

Now, we are to this place. Is a majority of the Supreme Court going to say: Pilgrims, Roger Williams, all of you that brought us to the place where the freest, most successful country in the history of the world, those freedoms that you saw, that you prayed for, they are going away because now, since the government has the power to tax, it will have the power to destroy your religions?

As the gentlelady points out, why stop with $2,000? Once the Supreme Court says this government has the power to tax you to observe your religious beliefs, why not $10,000, why not $20,000, why not $50,000?

Mrs. BACHMANN. Well, remember that the tax to express your religious beliefs is $36,500 per employee. The tax is $2,000 per employee if you decide you are not going to purchase health insurance, so it is extremely expensive.

I think the gentleman is raising an excellent point because to where do the people of this country repair? If we have a President who many believe is no longer following the Constitution of the United States under article II with the limitations of power or if we look at the Supreme Court and the Supreme Court justices themselves are not rendering opinions that are within the Constitution of the United States, what do the people do?

The Constitution provides for impeachment for justices. There is impeachment provided for the President of the United States. That is an option, but those are options of last resort.

I think what we are trying to do is appeal to the justices, to think of the people, think of the oath they took to the Constitution. Don't consider that, every time you meet in the Supreme Court, that you are in a new open constitutional convention.

It isn't a constitutional convention where the justices have a free pen and a phone, so to speak, and can rewrite the Constitution.

We are appealing to the justices to limit themselves under the Constitution and observe that the First Amendment has been ironclad since James Madison wrote it.

We are here on this floor today saying we stand with James Madison, we stand with the people of this country, and we are not, for one moment, going to allow anyone to attack any American's religious liberties and freedoms.

Mr. GOHMERT. Well, chains can be figuratively applied—figuratively applied when someone taxes because a tax hung around the neck is a burden. It is a chain. It is an albatross. It can be devastating, as some people have found out.

□ 1600

Mr. GOHMERT. Going back to this morning, as I mentioned, I am a member admitted to practice before the Supreme Court. It is a great honor, back when I was a real lawyer. There is seating in front of the bar for the members of the Supreme Court Bar, so those were full. So there is an overflow room where we listened to the audio but obviously don't get to see what is going on.

I was just listening to the argument, the oral argument audibly, without the benefit of being able to see which Justice asked which question. I don't know that I will be able to forget the premise of an educated Supreme Court Justice, almost rhetorically, asking: Why don't you just pay the $2,000? She didn't say this, but pay the $2,000 so you can practice your firmly held religious beliefs. That is what her question amounted to.

Mrs. BACHMANN. Did she say the $2,000 or $36,500?

Mr. GOHMERT. She pointed out the $2,000.

Mrs. BACHMANN. What she was saying is: Don't provide health insurance for your employees. Just push your employees out in the cold. They can sit on the curb. They won't have employer-sponsored insurance—which, by the way, has zero tax consequence to the employee. They have no tax consequences.

Under ObamaCare, every American is forced to buy a product whether they want it or not, even if they can't necessarily afford it. So then people now under ObamaCare have to go buy a product that the government dictates to them they have to buy at a price that the government dictates that they have to pay. So either they get health insurance with no tax consequence or they have to buy their health insurance with after-tax income, money that they have already paid taxes on. Now they are going to get double-hurt under ObamaCare.

So, what the President wins, the American people lose. That is our choice. The President wins; the American people lose—financially, freedom, most importantly in this case, religious liberty, and that is not acceptable under our constitutional guarantee of liberty.

I don't care who it is, because the Magna Carta taught King John at Runnymede that no man is above the law, especially the King, because that is who you have to worry about. It is no different in the United States of America. No man is to be above the law, including the President of the United States. He can't just change a law with the stroke of a pen or with a telephone call. He's not allowed to under our system of justice, but he also is not within his power to deny anyone their religious liberty rights.

Mr. GOHMERT. The gentlewoman makes a great point. But unfortunately or fortunately, depending on your point of view, the Founders created so much in the way of checks and balances to prevent the government from abusing the power, as the gentlewoman points out.

If the Congress will not protect its own powers, as we have not, the Senate has been very protective of the President's executive orders that usurped our power. They have gladly handed over power.

I was shocked to hear in this very room, as the President spoke from this podium, a standing ovation from most of the people on this side of the aisle when the President, in effect, said: If you don't change the law, I will. And they stand and applaud a President who says, in effect: I am going to usurp even more of the legislative power given to Congress under article 1 than I have already taken.

It is staggering to hear that applauded. It is also staggering to me to

see the Senate has a body, in effect, protecting the President's usurpation of our power. That is one check, one balance.

Mrs. BACHMANN. I was here in the Chamber with the gentleman. I saw and observed exactly what you said, that our colleagues across the aisle stood up and applauded. That is a constitutional crisis. As we are having this discussion today, we are in the midst of a constitutional crisis with a President who is aggregating to himself powers that are not constitutionally his. He is rendering also, taking away and denying constitutional liberties to the American people in terms of freedom of speech, expression, and religious liberty.

It is interesting, too, with all due respect to our colleagues across the aisle, they are applauding becoming dinosaurs when the President of the United States decides that he will also be Congress and he will also write the laws.

Thank you very much. I don't need your help. I am going to do what I want to do.

Why in the world would any Member of this body who has an election certificate applaud that now they get to become a dinosaur? Now they are no longer relevant. We might as well dispense with the cost of elections altogether and go home and revert to what King George III wanted in the first place, which is a total and complete and absolute government with one person calling all the shots. That isn't our form of government.

Mr. GOHMERT. Well, I was shocked that one of the Justices asked the question, basically: How can or does a corporation exercise religious freedom?

You know, this Justice knows that the Justice Department has indicted corporations charging criminal intent, intent to violate the law, and yet she cannot figure out how a corporation could have intent to violate the law but could not have intent to have religiously held beliefs. That was a bit staggering to me to hear that question: How can a corporation exercise religious beliefs?

Mrs. BACHMANN. She also fails to understand that the Federal Government again is practicing censorship and that the Federal Government is the one forcing its vision of morality and religious belief on every American. Again, that is government-enforced coercive speech and morality and religious expression. That is also contained in that remarkable premise of the Supreme Court Justice.

Mr. GOHMERT. Well, it is remarkable. Again, the Justice, if I heard her correctly, just advocated, well, just drop the insurance. Drop the insurance. This company is providing great insurance, as the gentlewoman pointed out, and her point was not made because time is so limited. I know Paul Clement knows, but that is such a huge benefit to the employee.

There was discussion by the Supreme Court about benefits to the employee. Well, gee, you can raise their salaries and make up the difference, when actually you may have to raise that salary an extra third in order to cover the cost that is pretax to the employee. So the employee is getting hammered when they just, as this Justice appeared to callously advocate, just drop the insurance, pay the $2,000 tax penalty. Congress said ''penalty''; they said ''penalty'' and ''tax,'' take your pick. Either way, they were advocating harming the employee.

Mrs. BACHMANN. Sixteen thousand employees of one company.

Mr. GOHMERT. Harming 16,000 employees as a way to deal with an unconstitutional act.

Mrs. BACHMANN. By the way, isn't it true, if the gentleman recalls, that while this Supreme Court Justice was just advocating, in a flippant way, drop health insurance coverage for over 16,000 employees, doesn't that same Supreme Court Justice enjoy Federal employee health insurance? And isn't that same Supreme Court Justice protected from not going into ObamaCare?

It seems to me that our President is not in ObamaCare nor are the Supreme Court Justices in ObamaCare. It seems to me that there is a shield of protection for them. It is good enough for the American people to suffer under ObamaCare, but I don't believe our President or the Supreme Court Justices have to be in ObamaCare.

Mr. GOHMERT. That is my recollection. And some of us were pushing for and asking our leadership why don't we do an amendment that will make sure the Supreme Court has to be under ObamaCare. I really think that would have been the more appropriate thing to do. In fact, I still think it is the appropriate thing to do.

It is hard to know, since Congress was not given a chance to see what the Supreme Court was doing and who was asking what questions, but it sure seems like since they feel so strongly about ObamaCare, that they really should have the chance to experience it firsthand and just find out how wonderful it is.

Mrs. BACHMANN. I would like to share my experience with it, because as Members of Congress we were forced to go into ObamaCare. The only exchange we were allowed to go in was the one here in Washington, D.C. It is called a small business link. The only small business is Congress, the government. We are the ones put in.

Just for the record, my own individual premium increased for the same number of people in our family that we would have to cover. Our premium was scheduled to increase times four. So we would have had to increase our premium by four times, and our deductible was quadrupled. That also went up four times. So there was no Affordable Care Act in our family. It is an extremely unaffordable health insurance act.

I would be curious to know if the Supreme Court Justices would voluntarily put themselves in ObamaCare so they, too, could know the pleasure of what it is to pay four times more for the same health insurance than my family paid last year.

Mr. GOHMERT. One of the Justices appeared to point out, apparently, that an agency is the one that established so many of these things. So the question arises, since an agency can say your insurance policy must provide this medicine, this medicine, not this medicine, this medicine, have we given unelected bureaucrats the power to determine what your religious beliefs firmly held include? Because under ObamaCare, an agency says: Your religious rights must yield to our unelected bureaucratic decision that this medication must be included; therefore, your First Amendment rights yield to our unelected bureaucratic agency rights to decide what your religious rights have to include and what they don't.

Mrs. BACHMANN. That is exactly right. That is government-enforced coercion on religious belief. It varies at caprice and whim. That is one thing under the rule of law that has been a pillar of American exceptionalism, the fact that under the rule of law there is certainty for the American people. If you look at the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution, you knew with certainty when you woke up tomorrow morning that your religious liberties were intact. Now, apparently, today, the gentleman was in the Chamber and heard that, according to at least one Supreme Court Justice, in her opinion, they aren't so certain anymore.

It is not only the election of the Court, but at the election of the unnamed bureaucrat who decides today we will have these killer drugs that we mandate. Tomorrow what drugs will they take off the list? Will I not get lifesaving drugs that I would need to get? Will I not get lifesaving treatments that I thought I was going get? Will the bureaucrats decide that only politically connected best friends of the administration get certain surgical procedures or get to see the best doctors? We don't know, because apparently the Supreme Court has decided that the bureaucracy must be fully imbued with all power.

That means again that the President and his administration wins their religious liberty and the right to force their religious views down the throats of the American people. While the President wins, the American people lose, and they lose under the protections of the Constitution. It is unlike anything we have ever seen before in the history of the United States of America. It is a seminal day in Washington, D.C., and it is why the American people better wake up really quickly and watch what is happening, because we are living in a country we no longer recognize. It is being rewritten by unelected bureaucrats. It is being rewritten by Supreme Court Justices who apparently think that the

amendments in the Constitution are optional rather than mandatory.

Mr. GOHMERT. Well, God bless Justices Antonin Scalia, Clarence Thomas. I didn't hear Justice Thomas ask questions. He normally doesn't. It is extraordinary to spend time with Justice Thomas. You find out rather quickly just how really brilliant he is.

□ 1615

He didn't need affirmative action to get him into Yale Law School—or Harvard, as he was accepted to, but at the time thought was too conservative.

Justice Scalia took on the Government's position. The Government's attorney stood up and basically said if a corporation is for profit, no matter how religiously convicted the holders of that are, they have no right to religious beliefs. Scalia took him on and said there has never been a case.

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

REPORT ON RESOLUTION PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 1459, ENSURING PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT IN THE CREATION OF NATIONAL MONUMENTS ACT

Mr. BISHOP of Utah (during the Special Order of Mr. GOHMERT), from the Committee on Rules, submitted a privileged report (Rept. No. 113–385) on the resolution (H. Res. 524) providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 1459) to ensure that the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 applies to the declaration of national monuments, and for other purposes, and providing for consideration of motions to suspend the rules, which was referred to the House Calendar and ordered to be printed.

THE PRICE IS WRONG

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2013, the gentlewoman from California (Ms. SPEIER) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

Ms. SPEIER. Mr. Speaker, I thank you for the opportunity to address the House tonight on what is called the Defense Logistics Agency, something probably not many people have heard about. The DLA is like a big hardware store in the Department of Defense.

About 30 years ago, we heard horrific stories about wasteful spending of taxpayers' dollars being spent: $436 on a hammer, $7,600 on coffee makers, and $640 for toilet seats. We all thought, Well, it has been taken care of. Well, not so fast.

I am showing you right now what is a plumbing elbow. At the local hardware store, this elbow sells for $1.41. But the taxpayers of this country spent $80 to a defense contractor that charged us that much money for this elbow.

How about a box of washers? At the local hardware store, we as individuals would pay something like $1.22 for this box of washers. What did the taxpayers of this country pay a defense contractor for a box of washers? How about $196.50?

So that issue that was around some 30 years ago is still with us today. It is time for the House of Representatives and for the Armed Services Committee to hold a hearing on why it is that the Defense Logistics Agency, our hardware store that is responsible for putting together good pricing on spare parts, is being overturned and overlooked by defense contractors and persons within the Department of Defense who would rather go outside and pay triple, quadruple, 100 percent more, or 200 percent more.

We are going to play a game tonight on C–SPAN called ''The Price Is Wrong,'' and see what we are talking about here. And if for 1 minute you think that we are talking about small potatoes, we are not talking about small potatoes. We are talking about a lot of money.

The Defense Department has so many excess spare parts, they have disposed of—thrown away—$15 billion in excess parts and materials in just the last 3 years. There is about $96 billion worth of spare parts inventory right now in the Defense hardware agency coffers.

So why would we ever go outside the internal hardware store to buy parts?

Well, some argue that it is faster or it is cheaper to go outside. Audits have revealed instances when the military had enough of certain parts that they would last 100 years—and they are still going outside of the Defense Logistics Agency. That is the equivalent of having spare parts that include horseshoes for a cavalry. If we were looking back in time today, that is 100 years of spare parts. The likelihood of these parts being used completely over 100 years is not so likely.

You might say, Well, maybe it is difficult for the Defense Department to figure out where their spare parts are and how much they are and how much they cost. Well, that is not correct. In fact, the Department of Defense has the resources and the databases to check the accuracy of these prices. The auditor found these overcharges by using the Department of Defense's own database. So this is no more than a click on a mouse to find out, one, whether the part is in stock and, two, how much it costs.

Well, let's start this game. The first game we are going to play is called ''Flip Flop.'' It is a game where the numbers are scrambled.

I am going to start with the gate assembly in this picture here. This is what it looks like. It is a little bit larger than a quarter. Ramp gate roller assembly. It is used for the Chinook helicopters.

You can buy this at a local hardware store for about $3.50, but because this is the military and we want the very best quality, the DLA sells this part for $7.71.

So the question is, What did the Army pay for this gate assembly? Did they pay $7.71 cents? No, they didn't pay that.

Did they pay $77.01?

No, they didn't pay that either.

Did they pay $771 for this little gate assembly part?

No.

For this ramp gate roller assembly they paid $1,678.61.

That is obscene, and that shouldn't be happening in the Department of Defense or anywhere in the Federal Government. The taxpayers should not be ripped off in that manner.

In ''The Price Is Wrong,'' taxpayers always lose because the Defense Department consistently pays too much, yet defense contractors consistently win.

So we are going to play the next game, which is ''That's Too Much.'' See what happens again when the military thinks that they can get something faster and cheaper by not going to the Defense Logistics Agency, our in-house hardware store.

This is a bearing sleeve. Let's see what we paid for this. Did we pay $6? That is what it would cost at our local defense hardware store. No, we didn't pay $6.

Was $86 too much to spend for that bearing sleeve?

No, $86 wasn't too much.

How about $286? Was that too much to pay?

No, that wasn't too much to pay either.

We paid $2,286 for a bearing sleeve that cost $6 at the Defense Department's Defense Logistics Agency.

So that is what we are dealing with here—a rip-off of the taxpayers.

The truth of the matter is that the Defense Department didn't just buy one of these bearing sleeves that we just bought one of here this evening. They bought 573 of these bearing sleeves—not for $6, not for $86, but for $2,286. And let me do the math for you. That is $1.3 million in overpayments for just these 573 bearing sleeves.

Next, we are going to talk about a spur gear for the Chinook helicopter. This is what it looks like. It is this tiny little thing smaller than a quarter. This is what is used in Chinook helicopters. We have lots of them in the DLA. But, again, they didn't want to go to the DLA, our hardware store, to actually purchase this.

They would have paid $12.51 if they had gone to the hardware store within the Department. No, they didn't want to do that.

So was $125 too much to pay for that spur gear?

No, that wasn't too much.

In fact, they were willing to pay $644.75 for this little rubberized spur gear. It was 34 times the fair and reasonable price.

So, again, why are we doing something like this? Why are we allowing the taxpayer dollars to be flushed down the toilet by not paying what is the normal price for these spare parts?

The last part is a flush door ring. Look at this. This is a pen next to it so

you can see this is a pretty small part. It is smaller than a pen the contracting officer would have used to sign off on the price. The DLA sells this part for $8.37.

Did we pay $83.37 for this product?

No, we didn't pay $83.37. That wasn't too much.

What we did pay, though, was $284.46 for this flush ring—34 times the fair and reasonable price. For that price you could go to dinner, a movie, and rent a hotel room.

Which brings me, I guess, to our last game, ''The Showcase Showdown'' on ''The Price Is Wrong.'' Much like ''The Price Is Right,'' we have this final showcase and we are going to compare two packages and guess which one costs more.

The first showcase is two ramp gate roller assemblies. This was the very first thing that we showed you earlier. Here it is. This is the item that cost $7.71.

So the question is, which costs more as a package, two ramp gate roller assemblies or a trip to Paris, France? It includes airfare and 4 nights in a four-star hotel for two adults. Which one do we think costs more?

Well, you have probably figured out that we in fact paid more for the ramp gate roller assembly, times two, than you would have paid for a trip to Paris France. The Army paid $3,357.22 for these two parts, while the trip to Paris is only $2,681.

So what are we doing here? How many more studies have to be done for us to make a serious attempt to clean up the spare parts issue in the Department of Defense?

Very recently—in fact, it just came out in February of this year—the inspector general for the Department of Defense put out this report entitled, ''Air Force Lifecycle Management Center Could Not Identify Actual Costs of F–119 Engine Spare Parts Purchased From Pratt and Whitney.''

Can it get any more embarrassing than that? Not only are we spending extraordinary sums of money on spare parts and not using the internal hardware agency that we have, but in an inspector general's report, the Air Force can't even figure out how much it paid for the initial spare parts.

So I would close, Mr. Speaker, by saying that we have a lot to do. The Army overpaid Boeing $13 million recently, but the Pentagon only recovered $2.6 million.

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It included paying twice the fair and reasonable price for kits, overpaid $16,000 for a structural support that should have only cost about $1,300.

So, all right, we overpaid; they overcharged. What happened next? Well, after the IG exposed the rip-off that had occurred, what did we do? Was that defense contractor kicked out?

No, I am sorry to say that what happened was the Air Force gave this contractor a new contract to oversee the supply chain contract. That is like giving the fox a contract to guard the chicken house.

I don't like playing this game any more than I think the taxpayers do; and it is not a game, it is truly a disaster, and it is one that we, as Members of the House of Representatives, have to clean up.

So I will continue to make the public aware of these kinds of overpayments until we fix the system. Stay tuned for the next show, ''The Price Is Wrong.''

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

ENROLLED BILL SIGNED

Karen L. Haas, Clerk of the House, reported and found truly enrolled a bill of the House of the following title, which were thereupon signed by the Speaker:

H.R. 3771. An act to accelerate the income tax benefits for charitable cash contributions for the relief of victims of the Typhoon Haiyan in the Philippines.

ADJOURNMENT

Ms. SPEIER. Mr. Speaker, I move that the House do now adjourn.

The motion was agreed to; accordingly (at 4 o'clock and 31 minutes p.m.), under its previous order, the House adjourned until tomorrow, Wednesday, March 26, 2014, at 10 a.m. for morning-hour debate.

EXECUTIVE COMMUNICATIONS, ETC.

Under clause 2 of rule XIV, executive communications were taken from the Speaker's table and referred as follows:

5057. A letter from the Director, Joint Staff, Department of Defense, transmitting a letter regarding a report on the construction requirements related to antiterrorism and force protection or urban training; to the Committee on Armed Services.

5058. A letter from the Under Secretary, Department of Defense, transmitting the semi-annual status report of the U.S. Chemical Demilitarization Program for March 2014; to the Committee on Armed Services.

5059. A letter from the Acting Deputy Secretary, Department of Defense, transmitting a letter regarding recommendations to the Military Compensation and Retirement Modernization Commission; to the Committee on Armed Services.

5060. A letter from the Secretary, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting the Department's Community Services Block Grant Report to Congress for Fiscal Year 2010; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

5061. A letter from the Assistant Secretary for Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting a report on gifts given by the United States to foreign individuals for Fiscal Year 2013, pursuant to 22 U.S.C. 2694(2); to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

5062. A letter from the Assistant Secretary, Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting the Department's determination and certification under Section 490(b)(1)(A) of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 relating to the top five exporting and importing countries of pseudoephedrine and ephedrine; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

5063. A letter from the Chairman, Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting Transmittal of D.C. Act 20-300, ''Classroom Animal for Educational Purposes Clarification Temporary Amendment Act of 2014''; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

5064. A letter from the Associate General Counsel for General Law, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting two reports pursuant to the Federal Vacancies Reform Act of 1998; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

5065. A letter from the Auditor, Office of the District of Columbia Auditor, transmitting a report entitled, ''Audit of the Administration of District Funds to the D.C. Children and Youth Investment Trust Corporation''; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

5066. A letter from the Staff Director, Sentencing Commission, transmitting report on the compliance of the federal district courts with documentation submission requirements on sentencing, pursuant to 28 U.S.C. 994(w)(1); to the Committee on the Judiciary.

5067. A letter from the Paralegal Specialist, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Airworthiness Directives; Bombardier, Inc. Airplanes [Docket No.: FAA-2013-0687; Directorate Identifier 2012-NM-118-AD; Amendment 39-17767; AD 2014-04-08] (RIN: 2120-AA64) received March 14, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

5068. A letter from the Paralegal Specialist, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Airworthiness Directives; Agusta S.p.A. Helicopters [Docket No.: FAA-2014-0035; Directorate Identifier 2013-SW-036-AD; Amendment 39-17734; AD 2014-02-06] (RIN: 2120-AA64) received March 14, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

5069. A letter from the Paralegal Specialist, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Airworthiness Directives; The Boeing Company Airplanes [Docket No.: FAA-2013-0547; Directorate Identifier 2013-NM-028-AD; Amendment 39-17758; AD 2014-03-21] (RIN: 2120-AA64) received March 14, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

5070. A letter from the Paralegal Specialist, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Airworthiness Directives; Turbomeca S.A. Turboshaft Engines [Docket No.: FAA-2013-0381; Directorate Identifier 2013-NE-16-AD; Amendment 39-17764; AD 2014-04-06] (RIN: 2120-AA64) received March 14, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

5071. A letter from the Paralegal Specialist, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Establishment of Class E Airspace; Central, AK [Docket No.: FAA-2013-0017; Airspace Docket No. 13-AAL-1] received March 14, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

5072. A letter from the Paralegal Specialist, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Establishment of Class E Airspace; Brevig Mission, AK [Docket No.: FAA-2012-0078; Airspace Docket No. 12-AAL-1] received March 14, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

5073. A letter from the Paralegal Specialist, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Revocation of Class E Airspace; Leesburg, VA

[Docket No.: FAA-2014-0085; Airspace Docket No. 14-AEA-2] received March 14, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

5074. A letter from the Paralegal Specialist, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Amendment of Class E Airspace; Burnet, TX [Docket No.: FAA-2013-0594; Airspace Docket No. 13-ASW-14] received March 14, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

5075. A letter from the Paralegal Specialist, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Establishment of Class E Airspace; Eagle, AK [Docket No.: FAA-2013-0777; Airspace Docket No. 12-AAL-16] received March 14, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

5076. A letter from the Paralegal Specialist, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Airworthiness Directives; Cessna Aircraft Company Airplanes [Docket No.: FAA-2011-0562; Directorate Identifier 2011-CE-015-AD; Amendment 39-17740; AD 2014-03-03] (RIN: 2120-AA64) received March 14, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

5077. A letter from the National Ombudsman and Assistant Administrator for Regulatory Enforcement Fairness, Small Business Administration, transmitting the National Ombudsman's Annual Report to Congress for Fiscal Year 2012; to the Committee on Small Business.

5078. A letter from the Board, Railroad Retirement Board, transmitting Congressional Justification of Budget Estimates for Fiscal Year 2015, including the Performance Plan, pursuant to 45 U.S.C. 231f(f); jointly to the Committees on Appropriations, Transportation and Infrastructure, and Ways and Means.

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES ON PUBLIC BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

Under clause 2 of rule XIII, reports of committees were delivered to the Clerk for printing and reference to the proper calendar, as follows:

Mr. SHUSTER: Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure. H.R. 4005. A bill to authorize appropriations for the Coast Guard for fiscal years 2015 and 2016, and for other purposes; with an amendment (Rept. 113–384). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

Mr. BISHOP of Utah: Committee on Rules. House Resolution 524. Resolution providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 1459) to ensure that the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 applies to the declaration of national monuments, and for other purposes, and providing for consideration of motions to suspend the rules (Rept. 113–385). Referred to the House Calendar.

PUBLIC BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

Under clause 2 of rule XII, public bills and resolutions of the following titles were introduced and severally referred, as follows:

By Mr. MATHESON (for himself and Mr. KING of New York):

H.R. 4290. A bill to amend the Public Health Service Act to reauthorize the Emergency Medical Services for Children Program; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. ROGERS of Michigan (for himself, Mr. MILLER of Florida, Mr. CONAWAY, Mr. KING of New York, Mr. LOBIONDO, Mr. NUNES, Mr. WESTMORELAND, Mrs. BACHMANN, Mr. POMPEO, Mr. RUPPERSBERGER, Mr. THOMPSON of California, Mr. LANGEVIN, and Ms. SEWELL of Alabama):

H.R. 4291. A bill to amend the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act of 1978 to prohibit the bulk collection of call detail records, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Intelligence (Permanent Select), and in addition to the Committee on the Judiciary, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. CHABOT (for himself, Mr. CONYERS, Mr. GOODLATTE, and Mr. COHEN):

H.R. 4292. A bill to amend chapter 97 of title 28, United States Code, to clarify the exception to foreign sovereign immunity set forth in section 1605(a)(3) of such title; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. CRAMER (for himself and Mrs. LUMMIS):

H.R. 4293. A bill to authorize the approval of natural gas pipelines and establish deadlines and expedite permits for certain natural gas gathering lines on Federal land and Indian land; to the Committee on Natural Resources, and in addition to the Committee on Agriculture, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. CROWLEY:

H.R. 4294. A bill to amend part A of title IV of the Social Security Act to exclude child care from the determination of the 5-year limit on assistance under the temporary assistance for needy families program, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Ways and Means, and in addition to the Committee on Education and the Workforce, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Ms. NORTON:

H.R. 4295. A bill to direct the Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration to collect and maintain data on the number of sexual assaults that occur on aircraft during flights in passenger air transportation, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

By Mr. SABLAN:

H.R. 4296. A bill to amend Public Law 94-241 with respect to the Northern Mariana Islands; to the Committee on Natural Resources, and in addition to the Committee on the Judiciary, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. WILLIAMS:

H.R. 4297. A bill to authorize a land exchange involving Fort Hood, Texas, and the City of Copperas Cove, Texas, to support the city's efforts to improve arterial transportation routes in the vicinity of Fort Hood and to promote economic development; to the Committee on Armed Services.

By Mr. ROGERS of Alabama (for himself, Mr. POE of Texas, and Mr. HECK of Washington):

H. Con. Res. 94. Concurrent resolution expressing the sense of Congress that the President should hold the Russian Federation accountable for being in material breach of its obligations under the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs, and in addition to the Committee on Armed Services, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. HUDSON:

H. Con. Res. 95. Concurrent resolution expressing the sense of Congress regarding support for voluntary, incentive-based, private land conservation implemented through cooperation with local soil and water conservation districts; to the Committee on Natural Resources.

By Mrs. MCMORRIS RODGERS:

H. Res. 523. A resolution electing a Member to certain standing committees of the House of Representatives; considered and agreed to.

CONSTITUTIONAL AUTHORITY STATEMENT

Pursuant to clause 7 of rule XII of the Rules of the House of Representatives, the following statements are submitted regarding the specific powers granted to Congress in the Constitution to enact the accompanying bill or joint resolution.

By Mr. MATHESON:

H.R. 4290.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 3

By Mr. ROGERS of Michigan:

H.R. 4291.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

The intelligence and intelligence-related activities of the United States government including those under Title 50 and the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act of 1978, as amended, are carried out to support the national security interests of the United States, to support and assist the armed forces of the United States, and to support the President in the execution of the foreign policy of the United States.

Article I, section 8 of the Constitution of the United States provides, in pertinent part, that ''Congress shall have power . . . to pay the debts and provide for the common defense and general welfare of the United States''; ''. . . to raise and support armies . . .''; ''to constitute Tribunals inferior to the supreme Court''; and ''To make all laws which shall be necessary and proper for carrying into Execution the foregoing Powers and all other Powers vested in this Constitution in the Government of the United States, or in any Department or Officer thereof.''

By Mr. CHABOT:

H.R. 4292.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

The constitutional authority on which this legislation is based is found in article I, section 8, clause 9; article III, section 1, clause 1; and article III, section 2, clause 2, of the Constitution, which grant Congress authority over federal courts.

By Mr. CRAMER:

H.R. 4293.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

The constitutional authority on which this bill rests is the power of Congress to make Rules and Regulations respecting the Territory or other Property belonging to the United States, as enumerated in Article 4, Section 3, Clause 2, of the United States Constitution.

By Mr. CROWLEY:

H.R. 4294.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8 of the U.S. Constitution

By Ms. NORTON:

H.R. 4295.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

clause 3 of N section 8 of article I of the Constitution.

By Mr. SABLAN:

H.R. 4296.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Under Article IV, Section 3, Clause 2 of the Constitution, Congress shall have Power to dispose of and make all needful Rules and Regulations respecting the Territory or other Property belonging to the United States; and nothing in this Constitution shall be so construed as to Prejudice any Claims of the United States, or of any particular State.

By Mr. WILLIAMS:

H.R. 4297.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article IV, Section 3 of the United States Constitution, which pertains to managerial authority over property.

ADDITIONAL SPONSORS

Under clause 7 of rule XII, sponsors were added to public bills and resolutions, as follows:

H.R. 6: Mr. STIVERS.
H.R. 494: Mr. MCNERNEY.
H.R. 498: Mr. SCHNEIDER.
H.R. 503: Mr. LATHAM.
H.R. 508: Mr. REICHERT.
H.R. 676: Ms. HAHN.
H.R. 710: Mr. LOWENTHAL.
H.R. 713: Mr. RICHMOND.
H.R. 721: Mrs. CAPITO.
H.R. 725: Mr. TIERNEY.
H.R. 808: Mr. CLEAVER, Mr. CLAY, and Ms. JACKSON LEE.
H.R. 820: Mr. RYAN of Ohio.
H.R. 921: Mr. MURPHY of Florida.
H.R. 942: Ms. CLARKE of New York, Mr. BLUMENAUER, Mr. GIBSON, Mr. GUTHRIE, Mr. POCAN, Mrs. BACHMANN, and Mr. MCALLISTER.
H.R. 1024: Ms. KAPTUR.
H.R. 1091: Mr. HUDSON, Mr. CHAFFETZ, Mr. SHUSTER, and Mr. CAMP.
H.R. 1125: Mr. BISHOP of Georgia and Ms. LORETTA SANCHEZ of California.
H.R. 1180: Mr. MEEKS, Mr. LARSON of Connecticut, and Mr. TAKANO.
H.R. 1199: Ms. CLARK of Massachusetts, Mr. CASTRO of Texas, and Mr. KENNEDY.
H.R. 1209: Mr. GIBSON.
H.R. 1249: Mr. VALADAO.
H.R. 1250: Mr. COLE.
H.R. 1252: Mr. RICHMOND.
H.R. 1278: Mr. CÁRDENAS.
H.R. 1281: Mr. PASCRELL.
H.R. 1291: Mr. TIERNEY.
H.R. 1313: Mr. JOYCE.
H.R. 1362: Mr. KILMER.
H.R. 1461: Ms. GRANGER, Mr. HOLDING, and Mr. DESANTIS
H.R. 1462: Mr. HOLDING and Mr. RIGELL.
H.R. 1528: Mr. SCHNEIDER, Ms. CHU, and Mr. BISHOP of Georgia.
H.R. 1563: Mr. DENHAM.
H.R. 1573: Mr. JONES and Mr. PETERS of California.
H.R. 1738: Mr. LOWENTHAL, Ms. HAHN, and Mr. GUTIÉRREZ.
H.R. 1761: Mr. LOWENTHAL.
H.R. 1812: Mr. OWENS.
H.R. 1827: Mr. DOYLE.
H.R. 1843: Mr. TIERNEY.
H.R. 1851: Mr. CÁRDENAS.
H.R. 2001: Mr. SIRES.
H.R. 2012: Mr. QUIGLEY.
H.R. 2028: Ms. CHU.
H.R. 2041: Mr. AUSTIN SCOTT of Georgia.
H.R. 2315: Mr. KING of New York.
H.R. 2366: Mr. KELLY of Pennsylvania, Mr. ROHRABACHER, Mr. TURNER, Mr. JONES, Mr. BURGESS, Mr. LANKFORD, Mr. CHABOT, Mr. FLEMING, Mr. BOUSTANY, Mr. ROGERS of Alabama, Mr. HARPER, Mr. TERRY, Mr. TIPTON, Mr. PRICE of Georgia, Mr. CRAMER, Mr. GARDNER, Mr. SMITH of Texas, Mr. BUTTERFIELD, Ms. MOORE, Mr. YOUNG of Alaska, and Mr. RUSH.
H.R. 2480: Mr. ENYART.
H.R. 2509: Ms. MOORE.
H.R. 2529: Mr. O'ROURKE.
H.R. 2537: Mr. AUSTIN SCOTT of Georgia.
H.R. 2548: Mr. STIVERS.
H.R. 2619: Mr. DEFAZIO.
H.R. 2690: Mr. HASTINGS of Florida, Mr. HONDA, and Ms. CASTOR of Florida.
H.R. 2692: Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas, Ms. SCHWARTZ, and Mr. FATTAH.
H.R. 2794: Mr. LAMBORN.
H.R. 2835: Mr. GRAVES of Missouri.
H.R. 2839: Mr. TIERNEY.
H.R. 2955: Mr. TIERNEY.
H.R. 2996: Mr. LATTA.
H.R. 2997: Mr. CHAFFETZ.
H.R. 3116: Mrs. ELLMERS and Mr. DUNCAN of Tennessee.
H.R. 3135: Ms. HAHN and Mr. TIERNEY.
H.R. 3240: Mr. DENHAM.
H.R. 3322: Ms. MATSUI.
H.R. 3367: Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania and Mr. TIBERI.
H.R. 3395: Mr. MICHAUD.
H.R. 3397: Mr. MURPHY of Florida.
H.R. 3408: Mr. HOLDING.
H.R. 3485: Mr. COTTON.
H.R. 3530: Mr. LOWENTHAL.
H.R. 3543: Mr. TAKANO.
H.R. 3560: Mr. POCAN.
H.R. 3658: Ms. SCHWARTZ, Mr. GERLACH, Ms. FRANKEL of Florida, Mr. PAULSEN, Mr. FARR, Mr. REED, Mr. BRIDENSTINE, Mr. KLINE, and Ms. SINEMA.
H.R. 3678: Mr. TIERNEY, Mr. PASCRELL, Mr. CUMMINGS, Mr. NADLER, Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas, Ms. NORTON, Mr. DOYLE, Mrs. NAPOLITANO, Mr. COBLE, and Mr. BISHOP of New York.
H.R. 3698: Mr. CARTWRIGHT.
H.R. 3712: Mr. O'ROURKE and Mr. CICILLINE.
H.R. 3774: Mr. DEFAZIO.
H.R. 3836: Mr. BARROW of Georgia, Ms. CASTOR of Florida, and Mr. AUSTIN SCOTT of Georgia.
H.R. 3852: Ms. CHU and Mr. WAXMAN.
H.R. 3963: Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia, Ms. SLAUGHTER, Mr. HASTINGS of Florida, Mr. HONDA, Mr. KEATING, Ms. HANABUSA, and Ms. BROWN of Florida.
H.R. 3970: Mr. BRADY of Pennsylvania and Ms. TSONGAS.
H.R. 3978: Mr. NEAL, Mr. ELLISON, Mrs. CAPPS, Ms. SHEA-PORTER, Mr. TONKO, Mr. CAPUANO, Mr. CROWLEY, Mr. OWENS, and Mr. BISHOP of New York.
H.R. 3991: Mr. MICHAUD and Mrs. LUMMIS.
H.R. 4016: Mr. MICHAUD.
H.R. 4023: Mr. JONES and Mr. MORAN.
H.R. 4068: Mr. COLLINS of Georgia.
H.R. 4069: Mr. GRIFFIN of Arkansas and Mr. GUTHRIE.
H.R. 4075: Mr. POLIS and Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia.
H.R. 4083: Mr. STIVERS.
H.R. 4098: Mr. MULVANEY.
H.R. 4105: Mr. RANGEL.
H.R. 4111: Mr. COTTON.
H.R. 4139: Mr. LATTA.
H.R. 4143: Mr. DESANTIS.
H.R. 4144: Mr. ISRAEL.
H.R. 4149: Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania.
H.R. 4158: Mr. GOSAR, Mr. HUELSKAMP, Mr. WILLIAMS, Mrs. MILLER of Michigan, and Mr. LONG.
H.R. 4160: Mrs. BACHMANN.
H.R. 4188: Mr. PAULSEN.
H.R. 4205: Mr. LOWENTHAL and Mr. SIRES.
H.R. 4208: Mr. VALADAO, Mr. HONDA, Mr. BERA of California, and Ms. BROWNLEY of California.
H.R. 4214: Ms. MCCOLLUM.
H.R. 4216: Ms. JACKSON LEE, Mr. DAVID SCOTT of Georgia, and Mr. GRIJALVA.
H.R. 4221: Mr. RANGEL and Ms. SLAUGHTER.
H.R. 4227: Ms. MICHELLE LUJAN GRISHAM of New Mexico,
H.R. 4228: Mr. O'ROURKE.
H.R. 4234: Mr. FARENTHOLD, Mr. RUSH, Mr. LOEBSACK, and Ms. NORTON.
H.R. 4277: Ms. GABBARD.
H.R. 4278: Mr. STOCKMAN, Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN, and Mr. MESSER.
H.R. 4286: Mr. CULBERSON.
H.J. Res. 47: Mr. MCINTYRE and Mr. DESJARLAIS.
H. Con. Res. 86: Mr. LATTA.
H. Res. 112: Mr. RIBBLE.
H. Res. 247: Mr. HIGGINS.
H. Res. 254: Mrs. NEGRETE MCLEOD, Mr. YOUNG of Indiana, and Mr. ROSS.
H. Res. 480: Mr. GIBSON and Mr. BISHOP of New York.
H. Res. 494: Mr. MURPHY of Pennsylvania, Mr. LUETKEMEYER, Ms. CHU, Mr. BENTIVOLIO, Mr. BURGESS, and Ms. BROWNLEY of California.
H. Res. 500: Mr. GRIFFITH of Virginia.
H. Res. 519: Ms. SCHWARTZ and Ms. SCHAKOWSKY.

United States of America

Congressional Record

PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES OF THE 113th CONGRESS, SECOND SESSION

Vol. 160 WASHINGTON, TUESDAY, MARCH 25, 2014 No. 47

Senate

The Senate met at 10 a.m. and was called to order by the Honorable CORY A. BOOKER, a Senator from the State of New Jersey.

PRAYER

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

Let us pray.

Eternal God, as the snow falls gently to the Earth, we are reminded of the shifting seasons of our lives. As we continue to look to You for guidance, guide our lives and inspire our hearts.

Today, strengthen our Senators as they deal with unattended needs and unresolved problems. Make them eager to lift burdens, to bring deliverance to captives, and to give hope to the oppressed. May our lawmakers serve humanity in a way that glorifies Your name. Lord, keep them open to a growing faith and a maturing set of convictions.

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, March 25, 2014.

To the Senate:

Under the provisions of rule I, paragraph 3, of the Standing Rules of the Senate, I hereby appoint the Honorable CORY A. BOOKER, a Senator from the State of New Jersey, to perform the duties of the Chair.

PATRICK J. LEAHY,
President pro tempore.

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

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

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

SCHEDULE

Mr. REID. Following my remarks and those of the Republican leader, the Senate will be in a period of morning business for 1 hour. The majority will control the first half, the Republicans the final half. Following morning business, the Senate will resume consideration of the motion to proceed to S. 2124, the Ukraine act. That will be postcloture time.

ORDER OF PROCEDURE

I ask unanimous consent that the Senate recess from 12:30 p.m. until 2:15 p.m. to allow for the weekly caucus meetings and that the time during the recess count postcloture on the Ukraine bill.

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

Mr. REID. Very, very soon we hope to work out an agreement to begin consideration of the bill. Senators will be notified when votes are scheduled. I have spoken this morning to Senator MENENDEZ, chairman of the committee, and I spoke last night to Senator CORKER and Senator MCCAIN. I talked to Senator MCCAIN this morning, and he was going to talk to Senator CORKER. Hopefully, we will move forward very quickly on this legislation.

MEASURE PLACED ON THE CALENDAR—S. 2149

Mr. REID. I am told S. 2149 is due for its second reading and is at the desk.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will read the bill by title for the second time.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 2149) to provide for the extension of certain unemployment benefits, and for other purposes.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I object to any further proceedings with respect to this legislation.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Objection is heard. The bill will be placed on the calendar.

UKRAINE

Mr. REID. Mr. President, last night the Senate took the first steps in supporting the people of Ukraine, sending a clear message to Russia. I am pleased the Senate voted overwhelmingly in a bipartisan fashion to consider this bipartisan bill that was reported to the Senate floor. The measure includes a number of provisions: a loan guarantee, sanctions, and security assistance. This certainly is a step in the right direction. It is not everything, but I certainly applaud the efforts of the Members from both sides of the aisle who have labored diligently to get us this far.

I hope the bipartisan support will continue so we can finish the bill this week and provide the people of Ukraine with the critical support they need while imposing strong sanctions against those in Russia and Ukraine who created this crisis. There is no reason why we can't pass the bill today.

According to all reports, the situation regarding Ukraine is getting worse, not better. Russian troops are seizing facilities in the Crimea. All they have to do is make a phone call. They didn't need to have all the brute force, knocking down doors and injuring people in the process. They have

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

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done this throughout Crimea. The Government of Russia looks foolish. The world community understands that. They are levying foolish retaliatory sanctions, mocking the efforts of the international community to bring about a peaceful and fair resolution to the illegal invasion and the annexation of Crimea.

Yesterday President Obama and other European leaders meeting in The Hague formed a strong, united front in denouncing Russia's unlawful actions against the people of Ukraine. Under President Obama's leadership, the United States, Canada, France, Italy, Japan, Germany, and the United Kingdom took further action by suspending Russia from the G8—as of today it is the G7—and canceling the planned summit in Sochi this summer.

I mentioned those seven countries, but over in Europe yesterday, the President was there with some 42 other nations, all of them looking with an eye toward what Russia had done that was totally contrary to international law. By excluding Russia from the G8, President Obama and our allies have sent the message loudly and clearly that bullying behavior and rhetoric will not go unchallenged. I applaud the efforts of our allies to take a stand against Russia's aggression and welcome their further commitment to hold accountable President Putin and his cronies—and they really are his cronies. If there were ever a thugocracy, this is it. This is a government that is corrupt, and they need to be held accountable for violating international law. This cannot go unnoticed and unretaliated against.

As for action here in the Senate, I look forward to stabilizing Ukraine and imposing new sanctions against Russia by passing the bill that is before us. We should do that today. One way or the other, we need to get it done as quickly as possible.

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 that 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.

UKRAINE

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I wish to start with a few words about the legislation the Senate is considering this week on Ukraine. It touches on the jurisdiction of many committees and is of high interest to Senators on both sides of the aisle. How the United States meets the Russian invasion of Crimea matters. It is related to the future vitality of NATO, the negotiations with Iran over its nuclear program, and our own energy policy regarding the export of natural gas.

We have Members on both sides of the aisle working closely, and there is a decent amount of common ground here, which is good. Nearly everyone agrees the Ukrainian people deserve our support. Most of us also agree we should back up that support with meaningful legislation, not just to show our support for an independent, democratic, and free Ukraine but also to show President Putin there will be costs for his actions.

So one would think it wouldn't be that difficult to get a solution here, but roadblocks keep popping up. First, there was a House-passed bill prior to the recess that would have provided loan guarantees to Ukraine. It was blocked by the majority leader. We should have passed that and sent it to the President. Now the majority leader seems determined to blow up the process too. Yesterday he actually came to the floor to effectively blame the Republicans—believe it or not—for the invasion of Crimea. I mean, who writes this stuff? It is not just completely unhelpful, it also injects hyper-partisanship into the process at a time when we should all actually be working together. At this point it is not at all certain the majority leader might not even make things worse by shutting down the amendment process. I hope that is not where we end up. This issue is way too important for that.

Look, this bill in the Senate cannot pass the House or become law in its current form. It has to be amended. Not only have many Members not yet had a chance to offer amendments in committee, but so many developments have unfolded in this crisis in the weeks since the bill was drafted, the legislation has to be at the least modified to take those realities into account. In order for this bill to become law, the controversial IMF provision must be removed.

This simply cannot be a ''take it or leave it'' situation. That is just nonsensical. The people who sent us here to represent them deserve better. We should give them that. That means allowing a sensible amendment process, and it means dropping the kinds of wild partisan accusations we have seen—attacks that will only make it that much harder to get an effective bipartisan solution.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

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

MORNING BUSINESS

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the Senate will be in a period of morning business for 1 hour, with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each, with the time equally divided and controlled between the two leaders or their designees, with the majority controlling the first half.

The Senator from Illinois.

UKRAINE

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I listened carefully to the comments of the minority leader, Senator MCCONNELL, and he is asking for bipartisanship and quick action on the Ukrainian matter before the Senate today. I agree with him completely.

In fact, it was about 10 days ago when Senator JOHN MCCAIN, on the other side of the aisle, joined with me and six of our colleagues, and we took a late-night flight on a Thursday evening, flew all night long to go to Kiev, Ukraine. We spent the whole day on Friday meeting with government leaders. We had one night in a hotel room and then the next day, Saturday, a whole day of meeting with their leaders as well. Late that night we caught a plane back to Washington, arriving at 5 in the morning.

It was a whirlwind trip but an important one because it came just hours before the Russians staged this phony referendum in Crimea—a referendum that had been condemned by the United Nations Security Council, with the exception of Russia's vote. They voted against the condemnation, which was to be expected. China abstained.

So the question before us is, What can and should the Senate do, and when should it do it? Well, we have a measure before us that passed out of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee. I believe the vote was 14 to 3. I may be mistaken by a vote or two there, but it was a strong bipartisan majority. Senator MENENDEZ then brought it to the floor.

When it came to the floor before our trip to Ukraine, Senator REID offered to bring it to the floor and pass it and do this on a bipartisan basis quickly—just what the Senate minority leader is now asking for—but there was an objection. The objection came from the Senate minority leader's side of the aisle. A Republican Senator objected to moving this bipartisan measure forward quickly. So Senator REID set up the vote that happened yesterday when 78 Members voted in the affirmative to move to this measure. That is a good thing. I hope we can bring it up this week, and if the other side or any Senator has a proposal for an amendment, I hope they won't keep it to themselves and conceal it but bring it forward. Let's talk about it and see if we can amend this measure, change this measure in a constructive fashion, without introducing a lot of amendments which might bog us down in long-term debate.

The Ukrainians are waiting to hear from the United States. What they

want to hear from us is very simple. Are we on their side? Will we stand with them as they resist Russian aggression and the possibility of Russia moving from Crimea into Ukraine proper. This is a legitimate concern in Ukraine.

We met with the governor of Donetsk in the eastern reaches of Ukraine, where there are more Russian-speaking people and perhaps more Russian loyalty than perhaps in other parts of the country, and he is concerned about provocateurs coming in from Russia stirring up the local people in demonstrations. Several people have been killed in the process. They want to see things stabilized and quieted. In order to do that, I think the United States and freedom-loving nations around the world need to stand with Ukraine. This is the purpose of our resolution: to sanction Russia for its aggression in Crimea, to warn them off from any further aggression into Eastern and Southern Ukraine, to provide some basic assistance to Ukraine, and to set up a process where this new government in Ukraine can borrow—underline ''borrow''—money under conditions from the International Monetary Fund to rebuild their economy. It is an economy on the ropes.

The previous leader Yanukovych was loyal to Moscow. People came to the streets and said they felt the government was insensitive to their own feeling that there also should be an attachment to the West and that Ukraine could in fact at least look to the West in terms of its economic future. Yanukovych resisted—demonstrations on the street, hundreds of thousands of people in the Maidan and Kiev, Ukraine, and 103 of those demonstrators gunned down, shot and killed in the streets, by snipers firing from government buildings.

There is a high state of emotion in the Ukraine today, as Yanukovych fled the country and the parliament took control. The new prime minister is a man who, at the age of 39, has an awesome responsibility. He carries the burden of his nation on his shoulders. He came to the United States asking for our help. President Obama met with him. He met with Members of the Senate, and I thought that conversation was positive—moving us forward. Now it is up to the Senate this week to move on this measure. Let's not bog down in partisan debates. Let's not get off on tangents.

One of the issues I think will be brought up in the course of this week is the question of energy, and it is an important question because Putin has to be viewed for what he is today. He is the leader of Russia, and he is trying to save and sustain a failing Soviet franchise. He said: The most disappointing event of the 20th century was the elimination of the Soviet Union. Those were Putin's words. He has this dream of restoring an empire, reaching out to countries which used to be republics of the Soviet Union and members of the Warsaw Pact nations, and trying to bring them back into the Russian fold. We saw it 8 years ago when he invaded Georgia and took territory there.

I have been there. I have seen it. Behind the barbed wire in South Ossetia we see the Russian troops. They are garrisoned trying to protect that region of Georgia which they seized 8 years ago. The same thing is true now in Crimea. This is Putin's idea. If he can't win the hearts and minds of neighboring nations, he will take them over with masked gunmen, Russian soldiers, and energy extortion.

There was a debate in the Senate Foreign Relations Committee about whether or not we can come to the assistance of those surrounding nations being preyed upon by the Russians and Putin—and to do it with assistance through energy. In the last several years we have found an abundance of natural gas in the United States. Somewhat surprisingly, our country, 5 years ago dependent on foreign energy sources, now has a surplus of natural gas.

So the question was raised: Can we transport this gas to these countries, liberating them from dependence on Russia for energy sources? It is a very important question. It is a timely question. But it is one we should view in the context of where we are today.

The good news is companies are moving back to the United States to reestablish manufacturing in our country—good-paying jobs. Why? We have skilled workers, some of the most productive in the world. Secondly, we now have this surplus of natural gas—an important feedstock for manufacturing jobs. With those two elements and transportation costs, we find more companies coming back to the United States, and we need them—in Illinois, in New Jersey, and desperately around the United States.

So the question then is raised—an important question: Would we jeopardize our economic growth, our creation of manufacturing jobs, if we started exporting the natural gas which we have discovered? It is a worthy debate, an important debate. It is one that is really important when we consider the future of building manufacturing jobs in America.

Secondly, we take a look at this natural gas debate, and we have to put it in historic context. Those who say to export, just to sell it, and that it is another commodity, need to put this in historical context. If 5 years ago the United States had gone through a famine, would we be exporting agricultural goods today without concern? I don't think so. We would think twice about it because we can remember that not that long ago we were vulnerable. Thank goodness we weren't and haven't been. But think about the energy famine we suffered some 5 years ago. We were dependent on OPEC. We were dependent on foreign suppliers. We were worried about where our Nation was going from an energy perspective.

The discovery of new sources of natural gas, new methods of extraction and new sources of oil, for example, have given us hope that we are going to be an energy surplus Nation. But it is a newfound treasure, and it is one about which we ought to be careful and measure carefully.

Some say we have plenty, more than we can use, and it should be an international commodity. Others say take care and make certain we make the decisions best for America, number one.

Should we debate that and decide that in a matter of minutes or hours on the floor of the Senate this week or take the time to look at it carefully? I think the latter.

When I went and spoke with the new Prime Minister of Ukraine, Yatsenyuk, I mentioned this possibility: What if we exported liquefied natural gas to Ukraine? He said: We don't have a place to receive it today. It is a pretty substantial investment of infrastructure to receive LNG into our country and to use it effectively. We are not in the position with our economy to make that investment today. We are going to look to other energy sources in the near term.

So the notion that natural gas exports will have benefit for Ukraine or any nation in the near term may be wishful thinking. Shouldn't we look at that part of the equation honestly about what they can absorb, when they can absorb it, and whether they want it? I think these are all legitimate and critically important energy policy debates in which we should engage.

But let's not make any mistake about it. We need to pass a resolution condemning what Russia has done in Crimea and threatens to do in Ukraine. They have gathered at the borders of Belarus and in Russia, on the eastern reaches of Ukraine—military forces far beyond what was necessary to guarantee an orderly referendum in Crimea a little over 9 days ago. They are poised to move forward. I pray that they won't.

We have to make it clear in the West—whether it is President Obama's visit with the G–7 nations, whether it is the European Union in resolution or even our Senate and House—that we stand with Ukraine. We want to stand by their sovereign and territorial integrity.

Many people didn't notice—they should have—but in 1994, Ukraine was the third strongest nuclear power in the world. After the breakup of the Soviet Union, Ukraine had more nuclear weapons than any country on earth, save the United States and Russia.

In 1994, they came forward and said: We are prepared to eliminate and destroy our nuclear arsenal if we have the assurance of major nations this won't jeopardize our future and it won't jeopardize our territorial integrity. They produced what was known as the Budapest Memorandum. The Budapest Memorandum was signed by the United States, the United Kingdom,

Ukraine, and Russia, guaranteeing that at least in principle all those nations would respect the territorial integrity of Ukraine. Within the last 2 weeks, Russia has not only reneged on that promise—it has in fact invaded Ukraine and taken over territory there.

It is important for us, when it comes to Ukraine, to not only stand by the Ukrainian people as they move toward a more democratic form of government, but it is important for us to reinforce the premise that if a country will give up its nuclear weapons, will not pursue the development of nuclear weapons, and become part of the nuclear club, we will basically say: That will not create a dangerous situation for your future. This is what the Budapest agreement was about, recently violated by Russia, one of the signatories.

If we want to make the argument in Iran, North Korea, and other countries, that they should foreswear their nuclear weapons, shouldn't we also be standing by the premise that if they do, at least civilized nations will stand behind them if they and their sovereignty are threatened? This is what is happening today in Ukraine and Crimea.

It is not just a question of the survival of the Ukrainian Government but also a question as to whether civilized countries around the world trying to lessen the threat of nuclear weapons will stand with one voice and condemn the Russians for what they have done.

It is very clear Putin has ambitions far beyond the Republic of Georgia and far beyond Ukraine. He engaged in this charm offensive at the Sochi Olympics and talked about the modern Russia and what it meant in the 21st century. The very same troops who were protecting the athletes from terrorism in Sochi, as soon as the final ceremony ended, were shifted and transferred into Crimea to invade that nation. The charm offensive was clearly over. NBC may have covered the Sochi Olympics, but it didn't cover the invasion of Crimea in real-time. But it happened, and we know it happened.

Having been to Ukraine with Senator MCCAIN and six other colleagues, our bipartisan delegation found a deep attachment in Ukraine to the United States. It is an attachment sometimes linked to specific families. I happen to represent the City of Chicago, where there is a prominent section known as Ukrainian Village. When I returned from Ukraine and went back to this section of Chicago, near the church where the Ukrainians worship on Sunday, we had over 500 people who gathered to hear what I had seen and heard and to talk about where we should go when it came to the future of Ukraine.

But it is worthy to note that there weren't just Ukrainian Americans in that room in Chicago when I returned a week ago. In the front row were Polish people—and we have more Poles in Chicago than almost any other city outside of the nation of Poland—Lithuanians, Latvians, Georgians, and even Venezuelans. They had all come there to listen carefully, many of them with memories that not that long ago they were under Soviet domination and lived in fear of what would come from Moscow. These same people were standing together. They were standing in league with their Ukrainian-American neighbors, with the understanding that throughout its modern history Russia and the Soviet Union have taken over countries nearby when they could, and many times we didn't speak out.

I have heard the argument made that perhaps, if the United States showed more military force in other places in the world, we might have discouraged Vladimir Putin. That argument doesn't make sense. Look at history. We were in the midst of the Vietnam war and we had committed half a million troops. The greatest military in the world was engaged in Southeast Asia when Brezhnev, the head of the Soviet Union, invaded Czechoslovakia. We were engaged in two wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, actively showing the power of our military in those countries, under President George W. Bush, when Vladimir Putin invaded the Republic of Georgia.

So I think it is an empty argument to say if we just show our muscles and start a war someplace, the rest of the world will be fearful. I don't think it is a recipe for the future. What the President is trying to do is to establish political and economic sanctions on Russia which will cost their economy and put pressure on them to stop this aggressive conduct. That, to me, is sensible.

Let's take up this measure. If Members have amendments, bring them to the floor. Let's pass it today, not later this week. Let's show that we stand with the Ukrainians and oppose Russian aggression, support sanctions when needed, and prepare to loan to the Ukrainians the money they need to sustain their economy and to build it in the future.

Ukraine is the second largest country in Europe. It is moving toward the West. Let us welcome them. As long as they are going to make certain their future is consistent with our democratic values, I think it is important we not only continue this dialogue but show we can truly be their allies and friends.

Mr. President, I yield the floor and 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. THUNE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

HEALTH CARE

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I come to the floor to discuss the fourth anniversary of ObamaCare. Four years ago this past Sunday the President signed his health care legislation into law. The measure was jammed through Congress on a party-line vote against the strong objections of Republicans and the American people. Democrats and the President assured everyone this opposition was temporary. When people find out what is in the law, they will like it, Democrats and the President promised.

Four years later, however, that isn't the case. The majority of the American people still disapprove of the law. Why do they still disapprove? Because the President's health care law has failed in every possible way. We have canceled health care plans. We have seen people who have lost their doctors and lost their hospitals. We have seen soaring premiums, higher out-of-pocket costs, lower pay, disastrous Web sites that have left thousands in limbo, confusion in the health insurance market, and widespread damage to the economy.

The President's law has failed so badly that some of the President's strongest supporters are rejecting it. Young people whose support of the President was so successful in his election and reelection are turning their backs on the President's law. Unions which pushed for the law's passage and the President's reelection are now protesting that the law will destroy their health care plans and damage workers' livelihoods. Democrats running for reelection are running from the health care law as fast as they can for fear that association with ObamaCare will doom their chances of reelection. People are finding out what the law truly means for them and they don't like it.

When the President was trying to pass his health care law, he made a few promises. I think a lot of people remember when the President said: If you like your health care plan, you can keep your health care plan. He said: If you like your doctor, you can keep your doctor. The reality of the law has proven to be quite different.

Six million Americans so far have lost their health care plans as a direct result of ObamaCare, and far too many of them found their only alternative was a plan that offered less coverage for more money. Millions of other Americans have lost their doctors and hospitals. ObamaCare placed a number of new taxes and regulations on insurance companies that left them facing huge cost increases. In an effort to manage their costs without raising health care premiums even further, many companies have narrowed their network of doctors and hospitals, especially in exchange plans. As a result, many Americans have lost doctors they have been seeing literally for years. Cancer patients in the middle of treatment have found their doctors are not covered by the new health care plans. Patients are also discovering their hospital options are now far more limited, as many plans exclude top hospitals.

A recent article in the Associated Press reported:

Some of America's best cancer hospitals are off-limits to many of the people now signing up for coverage under the Nation's new health care program.

Practically speaking, the AP reports:

Those patients may not be able to get the most advanced treatment including clinical trials of new medications.

In a particularly cruel twist, many of the patients who lost access to doctors and hospitals didn't know they would lose access when they signed up for their plans as provider information on the health care exchange Web sites is often, to quote a Business Week article, ''missing, wrong, or difficult to navigate.''

In addition to promising that patients would be able to keep their health care plans and their doctors, the President promised his health care law would reduce health care costs, but in fact health care costs have only risen since the Affordable Care Act passed. Families and individuals who were effectively dumped into the exchanges have frequently found that their only health care options cost far more than their previous health care plans and offer far less.

Family shopping for so-called silver plans now can face deductibles up to $12,700, a staggering amount of money that very few families are able to afford. For many families that number represents a full quarter of their income before taxes.

Last week news emerged that already-high premiums on the exchanges are set to increase substantially next year. This was the headline in The Hill newspaper: O-Care premiums about to skyrocket. The Fiscal Times reported that Americans should ''expect premium prices to soar.'' In fact, The Hill reported that ''health industry officials say that ObamaCare-related premiums will double in some parts of the country.'' The Wall Street Journal reports that ''one recent analysis finds that 80% of firms offering employee coverage have raised deductibles or other cost-sharing provisions, or are considering doing so . . . to avoid a new tax that's set to hit more lavish plans in 2018 and to counter health-cost increases. Thus, employee out-of-pocket costs could rise.'' Perhaps a more accurate name for the law would have been the ''Unaffordable Care Act.''

The havoc ObamaCare has wreaked on our health care system would be ample reason to dislike the law. ObamaCare's damage isn't limited to our health care system; it is also damaging our economy.

The nonpartisan Congressional Budget Office reports that ObamaCare will result in 2½ million fewer full-time workers over the next 10 years and reduce wages by more than $1 trillion. Those are real-world economic impacts.

Household income has already dropped by almost $3,700 over the course of the Obama Presidency, and American families are already struggling. Unemployment is high and economic growth is sluggish. The last thing we need is fewer workers and lower wages.

On top of that, ObamaCare is discouraging employers from hiring and reducing employees' hours, thanks to the slew of new taxes, mandates, and regulations ObamaCare levies on businesses large and small. Chief among these, of course, is the requirement that businesses with 50 or more employees provide health insurance to all of their full-time employees, which the law defines as those working 30 hours or more. If they don't do that, they pay fines. Faced with this mandate, State and local governments, nonprofits, and businesses with small profit margins have been forced to cut employees' hours to avoid health care bills or fines they can't afford to pay. Other businesses have been forced to keep their businesses under 50 workers instead of creating new jobs and hiring new people.

Larger businesses are also deciding not to hire or even letting workers go as a result of the costly taxes and regulations the health care law imposes. According to a recent study, ObamaCare's tax on lifesaving medical devices, such as pacemakers and insulin pumps, has already affected more than 30,000 jobs in the medical device industry.

I don't care what party you are from, you cannot think this law is working. Our health care system may have needed reform, but this was not the way to do it. Instead of improving our health care system, ObamaCare is making it far worse. It is time to repeal this law and pursue real solutions to our health care challenges.

Instead of the failing government health care exchanges, we could create affordable health care plans by allowing the purchase of insurance across State lines. This would allow for interstate competition when it comes to the purchase and sale of insurance. That would increase competition among health plans, which in turn would drive prices down, not up, as is happening now.

We could allow businesses to pool together to negotiate lower rates with health insurance companies.

We could improve high-risk pools to help people with preexisting conditions and expand health savings accounts to allow families to put away money tax free to pay for future health care-related expenses.

We could end the rampant lawsuit abuse that is driving up the cost of care for all Americans.

We do need real reform of our health care system—the kind of reform that will actually drive down costs and expand access to care while allowing Americans, not the government, to make decisions about the health care plans they choose and the doctors they visit. ObamaCare is doing the opposite.

ObamaCare isn't working. We need to repeal it now and replace it with real health care reforms so that Americans don't have to endure another 4 years like the last 4.

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

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

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

RUSSIA

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, sometimes it takes a sudden, flagrant breach of international order to dispel a President's naivete about an adversary. The 1979 Soviet invasion of Afghanistan had that effect on President Carter, and one can only hope that Russia's annexation of Crimea will have a similar impact on President Obama.

Only recently the President was describing his Russian reset—those were his words—as a success. In other words, he was still calling the reset a success after Moscow had done the following things—and I think it is worth recalling the litany of things Vladimir Putin and Russia have done notwithstanding President Obama's hopeful intention to reset that relationship. Here is what Moscow has done:

They brutalized domestic human rights activists.

They tortured and murdered anticorruption whistleblower Sergei Magnitsky.

They unleashed a barrage of anti-American propaganda.

They threatened to target U.S. missile defense sites with offensive weapons.

They vetoed numerous United Nations resolutions regarding Syria, where Bashar al-Assad has now killed roughly 150,000 civilians. They vetoed those resolutions. They also ignored U.S. demands to stop aiding Bashar al-Assad, period. It is well known and documented that Russia regularly sends weapons to Assad to use on his own people.

Russia has denounced U.S. sanctions against Iran as undisguised blackmail. This is a country seeking a nuclear weapon that would destabilize the entire region—and perhaps worse—in the Middle East.

Russia has expelled USAID from their country and pulled out of the Nunn-Lugar Cooperative Threat Reduction Program designed to reduce the threat of nuclear weapons.

Russia has also banned American citizens from adopting Russian children and offered asylum to NSA leaker Edward Snowden.

That is quite a list. As you can see, while President Obama said he wants to reset that relationship with Russia, Vladimir Putin has basically thumbed

his nose at the United States and the international order. Yet none of that has kept President Obama from calling this relationship with Putin and Russia a success.

If we consider the three biggest U.S. diplomatic victories often attributed to this reset the President likes to talk about—greater Russian cooperation in Afghanistan, the New START arms control treaty, and the Russian support for U.S. sanctions in Iran—only the first one looks like a genuine, durable achievement from the vantage point of March 2014.

The New START treaty was a dangerous giveaway. In addition to jeopardizing U.S. missile defense plans, it reduced the number of American nuclear launchers and warheads while allowing Russia to increase the size of its own arsenal.

As for the Iran sanctions endorsed by the U.N. Security Council members in June of 2010, these were less significant than the unilateral U.S. sanctions that Congress forced upon President Obama despite his objections in December 2011. For that matter, the administration has now unilaterally decided to loosen U.S. sanctions—and thereby relinquish some of the best leverage we have on Tehran—to keep them from crossing that red line and acquiring a nuclear weapon. What did we get for that? We got minor concessions and more hollow promises.

As with other U.S. adversaries, the Iranians are watching Ukraine to see how President Obama responds. In the modern era, cross-border military invasions of sovereign States have been a blessedly rare occurrence. Yet Vladimir Putin has now launched two of them in less than 6 years. The Secretary General of NATO has called Russia's armed seizure of Crimea ''the gravest threat to European security and stability since the end of the Cold War.'' Europe remembers the primary location for two world wars during the last century. They remember, and they remember what happened in 1938 which, unfortunately, bears an eerie resemblance to some of the initial steps being taken by Vladimir Putin and Russia today, and they remember what happened after that, casting the world into a terrible war in which millions of people lost their lives in World War II.

President Obama's initial response was to sanction 11 Russians and Ukrainians, leaving Putin's inner circle and his favorite oligarchs untouched, and they drew mocking rebukes from the Kremlin. Last Thursday, the President decided to ramp up the sanctions by issuing new sanctions that did go a little further, targeting four oligarchs and 16 government officials, including Putin's Chief of Staff, along with a prominent Putin-linked financial institution.

In addition, President Obama declared he had now signed a new Executive order. Remember, the President said he has a phone and a pen. Well, he has been using them—not necessarily working with Congress but he has been using them. He has issued a new Executive order that gives us the authority to impose sanctions not just on individuals but on key sectors of the Russian economy. The problem with that is that sanctions imposed on Russia's economy are going to hurt Europe and invariably end up inflicting damage even on the U.S. economy. But I hope the President uses this authority to send Putin a message and finds a way to thread the needle to exact the costs he said he would exact on Putin for this lawless act.

In my view, the sanctions should also target Rosoboronexport. This is a State-owned Russian arms dealer that has been supplying the Assad regime and Syria with weapons, and it has become the Grand Central Station of corruption. The U.S. Pentagon has inexplicably been buying Mi-17 helicopters from Rosoboronexport to supply the Afghan military, despite numerous alternatives. I am happy to report the senior Senator from Indiana Mr. COATS has introduced an amendment that would terminate these contracts and prohibit all business dealings with companies that cooperate with Rosoboronexport, and I am a proud cosponsor of that amendment. I hope the majority leader, as Senator MCCONNELL, the Republican leader, implored this morning, will allow an open amendment process so reasonable amendments designed to improve this bill will be allowed to be voted on.

As America responds to Vladimir Putin's invasion of Ukraine, sanctions will remain a critically important tool, but sanctions alone are not enough. They should be accompanied by at least three other U.S. policy moves.

First, the United States needs to assess the military needs of Ukraine and other Eastern European countries and then swiftly dispatch—or facilitate the purchase of—whatever resources may be required. Offering military ration kits rather than serious military assistance is a joke. It is a bad joke, and it is an insult to our friends in Kiev and freedom-loving people within the orbit of Russia.

Second, we should enhance and expand our European missile defense system with upgrades such as a new X-Band radar and more capable interceptors. We should also increase our overall missile defense budget. This is something Putin hates but which is a legitimate expenditure of self-defense monies to help keep the world safer, particularly from the threat of an Iranian missile.

Third, we should dramatically accelerate the approval process for U.S. companies seeking to export liquefied natural gas. Congress can take the lead here by amending the 1938 Natural Gas Act, an antiquated, Depression-era law that has become an obstacle to economic growth and U.S. foreign policy interests. Even in the short term, most of our LNG exports would go to Asia, it is true, rather than Europe, but it would increase overall the supply, and expediting and expanding those exports would increase that global supply, help push down prices, and signal to Vladimir Putin that Washington is determined to squeeze his gas revenues and break his energy stranglehold on Eastern Europe. That is why members of both political parties have called for boosting and accelerating LNG exports as quickly as possible. Those can begin to flow from the United States as early as 2015, thus increasing supply, alleviating dependency on other sources, and send a very important message to Mr. Putin.

All of the actions I have described would send a powerful message to Moscow and help maximize our diplomatic leverage in the current crisis. The March 20 sanctions were a good start. The legislation that is crafted by my friend from Tennessee, the ranking Republican on the Foreign Relations Committee, along with Senator MENENDEZ, the chairman, are a good start, but there is more that can be done and should be done. I hope the majority leader will allow a reasonable and rational process to allow other Members in the body to participate by adding their constructive ideas to this legislation, which will pass by the end of the week, but I think there are a multitude of good ideas that could be added to it to make it even stronger and send an even more effective message to Vladimir Putin and, hopefully, discourage him from acting further in his naked aggression in Ukraine.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. SCHATZ). The Senator from Tennessee.

Mr. CORKER. Mr. President, I wish to ask about my time, but before the Senator from Texas leaves, I wish to thank him for his comments and his involvement in this issue. I appreciate his coming to the floor. I think this is an important issue for us to be debating and I firmly support the open amendment process that has been alluded to.

If I could, I wish to inquire as to how much time is remaining at this point.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. There is 4 minutes remaining on the Republican side.

Mr. CORKER. I was afraid that might be the case. I wonder if I could ask unanimous consent to speak for 8 minutes or so.

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

UKRAINE

Mr. CORKER. I thank the Chair. Mr. President, I rise to speak on the pending business before the Senate, which is the aid package and sanctions package and the IMF package relative to Ukraine. I wish to thank Senator MENENDEZ for the way he conducted our hearings and markup relative to this bill.

I think most people in this body understand this is a bill that came out of

the Senate Foreign Relations Committee on a 14–3 vote. We had one Member who was absent, dealing with some business in Florida. It is my understanding had that Member been there, this actually would have come out of committee on a 15–3 vote. So I emphasize, first of all, this bill has been through the committee process. On the other hand, events on the ground have changed since the bill came out of committee. Things have evolved since it came out of committee. I hope there is an open amendment process to make adjustments to the bill to take into account some of the things that have occurred on the ground since that time.

Look, I know all of us want to strongly support Ukraine. I know all of us strongly condemn what Russia and Putin have done recently in Crimea, and I think all of us understand that what we want to do is to stop that aggression from moving on into the southern and eastern portions of Ukraine. So we are trying to respond in a way that sends a signal to Russia, sends a signal to those who have been involved in these illicit activities, that they should at least stop on the Crimean border and, hopefully, over time they will recede from Crimea. What we are trying to do is prevent further aggression in this area.

I think everyone understands it has been our policy for 70 years as the United States to promote a democratic whole and free Europe. So what is happening with Russia and Crimea—and hopefully not in Ukraine, although there is no doubt they have fomented many of the problems that have occurred there—what we are attempting to do is to ensure that Europe remains free, democratic, and whole.

I know everybody here remembers the fact that Ukraine was a place of numbers of nuclear weapons from Russia. When the Soviet Union broke apart in 1991, there was a huge arsenal of nuclear weapons and warheads in Ukraine. We signed an agreement called the Budapest Memorandum with the United Kingdom, Russia, and Ukraine relative to Ukraine's sovereignty if they were willing to give up these nuclear weapons. So it is very much in our national interests that we prevent Russia from breaking up and dealing nefariously with the sovereignty of Ukraine.

We have crafted a bill which does three things. No. 1, it provides economic aid. I think everyone in this body understands the tremendous economic problems Ukraine is experiencing. I think we all understand the first thing that has to happen in Ukraine is it has to be stabilized economically. Therefore, the administration has pledged $1 billion in aid. This bill backs that up in a way that allows that to occur. Obviously, Congress has to approve spending, which is associated with loan guarantees. These loan guarantees, by the way, would not take effect until after Ukraine has signed an IMF agreement that makes sure they are going to go through the structural processes necessary to make sure they do what actually causes them to be a more successful country.

The bill also deals with sanctions. I think everyone knows there have been numbers of people who have been involved nefariously in dealing internally in Ukraine with their sovereignty issues, but there also have been numbers of corrupt officials in Russia who have affected what is happening in Ukraine, and this bill sanctions both. We are sending a very strong message. Economic aid is important, but I also think sanctioning the bad behavior and Russia understanding there are going to be additional sanctions put in place is important.

I wish to thank the administration for the sanctions that have been put in place. I thought it was a big step to put in place sectoral sanctions, or when they said they had the ability through Executive order to do that. What I hope will happen, and what we have pressed for out of our office, is they will implement some of those sectoral sanctions to send a shock wave through the Russian economy that in the event they do anything to come into Ukraine while they are amassing troops on the border—if they do anything in that regard—this is just the beginning.

I think all of us understand Russia is in a place where their economy is weak and we know the ruble has depreciated greatly in value. We understand our best asset against them right now is sanctions that would hurt them economically and certainly affect those people who sit around Putin and affect him in big ways.

The third piece of this bill is IMF reform. I join a number of people who believe the IMF reforms that have been laid out are important. They are important to the world. I talk to my friends on this side of the aisle who I think may have more of an isolationist bent, and I say that one of the things that is most important for us as a nation is to have an entity such as the IMF—it is not perfect, it makes mistakes, but it is the entity that everything in the world is looking to right now to help usher Ukraine from where they are to a place that is prosperous and has the ability to improve the standard of living of Ukrainians, which is very important from the standpoint of their stability.

So we are all focused on the IMF. We have people on my side of the aisle who again have become more isolationist, less adventurous, if you would, relative to—which is where the country is, I understand. But what the IMF does is allow us to share the risk of stabilizing countries such as Ukraine with other countries around the world. I think all of us understand the threats to global stability are greater today than they have been in the past. So there was an agreed-to set of reforms that took place back in 2010. I strongly support—I strongly support—those reforms and, as a matter of fact, would say Ukraine is the poster child for why we need to have an IMF that is functioning at a much higher level.

We account for a transfer from something called the NAB, if you will—it is a line of credit that we have; it is out there; it is a liability our Nation has—and we transfer $63 billion of that $100 billion over to something that is in a basket of currency. So we are not taking on any additional liabilities. Yet there is a pay-for aspect of this through the budgeting process that is fully accounted for in this bill.

Again, I join Dr. Henry Kissinger, Dr. Condoleezza Rice, former Secretary Jim Baker in saying and knowing we should adopt these IMF reforms.

These are the three big elements of this bill. We have some democracy assistance. We have some authorized sums to help us build stronger relationships with our allies. But I strongly support this piece of legislation. I think this piece of legislation is a full package. It is a package that deals with the three aspects that need to be dealt with at this time.

Ukraine is, again, the poster child of why we want to have a fully functioning IMF. Look. I know there are going to be amendments offered. There actually have been some already. I hope we will have a full and open process, with amendments that are relevant to what we are dealing with on the floor. I think the bill can be improved.

It is my hope, as we move through this week, that we will have the opportunity for those amendments to be heard and voted on but, at the same time, by the time the week ends and we head back to our respective States we will have, in a unified way, sent a message to Russia, sent a message to the people of Ukraine as to where this body stands relative to their support economically, relative to sanctions that we believe strongly should be put in place against Russia, and how we believe the IMF should be functioning as a stabilizing force in the world.

With that, I yield the floor.

CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Morning business is closed.

SUPPORT FOR THE SOVEREIGNTY, INTEGRITY, DEMOCRACY, AND ECONOMIC STABILITY OF UKRAINE ACT OF 2014—MOTION TO PROCEED

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will resume consideration of the motion to proceed to S. 2124, which the clerk will report.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

Motion to proceed to Calendar No. 329, S. 2124, a bill to support sovereignty and democracy in Ukraine, and for other purposes.

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

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

Mr. RUBIO. Mr. President, my understanding is we are on the motion to proceed.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. We are.

Mr. RUBIO. I wanted to speak about the issue of Ukraine. I get a lot of questions, phone calls, emails about it. It has certainly been on the minds of a lot of people across the country. The most common question that I get is: What do we do about it? What can we do? Related to that is the question of: Why does this even matter?

I am going to get to that in my conclusion. But on this motion that is now before the Senate, where we are being asked to vote on a package of sanctions and also assistance to Ukraine, I wanted to first outline what it is we can do moving forward in addition to this bill that is before us, but also why this bill that is before us is so important.

I think there are a couple of things that we really need to focus on in terms of our reaction to what has happened with regards to Crimea and with Ukraine, in particular, because of the Russian actions that have been taken.

First and most important we need to help the Ukrainian people and the interim government in Ukraine to protect its nation's sovereignty but also to protect its transition to democracy—to full democracy.

They have elections scheduled in May of this year. For these elections it is going to be critical that they go off smoothly, that they are free and they are fair because that is an important step in their transition to democracy.

But we should anticipate that Russia, through Putin, is going to do everything it can to disrupt these elections, to delegitimize these elections. We already see evidence in open source reporting in the media that, in fact, there are highly trained agitators sponsored by the Kremlin that have found their way into Ukraine and could potentially participate in ways to try to disrupt these elections.

So I think one of the first things we can do, working with our allies in Europe, is to help them with the logistical support they need to carry out in May elections that are free and are fair and to help them with the biggest step they are going to take so far towards a transition to democracy in Ukraine.

The second action we need to take to help Ukraine to protect its sovereignty and to make its transition to democracy is to help them stabilize their economy. You can imagine that this disruptive change in government, combined with an invasion of its territories, has been highly disruptive to their economy, which was already feeling some real constraints. That is why the bill before us is so critical. In addition to some of the direct assistance, it will help them access loans that will allow them to stabilize their economic situation.

What we can anticipate is that Russia is going to do everything it can to disrupt their economy. Again, the Russian argument here is—it is a ridiculous argument. But the argument they are making to the world is: Ukraine is a failed state. The Russian-speaking population is being threatened. So we have to get involved. We must intervene to try to stabilize that situation.

That is the argument they have made in Crimea. Increasingly, that is the argument they seem to be making with regard to Eastern Ukraine. So the bill before us is critical because it will be a major step on the part of this government to do its part, in conjunction with our allies in Europe, to help Ukrainians stabilize their economy.

As I have shared before, I have some real concerns about some of the language that is in this bill. It has to do with these changes to the IMF that I do not think belong in this legislation. I do not think they belong in this legislation for two reasons. One, I do not think that we should be taking up an issue of that importance in this manner. We should have a full debate. That should be dealt with separately. But I also think it was a mistake by this administration to include the IMF language in this bill because what we need as much as anything else is not just to pass this bill out of the Senate but to pass it with the most amount of support possible.

I want to see it be 100 to 0 or 95 to 5 so we can send a very strong message to Russia and the world that the United States of America and her people are firmly on the side of Ukraine's sovereignty and Ukraine's desire for independence from Russia and its ability to stabilize itself in moving forward. That, quite frankly, is endangered as a result of the administration's decision to push this divisive language into this bill. There was no reason for them to do that.

In fact, that sentiment is not a Republican sentiment. It is being echoed in the House, where a number of Democrats today are quoted in newspaper articles as saying that this is a mistake, that they should never have done this. If they were to take this language out, you would pass a bill in the House and Senate this week. We could have passed one before we left 2 weeks ago. Instead, it continues to have to go through a prolonged debate and divisiveness.

There are people who have had to vote against it here on the floor because they feel so strongly about the IMF language. We could have had their support. We could have sent a stronger message than the one that is being sent now.

I have those concerns. By the way, there was a statement made on the floor yesterday that I think deserves to be addressed. The majority leader stood here and said that, basically, the reason that—Republicans are responsible for the loss of Crimea in an effort to help a family that is engaged in American politics. I think that statement is absurd and ridiculous. I think it is the kind of hyperbole that in issues such as this has no place.

At some point there have to be issues so big and so important to the national security of this country that they are above politics and above that sort of statement. That being said, while I share the same concerns that many of my colleagues do about the IMF language, and initially expressed my position that I was not willing to vote for this bill with it, after much thought and consideration over the last couple of weeks, researching the issues, I made the conclusion that in the cost-benefit analysis, helping Ukraine stabilize itself, helping Ukraine stabilize its economy, given the importance of this issue, it is so important that I am prepared to vote for this despite the fact that it has something in it that I do not like. That is how important I think this issue truly is.

Oftentimes in foreign policy that is what we are called to do. We are called to make pragmatic decisions that are in the best interests of America and our allies around the world, even if it is less than ideal or perhaps not the complete solution that we want. That is why I voted to proceed with the debate on this bill yesterday. That is why I am prepared to support it despite the inclusion of IMF language that I am strongly against—because I think this issue is that important.

The third thing we can do to help Ukraine protect its sovereignty and make its full transition to democracy is to help them with their defense capability. Now, understand that when the Soviet Union fell in the early 1990s, Ukraine was left with the world's third largest stockpile of tactical nuclear weapons and strategic nuclear weapons on the planet.

But they signed this agreement with the United States, the United Kingdom, and Russia that basically said: If you give up your nuclear weapons, we, these three countries that signed this, will provide for your defense and assure you of your defense. So Ukraine did that. They gave up these weapons. This was signed in 1994, and 20 years later, one of the three countries that signed that agreement has not just not provided for their defense, they actually invaded them.

I want to make a point on this for a second. Think about if you were one of these other countries around the world right now that feels threatened by your neighbors, and the United States and the rest of the world are going to you and saying: Listen, do not develop nuclear weapons. Do not develop nuclear weapons, South Korea. Do not develop nuclear weapons, Japan. Do not develop nuclear weapons, Saudi Arabia.

We will protect you. We will watch out for you.

What kind of lesson do you think this instance sends to them? I think the message this is sending to many nations around the world is: Perhaps we can no longer count on the security promises made by the free world. Perhaps we need to start looking out for ourselves. That is why the Ukrainian situation is so more important than simply what is happening in Europe. This has implications around the world.

There are a number of countries around the world now that are considering increasing their defense capabilities, including a nuclear capacity, because they feel threatened by neighbors that have a nuclear capacity themselves. So far they have held back because they have relied on the United States and our partners to assure them that they do not need these weapons, that we have their back. But now when something like this happens, these countries see it as further evidence that potentially those sorts of assurances are no longer enough in the 21st century.

That raises the real risk that over the next 2 decades, you could see an explosion in the number of countries around the world that possess a nuclear weapons capability because they now feel that they must protect themselves and can no longer rely on other countries to do it for them.

So how can we help Ukraine with its military and defense capabilities? By providing them assistance. By the way, the Ukraine military capability degraded not just because of their overconfidence in these assurances that were made to them, but there was also corruption in that government. In fact, the previous president who was ousted by a popular revolt, that president actually undermined the defense capabilities of that country and took a lot of that money and used it for internal control, to be able to control his own population instead of being able to protect his country.

So what can we do to help? The first thing that I have called for us to do is to provide Ukraine with more military equipment and more training. We should work with our NATO allies and the European Union to help equip and train the Ukrainian military forces so that they can protect the country now and moving forward. We can also share intelligence information with them to help them better position their assets and understand and have a better awareness of what is going on around them.

We can also help them with logistical support. These are the sorts of things that I hope this administration will take steps toward in the next couple of days. So that is the first thing we can do. We can help Ukraine protect its sovereignty and make its full transition to democracy.

The second thing we need to do is we need to continue to raise the price on Putin for the invasion of Crimea. We need to change the calculation, the cost-benefit calculation that he is going to go through as he decides whether to move into Eastern Ukraine now and potentially even parts of Moldova.

So already some steps have been taken in that regard. I applaud the administration for having additional sanctions announced last week. I think we are going to have to continue to do more in conjunction with our allies. I think we need to add more names of individuals, of financial institutions, and of businesses, primarily those who have links to this invasion, but also Russia's involvement in supporting the Syrian regime as it carries out the mass slaughter of its own people.

I think we need to suspend our civil and nuclear cooperation agreement that was entered into as part of the 123 agreement 4 years ago as a strong message to them. I think we need to reassess the role that NATO plays in Europe. NATO was largely built around the Soviet risks in Western Europe.

Then, after the fall of the Soviet Union and the end of the Cold War, NATO kind of lost its way a little bit in terms of its role in Europe because there was no threat. In fact, you saw some of these countries saying, you know, it is likely that NATO's role now will be about operations in the Middle East or in Africa and being involved in threats there as opposed to actually having to defend our own territory.

The facts on the ground in Europe have changed dramatically in the last 2 months. You now, in fact, do have a powerful military force in the region that has shown a willingness to invade a neighbor. They did this in 2008 in Georgia. They are doing it again now in a way that is even more egregious and outrageous. I think it is time for NATO to reevaluate its capabilities, given this new threat that is here to stay.

Also, the time has come for NATO to reposition its assets to face this threat and this risk. I think and I hope that those conversations are happening now. I think for NATO, in many respects, it is time to reinvigorate this alliance. It has a clear and present danger in Europe in the form of the government of Vladimir Putin, who threatens his neighbors and the stability of Europe. So now I think NATO has found a reason to reinvigorate itself.

The last point I would make, in terms of changing the calculus, is the real stranglehold Russia has on Europe. It is not simply its military capabilities, it is its natural resources. Much of Europe depends on Russia for its oil and natural gas. This creates a tremendous amount of leverage on their neighbors. One of the reasons we have seen some countries in Europe reluctant to move forward on even higher sanctions is because they are afraid of losing access to the natural gas and oil from Russia that their economy depends on.

We need to change that. That can't happen overnight, but we need to begin to change that; first, by increasing our exports to those countries and particularly Ukraine. I know Senator BARRASSO will have an amendment as part of this debate that I hope will be considered that will allow us to export more natural gas to Ukraine. But what also needs to happen is other countries in Europe need to develop their own domestic capabilities in natural gas so they can become less reliant on Russia for these resources and become more reliant on themselves and free countries in the region to be able to do that. That is a critical component of a long-term strategy in all of this.

Let me close by answering the question I began with. Why does this matter? I think this matters for a lot of different reasons. I have highlighted one, in terms of decisions being made around the world and governments deciding whether they are going to pursue their own domestic nuclear weapons capability, but there is another that perhaps we need to think about.

After World War II—in fact, after the last century when the world went through two devastating World Wars—there was a commitment made that no longer would nations be allowed to aggressively invade other countries and take over territory and exercise illegitimate claims. In fact, international norms were established at the end of World War II. There were some conflicts during the Cold War with Russia, with the Soviet Union, and with the spread of communism, but by and large, especially since the end of the Cold War, that has been the established norm.

It is not acceptable in the late 20th century and in the early 21st century for a country to simply make up an excuse and invade a neighbor and take their lands and territory. That was perhaps the way of the world 300 years ago, 200 years ago, and 100 years ago, and there were massive wars and loss of life as a result of countries doing that, but the world grew tired of these conflicts and decided we will no longer tolerate or accept these sorts of things. If you recall, in the early 1990s, Saddam Hussein did that. He invaded Kuwait. The entire world community rallied around the United States of America to expel him as a result of that illegitimate action.

In the 21st century, we have the most egregious violation of that norm. We basically have Russia deciding they don't like the way things are going in Ukraine so they decide to invade. They decided to take over a territory. Think about how they did it. They denied ever doing it. They sent Russian troops into Crimea, but they had them wear uniforms that had no markings on them. In fact, the press would ask these soldiers: Where are you from, and they wouldn't answer. They invaded a country but lied about their invasion. They claimed these were local defense forces that had rallied around the Russian flag. They made up this excuse

that somehow the Russian-speaking population in the region was being oppressed and attacked and was in danger and so they needed to intervene.

To this day, Russia still will not admit the military role they are playing on the ground in Crimea. So in addition to violating this international norm, which is an outrageous behavior, they have lied about it and think they can get away with it. The point I am making is, if in the 21st century a country is allowed to invade a neighbor, lie about it and lie about the reasons for it and they can get away with it without significant costs, we have created a dangerous precedent with which we are going to have to live. All over the world there are powerful nations that can now claim land they do not control belongs to them.

I took a trip in February to Asia. I visited Japan and the Philippines and South Korea. You know what the No. 1 fear in that region is. That China has similar claims to Russia. They claim all sorts of pieces of territory and of oceans that belong to them. They claim it belonged to them 1,000 years ago and should belong to them now. They have taken a different tack, but the point is, if we now live in a world where a country can make territorial claims and then simply act on them without any repercussions from the international community, then I think the 21st century is starting to look more and more like the early 20th century, a time that subjected the world to two devastating World Wars.

We cannot allow this to go unpunished. The only way this can be punished is if the free countries of the world rally together and impose sanctions and costs on Vladimir Putin and his cronies for having taken this action. That will never happen—the free world will never be able to rally to impose those costs—unless the United States leads that effort. We can't do it alone, but it cannot be done without us.

That is why it is so important that measures such as the one the Senate now is considering happen with the highest amount of bipartisan support we can muster. We may not agree with every aspect of it—I certainly do not—but we must weigh the equities. If we were to put this on a scale, the need to do something about Ukraine so far outweighs the things about the legislation before us that we don't like because of the implications it has not just on our Nation but on the world and the role we must play. If some other country around the world fails to pass sanctions, fails to take steps or does so in a way that is divided, it might have some impact, but when the United States fails to act in a decisive way, it has a dramatic impact.

One of the arguments our adversaries around the world use is asking our allies: Why are you still in the camp of the United States? They ask: Why are you still allying yourself with the United States? They are unreliable. Their government is always bickering and deeply divided. They can't come together in Washington to do anything. Do you think, if you are ever invaded or ever get into trouble, the United States could possibly muster the domestic political support necessary for them to come to your assistance? Don't count on America. Count on us or count on yourself.

I have already explained why there is danger in that, but that is the argument these countries use against us. What I fear is that if we fail to take decisive and unified action in this body, in the Senate, to send a strong message—and while we may not agree on every component of this, and I have already said I believe it was a mistake for the administration to push for that IMF reform language—if we do not send a strong and decisive message, then I think this will be spun against us. I think this will be used as evidence to our allies and other countries around the world why America is no longer reliable, either economically or militarily.

The consequences of that could extend far beyond Europe into other regions of the world, such as Asia. This is not a game. This is not some domestic political dispute. This issue has ramifications that will directly impact the kind of world our children will inherit. In fact, it will dramatically impact the kind of world we will have to live in over the next 20, 30, and 40 years. We cannot afford to make a mistake. We cannot afford to be wrong.

I hope I can convince as many of my colleagues as possible to support this legislation, with all of its flaws, so we can send a clear message that on these issues we are united as a people and as a nation and that we remain committed to U.S. global leadership.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The assistant majority leader.

PHILIPPINES CHARITABLE GIVING ASSISTANCE ACT

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I understand we have an announcement from the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator is correct.

Under the previous order, the Senate having received H.R. 3771, the text of which is identical to S. 1821, the Senate will proceed to consideration of the measure, which the clerk will report.

The assistant bill clerk read as follows:

A bill (H.R. 3771) to accelerate the income tax benefits for charitable cash contributions for the relief of victims of the Typhoon Haiyan in the Philippines.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, H.R. 3771 is read a third time and passed, S. 1821 is indefinitely postponed, and the motions to reconsider are considered made and laid upon the table.

SUPPORT FOR THE SOVEREIGNTY, INTEGRITY, DEMOCRACY, AND ECONOMIC STABILITY OF UKRAINE ACT OF 2014—MOTION TO PROCEED—Continued

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Oklahoma.

Mr. INHOFE. Mr. President, I enjoyed very much the remarks of the Senator from Florida. He is very much concerned about this, very much plugged into the situation of what is happening in Ukraine, but I would like to make a couple of comments about that from a slightly different perspective, one that is from my current position as the ranking member on the Senate Armed Services Committee.

I would like to look at just one part of this proposal; that is, the money that would be coming out of the military to take care of a problem the military should not have to take care of at a time when things are very serious. The IMF has all the authority it needs to meet all of Ukraine's borrowing needs—that is the $35 billion—with its existing commitments from the global community. The IMF does not need additional U.S. funds to help Ukraine. It does not make sense to double the size of the IMF by ratifying a 2010 agreement, paying for it with money that could be used by DOD to address the shortfalls which I am going to talk about.

By the way, there is another option out there because the House has a bill. Chairman ROYCE of the House Foreign Affairs Committee is marking up a bill today as we are speaking that I believe addresses our response to Ukraine in a more responsible way. The House bill is likely to provide $68 billion in Ukraine aid that does not expand the IMF and removes it from the bans on LNG. This does not contain IMF reform. It does not take money from the DOD. I think that is good.

The Senator from Florida commented that we wouldn't be in the position we are in right now with the Europeans afraid to come to the aid of Ukraine if it weren't for the fact they are reliant upon Russia for their ability to produce LNG. We in this country have had a real boom in getting in the tight formations of the LNG. Right now we need to be exporting more of it to get the price up so it can be produced for ourselves in this country. No better way than to start exporting this to countries such as Ukraine. If we are doing this, the Western European countries would not be reliant upon Russia for that ability.

I think we have an opportunity there to do something with this bill, and hopefully we will be able to satisfy the needs of Ukraine and at the same time not provide further damage to our military.

I recognize that out of the $315 million pricetag in total aid for the package, it rightly cuts $150 million from the State Department. That is true. That is where it should come from. But it also then takes an equal amount—

$150 million—away from the Department of Defense to double the size of IMF in order to give authority that isn't actually required for the IMF to adequately loan to Ukraine, and should not be included as part of this bill.

The unnecessary proposed $157 million of defense rescission to pay for this aid has already been used by OMB, the Office of Management and Budget, and by the DOD, Department of Defense, to build the current defense budget. These funds have already been spent and we cannot get any more out of the military right now. If Defense is forced to pay for this aid, then the services will likely have to reduce their readiness accounts.

Readiness accounts mean lives because we talk about risk. If we are not ready, to the degree we are not ready, we incur more risk, and risk is translated into lives. Our national security funding can't be treated like an ATM. Mr. President, $157 million can be used to support critical defense readiness needs, such as an Army brigade combat team for 6 months, 1,000 Marine embassy security personnel for 1½ years, about 2 months of the O&M for a second carrier air wing or almost two F–16 squadrons for 1 year.

What has happened to the military, if only people out there would understand, and they do not—there are a lot of Republicans and Democrats both out there not talking about this, the most serious problem we are facing in this country—is what the Obama administration has done to our military.

I remember so well 5 years ago going to Afghanistan so I could respond to the President's budget, which was at that time talking about what he was going to be doing to the military. I knew he would begin 5 years ago to start disarming America, and what did he do. He did away with our only fifth-generation fighter, the F–22; he did away with our carrier capability, the C–17; did away with our future combat system; and he did away with our ground-based interceptor in Poland. Of course, we are desperately looking for something to protect the Eastern part of the United States as a result of that. That was all in the first year, the first step in disarming America.

Since that time, the President in his budget has taken out of the military some $487 billion. If he goes through with his sequestration, it will be another one-half billion dollars.

People don't realize where this all started. They will say: Wait a minute. It is just entitlements. Entitlements are a problem, because 60 percent of the total budget goes to entitlements. But keep in mind, there is also discretionary spending which is nondefense discretionary spending. When this President took office, the first thing done was to take $800 billion for a stimulus, none of which was used for the military. That obligated us on nondefense discretionary spending for the rest of the time at the expense of defense. So now we are in a situation which is so serious in this country that even our military leaders have come out and made statements. People have to understand how critical this situation is and how we have disarmed this country.

Secretary Hagel 2 weeks ago said:

> American dominance on the seas, in the skies, and in space can no longer be taken for granted.

Is this America? We have taken this for granted since World War II, and all of a sudden—because of what has happened through this administration to the military in the last 5 years—we can no longer do this.

General Amos, head of the Marines, agrees with me on increased risk:

> We will have fewer forces arriving less-trained, arriving later to the fight. . . . This is a formula for more American casualties.

We just said when the risk increases, then our very brave troops die.

Under Secretary Frank Kendall of this administration, on January 3, said:

> We're cutting our budget substantially while some of the people we worry about are going in the opposite direction. We've had 20 years since the end of the cold war [and sort] of a presumption in the United States that we are technologically superior militarily.

That is not the case now.

The top military person, the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, General Dempsey, was appointed to the position by President Obama. He said to our committee, the Armed Services Committee, that we are putting our military on a path where the ''force is so degraded and so unready'' that it would be ''immoral to use the force.''

The Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff: Immoral to use the force. This is supposed to be America. We are supposed to be a superior country. What has happened to us?

Admiral Winnefeld, Vice Chairman of the Joint Chiefs, the second highest position, stated:

> [t]here could be for the first time in my career instances where we may be asked to respond to a crisis and we will have to say that we cannot.

Unfortunately, this is something which not many people are aware of in terms of what we are doing.

Yes, we want to do what we can for Ukraine, and we believe the State Department certainly has an obligation. But the other half of the amount, the $157 million, cannot come from the military because we are so unready today.

When we are considering this, we have to consider we have a real serious problem with our military. Unfortunately, people are not aware of this, and a lot of politicians don't talk about it because they are uncomfortable talking about it.

SEBELIUS V. HOBBY LOBBY

Mr. INHOFE. Mr. President, today in the Supreme Court something very significant is happening.

I am from Oklahoma. David Green and his wife, of Oklahoma City, started a business called Hobby Lobby by making picture frames in their garage. It wasn't that long ago. I can remember them doing that. They were able to open their first store which was about 300 square feet.

With the profits they made in their little garage operation, David Green's faith, practice, and his day-to-day business decisions led him and his family to build a successful nationwide company. Over the years, their business has grown to 602 stores. With plans to expand, Hobby Lobby has an annual revenue upward of $2.5 billion, and David has had success despite running his business in a very countercultural way.

For instance, all of the retail stores close at 8 p.m. each night and all day on Sunday so employees can spend time with their families. This is appreciated by the company's some 16,000 employees who are paid above the minimum wage. Hobby Lobby's generous employee benefit plan includes an on-site clinic with no copay at Hobby Lobby headquarters and eligibility to enroll in medical, dental, and prescription drug plans, along with long-term disability, life insurance, and a 401(k) plan with a generous company match. This is something they have done since long before ObamaCare came along.

At one point Hobby Lobby was challenged by a competitor who said they would bury the company with their money; so the firm opened their doors on Sunday, ultimately earning the company some $150 million in revenue each week over and above what the competitor previously had been able to raise. Eventually David Green said he was challenged by God to trust in Him with his business to go back to his policy of closing on Sundays. He did, and his business has prospered. David's Christian faith runs deeper than his desire to have a profitable, successful company. But he is getting both. When he was faced with the decision to make money or obey God, he chose to obey God, whatever the consequences.

More recently he was faced with a new test. It didn't come from a competitor. It came from the U.S. Government.

Part of ObamaCare requires employers not only to provide health insurance to their employees but also to provide free access to the pills which terminate pregnancies. David, as I and many others, believes that life begins at conception. I believe that; David believes that. We are free to believe that. Offering an option to end that life would be a violation of our moral compass as defined by his faith and our faith.

Here is a guy who feels so strongly in his belief, and as his actions have shown, he would rather pay the $1.3 million a day in fines from the Obama administration than comply with the law—in other words, killing an unborn child.

Today the Obama administration is claiming this privately-owned business is waging a war on women for not

agreeing to provide these treatments for its employees free of charge—never mind that he has been offering his employees health insurance since long before the government mandated it.

So we have the faith of an individual and what he is willing to do for his faith: He is willing to stand up to this abusive government. If we restrict those of faith from applying their conscience to the world around, then we quench the progress of freedom.

The Obama administration is attempting to write a new moral code if it is going to tell people like David Green he no longer has the freedom to apply his faith and convictions to how he operates his private business.

The case before the Supreme Court today is about maintaining freedom, which starts by preserving the fundamental freedom of religion under the First Amendment—whether it is practiced in a temple or a public square. Hobby Lobby is not alone, but it is a leader in this battle. More than 100 institutions have filed similar claims. Four universities in my State of Oklahoma have also filed a lawsuit along the same lines.

So here we have a situation—and it is hard to believe this can happen in America—where there is a man who has built up and is actively employing 16,000 people who otherwise might not be employed. He is providing income, selling products. He is a self-made man who started out in his garage. He has built up a giant operation all throughout America and has made a great contribution. Along comes the Obama administration and ObamaCare which says: We are going to fine you $1.3 million a day if you don't offer these abortions.

This is actually being considered right now in the U.S. Supreme Court. I think God is on our side and I think we are going to have a good outcome. But imagine, one man taking the risk of $1.3 million a day in fines just to stand behind his faith and behind the 16,000 people who work for him to make sure that good happens.

Mr. President, I yield the floor

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. HEITKAMP). The Senator from Missouri.

Mr. BLUNT. Madam President, I wish to speak about the same topic as my good friend from Oklahoma.

I was at the Supreme Court listening to the arguments on this case, Sebelius v. Hobby Lobby, and another case involving a Pennsylvania company which I wish to speak about as well.

Of course, this case, as the Senator from Oklahoma has pointed out, starts with the Affordable Care Act and what many people and I believe the Supreme Court will decide is a blatant violation in religious freedom in the way that act would be applied.

There is nothing in the act that deals with the rule which sets those big fines up or establishes how those fines would be collected—or, in fact, nothing in the act which specifies specific things that have to be in the so-called model plan. That all is up to the administration, all up to the Department of HHS—unless the Court or the Congress does what needs to be done here, which is to say there are certain boundaries you can't cross.

The so-called Affordable Health Care Act—which seems to be providing neither better health care nor better affordability—was signed into law 4 years ago this week. In that 4 years we have seen disastrous effects of the health care act. One of those is the workplace effect where more and more people work less and less.

Why do they work less and less? Because for the first time ever the government has said businesses and people had an obligation to provide insurance for somebody who worked more than 30 hours. Prior to that law, many people with insurance worked less than 30 hours. It may not have been insurance which the President of the United States would have specified they had, but it was insurance which appeared to be working for them. But once the government says: Here is what you have to do, the government ironically also appears to be saying: Here is what you don't have to do.

So we know the workplace effects are bad. We know this is one of the principal reasons given for people working part time without benefits instead of working either full time or part time with benefits. We see the cut in Medicare and the impact it has on seniors. We see the increasing amount of money you have to spend before your insurance kicks in for so many people. We know this law is not working for American families or American individuals. Now we see a case where the law doesn't work for the Constitution.

Specifically, the law forces businesses such as Hobby Lobby—mentioned by the Senator from Oklahoma, Senator INHOFE—to offer health insurance for employees which covers services that violate their religious belief. This is a company which has always prided itself in its ability to offer health care coverage better than its employees might be able to get other places. This is a company which starts its nonseasonal employees at a rate about twice minimum wage, its lowest paid employee. This is not a company which is in any way trying to take advantage of its employees. This is a company which in every indication through the existence of the company is they want to act in a certain way which is comfortable with its faith.

The penalties? If you don't do what the government says, the penalties are $36,500 per employee per year. In the case of this company, which has locations all over the country and a significant number of employees, that is more than $450 million a year. If you don't provide insurance at all, one of the points made by the government lawyers today, your option would be you would only pay a $2,000 penalty. So $2,000 a year if you don't offer insurance at all; $36,500 a year per employee if you don't offer exactly the insurance the all-knowing government has decided you need to have.

What a foolish position for the Federal Government to be in: Your penalty, if you are this big company but privately held, closely held by a family—this happens to be a big and successful company but not a publicly-traded company. It happens to be a company that chose to incorporate but incorporated within the ability of the family to do so in a closely-held way. If you don't pay—if you don't do what the government says, your penalty would be less than the insurance you are providing by quite a bit—if you don't provide insurance at all. If you don't do exactly what the government says, it is probably the amount of money that puts your company out of business.

Hobby Lobby, with more than 500 arts and crafts stores around the country, is being joined in the case today. The cases were joined together by Conestoga Wood Specialties, a company that manufactures kitchen cabinets. Their case was presented at the same time. This company was founded by the Hahns family, a Mennonite family from Pennsylvania. It is a smaller company than Hobby Lobby, but a company that still upholds their own religious beliefs and has a tradition of upholding those religious beliefs in everything they do. These two companies of very different size do not object to all of the things in the list of things the government says you have to offer. In fact, in the area of contraception, they object to only 4 of the things that happen after conception, the things that would create an abortion in their view after conception. They both traditionally offered other kinds of contraception, but this crosses their religious boundary. So for these 4 things only the government would say you have to pay $36,500 per employee per year.

There are at least 46 cases filed concerning for-profit companies that have the same kinds of religious objections. More than 10 of those lawsuits are in my State of Missouri. It is not just about one set of religious beliefs, but it is about protecting all Americans' First Amendment rights to pursue their faith-based principles and what they believe. These happen to be a Mennonite family and an evangelical Christian family. The largest Christian group in America, the Catholic Church, has a broader sense of what they think would violate their religious beliefs. But the point here is not what the government is specifically trying to force you to do; it is that the government under the laws that we have passed should not be able to force you to do things that violate your faith principles.

There are many faith-based groups that have different views of how you deliver health services. I met with many of those groups over the course of the last 2 years since this rule came out. There are 84 different briefs that have been filed with the Court on behalf of these two cases, suggesting as

friends of the Court that here is something you should think about and look at. On those 84 amicus briefs they are at least 3 to 1 in favor of the families that own these companies that want to be able to run their companies based on their faith-based principles.

The numbers of people that are concerned about this are large, and they include a very diverse set of coalitions of people who care. One brief from a bipartisan group of 107 Members of Congress said you should uphold the law that Congress passed that protects people's freedom of religion—not to mention the Constitution itself—where freedom of religion is the first freedom mentioned and the first sentence in the First Amendment to the Constitution. It is important in our history of who we are. Twenty-one states have joined this case on behalf of these companies. Doctors' and women's organizations have filed briefs advocating that the Court respect the religious rights of companies. Protestant and Catholic theologians have filed briefs, as have the Rabbinical Council of America, the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, the International Society of Krishna Consciousness, Crescent Foods, a halal food company, the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, and the Coalition of Christian Colleges and Universities. All have a broad diversity of religious views, but they agree on one thing: This is a principal tenet of who we are.

President Jefferson said in a letter he wrote to the New London Methodists in 1809 that of all the rights we hold, we should hold the right of conscience most dear. Once the government can start telling you what to believe and how you apply what you believe, we have given up the most fundamental of all freedoms.

Congress has a long tradition of protecting religious liberty. The Congress enacted the Religious Freedom Restoration Act to ensure broad protection of religious liberty. The HHS regulations do not satisfy the high bar set by that act. That is a position that I hope the Court upholds. The mandate is an enormous government overreach, and it violates Americans' constitutional rights.

While this mandate severely fines religious individuals, it exempts plenty of other nonreligious institutions. The administration has already exempted 100 million employees from the mandate for commercial or political reasons. People should also not be forced to give up their business to hold on to their faith or to give up their faith to hold on to their business. These family businesses are not publicly traded corporations.

I am not a lawyer, but I am told on the best authority there is not one court case that diminishes the rights of these kinds of corporations. In fact, numerous Federal courts have upheld the ability of for-profit corporations to bring racial discrimination cases. So you could have a racial profile as a corporation, but you couldn't have a religious profile as a corporation. This is an untenable position for the government to take.

The Supreme Court has heard this case today. I join my colleagues on both sides of the aisle and in both Chambers to urge the Court to preserve the fundamental religious freedoms that Americans have enjoyed, the Constitution demands, that laws passed overwhelmingly by the Congress and signed by the President in 1993 continue to be the standard that is applied to our right of conscience, our right of belief, of what we want to believe, must believe, and do believe.

I am pleased to be joined by my colleagues to talk about this very same topic.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Oklahoma.

Mr. COBURN. I thank Senator BLUNT. I did not get to hear all of Senator INHOFE's comments, but as an Oklahoman I think we couldn't have a finer company or a finer corporate citizen than the Green family, in terms of their chains of stores around the country and what they have done. The reason they are successful is because they actually care, nurture, and support every one of their employees.

They work on principles that they truly believe in, and it has really been the key to their success. They are never open on the sabbath. They believe in paying somebody a livable wage. They are big in the community. As a matter of fact, they are one of the largest contributors to organizations that are funded in the charitable realm. They go down deep to actually help people. They come with pure motives.

The Senator from Missouri mentioned what Thomas Jefferson said in 1809:

> No provision in our Constitution ought to be dearer to man than that which protects the rights of conscience against the enterprises of civil authority.

I want you to listen to that for a minute. Jefferson, one of the authors of the rules of the Senate, one of the key Framers of the very Constitution that we live under, recognized that it is most important to protect this conscience of the Green family to do what they think, according to their faith, is the right thing to do.

My colleague referenced the Religious Freedom Restoration Act. Why was that necessary? Because we saw civil government starting to impede into an arena that Thomas Jefferson warned about. That is why it was passed, that is why it was signed, and that is why it is the law of the land. This is going to be a seminal case, and it has nothing to do with birth control. Hobby Lobby pays for birth control. It always has and always will. It has to do with can we allow the civil government to impede to such a level, as my colleague from Missouri said, that the government can now tell you what your values are, what you have to think, and how you have to act, on the basis of what the government says your values are.

As an obstetrician who has delivered more than 4,000 children, as somebody who has cared for every complication of pregnancy, as somebody who believes in the value of newly created human life, all the Greens are saying is: We really shouldn't have to pay our money to abort a baby when we find it unconscionable to take innocent human life. It doesn't mean that people that work for them cannot get an abortion. It just says they don't want to violate their own conscience by supplying it.

The other issue that ought to be evident to everybody is that plan B is over the counter. It is not even part of your health care. You can go buy it. As a matter of fact, there is not even an age limit on it now. A 12-year-old can go buy it over the counter. So it is not about limiting abortion; it is about the conscience of a very successful company. The reason they are successful is they follow the teachings of their faith. Now we have government in a position where they are going to tell them what their faith is.

Let me reiterate what Jefferson said:

> No provision in our Constitution ought to be dearer to man than that which protects the rights of conscience against the enterprises of civil authority.

These are deeply felt and held beliefs based on their faith.

The other side of this is we see their deeply held beliefs and how they have rescued universities, how they have come to the aid of food pantries, how they have actually been active in the community. Everywhere they are involved they are out following the same deeply held beliefs of helping the poor and indigent, giving people an opportunity through a college education that they never would have had, giving people a day of rest.

Their stores are not open late. Their employees get to go home. They could sell more products if they were open later. They could sell more product if they were open on Sunday. They choose not to because they think the principles under which they operate their business based on their faith have created an environment which allows everybody who works for them to succeed. If you go through their businesses, if you go through their warehouses, and if you go to their stores, what you see is a smile on almost everybody's face. Why? Because people enjoy working there, because they are treated as human beings. They are lifted up. They are given opportunity. They are given the very things that we all want for our neighbors and for ourselves.

My hope is that the Constitution will be looked at as the Supreme Court considers this case and that the Religious Freedom Restoration Act will be looked at as the Supreme Court considers this case.

The Affordable Care Act is not affordable; it is unaffordable. For Americans it has a $2 trillion cost over the next 10 years. It is a disaster in terms of how it has been implemented. It is going to be a disaster in terms of quality care and delayed care because of the increased deductibles that almost everybody is facing. We shouldn't let it be a disaster in terms of destroying businesses.

We ought to embrace this family and their business for what they have done. They have taken advantage of the American enterprise system in a way that has built tremendous success, that has benefited not just the Green family but hundreds of thousands of people through their generosity, and their capability to empower people to get ahead.

I am glad to see my colleague, and I yield the floor.

Mr. BLUNT. Madam President, I would ask for an additional 5 minutes for the Senator from New Hampshire.

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

Ms. AYOTTE. Thank you, Madam President.

I come to the floor today to talk about a very important case that the U.S. Supreme Court heard arguments on this morning that goes to the very core of our Nation's foundation—the future of religious freedom in the United States.

As Americans we cherish our religious liberty. It lies at the heart of who we are as a people, and we know we must always guard against threats to our religious freedom enshrined in the First Amendment of the Constitution. That is why I am joining my colleagues Senator BLUNT and Senator COBURN on the floor today and speaking in support of the constitutional rights that all Americans have under the First Amendment, which guarantees the right of freedom of conscience and religious liberty.

Here is what is at stake. Americans should not be forced to give up their religious freedom or their rights of conscience simply because they want to open a family business. American families should not be forced into choosing between their family business and complying with unlawful government mandates that infringe on the First Amendment to the Constitution, and that is why this case, which is being heard today by our Supreme Court, is so important to the American people.

A provision of President Obama's health care law includes a mandate that threatens penalties on private organizations unless they involuntary agree to violate their deeply held religious beliefs. This is anathema to the First Amendment to our Constitution. If religious institutions and faith-based organizations are forced to comply with government mandates that violate the core principles of their faith, that is a violation of the First Amendment to the Constitution, and it is contrary to what we stand for as Americans.

I have heard from people in my State who are deeply concerned about this mandate and the issue that is being considered by the Supreme Court today. They are simply asking to have the same conscience rights they had before the President's health care law was passed—the same conscience rights that are enshrined in our Constitution that protect all Americans regardless of what our faith is and regardless of our background.

This is a fundamental matter of religious freedom and the proper role of our government. It is about who we are as Americans. If the government, through mandates, can take away our conscience rights, what does that say about other rights we have under our Constitution?

This debate comes down to the legacy left behind by our Founding Fathers and over 200 years of American history. We have a choice between being responsible stewards of this legacy or allowing the Federal Government to interfere with religious life in an unprecedented way.

Protecting religious freedom and conscience rights in the past has been a bipartisan issue. Congress has a long history of protecting religious liberty. I heard my colleague talk about the Religious Freedom Restoration Act that was signed into law by President Clinton to ensure that the government should be held to a very high level of proof before it interferes with someone's free exercise of religion. That is what is at stake in the Supreme Court decision and the mandates that are being rendered by the health care law against private companies such as Hobby Lobby and others.

This is what is at stake: Under the President's health care law, companies such as Hobby Lobby and Conestoga—and we are proud to have a Hobby Lobby in the State of New Hampshire—that want to help and provide health care coverage for their employees could be forced to pay over $36,000 per employee unless they provide drugs and devices that violate their religious beliefs and conscience rights. Why should they be forced into this position? If the Federal Government is able to violate the First Amendment in this way, what is to stop other fundamental rights from being violated?

Protecting religious freedom was once an issue that bound Americans together. I believe this effort, which is so fundamental to our national character, must bring us together once more.

I look forward to seeing the Supreme Court's decision on this issue, but this is a case that never should have been filed. The Affordable Care Act, or ObamaCare, should have never violated the rights of conscience of these companies or of religious organizations, and it is time to turn this around. I look forward to the Supreme Court vindicating their rights under the First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution, which should have been respected by this administration, but that is why we have a Supreme Court. I look forward to the Supreme Court decision, which I hope will uphold the First Amendment rights of the parties to this litigation and to all Americans.

I thank the Presiding Officer.

RECESS

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

Thereupon, the Senate, at 12:35 p.m., recessed until 2:15 p.m. and reassembled when called to order by the Presiding Officer (Ms. BALDWIN).

COOPERATIVE AND SMALL EMPLOYER CHARITY PENSION FLEXIBILITY ACT

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate has received H.R. 4275, the text of which is identical to S. 1302. The Senate will proceed to consideration of the measure, which the clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (H.R. 4275) to amend the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974 and the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to provide for cooperative and small employer charity pension plans.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, H.R. 4275 is read a third time and passed.

SUPPORT FOR THE SOVEREIGNTY, INTEGRITY, DEMOCRACY, AND ECONOMIC STABILITY OF UKRAINE—MOTION TO PROCEED—Continued

Mrs. MURRAY. Madam President, I ask to speak as in morning business.

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

WASHINGTON LANDSLIDE

Mrs. MURRAY. Madam President, I wish to take a moment to address an issue that has really been on the hearts and minds of those back home in my home State of Washington.

On Saturday, as I am sure many of my colleagues heard, the town of Oso, WA—a small, tightly knit town alongside the Stillaguamish River—was directly hit by a massive landslide. That landslide cut off the town of Darrington, which is just a few miles down State Road 530. Houses over a square mile were simply swept away. We already know we have lost several people, and yesterday we learned there could be well more than 100 who are still missing. So right now in Washington State there are dozens of families who simply don't know if their loved ones are even still alive.

Even though Oso and Darrington are 2,300 miles away from the Nation's Capital, our hearts and prayers are with them and their families. I want them to know that in the coming days and weeks and months—and even years, if that is what it takes—all of us will stand with the people of Oso and

Darrington and provide any resources they need to recover and rebuild and that they have the thoughts and prayers of everyone in this country, from their Washington to this one.

AFFORDABLE CARE ACT

Let me change gears a bit and address one of the most significant pieces of legislation for women in my lifetime—the Affordable Care Act.

On Sunday this law celebrated its fourth anniversary, serving as a very stark reminder of where our Nation's health care system was just 4 years ago. Four years ago our health insurance companies could deny women care due to so-called preexisting conditions such as pregnancy or being a victim of domestic violence. Four years ago women were permitted to be legally discriminated against when it came to insurance premiums and often were paying more for coverage than men. Four years ago women did not have access to the full range of recommended preventive care, such as mammograms or prenatal screenings and much more. Four years ago insurance companies had all the leverage and all the power, and too often it was women who paid the price.

Now, thanks to the Affordable Care Act, for the first time women—not their insurance companies or their employers—are fully in charge of their own health care. In fact, women make up over half of the 5 million people who have already signed up for coverage in the new marketplace, and over 47 million women have already gained guaranteed access to preventive health services thanks to the Affordable Care Act.

That is why I feel so strongly that we cannot go back to the way things were. While we can never stop working to make improvements, we owe it to the women of America to make progress and to move forward and not allow the clock to be rolled back on their health care needs.

Unfortunately, there are efforts underway all across the country—including here today in our Nation's Capital—to severely undermine a woman's access to some of those most critical and lifesaving services that are provided under the Affordable Care Act. No provision of this law has faced quite as many attacks as the idea of providing affordable, quality reproductive health services to the women of America.

For this reason I was very proud to lead Members of my caucus in filing an amicus brief with the Supreme Court in the two cases being considered there today. Those cases were brought by CEOs who want to take away their employees' right to insurance coverage for birth control, which is guaranteed under the Affordable Care Act.

As was the case in the many attempts before this case, there are those out there who would like the American public to believe this conversation is anything but an attack on women's health care. To them, it is a debate about freedom—except, of course, freedom for women's access to care. It is no different than when we are told that attacks on abortion rights somehow are not an infringement on a woman's right to choose but it is somehow about religion or States rights; or when we are told that restricting emergency contraception isn't about limiting women's ability to make their own family planning decisions, it is somehow about protecting pharmacists; or just like last week when an Alaska State senator proposed placing State-funded pregnancy tests in bars but ruled out providing contraception because ''birth control is for people who don't necessarily want to act responsibly.''

The truth is that this is about contraception. This is an attempt to limit a woman's ability to access care. This is about women. Allowing a woman's boss to call the shots about her access to birth control should be inconceivable to all Americans in this day and age. It takes us back to a place in history when women had no voice and no choice.

In fact, contraception was included as a required preventive service in the Affordable Care Act on the recommendation of the independent, nonprofit Institute of Medicine and other medical experts because it is essential to the health of women and families. After many years of research, we know that ensuring access to effective birth control has a direct impact on improving the lives of women and families in America. We have been able to directly link it to declines in maternal and infant mortality, reduced risk of ovarian cancer, better overall health care outcomes for women, and far fewer unintended pregnancies and abortions, which is a goal we all share.

What is at stake in this case before the Supreme Court is whether a CEO's personal beliefs can trump a woman's right to access free or low-cost contraception under the Affordable Care Act.

I strongly believe every American deserves to have access to high-quality health care coverage regardless of where they work or where they live, and each of us should have the right to make our own medical and religious decisions without being dictated to or limited by our employers. Contraceptive coverage is supported by the vast majority of Americans, who understand how important it is for women and families.

In weighing this case, my hope is the Court realizes that women working for private companies should be afforded the same access to medical care regardless of who signs their paycheck. We can't allow for-profit, secular corporations or their shareholders to deny female employees access to comprehensive women's health care under the guise of a religious exemption. It is as if we are saying that because someone is a CEO or a shareholder in a corporation, their rights are more important than the employees who happen to be women.

As I sat inside that Supreme Court chamber this morning listening to the arguments being made on both sides, I couldn't help but think: If these CEOs are allowed to evade this law, what would happen to the other legal protections for employees? Could a boss decide not to cover HIV treatment? Could an employer opt out of having to comply with antidiscrimination laws? Corporations should not be able to use religion as a license to discriminate.

I am proud to be joined in filing the brief by 18 other Senators who were in office when Congress enacted the religious protections through the Religious Freedom Restoration Act in 1993 and again when we made access to women's health care available through the Affordable Care Act in 2010. We are Senators who know that Congress did not intend for a corporation or its shareholders to restrict a woman's access to preventive health care. We all know that improving access to birth control is good health policy and good economic policy. We know it will mean healthier women, healthier children, healthier families, and a healthier America. And we all know it will save money for businesses and consumers.

I know many of our colleagues believe that repealing the Affordable Care Act and access to reproductive health services is somehow a political winner for them. But the truth is that this law and these provisions are winners for women, for men, for children, and for our health care system overall. So I am very proud to stand with my colleagues who are committed to making sure the benefits of this law do not get taken away from the women of America, because politicians and ideology should not matter when it comes to making sure women get the care they need at a cost they can afford.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Missouri.

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

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

Mrs. MCCASKILL. I wish to speak as in morning business.

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

HARPOOL NOMINATION

Mrs. MCCASKILL. Madam President, I rise to urge my colleagues to vote this afternoon—hopefully this afternoon or, if not this afternoon, tomorrow—for a terrific man to be a judge in the Western District of the Federal District Court in Missouri.

As an old lawyer—too old—I find myself amazed that I have the opportunity to speak to the Senate about someone I have known a long time, about a lawyer I know very well. This is a man whose name is Doug Harpool. He is from Springfield, MO.

Back in the early 1980s he and I arrived as very young lawyers in the Missouri House of Representatives. I had the opportunity to get to know him well—his character, his integrity, his work ethic. I watched him, against tremendous odds and, frankly, some inappropriate pressure, fight for a first major attempt at ethics reform in the Missouri Legislature. His journey was sometimes a very lonely journey, but he had a pit bull kind of mentality about going after this important topic, believing that if a person is in public service, a person's standards must be high; believing that if one chooses—many times at less compensation—a path in the public arena, one has a certain duty to conduct oneself with integrity and the kind of character that could make others proud of their representation.

After his time in the Missouri Legislature, he went on to be a lawyer's lawyer. I don't mean the kind who says ''I am a litigator'' and never goes near a courtroom, and I don't mean the kind who says ''I handle serious cases'' and does nothing but shuffle paper, but, rather, a real litigant—somebody who is in the courtroom, by the way, on both sides of the table. This is somebody who helped clients who were suing people and helped people who were being sued.

He has worked with great regard as a practicing attorney now for many years. There is nothing better than being respected by one's peers, especially those whom one has battled because when we battle with someone, we see it all. We see what kind of a person we are up against and what tactics the other person is willing to use. We see a person's raw intellect and their ability to think on their feet. So when I started hearing from so many lawyers who were Doug Harpool's colleagues what a terrific choice he would be, I knew that what I believed about him was shared by so many others.

He will never be a judge who gets ''robitis.'' That is a serious disease which sometimes strikes Federal judges more often than other kinds because they are appointed for life. Practicing lawyers talk about judges who have robitis, which is a malaise that comes upon a judge who all of a sudden removes himself from the common people and that somehow makes him or her above the struggles lawyers are having, makes them above the problems clients are presenting in their courtroom. This is a grounded man. This is a man who will understand what it is like to litigate a case, why his judgments must be fair and also speedy, why he owes it to the litigants to actually read their briefs—not assign it to someone else, to thumb through and then make a decision based on a predetermined notion he might have.

This is someone who will take this work with the degree of seriousness it deserves and with the amount of compassion we all should demand.

I am so proud to be here urging his confirmation. I am confident he will be confirmed by a wide margin. But I am even more confident he will be the kind of Federal judge who will make me proud and all of Missouri proud for as long as he chooses to sit on the bench.

Thank you, Madam President.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

Mrs. SHAHEEN. Madam President, I rise today to speak to the importance of passing the pending legislation to support the people of Ukraine in maintaining their independence at this very challenging time.

Russia's illegal annexation of Crimea marks the first time one European nation has seized territory from another since the end of World War II. Now President Putin is continuing his military buildup along Ukraine's eastern border, and Russia's actions in the Crimea fly in the face of the basic principles of sovereignty that have underpinned security in Europe and around the world for decades. The United States and the international community must stand with Ukraine and reaffirm our commitment to Ukraine's independence and territorial integrity.

This moment is a real test for the international community. It tests whether the nations of the world can respond in a unified way to support Ukraine and to check Russia. It will also test whether we in Congress can overcome political differences and leave partisanship at the water's edge.

I believe we can and that we will rise to the occasion. We had a very good vote last night and hopefully that will continue as we take up the pending legislation.

First, we should provide Ukraine with much needed economic assistance. That is why I strongly support the legislation that is currently before us. It authorizes the administration to extend $1 billion in loan guarantees to Ukraine.

Second, Congress needs to continue to push the administration to impose costs on Russia for its illegal and escalating actions.

I applaud yesterday's decision by the G7 nations to cancel their participation in the upcoming Sochi summit, to suspend Russia's participation, and to convene energy ministers for talks to strengthen our collective energy security.

The latest round of U.S. and EU sanctions are another very important step. However, Congress must continue to explore options for additional bipartisan sanctions legislation. In addition, the administration should be aggressive in responding to Russian provocations using the authorities we give them.

Third, we need to demonstrate support for our other allies and partners in the region who are threatened by Russia's expansionist agenda.

NATO has already taken some commendable actions in the past week. They have deployed additional aircraft and early warning systems, and we are reinforcing our commitment to Poland and our Baltic partners.

This is a significant moment for Ukraine, for Europe, and for the United States. It is imperative that we do our part to help the people of Ukraine secure the bright independent future they deserve. The people of Ukraine and of Ukrainian descent—whether they be in Kiev or in Manchester, NH—are watching and counting on our support.

Our European allies are watching and are counting on our continued leadership. And maybe most important, Vladimir Putin is watching and counting on our acquiescence.

So let us be committed and resolute. Let us stand together in support of the people of Ukraine. And let us start by passing this important legislation.

I thank the Presiding Officer and yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE

Mr. REED. Madam President, the Senate needs to do everything it can to help create jobs, improve our economy, and address the basic needs of the average American. Unfortunately, many efforts to make meaningful progress on these issues have been thwarted in the last 2 months. Specifically, for the last 87 days, emergency assistance for job seekers has been blocked by gridlock.

Despite the best efforts of several of my colleagues, including my colleague and friend Senator DEAN HELLER of Nevada, today over 2.2 million Americans are being denied vital assistance in what remains a very difficult economy, but I am pleased to say that a group of five Republicans and five Democrats have reached a principled compromise to end this impasse and help get people back on their feet.

Indeed, I along with Senators Heller, Merkley, Collins, Booker, Portman, Brown, Murkowski, Durbin, and Kirk have introduced a bill to continue emergency unemployment insurance for 5 months retroactive from December 28.

As I have advocated, this bill contains no cuts to the weeks of benefits available or the structure of the tiers of benefits, nor does it include other problematic policy changes. It is, however, fully paid for and includes some positive reforms that better align the unemployment insurance and workforce systems to help get people back to work sooner.

It also includes language my colleagues on the other side of the aisle sought—and that was previously passed in the Senate 100 to 0—which would prohibit millionaires from receiving Federal emergency benefits.

I wish to thank Senator HELLER for his commitment to this issue, for his steadfastness, and for his recognizing that this should not be a partisan issue. He has been an extremely thoughtful, collaborative, and constructive colleague in trying to bring this issue to the floor.

I also wish to particularly thank Senators Collins, Murkowski, Portman, and Kirk because they also have been extremely thoughtful, tireless, and resolute in their efforts to find a pathway forward. They have all brought constructive ideas to the table. We have been able to craft a principled compromise that will provide aid to an estimated 2.7 million Americans, including 12,000 Rhode Islanders.

This is a vital lifeline that can mean the difference between making a rent payment, putting enough food on the table, and keeping the heat on as our constituents search for work in an economy where there are still more than two job seekers for every opening and in fact in some places three job seekers for every opening.

I have been working since last year to extend these benefits. Every day that passes is another day that hardworking Americans do not have the same type of aid as those who were unemployed and looking for work last year had. I am glad we have reached a principled bipartisan compromise. It deserves to move forward quickly so we can provide much needed relief to our constituents and can strengthen our economy.

I understand there have been administrative concerns raised about this bill by the National Association of State Workforce Agencies, which Speaker BOEHNER appears to be using as a reason to not take up this bipartisan compromise. Frankly, administrative challenges should not be a reason to deny aid to working Americans who have lost their jobs through no fault of their own and are out there hitting the pavement searching for work in a challenging economy.

The Secretary of Labor has sent Congress a letter addressing all of the concerns raised by the national group. This letter notes the Secretary of Labor is ''confident that there are workable solutions for all the concerns raised by NASWA. From the Great Recession to the present, the Congress has worked in a bipartisan fashion to enact twelve different expansions or extensions to the EUC program. A number of extensions included changes to the program that were as or more complex than those included in the current bill. The Department of Labor has consistently worked with states to implement these extensions in an effective, collaborative and prompt fashion, and will do so again.''

Indeed, the States have implemented benefits retroactively several weeks after the program has expired previously. I would like to add that my colleagues who have joined as cosponsors of this bill, out of an abundance of caution and a desire to allay these administrative concerns, have included clarifying language to ensure that administrative funding constraints related to the prohibition on millionaires receiving emergency unemployment insurance could not be read in an overly broad fashion, so that it will make this bill administratively easier to implement.

I look forward to debating this bill later this week. I am hopeful that with this strong bipartisan showing, we can convince our colleagues on the other side of the Capitol that this is the right thing to do for the economy and for working Americans who lost their job through no fault of their own and who are searching for work.

Again, I am delighted to join Senator HELLER in this effort and our other Republican cosponsors. They have been extraordinarily thoughtful, constructive, and collaborative. They have served not only their constituents but this Senate and this country with great and deeply appreciated effort.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Nevada.

Mr. HELLER. Madam President, I would like to begin by thanking my friend from Rhode Island for his continued work to help the American people by temporarily extending unemployment insurance benefits. This is something he and I have been working on together since this past December. I am pleased to have finally reached a bipartisan agreement that can pass this Chamber.

I admire my colleague's dedication and am greatly pleased that we are here this week to support our efforts to help keep American families on their feet during this tough economy. I also wish to thank Senators COLLINS, PORTMAN, MURKOWSKI, and KIRK for their continued willingness to come to the table to craft a bill that can garner enough support to pass in this Chamber.

I would also like to recognize some of my other colleagues: Senator COATS, Senator AYOTTE, who though not cosponsors on this bill today were instrumental in these negotiations from the beginning. I understand their concerns and I also share their desire to see additional reforms to these programs.

Regardless, I am grateful for their contribution over the past few months. I would also like to thank Senator ISAKSON and Senator HOEVEN for their input and am appreciative of their efforts throughout the process. Though it has not always been easy, this process has truly been a collaborative effort at every level.

Fortunately, I believe we have reached a compromise that will garner enough support in the Senate to help 1.3 million unemployed Americans get back on their feet as they look for work in the toughest job market in decades.

This bill is a responsible, fully paid for, temporary extension of unemployment insurance benefits that expired in December. It addresses concerns that any further extension ought to be paid for. As our economy recovers and people find new jobs, the demand for social safety net programs should naturally diminish, but States such as Nevada, Rhode Island, and many others still have long economic recoveries ahead of them.

I know some may feel there is little reason to extend these benefits, especially since they were allowed to expire at the end of last December, but the fact remains that too many Americans are out of work but want to return to the workforce. I have heard from many Nevada job seekers who in addition to trying to find a job are also struggling to put food on the table for their families, pay their rent or mortgage, and are running out of ways to make ends meet. Extending these benefits will help these families before their situation goes from bad to worse.

My colleagues and I have worked together to come to a reasonable bipartisan agreement on both policy and pay-fors. I think we would all agree there are certain provisions that I think each side would prefer to see included in this bill, such as additional reforms, but this is the nature of compromise.

We also recognize the challenge of dealing with a patchwork of State UI systems of varying capabilities, but I believe we are all open to finding ways to ensure that this extension is implemented as efficiently as possible. This task may not be easy, but I firmly believe it is worth doing.

Again, thanks to all of my colleagues, especially my colleague from Rhode Island who has been involved in this process. I look forward to moving to this bill very soon and am hopeful Congress can finally resolve this matter as soon as possible to help restore some stability for the millions of unemployed Americans looking to get back to work.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. MANCHIN). Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. MENENDEZ. Mr. President, I rise to express my robust concern about Russia's actions and the continuing escalation of tensions in Central and Eastern Europe. Even with Ukrainian troops leaving Crimea, Russia continues to extort Ukraine, disavowing an agreement on gas prices that was part of a bilateral agreement

allowing Russia to lease the Black Sea port in Crimea for its fleet. Russia is now arguing it no longer has to provide the discounted gas—because it illegally seized the port—but that it also must be paid back $11 billion for prior discounts.

At the same time Russia has amassed more than 100,000 troops at Ukraine's border, in addition to 23,000 troops that are in Crimea, making clear the threat of an outright invasion of Ukraine and possibly a portion of Moldova. Putin is watching to see what we will do, to see if we have the resolve to act or if he, in essence, gets the green light to take the next step.

I believe we need to act now. Although I also believe our response to Russia's annexation of Crimea should include the International Monetary Fund reforms that passed in a bipartisan way out of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee and that obviously received a rather strong procedural vote yesterday in the Senate—and these are critical to strengthening the assistance package for Ukraine and to strengthen U.S. global leadership—I recognize our ability to move this package with those reforms in it at this point is unlikely.

The House Republican leadership has proven itself intransigent on IMF reform, and we all know why. Trying to link support for IMF reforms to C–4 political committees that may have violated campaign finance laws and may involve individuals who illegally used them to influence Federal elections is pretty outrageous. I cannot believe the House leadership will not put national security interests above their partisan political interest but, obviously, politics clearly don't stop at the water's edge on this issue.

So while I am not happy about it, I believe we need to move forward on a bill today that sends the necessary message of support to Ukraine and resolve to Russia. But as we take that step, let us realize it is the IMF that is leading the effort to stabilize Ukraine's fragile economy. Congressional ratification of the 2010 IMF reforms would increase IMF emergency funding to Ukraine by up to 60 percent and provide an additional $6 billion for longer term support, setting an important marker for other donors, such as the EU and the World Bank.

Let us be clear about what keeping the IMF provisions would have done. The IMF is strengthened at no cost to U.S. finances or influence. The United States retains its executive board seat and the sole veto power at no net cost because the $63 billion increase in the U.S. quota is totally offset by an equivalent decrease to a separate emergency facility. However, other countries would put in new money, increasing the IMF's lending power.

The fact is this would be a pure win for the United States. We would fully have paid for the $315 million budget impact of the bill with real cuts and from funds that were underperforming or no longer needed. Given that the IMF helps to stabilize countries, often an ingredient precluding future need for military action, the minor cost would have been paid back many times over. And we will have another crisis in the future, in which the IMF will be critical to whether that crisis can be diffused and solved.

I repeat what I have said before. This should not be a partisan issue. Presidents Reagan, Clinton, and both Presidents Bush backed legislation to increase IMF resources. Ronald Reagan called the International Monetary Fund ''the linchpin of the international financial system.''

In a letter to the House and Senate leadership last week, members of the Bretton Woods Committee, the original entity that created some of the international organizations that have created global stability, such as the IMF, wrote that ''Implementing the IMF quota reforms . . . bolsters our leadership in the fund'' . . . and provides the United States with ''leverage to continue to preserve our national security and economic interests abroad.''

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to have printed in the RECORD the letter I am referring to.

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

THE BRETTON WOODS COMMITTEE,
Washington, DC.

Hon. HARRY REID,
Majority Leader, U.S. Senate, Washington, DC.
Hon. MITCH MCCONNELL,
Minority Leader, U.S. Senate, Washington, DC.
Hon. JOHN BOEHNER,
Speaker, House of Representatives, Washington, DC.
Hon. NANCY PELOSI,
Minority Leader, House of Representatives, Washington, DC.

DEAR MAJORITY LEADER REID, SPEAKER BOEHNER, MINORITY LEADER MCCONNELL AND MINORITY LEADER PELOSI: We write to urge Congress to maintain strong U.S. leadership in the International Monetary Fund (IMF) by enacting IMF quota reform legislation. For over 60 years, the IMF has been a principal tool for advancing U.S. national security and economic interests globally.

The immediate importance of a strong IMF role for countries in crisis is apparent now in Ukraine, which seeks help from the U.S. and IMF to maintain its independence and economic health, and to reduce its energy dependence on Russia. Implementation of IMF quota reform would mean Ukraine would be able to borrow 60% more in rapid IMF financing (from $1B to $1.6B) than is possible today. Coupled with the U.S. $1 billion in new loan guarantees for Ukraine currently being considered by the Congress, Ukraine would have a total of $2.6 billion in emergency resources to draw upon to stabilize its economy. This enhances the geopolitical position of Ukraine's government in the current crisis with Russia.

The IMF doesn't always get it right but it has been doing important work in countries for decades to stabilize their financial situation and put them on a path toward economic growth for decades. This clearly serves our interests.

ADVANCING NATIONAL SECURITY INTERESTS

The IMF is often the first responder of choice for the United States and our allies, to help countries prevent or manage financial crises before they destabilize an economy and give rise to conditions of economic stagnation, poverty, and political instability, which can embolden terrorism. When Russia went to war with Georgia in 2008, the U.S.-backed IMF $750 million emergency loan to Georgia countered the early financial fallout and kept our friend on a path of market-friendly economic policies. It was the IMF that stepped in to provide financial assistance to the former Eastern European countries after the fall of the Berlin Wall. U.S.-supported IMF loans helped stabilize Pakistan after 9/11, and have reinforced fragile economies such as Jordan, Tunisia and Morocco to help ensure our partners can focus on counter-terrorism cooperation and combating radical extremism.

PROMOTING U.S. ECONOMIC INTERESTS

In its role to promote the stability of the international monetary and financial system, the IMF consistently promotes a growth-oriented agenda based on open markets and strong macroeconomic and structural policies. IMF support to the Euro Area during the recent financial crisis lessened the global fallout and financial instability of highly interconnected economies, and forced long-needed structural reforms to begin to take place. The IMF was first responder to the Asian crisis in the late 1990s, and helped restore growth to Asian economies and create robust export markets for U.S. businesses, which supports American jobs.

Implementing the IMF quota reforms negotiated by the United States in 2010 bolsters our leadership in the Fund without increasing the overall U.S. financial commitment. It requires other countries to make additional financial commitments, effectively providing a larger and more stable source of financing that the U.S.—as the largest shareholder and only country with veto power over major IMF decisions—can leverage to continue to preserve our national security and economic interests abroad. A stronger IMF keeps emerging economies secured in the system we designed without sacrificing any of our influence.

We would therefore urge the Congress to continue its longstanding, bipartisan support of the International Monetary Fund for our national self-interest and for the good of the global system.

Mr. MENENDEZ. Let me cite the names of some of the folks who signed that letter: Madeleine Albright, former Secretary James Baker, Zbigniew Brzezinski, William Cohen, Stephen Hadley, Henry Kissinger, Tom Ridge, Condoleezza Rice, Clayton Yeutter, Robert Zoellick, Lee Hamilton, Brent Scowcroft, Frank Carlucci, Robert Rubin, Larry Summers, John Snow, and Henry Paulson. This is a bipartisan list of ''Who's Who'' in foreign policy, all saying this is critical to do.

Let me be very clear. Opponents have argued that IMF reforms provide no added relief to Ukraine, so it is superfluous to this bill. That argument is patently false. The 2010 IMF reforms strengthen the IMF. That is why they were done. And as it relates to Ukraine, by increasing Ukraine's quota, the reforms increase available short-term lending from $1 billion to $1.6 billion, and longer term resources the IMF can leverage for Ukraine by up to $6 billion. It also strengthens our ability to shape an IMF support package for Ukraine.

Critics say IMF reforms undermine U.S. influence and increase Russia's influence in the IMF. They are dead

wrong again. We remain the largest IMF shareholder even after reform, we are guaranteed our executive board seat, and we will continue as the only country—the only country—with veto power over major IMF decisions.

Meanwhile, the reforms rationalize the voting structure of the IMF to increase buy-in of dynamic emerging economies in a way that ensures continued U.S. leadership in a more relevant international institution. On the other side, the reforms matter little to Russia, which already has a board seat.

Opponents say IMF reforms cost American taxpayers billions and put taxpayer money at risk. Again, wrong. There is no cost to American taxpayers. The reforms included in the Senate Ukraine bill preserve U.S. leadership, the veto position in the IMF, without increasing—without increasing—our financial commitment to the IMF. The IMF is the most solvent financial institution in the world, and the risk of IMF default is de minimis.

We would have paid for all of this budget impact through real cuts, as my colleague and ranking member on the committee BOB CORKER asked. We came together and we figured it out. The appropriators helped us determine underperforming funds, programs from which we could take these funds, and we ultimately came to a very successful conclusion.

I regret the failure to strengthen the IMF to support Ukraine and other unforeseen crises around the world will endanger the system we have so painstakingly built. And it shouldn't need arguing that fragmentation of global economic governance is not in our national interest. The fact is IMF reform, combined with the aid package for Ukraine, would send a clear and unambiguous message to the world that the annexation of Crimea will not stand.

But I understand this institution and our political realities, so I have come to the floor to ask that we come together to at least send our message of support to Ukraine and another message to Putin. We should act today. We cannot and should not stand for the violations of international norms perpetrated on Crimea by Russia. The world is watching, and the world's superpower cannot be seen as incapable of rising to Russia's challenge. That is the responsibility before the Senate today.

So for those who have criticized the IMF reforms—and because the House leadership doesn't want to pursue it because of extraneous matters having to deal with politics and not policy, willing to risk national security issues—they are going to get their way today. I would hope, therefore, the rest of this package, which provides a loan guarantee to Ukraine of $1 billion, that provides sanctions against the Russian regime and others who corrupted Ukraine, the previous Ukrainian Government, and who have violated its territorial integrity, that provides assistance to ensure democratic elections can be held this May in Ukraine, that provides for greater defense cooperation with Ukraine, all other elements of this legislation, should have universal support. We should do it today in order to ensure that we send a clear, unambiguous message, as 100,000 Russian troops are on the eastern front of the Ukraine. I believe this is a critical moment for us to answer affirmatively.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

Mr. BARRASSO. Mr. President, I come to the floor today to talk about an issue that has been in the news quite a bit, and quite a bit on the minds of people, I think, all around the Capitol, which is what is happening with, specifically, Vladimir Putin and Russia and the invasion and takeover of Crimea and the activities in Ukraine.

On March 15 Russian forces seized a natural gas distribution station in a Ukrainian village. I think this is key because this was right at the time they were getting ready to have a vote on Crimea leaving Ukraine, joining Russia, and I was in Ukraine at the time. I was there with a bipartisan group. We had eight Senators—Republicans and Democrats from across the aisle and across the broad spectrum of politics in America. What we saw at the time, right before the vote, was the helicopters heading in to take over the gas plant. To me that showed how Vladimir Putin thinks of energy, thinks of politics, and thinks of power.

In the Washington Post that Sunday morning, the day of the vote in Crimea: ''Ukraine decries Russian Invasion, Natural Gas Facility Seized.'' Their first action before the vote even occurred, the Russians came in and seized a natural gas facility. It showed his willingness, his desire, to use energy as a weapon. It is also a reminder that energy for us can be a powerful weapon to counter Russian aggression.

President Putin has repeatedly made it clear that he does not care about democracy, about freedom or about the Ukrainian people. What he does care about is money and power. As the United States considers how to help the Ukrainian people, as we are doing right now on the floor of the Senate with sanctions and aid, I think we need to make sure we take steps to hit Putin exactly where it hurts, which is in his wallet, in his power. Right now some may say: How does this matter? How important is this? Right now about half of Russia's revenue comes from oil and natural gas.

We heard it today in the energy committee. The chairman of the committee stated that in her remarks before hearing testimony. Fifty-two percent, she said, of Russia's revenue comes from oil and natural gas. I think Senator JOHN MCCAIN was exactly right when he said this past Sunday on CNN that ''Russia is a gas station masquerading as a country.'' He was part of that group of eight Senators who went to Ukraine, went to Kiev, went and saw where the massacres occurred and visited with the new Prime Minister and the new President.

That is why I believe my amendment to this sanctions bill, this aid bill on the floor of the Senate, is so very important not just to us as a Nation but to the people of Ukraine, the people of Europe, those who are trying to regain some freedom from the yoke and the tyranny of what Russia is doing by charging outrageous energy prices to people across Europe and across the Ukraine. We have an opportunity right now to make it easier for the United States to export our own gas to NATO countries and Ukraine. That is what my amendment will do. It is simple. It is two pages. By expediting the approval of facilities to export liquefied natural gas, we can send a very powerful signal to European markets that alternative supplies will be available soon. We can undermine Russia's leverage with its European customers today and undercut Russia's ability to make so much money off gas exports in the future.

Some Washington Democrats continue to act as though the conflict in Ukraine has nothing to do with energy. Other Democrats see it differently. The Obama administration claims that speeding up LNG exports to Europe would not have an immediate effect. That is not what we heard today in the energy committee. That is not what a bipartisan group of Senators has heard and believes.

We cannot ignore Russia's economic dependence on energy and the reality about how energy markets work. Remember, half of Russia's revenue comes from oil and natural gas. That is why the United States shale gas revolution is already undermining Russia's negotiating position with its European neighbors.

This all has come about in the last decade—new techniques of horizontal drilling, directional drilling, all of which makes energy in the United States easier, cheaper to get, and then more available so it can then be more easily exported. By reducing U.S. demand, that frees up supply that can be bought on European markets. Because there is more supply, that forces Russia's state-owned gas companies to adjust their prices. Every molecule of American gas that can get anywhere else in the world is going to be a molecule that those in Europe and those in Ukraine cannot be held hostage to buy from Russia.

That is what The Economist said earlier this year. The more supply there is, then Russia's state-owned gas company will have to adjust its prices. It

ran an article on European efforts to reduce the control Russia has had over gas prices. We can immediately apply more pressure to the region's gas prices and further erode Russia's revenues by approving additional liquefied natural gas export capacity.

I think about that hearing earlier today in the energy Committee, when every witness endorsed LNG exports to undercut Russia. So what is stopping us? Some Washington Democrats have denied any need to act more quickly. The administration has approved just seven applications for LNG export facilities over many years. It spent an average of 697 days processing each of them. The Energy Department has still not processed another 24 applications that are waiting and waiting and waiting.

My amendment would speed up that process, force the administration to act on applications to be able to allow energy to be sent to our NATO allies and to the Ukraine. We don't need more hearings to tell us what we already know. Natural gas and the pricing continues to be a boot on the neck of the Ukrainian people and in Europe.

Majority Leader REID needs to allow a vote on my amendment. To me, it strengthens the Ukrainian relief package. It strengthens the economics in terms of money going from the United States. It strengthens aid, and it strengthens sanctions because it actually works to specifically undercut, undermine Russia's ability to hold others hostage. Plus, it has bipartisan support. There are a number of Democrats who would vote to support it. I think it is time to send a signal to Russia that we are finally ready to use energy to help stop their aggression.

I will point out that I am not alone in this, and there is significant across-the-board support. It is interesting, the number of headlines in the past week or so from papers with various different approaches, including the New York Times: ''U.S. Hopes Boom In Natural Gas Can Curb Putin,'' directly tying natural gas to the Russian President. That is the New York Times.

The Wall Street Journal: ''West Tries To Loosen Russia's Gas Grip.''

Investor's Business Daily: ''Bold Energy Policy Best Response To Russia In Ukraine.''

The Wall Street Journal: ''Energy Exports as Foreign-Policy Tool'' and ''Moscow Tightens Squeeze on Ukraine Over Energy.''

It is evident the export of liquefied natural gas from the United States will help us as a Nation. It will help us in terms of our foreign policy, and it can be used and should be used and must be used to undermine the Russian economy at a time when they are—with Putin on the move, Putin on a daily basis evaluating the consequences of his actions to decide what he is going to do, planning to do, with the possibility of additional incursions into Ukraine. He continues with troops along the border between Russia and the Ukraine ready to act, ready to go in, ready to cross the border. All he understands is strength and power, and the way to undercut that is by undercutting his economic strength and power, by exporting liquefied natural gas.

So I come to the floor asking that Senator REID allow an amendment that would strengthen the bill we are discussing right now and making it better for the people in Ukraine, better for the people here at home, and actually doing something significant about the problem we see existing with the additional use of power by Vladimir Putin.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. WARREN). The Senator from North Dakota.

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

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

Mr. HOEVEN. Madam President, I come to the Senate floor today to address the legislation that we are considering, legislation that will provide economic and diplomatic sanctions to deter Russian aggression and also provide financial assistance in the form of a loan guarantee to the Ukraine to provide financial assistance that will be combined with $15 billion in loan guarantees from the European Union as well as assistance from the International Monetary Fund that can truly make a difference for Ukraine in helping them to stand up to this Russian aggression, while at the same time undertaking sanctions that I believe can be effective in deterring the incursions Russia is making into Ukraine.

A very important part of what we do is to be united with the European Union in this effort. For the sanctions to work, for the economic assistance to Ukraine to work, we have to have a united front. We have to work with our allies throughout Europe. But the European Union's ability and willingness to stand with us is greatly impacted by their energy situation. So how do we help? How do we help them address a very difficult situation in energy so that they will stand with us in putting forth the kinds of sanctions that can truly make a difference now? And the time to take action is now. The time to stand up to Russia's action of invading another country unlawfully, taking part of that country, holding an election that is not bona fide, and amassing troops on the border of a country and threatening to make additional incursions into a country—the time to stand up and put sanctions in place that will deter that behavior is now.

But the European Union finds itself in a situation where fully one-third if not more of its energy comes from Russia. Half of that is piped through the Ukraine and 50 percent or more of Ukraine's energy comes from Russia as well—specifically, natural gas. So the EU finds itself in a very difficult position when it comes to energy, and obviously that is a very important factor as they deliberate their steps in terms of both sanctions against President Putin and Russia and the activities he has undertaken and may undertake in the future and also in terms of their willingness to stand up and to halt those actions and to assist Ukraine.

So as part of this legislation we are considering, we have offered to help provide energy to Europe. The good Senator from Wyoming, Mr. BARRASSO, was on this floor. He is the prime sponsor of legislation that would help move natural gas in the form of LNG—liquefied natural gas—from this country to Europe. I am a cosponsor of that legislation. We filed that legislation as an amendment to the bill we are considering, and we are asking for a vote on that legislation. I think there would be very strong bipartisan support in this Chamber, and I have no doubt whatsoever that the legislation will pass the House as well. Representative GARDNER has introduced the same or very similar legislation on the House side, and there is no question that the support is there to pass the legislation.

So as we look this week—and I think we will pass a bill this week—to both put sanctions on Russia in place and to assist Ukraine, we can add this energy legislation which is an integral piece in helping the EU stand with us in standing up against Russian aggression—very simple, straightforward legislation.

What the legislation provides is that for companies in the United States that are willing to build LNG facilities and export liquefied natural gas, which they are prepared to do—and we will expand the countries to which they can export. Right now we have a limitation in terms of the exports. They can go to countries with which we have free-trade agreements, but there are many other countries that we have strategic security interests in that make a huge difference in terms of our security and security in the world, NATO countries, the EU, Ukraine.

I understand it would take time to build the facilities and move that product, but there is no question in the near term that if we pass this kind of legislation, we will be sending a very strong signal to world markets and, even more importantly, a very strong signal to President Putin that we are serious about working with the EU to provide energy so that they have sources other than Russia. That strengthens the EU, and it also weakens Russia because Russia is entirely dependent for revenue on their sales of energy. So as we take this step, we not only strengthen our allies, we weaken Russia's ability to make the kinds of incursions they have made into the Ukraine.

This is a very straightforward amendment. It has bipartisan support.

We are offering it as part of this bill. As we work through the amendment process and we determine the form this bill is going to take—and again, I think there is strong bipartisan support to move this legislation. I believe we can move it this week. I believe we can get agreement to have the votes and to move it this week. But I call on our leadership, I call on the leadership of the majority party in a bipartisan way to come together and give us the opportunity to vote on this amendment. It is part of a commonsense, comprehensive approach to truly deal with the situation in Eastern Europe.

In addition, I would like to take a moment to call on the President of the United States to take concrete steps that could make a big difference in the energy equation. The President is negotiating with our NATO allies right now, with the EU, which is now the G7—formerly the G8 but the G7 without Russia—talking about what steps can and should be undertaken to address what Russia has done and may do in the future.

On a bipartisan basis, I joined with Senator MARK WARNER of Virginia, and on May 21 we wrote a letter to the President calling on him to undertake an energy plan. I would like to take a minute to read that letter on the Senate floor because I think it is a straightforward, commonsense energy plan that the President could undertake right now and show the world and show specifically President Putin that he is serious, that we are serious about working with the EU starting immediately. So it addresses taking short-term steps but undertaking a long-term plan that will ensure that the EU, working with the United States and others—countries such as Norway, which is producing incredible amounts of natural gas in the North Sea—working with countries that can supply natural gas to the EU, that we will end their dependence on Russia. And if Russia continues the kinds of activities it is undertaking, they will find themselves isolated.

Dear President Obama. We write to you today because we are deeply concerned with the events unfolding in Ukraine and Crimea that have been instigated and supported by Russia. President Vladimir Putin's aggressive actions and intransigence, and his continued dismissal of U.S. and European Union warnings, is of particular concern. We share your view that tough sanctions from both sides of the Atlantic will be required to provide the necessary motivation to change Putin's behavior, and to enable a diplomatic resolution of this crisis.

The sanctions that have been implemented so far are good and appropriate; however, we believe that energy security is a critical component to achieving a successful outcome in the region. Russia provides one-third of Europe's natural gas needs. With Russia in a position to slow or stop gas flowing into much of Europe, Putin retains leverage to continue to dominate European energy markets. Though Russia has publicly committed to maintaining a full supply of gas to Ukraine and Europe, their recent history contradicts those proclamations. In January 2009, Moscow cut its supply of gas flowing through Ukraine, and at least 18 European countries saw their supplies completely or partially reduced. Some governments declared states of emergency and ordered factories and schools to close, while millions of people struggled to cope in freezing temperatures.

As long as Vladimir Putin continues to use energy as a weapon, we must take this threat seriously and take this Russian threat off the table. For the first time in a generation, America is in a position to export energy, and acting strategically to increase our natural gas exports accompanied by a more comprehensive U.S.-EU energy security dialogue will weaken Putin's grip on European energy markets.

We produce 30 trillion cubic feet of gas a year in the United States. States such as mine are producing incredible amounts. We are flaring off gas we would like to get to markets. This is a winning proposition to the United States. If we provide gas to the EU, that generates economic activity and jobs here and helps strengthen the EU and reduces our dependence on natural gas from Russia.

We urge you to take five specific actions that will have near and long term positive impacts on the energy security of Ukraine and the EU.

First, direct the Department of Energy to accelerate the natural gas export permit process by approving the pending permits within 60 days, or providing specific reasons why it cannot approve individual permit applications. Though exports would not start immediately, and though the price points in Asian markets are currently more attractive to natural gas exporters, calling for expedited approval of Liquefied Natural Gas exports will increase liquidity on the global markets and will improve the European energy security.

Second, conduct a strategic review of U.S. energy policies, and expand the group of nations that currently qualify for U.S. energy exports beyond those with free trade agreements to include our NATO allies, the EU, Ukraine, and any others that are in the national security interest of the United States.

It just makes sense.

The review could include examining the potential of additional investments of facilities capable of liquefying natural gas.

Third, launch a joint U.S.-EU initiative on energy security at next week's—

Meaning this week—

U.S.-EU summit in Brussels, with specific near-term and future deliverables. One area of critical importance to ensure greater energy security in Europe is the natural gas infrastructure. While some European countries such as Lithuania and Austria receive 100 percent of their gas from Russia, others receive far less, and by improving the interconnections, these countries could far more easily direct supplies to one another in case of an outage. One specific fix would be to reverse the flow of gas from Slovakia to Ukraine, a proposal that is under consideration by the European Commission. Additionally, we should assist Ukraine to establish and maintain a high level of security around its strategically significant gas storage facilities in Southern Ukraine.

Countries such as Norway—Statoil—can supply more gas. Working cooperatively, we could have an impact right now as well as put a long-term plan in place that sends a very clear message to President Putin that we are going to change the energy equation.

Fourth, help Ukraine implement a significant energy productivity initiative. U.S. businesses have developed many off-the-shelf technologies that can greatly reduce energy waste and promote greater efficiency, which will reduce Ukraine's energy needs. This has the potential to greatly reduce the amount of energy required by Ukraine and lessen their dependence on Russia.

I was recently in Ukraine. We have many U.S. companies doing business over there. Many of the companies were from my State. I met with 10 CEOs from different companies in Kiev that are doing business throughout Ukraine. There is no question that by working with our companies they can have a major impact on what happens in Ukraine both in terms of conserving energy but also producing more energy, and that goes to the final point.

Finally, help Ukraine implement energy development technology to enhance domestic production and promote energy security. We have been contacted by several U.S. companies that are ready to make strategic investments to help Ukraine increase production of their own energy resources to reduce reliance on Russian energy supplies.

We urge you to support and encourage the U.S. State Department's Unconventional Gas Technical Engagement program that allows U.S. local and state-level officials to share best practices with European government officials. Already, U.S. oil and gas companies are leading EU countries in shale gas exploration and off-shore exploration in Eastern Europe to help these countries diversify their energy sources.

We urge you to use the meetings to encourage more European cooperation to solve their own energy dependency problem. A recent proposal from the United Kingdom provides a series of recommended reforms to the European energy infrastructure. We believe our proposal aligns with the British recommendations will provide a helpful starting point for the discussions next week. The U.S. has a long history of supporting the transatlantic relationship on areas of security and defense, and energy security should be part of that dialogue.

We then close the letter saying:

We look forward to working with you to implement this plan.

Think about it. These are steps the administration can and should take now. There is bipartisan support for energy legislation in this body to back it up and make it happen.

I call on my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to come together as part of an effort to deter Russian aggression, help Ukraine. To help the EU stand strong and united with us, we need to address the energy issue. We can and we should.

With that, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Minnesota.

Ms. KLOBUCHAR. Madam President, I appreciate Senator HOEVEN's work on the Ukraine issue. I know he went there recently, and I have also visited the great energy resources in his State as his guest and know they have a broad range of energy sources, as does Minnesota.

I rise to talk about the importance of the Support for the Sovereignty, Integrity, Democracy, and Economic Stability of the Ukraine Act, and I urge the Senate to act as quickly as possible to get it done.

As the past week has made clear, the crisis in Ukraine is not waiting for us. We witnessed Russia's blatantly illegal annexation of Crimea and its continued efforts to bully, intimidate, and weaken the new Ukrainian Government.

It is critical we immediately demonstrate to the world, one, our support for Ukraine as it charts a new democratic future for itself; two, our abhorrence of the Russian Government's actions that violate Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity; and three, our commitment to continue leading the world through a tough and determined response to the crisis.

This legislation, which was backed by our colleagues on the Foreign Relations Committee on a strong bipartisan vote, accomplishes these important goals. It provides badly needed assistance to Ukraine to help its new government stand on its own two feet.

It also punishes those who contributed to the crisis by authorizing sanctions targeting Russia's officials, Crimea's self-appointed leaders, and the former leaders of Ukraine who lined their own pockets at their country's expense.

It is unfortunate we have not passed this bill already, given that the vast majority of our colleagues agree on the basic framework of how we should respond to events in Ukraine. I understand some of our colleagues may want to add something else to this bill, but almost everyone agrees we should provide assistance, including loan guarantees to the new Ukrainian Government and impose sanctions on Russian leaders and key institutions.

Now is the time for us to move forward. Together, the United States and our allies have taken important steps, such as barring Russia from the Group of Eight and imposing sanctions on key Russian officials. President Obama is in Europe this week working to convince our allies to take even stronger measures to help Ukraine and hold Russia accountable. We in the Senate must also act.

I think it is important to step back to reflect on how we arrived at this point. This is not a crisis the United States sought. The situation in Ukraine became a crisis because the former President of Ukraine and Russian leaders sought to keep the Ukrainian people from pursuing their right to determine their own future.

The Ukrainian people rose last November after their then-President turned his back on an association agreement with the European Union. This agreement would have helped bring Ukraine into the prosperous community of European nations while also compelling it to reduce corruption and enhance the rule of law. In short, it was a treaty that would have helped lift Ukraine to a better future with greater opportunity for its people.

When the former President abandoned that treaty, the people of Ukraine did not go quietly. They demonstrated courageously for months in the face of severe repression by the regime, including snipers shooting at civilians in the streets of Kiev. In the face of all odds, they succeeded in forcing the regime to the negotiating table.

The President fled the country, taking with him his ill-gotten wealth. It seemed the Ukrainian people would at least have the freedom they had worked so hard to achieve. The new government even signed—at long last—the association agreement with the European Union that the old regime had rejected.

Unfortunately, President Putin has long sought to keep Ukraine from charting its own course, first through economic manipulation and now through brutal force. When it became clear that the people of Ukraine would not be denied, President Putin carried out a military intervention to cut off Crimea and stage a sham referendum before illegally annexing the territory in a flagrant breach of international law and Russia's own past commitments to Ukraine's sovereignty.

Even though he claims Russia will seek no more territory from Ukraine, he continues to harass and undermine the new government by reneging on previous agreements to provide subsidies for gas and slowing deliveries, something my colleague from North Dakota has focused on. Russia's military continues to mass on Ukraine's borders.

I find it interesting that just a few months ago President Putin wrote a New York Times op-ed on the subject of international law and the use of force. He declared:

> Under current international law, force is permitted only in self-defense or by the decision of the Security Council. Anything else is unacceptable under the United Nations charter and would constitute an act of aggression.

In President Putin's view, force must be approved by the U.N. Security Council or it is an act of aggression, except when it comes to Ukraine.

It should be clear by now that President Putin will use any means to advance his ends. He employs the language of ethnic nationalism while he tries to take apart Ukraine. His dissenters are sent to prison on trumped-up charges, children languish in state institutions as a result of the adoption ban, which is something we care so much about in Minnesota as one of the top States for adopting kids from Russia and across the world, and the Russian LGBT community lives under the constant threat of oppression.

All the people of Ukraine want is a simple freedom to seek a brighter future for their country, to not be a pawn to President Putin's efforts to resurrect the Soviet Union. The whole world sees that.

On March 15, 13 members of the U.N. Security Council voted for a resolution to condemn Russia for the very use of force that President Putin criticized last year. Only one country voted against it and that country was Russia.

Now the world is watching us. They are watching to see whether the Congress of the United States will act. We have talked a lot about Ukraine over the past several weeks. I was proud to cosponsor a bipartisan resolution, led by Senators DURBIN and COATS, that expressed support for Ukraine and criticized Russia's actions. That resolution passed unanimously 2 weeks ago. Now is the time to show we are actually doing something.

Ukrainians need to know that the United States stands with them, not just in the very important speeches on the Senate floor but also with real assistance and real action. President Putin needs to know we will not meekly return to business as usual and allow him to bully Ukraine with impunity.

Our allies and adversaries around the world need to know we will stand together to protect our vision of a world governed by democracy and law, where nations do not live under the threat of force by their neighbors.

This is one of those times where the impact of our votes will be felt far beyond the walls of this Chamber. In Ukraine they are going to be watching this vote. In Russia they are going to be watching this vote. All over Europe they are going to be watching this vote and in those countries from the former Soviet Union. The world is watching. So other people, other countries that may choose to engage in this illegal breach of international law, that may choose to tread on this illegal ground will be watching, and that is why this vote is so important.

I urge my colleagues, in the support of the people of Ukraine, to support this bill.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from North Dakota.

Mr. HOEVEN. Madam President, I wish to take a moment to commend the Senator from Minnesota on her remarks. She expressed what we feel very strongly in this body. I wish to express both my agreement with her comments as well as the importance of moving this legislation. I believe there is very strong bipartisan support to move this legislation. I think we can get it done this week.

Again, I express my appreciation for her words here today and I believe that is exactly the kind of cooperative spirit we need on the part of all 100 Senators to get this done. Now is the time for action. I join with the good Senator from Minnesota in calling for that action.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader.

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.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT AGREEMENT—H.R. 4152

Mr. REID. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that notwithstanding cloture having been invoked, the motion to proceed to S. 2124 be withdrawn; that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of Calendar No. 328, H.R. 4152; that following the reporting of the bill, a Menendez-Corker substitute amendment, the text of which is at the desk, be made pending; that no other amendments be in order; that no points of order or motions be in order other than budget points of order and the applicable motions to waive; that on Thursday, March 27, following morning business, there be 2 hours of debate equally divided between the two leaders or their designees prior to a vote in relation to the Menendez-Corker amendment; that upon disposition of the amendment, the bill be read a third time and the Senate proceed to vote on passage of the bill, as amended, if amended.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

The Senator from Texas.

Mr. CORNYN. Madam President, reserving the right to object, I note in the majority leader's requested consent order he stipulates that no other amendments be in order, which I think is deeply regrettable, given the fact that this matter has been considered in the Foreign Relations Committee and then came to the floor without any opportunity for the rest of the Senate to participate, either in the deliberative process or to debate important improvements to the legislation. I would note two for the majority leader's consideration.

Two amendments which seem to enjoy a tremendous amount of bipartisan support are in recognition of the stranglehold Vladimir Putin and Russia have on Ukraine's energy supply as well as the energy supply to the rest of Europe. There is a Barrasso amendment many of us support that calls for the expedited consideration and permitting of exporting liquefied natural gas.

There is another amendment I have offered that would provide military assistance to Ukraine. Right now, the underlying bill provides $100 million. It doesn't specify the precise nature of the assistance, but it appears to be in the nature of rations, uniforms, and medical supplies. I would think at a minimum we would want to make sure the Ukrainians who are defending their country are supplied additional U.S. military assistance in order to defend themselves against this Russian aggression.

So I ask the majority leader to modify his unanimous consent request with the following: that the first amendment in order be a Barrasso amendment related to the exportation of liquefied natural gas; and that following the disposition of the Barrasso amendment, the majority leader and the Republican leader or their designees be recognized to offer relevant amendments in an alternating fashion, including the Cornyn amendment on military assistance to Ukraine.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Does the majority leader so modify his request?

Mr. REID. I reserve the right, and will just make a brief comment. The committee action on this bill was really historic. The issue my friend just suggested be part of an amendment process was discussed at some length in the committee.

As I discussed this morning, the situation in Ukraine is critical. The Senate must act as quickly as we can on the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations bill.

The bill before us gives additional aid to the fragile Ukrainian economy. As Secretary Kerry said yesterday, he wants this aid that is in our bill now, but he also wanted what was in our bill—IMF funding. But he said: If I cannot get both, the most important thing we do now is the funding that is in our bill, and he is probably right.

We already know there have been many signals—not any hidden signals—from the House that they would not accept the IMF. The Republican leader said he was concerned about the IMF.

So I am very pleased the sanctions inside this legislation that I hope will pass on Thursday is something that is going to help Ukraine. I am confident it will. It sanctions those inside Ukraine and Russia who have undetermined Ukraine's sovereignty and stability.

I think, as far as I am concerned, we will have more legislation on this in the not distant future. As far as I am concerned, I think there should be more sanctions that we look at. I think they need more aid. On Sunday shows, I heard Republican Senator AYOTTE, Democratic Senator DURBIN both talking about the need for sleeping bags, small arms fire, and things such as that that the Ukrainians simply do not have.

That is why I am pleased we have been able to come to a tentative agreement to vote on this measure Thursday. I would have preferred to include, as I have already indicated, the International Monetary Fund provisions in this bill. It is something that is needed. These provisions would have provided additional funds to stabilize this fragile Ukrainian economy, but my Republican colleagues, for reasons unrelated to Ukraine, were ready to kill the bill over the IMF issue.

Today we are ready to move forward on the bipartisan Senate Foreign Relations Committee bill without the IMF language. Let me just take a minute—a brief minute—to extend my appreciation—and I think I speak for the entire Senate—for the hard work that has allowed us to get where we are.

Chairman MENENDEZ, Ranking Member CORKER—they have worked very well together on legislation generally but on this specifically. Senator MCCAIN, who is a long-time leader on national security issues, has been very articulate and forceful in his view as to what should be done. By the way, both Senators CORKER and MCCAIN suggested we should have the IMF money in this, but I called Senator MCCAIN this morning and told him reasons why I thought we could not go forward with it, and I think he agrees with that.

I hope my colleagues will join us in voting to pass this important bill on Thursday. The people of the Ukraine are watching. The Russians are watching. It is time for the Senate to act. It is time for Ukraine to get the support it needs, it is time for this body to sanction the Russians, and it is time to send a clear message to Putin that the United States condemns the Russian annexation of Ukraine. I say once again, if he so likes these votes he created in Crimea, why doesn't he have one in Chechnya? Why doesn't he have a vote there? Because I think that would turn out much differently than what he would want.

I understand Senator BARRASSO is talking about this issue that my friend from Texas suggested, and it and other issues are something we need to bring up when we talk about further work on Ukraine.

So I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

The Senator from Texas.

Mr. CORNYN. Madam President, I will be brief, but further reserving the right to object to the majority leader's request, I just want to make sure the majority leader understands no one is talking about slowing down this bill. It is anticipated, I think even under the majority leader's consent request, that we will be finished with this bill no later than Thursday. It is one of those circumstances where, given the context of what is in the legislation, there is actually bipartisan support because of the importance of sending a unified message to the Russian leader about this aggression.

But I wish to be clear that my position is that sanctions are not enough. We need to go further and to provide a means for the Ukrainian people to defend themselves against this sort of aggression, which they do not presently possess. We need to find a way to relieve the stranglehold Putin has on Ukraine and much of the rest of Europe that he is going to keep using as long as he feels we have not acted to undermine or jeopardize that stranglehold.

That is the purpose of these amendments, and I regret the majority leader has seen fit to object to my request—reasonable request—for germane amendments.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader.

Mr. REID. Madam President, my friend from Texas is absolutely right.

We need to do more on Ukraine—there is no question about that—and I look forward to working with him and all Senators to do that.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection to the request?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

The motion to proceed is withdrawn.

PROVIDING FOR THE COSTS OF LOAN GUARANTEES FOR UKRAINE

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report H.R. 4152.

The bill clerk read as follows:

A bill (H.R. 4152) to provide for the costs of loan guarantees for Ukraine.

AMENDMENT NO. 2867

(Purpose: To provide a complete substitute)

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the substitute amendment.

The bill clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Nevada [Mr. REID], for Mr. MENENDEZ, for himself and Mr. CORKER, proposes an amendment numbered 2867.

Mr. REID. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that reading of the amendment be dispensed with.

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

(The amendment is printed in today's RECORD under ''Text of Amendments.'')

Mr. REID. Madam President, is there more that the Chair needs to do?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. There is not on that matter.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT AGREEMENT—EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. REID. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that at 11 a.m. Wednesday, March 26, 2014, the Senate proceed to executive session, and that notwithstanding rule XXII, the Senate proceed to vote on cloture on Executive Calendar Nos. 581, 582, 583, and 584; further, that if cloture is invoked on any of these nominations, the time until 2:30 p.m. be equally divided between the two leaders or their designees and that at 2:30 p.m. all postcloture time be expired and the Senate proceed to vote on confirmation of the nominations in the order upon which cloture was invoked; further, that following Senate action on these nominations, the Senate proceed to vote on confirmation of Calendar No. 694; further, that there be 2 minutes for debate prior to each vote and all rollcall votes after the first vote in each sequence be 10 minutes in length; further, that following the disposition of Calendar No. 694, the Senate resume legislative session; further, that upon disposition of the listed nominations, the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table and President Obama be immediately notified of the Senate's action.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

PROTECTING VOLUNTEER FIREFIGHTERS AND EMERGENCY RESPONDERS ACT OF 2014—MOTION TO PROCEED

Mr. REID. Madam President, I now move to proceed to Calendar No. 333, H.R. 3979.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the motion.

The bill clerk read as follows:

Motion to proceed to Calendar No. 333, H.R. 3979, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to ensure that emergency services volunteers are not taken into account as employees under the shared responsibility requirements contained in the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

CLIMATE CHANGE

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. Madam President, I am now here for the 62nd weekly effort to have my colleagues wake up to the threats of climate change. Congress continues to remain sound asleep, I suspect anesthetized by the narcotic drip of polluter money into our veins. But the signs of change around us continue.

These are the Mau Loa monthly carbon dioxide concentrations. We have just passed, again, 400 parts per million of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere. This is the second year in a row this has happened. This year it happened 2 months earlier than last year. So why does it matter that we are at 400 parts per million? What does that mean to anybody?

We have actually gone back and measured where the carbon concentration in the atmosphere has been going way back. We can measure back in ancient ice so we know that for at least 800,000 years, our carbon concentration is between 170 and 300 parts per million. That is a long run for a species that has only been homo sapien for about 250,000 years. That has been a long and hospitable window, during which our species has developed from very primitive hunter-gatherers into the complex people that we are now.

So when you take something like that, the carbon concentration, and you bust out of a range that has sheltered us for 800,000 years, that is not nothing. It is particularly not nothing when you know that carbon dioxide in the atmosphere raises the temperature of the Earth. We have known that since Abraham Lincoln was President. This is not something that is debatable. This is not new news. This is established science for 150-plus years.

We also know—because you can replicate it in the laboratory—that when you put higher concentrations of carbon in the air over seawater, it acidifies the seawater. If you doubt any of that, you can go out and measure that it is actually happening—the known provable theories, the known principles, I should say. In fact, laws of science are actually manifest in sea level rise from the warming oceans, in warming ocean temperatures, in increased acidification. These are measurements.

As this continues, we continue to do nothing about it, but we let the big polluters continue to spew carbon pollution into our atmosphere. Some of us in Congress are tired of waiting for folks to wake up. This month 31 Senators from every part of the country held the Senate floor through the night to sharpen this Chamber's focus on the threats of climate change. I thank Senator SCHATZ of Hawaii for leading us through this wake-up call, and to Senator BOXER for her leadership of the Senate Climate Action Task Force, and to the Presiding Officer, the senior Senator from Massachusetts, for her enthusiastic participation and support in that effort.

The American people tuned in, tweeting over 54,000 times at the hashtag up4climate in the 24-hour period of this effort. Also, Americans added more than 200,000 signatures to online petitions urging Congress to get with it and do something about this climate problem. The public knows it is a problem and has been pushing us to act now for years.

I have heard it from Rhode Island fishermen who now have to chase their catch further offshore into cooler waters because our coastal waters have warmed. The Presiding Officer has heard it from her Massachusetts fishermen as well. I have heard it from homeowners in South Kingston, RI, whose houses are falling into the ocean as the sea level rises and they encroach further inland into what had for generations been family homes.

Rhode Island does its part to try to address climate change. We are participating in the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative, and we are everywhere readying our coastlines for worse storms and higher seas. But the Ocean State cannot do this alone. The health, the safety, the prosperity of the people I represent in Rhode Island's communities depend on national action. We need a national groundswell of citizens and elected officials from every State.

So last week I went to Iowa to share with that State Rhode Island's climate change stories and to listen to Iowans tell me their climate change stories and how it is affecting their communities. I was invited to Iowa by Senator Rob Hogg, who is a passionate defender of the Iowan environment and way of life and a very knowledgeable expert on climate change.

I want to thank him and I also want to thank the Iowa legislature, particularly house minority leader Mark Smith and senate majority leader Michael Gronstal for their warm welcome. I also want to thank my colleague Senator HARKIN and his staff for

their assistance in planning and coordinating my visit.

Farming is not a big deal in Rhode Island. We are not known as an agricultural State. We have farms and we love them. But it is not quite the same as Iowa. Farming is the cornerstone of Iowa's economy. Disruption of agricultural productivity is one of the great climate risks in Iowa. The recent National Climate Assessment draft finds this:

> In the long term, combined stresses associated with climate change are expected to decrease agricultural productivity, especially without significant advances in genetic and agronomic technology.

But we do not have to wait for the long term. Iowans are already being hit by extreme weather. In 2013, just last year, 155 science faculty and research staff from 36 Iowa colleges and universities—home State Iowa teachers from their colleges and universities, 155 of them—signed the Iowa Climate Statement, concerning the losses that farmers across the State are already experiencing due to climate change.

I ask unanimous consent that the Iowa Climate Statement be printed in the RECORD following my statement.

Iowa has had 20 Presidential Disaster Declarations since 1990 due to flooding. Damage has been more than $20 billion. Although no one particular flood can be directly connected to climate change, we know that carbon pollution loads the dice for the extreme downpours that provoke these floods in Iowa and in the Midwest.

I call it the Barry Bonds rule. You do not know which home run was caused by the steroids, but you know for sure he was hitting extra home runs because of the steroids and you can measure that. In 1993 in Iowa, a flood exceeding once-in-500-year flood levels hit Des Moines. Ted Corrigan of Des Moines Water Works told me during my visit that the city's infrastructure was overwhelmed, leaving Des Moines without clean water for more than 2 weeks.

The Des Moines Register reports that Iowa has endured at least 10 so-called 500-year floods since 1993—10 500-year floods since 1993. That includes the big 2008 flood that cost $10 billion statewide in Iowa.

Doug Newman, the executive vice president at the Cedar Rapids Economic Alliance, told me what it was like to live through that unprecedented flood. Doug explained that in Cedar Rapids, flood levels had never, for as long as they have measured it, exceeded 21 feet. This flood maxed out at 31 feet, 10 feet above the all time previous ever recorded record.

A thousand businesses were flooded. One-fifth of them were lost. More than 1,000 people lost their jobs. So it was tough. But what I saw was Iowans taking action—from college students to business leaders, from activists of the Iowa Citizens Climate Lobby to the conservationists to the Izaak Walton League. Iowans are preparing for the effects of climate change, and they want to see Federal action.

Like Rhode Islanders, they are tired of trying to carry this themselves. Des Moines Mayor Frank Cownie is one of over 1,000 mayors represented on this map all across the country who have signed the U.S. Conference of Mayors Climate Protection Agreement, pledging to meet or beat the Kyoto Protocol targets in their own cities and to press their State governments and the Federal Government—us—to enact meaningful greenhouse gas reductions.

I visited with TPI Composites. TPI Composites has a development and manufacturing facility in my home State, in Warren, RI. They are part of our composites cluster in Rhode Island. But they are also a leading Iowa manufacturer of wind turbine blades. In 10 years, TPI has manufactured more than 10,000 wind turbine blades. So when the Maytag headquarters closed, leaving as many as 4,000 workers jobless in Newton, IA, this helped the town get back on its feet.

If we allow the production tax credit or the PTC to lapse, loss of that tax incentive for wind energy producers will jeopardize the business that TPI has built. So the Iowa State Senate unanimously passed a resolution in January supporting the extension of the production tax credit—unanimously, bipartisan.

There is bipartisan support for the extension of both the production tax credit and the investment tax credit, and we should get that done in this Congress. I also heard in Iowa from Warren McKenna, the manager at the Farmer Electric Cooperative in Kalona, IA. Kalona is a town of about 2,400 people. It has Iowa's first community solar garden, with 25 kilowatts of capacity. For the co-op's 800 owner-members, that 25 kilowatts of energy helps reduce their monthly bills. And for members who have their own solar panels, they also get paid for the energy they add into the co-op's system. And this year, off of those successes, the co-op is breaking ground on an 800,000-kilowatt solar installation, taking advantage of a State solar tax credit that was passed by a Democratic senate and a Republican house and signed into law by a Republican Governor.

This body could learn a thing or two from the Iowa State legislature. It shows what can happen when the polluter money doesn't have a Democratic institution locked down the way Congress has been.

I also visited BioProcess Algae. This is a Rhode Island-based company. The CEO, Timmy Burns, is right here—a Quidnick Islander like myself. They design, build, and operate commercial-scale algae bioreactors. The commercial demonstration project shown here is located down in the southwest corner of Iowa in Shenandoah.

BioProcess Algae uses the wastewater and the waste heat and the carbon dioxide emissions from the nearby ethanol refinery to grow algae. The algae can then be used for animal feed, can be used for biofuels, and, while it is growing, it eats up the carbon dioxide that would otherwise be emitted to pollute the atmosphere. Here in Shenandoah, American ingenuity is turning carbon pollution into economic opportunity.

I also visited this wind turbine. This is the base of a wind turbine. This is the stairway up into where you can go inside to serve it. You can see it is pretty big. There is the arc of the round steel base, and it towers up hundreds of feet. I think the blade diameter was 160 meters. It is a pretty serious-sized wind turbine. It is located in one of five wind parks which have a combined 500 wind turbines that are operated by a company called MidAmerican Energy.

Thanks to pioneering companies such as MidAmerican, and to the State tax incentives that encourage these projects, more than a quarter of Iowa's electricity is generated by wind. They are leading the country. More than a quarter of their electricity is generated by wind. It measures in the gigawatts. That is a lot of wind power. And they love it. The farmers get paid for having the wind turbine on their farm. If you look—I don't know how well the camera can see this—this is the turbine itself, the stand that it rises up on, the column. That is the doorway into it. We are standing on a gravel sort of service road ring around it so that equipment can be pulled up to it for maintenance purposes. But look right here. That is not too far away. That is maybe 25 feet. They are farming right up to 25 feet away from this thing. So you farm and you get paid for having the wind turbine located on your farm. It is a wonderful two-fer.

The conclusion I drew from all of this—from the exciting new types of energy being grown from algae, from the huge commitment to wind, from the audiences that came out and expressed their support for getting stuff done on climate, for the bipartisan support from so much of this clean energy stuff—is that Iowans have awoken to the threat of climate change. And that is important. Because Iowa plays a key role in our politics. Iowa helps determine which issues our Presidential candidates will be judged on. In 2016, I will bet that Iowans are going to insist they all address carbon pollution and they are not going to accept a lot of nonsense denial out of those candidates.

In fact, I believe if the Republican Party tries to nominate a climate denier for President, they are in big trouble. Of course, the carbon fuel-funded denial machine will do its best to change the subject, to muddy the waters, to create doubt, to use its anonymous dark political money to keep candidates quiet. But all the money in the world can't change the fact that Iowans know, just like Rhode Islanders do, that climate change is real. And those Iowans are going to put those Presidential candidates on

record. If you are a denier, good luck in Iowa. Iowans see the changes taking place and they are speaking up. Farmers in Iowa and fishermen in Rhode Island may be miles from each other geographically, but they both see in their lives around them the facts of the changes that are already happening.

The time to sit on the sidelines is over. If we fight hard, if we are willing to have this fight, I am confident we can do a strong climate bill in Congress and soon—a climate bill that will strengthen our economy, because it will; a climate bill that will redirect our future, as it must; a climate bill that will protect our democracy, because the pollution of our atmosphere and oceans that the carbon polluters are doing is matched by the pollution of our democracy that they are doing with their dirty and anonymous money; and finally, a bill that will honor our duty to the generations that will follow us, because each American generation takes that duty as a very high duty. Right now we are dishonoring that duty and we are not leaving for future generations the kind of country we should.

I went recently to Ukraine. I met with one of the leaders of the Ukrainian freedom movement. His name is Vitali Klitschko. If you are a boxing fan, you know who Vitali Klitschko is because he is a huge guy who was the world heavyweight boxing champion for years, and he has now thrown himself into the struggle of Ukraine for freedom; first of all, freedom from Russian influence and control, and more recently freedom from the oligarchs who basically robbed the country blind but were finally run out after that long bloody siege at the square in Kiev, the Maidan.

Vitali has an interesting phrase that he uses. Because when he started this fight, it wasn't the least bit clear that anybody could win this thing. The oligarchs are billionaires. They have immense resources at their disposal. And they keep stealing, so there is always more. And, of course, the Russians are right there with their baleful influence, trying to make sure there is as little freedom and opportunity as possible and to keep Ukraine under their thrall. Those are some powerful forces. So people would ask him: Can you win? And he had a very simple answer. I can't imitate the good Slavic accent, and I can't imitate the basso profundo voice of a man that big, but his phrase was memorable: No fight, no win.

Well, we have had no fight in us for too long on climate. It is time to put some more fight into this thing, because I think on climate the opposite is true. This isn't a no-fight, no-win situation. This is a ''if we fight, we will win'' situation. The facts are there. The public is ready. There is nothing between us and doing our duty other than the barricade of lies, the polluter-funded denial beast that is out there shopping their nonsense, and we can outdo them. It doesn't take much. Because, among other things, it is always easier for the truth to win over a lie. You just have to be willing to go out there and have that fight. So we have to wake up. When we do, we will win. I am more confident than ever, having been back from Iowa.

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

IOWA CLIMATE STATEMENT 2013: A RISING CHALLENGE TO IOWA AGRICULTURE

Our state has long held a proud tradition of helping to ''feed the world.'' Our ability to do so is now increasingly threatened by rising greenhouse gas emissions and resulting climate change. Our climate has disrupted agricultural production profoundly during the past two years and is projected to become even more harmful in coming decades as our climate continues to warm and change.

Swings from one extreme to another have characterized Iowa's 2013 weather patterns. Iowa started the year under the widespread drought that began in 2011 and persisted throughout 2012. But the spring of 2013 (March–May) was the wettest in the 140 years of record-keeping, creating conditions that hampered the timely planting of corn and soybean fields. During those months, sixty-two Iowa counties experienced storms and flooding severe enough to result in federal disaster declarations.

By mid-August, very dry conditions had returned to Iowa, subjecting many of the state's croplands to moderate drought. These types of weather extremes, which are highly detrimental to Iowa's crops, were discussed in our 2012 Iowa Climate Statement, where we also noted that globally over the past 30 years extreme high temperatures are becoming increasingly more common than extreme low temperatures. In a warming climate, wet years get wetter and dry years get dryer and hotter. The climate likely will continue to warm due to increasing emissions of heat-trapping gases.

Climate change damages agriculture in additional ways. Intense rain events, the most notable evidence of climate change in Iowa, dramatically increase soil erosion, which degrades the future of agricultural production.

As Iowa farmers continue to adjust to more intense rain events, they must also manage the negative effects of hot and dry weather. The increase in hot nights that accompanies hot, dry periods reduces dairy and egg production, weight gain of meat animals, and conception rates in breeding stock. Warmer winters and earlier springs allow disease-causing agents and parasites to proliferate, and these then require greater use of agricultural pesticides.

Local food producers, fruit producers, plant-nursery owners, and even gardeners have also felt the stresses of recent weather extremes. Following on the heels of the disastrous 2012 loss of 90% of Iowa's apple crop, the 2013 cool March and record-breaking March-through-May rainfall set most ornamental and garden plants back well behind seasonal norms. Events such as these are bringing climate change home to the many Iowans who work the land on a small scale, visit the Farmer's Market, or simply love Iowa's sweet corn and tomatoes.

Iowa's soils and agriculture remain our most important economic resources, but these resources are threatened by climate change. It is time for all Iowans to work together to limit future climate change and make Iowa more resilient to extreme weather. Doing so will allow us to pass on to future generations our proud tradition of helping to feed the world.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

Mr. BLUMENTHAL. Madam President, I am here to express my support for S. 2124, which expresses the American people's support for the sovereignty, integrity, democracy, and economic stability of Ukraine. I also support the Senate taking up a modified version of H.R. 4152 so we can get this measure to the President's desk—something we should have done weeks ago.

I thank and praise Majority Leader REID for his commitment to this issue, his fortitude, and his patience—as well as our colleagues Senator MURPHY, the head of the subcommittee of the Foreign Relations Committee, and my colleague from Connecticut and Senator MENENDEZ, along with Senator MCCAIN, whose leadership in spearheading this measure has been so instrumental.

I believe the people of Ukraine need and deserve the opportunity to determine their own future. This goal is not an exceedingly ambitious one. It is hardly novel. It is the universally accepted principle that forms the basis for the sovereignty of all nations.

Together with our European allies, the United States has encouraged Ukrainians to stabilize their country and hold elections this spring. We have taken these actions not to bring Ukraine closer to the European fold or separate it from its historic ties to any of its neighbors but to affirm the principle of human rights, freedom, and sovereignty, which is the bedrock of our own national security and ultimately the security of our global order and the rule of law.

Russia's territorial expansion into Crimea destabilizes and calls into question the security of Russia's neighbors from Finland to China. Who will be next? What pretext and implausible denials will Russia use next time? Who knows, other than Putin and his inner circle.

The United States needs a productive working relationship with Russia, and the world relies on us to be the one nation that can always be counted on to speak clearly and honestly about world events. Ukraine's deep internal division and chronic economic challenges are exacerbated by Russia's less than neighborly interests.

I support targeted individual sanctions already put in place by the President. I thank him for his leadership. We will vote on those this week. But we and our European allies must do more. These measures must be the beginning, not the end. What we do on this measure is a start, a good step in the right direction, but it must be accompanied by additional action—not

just words or rhetoric on the floor of the Senate but action that speaks louder than words, sanctions that bite, just as the sanctions on Iran had their effect and brought Iran to the table.

Two years ago I worked successfully with my Senate colleagues on the Helsinki Commission to impose sanctions on government officials in Russia who were complicit in the murder and coverup of Sergei Magnitsky, a Russian lawyer and auditor who died in a Moscow prison after investigating fraud. This law serves as good groundwork and a framework for expanding these types of individually targeted sanctions, which should include travel and banking restrictions on anybody inciting violence and anyone who profits from the theft of state assets.

I believe the legislation before us is an important matter of national security, and we should delay it no further. We have taken a week with extraneous amendments, and delay and time do not strengthen our hand.

The fact is, as we have seen with Iran, we will need strong and strengthening sanctions on Russia to have real effect. This first step must be followed by more, and maybe equally important we need close cooperation with our regional allies to create a really effective deterrent so the Russians know their unilateral seizure of Crimea is condemned by all law-abiding nations and we are taking positive steps to isolate Russia.

Russia's attack ought to be an alarm to the harm of Russian arms exports and military expansion that have brought effects globally and should be a focus of ours and international efforts countering Russian expansion. That expansion takes place at the expense of its neighbors, also sovereign nations, and at the expense of more than 140,000 civilian casualties.

To my dismay and to the sadness of much of the international community, Russia remains the largest arms supplier to the Syrian Government. Russia is a chief obstacle in achieving meaningful progress toward a peaceful resolution in Syria, and they have undermined progress in Geneva, obstructing or watering down efforts at the U.N. Security Council and a variety of international forums to bring humanitarian relief so desperately needed within Syria and in the refugee camps.

The Senate should take meaningful action to sanction Russia's arms exporters. These companies and individuals who benefit from contracts, both for the fuel they provide to the civil war in Syria and the takeover of Crimea, truly deserve not only our condemnation but action. That is why I am cosponsoring an amendment with my colleagues, Senator CORNYN and Senator COATS, to take exactly such action and why I introduced the Syria Sanctions Enhancement Act of 2013, which would create comprehensive sanctions against anyone who finances the murderous actions of Bashar al-Assad or sustains his military.

I have also written the U.S. Department of Treasury urging them to take action against Russian banks that have undermined U.S. sanctions by facilitating transactions with the Syrian Government. That is right—Russian banks facilitating actions with the Syrian Government. Sanctions on them can have an effect because their activities have reportedly included facilitating payments for S–300 missile batteries, Assad's personal offshore funds, as well as payments for crude oil. In my view, these institutions—Russian banks, the financial structure of Russia—are complicit in prolonging the brutal conflict in Syria and should be barred from the U.S. financial system.

Secretary Kerry said in February:

> Russia needs to be part of the solution, not contributing so many more weapons and so much more aid that they are really enabling Assad to double down.

As the majority leader has said, we need to act quickly on the legislation before us. But let's begin and let this action be the beginning of the Senate working together on a bipartisan basis to push back against Russian adventurism and aggression in all its forms, whether it is in Crimea or Syria, and the institutions—financial, energy, and otherwise—that support those efforts. I look forward to joining with my colleagues in those efforts and approving this important measure.

GM CALL FOR ACTION

Madam President, there is no question at this hour on the Senate floor that serious and severe defects in the ignition switches in General Motors vehicles have caused at least 31 crashes and 12 deaths. That tragic loss of life—not even counting the damage to cars, resulting in economic loss, and the injuries to people, resulting in suffering and emotional pain—is part of a situation that calls for action. These defects meant that in a car going full speed down the highway, simply bumping or weighing down the key in the ignition could cause the engine to shut down—as well as disabling the airbags.

That situation has prompted leadership on the part of a number of my colleagues, and I want to thank Senator MARKEY for his legislative proposal on NHTSA, Senator MCCASKILL for her convening a hearing of our consumer protection subcommittee of the commerce committee, as well as others who have taken action to criticize General Motors.

There is also no question, as the New York Times reported this past Saturday, that GM was aware of that situation—those problems with the switches—as early as 2001. That was 8 years before GM went into bankruptcy. The old GM and the new GM were separated. Now the Department of Justice is investigating whether GM committed fraud when it did not disclose those defects in the context of its 2009 bankruptcy.

I have been a Federal prosecutor, and I can tell you about people who have been prosecuted very severely for lying to banks or lying to the Federal Government—lying to banks when they got a loan sometimes for as little as a couple of thousand dollars and false statements to the Federal Government in connection with a seemingly small matter.

At the time it went into bankruptcy and then emerged, GM signed a document—section 6.12—entitled ''True and Complete Disclosure,'' and it said to the Federal Government that in return for not a couple of thousand dollars, not even a couple million dollars, not a couple of billion dollars, but tens of billions of dollars, more than $40 billion—I am quoting:

> There is no fact known to a Responsible Person of any Loan Party that, after due inquiry, could reasonably be expected to have a Material Adverse Effect that has not been disclosed herein.

It also said that the documents that were submitted to the U.S. Government at that time ''do not contain any untrue statement of material fact or omit to state any material fact necessary to make the statements herein or therein.''

And that section is replete with other representations that now pretty clearly were false because those defects and the role of those defects in causing the crashes were known to GM. It knew also that those defects and the death, injury, and damage seem almost certainly then and now to be a material fact and have a material adverse effect on that agreement.

Well, when GM was restructured in 2009, it was split into an old GM, which took most of the bad assets, such as GM's closed-down plants, and the new GM, which took the good assets. Old GM took the liability for accidents that occurred before the bankruptcy, effectively granting the new GM a shield from responsibility but not a shield from criminal liability. That is why the Department of Justice investigation is so critically important in holding GM officials and GM itself responsible.

Although some prebankruptcy claims have been settled, they have a greatly reduced pool of money to draw upon so that the potential claims on the part of those 12 families whose loved ones perished, not to mention the injured parties who are due money for their suffering as well as economic loss and others who may have claims—all those claims will be without recourse unless something is done.

Let's be clear about the 2009 bankruptcy. It was not the kind of reorganization that involved Manville, where a fund was created with a trustee. That kind of reorganization is a way that bankruptcies are often pursued. This was a sale of assets. It was fast and easy because the government wanted it so. And, of course, the old GM and the new GM—GM officials, shareholders, everyone interested—wanted it to be so.

I was serving as attorney general of Connecticut at the time, and I warned

that this bankruptcy agreement would leave many injured victims without recourse. I led a group of eight State attorneys general in warning the Federal Government—which supported and sponsored the bankruptcy plan—that the situation we see now would come to pass. I don't take a lot of satisfaction in knowing that now we have learned the real facts GM concealed then. I don't take any satisfaction in the potential denial of what is due to the victims of GM's concealment, not to mention its reprehensible and potentially illegal failure to repair those defects rather than conceal them. But, unfortunately, that is what has happened.

Due to GM's failure to disclose that known defect in its vehicles and facts that will continue to come to light in this investigation, everything suggests that this failure to disclose was, in fact, deliberate, fraudulent concealment of information from consumers and from government officials. That is criminal, and that is why the Department of Justice is investigating.

As we stand here, we may be too early to reach conclusions but not too early for the Department of Justice to make things right and for GM to do the right thing.

Yesterday I sent a letter to Attorney General Eric Holder. I told General Holder respectfully that I believe the Federal Government has a moral if not a legal obligation to take certain steps to protect innocent consumers, and I requested that he give it his personal attention. I do that again today—make that request—and urge his personal attention.

Although consumer victims may be barred from seeking relief before the bankruptcy court, the Department of Justice can take steps now in the context of this criminal investigation that could greatly help people who have been injured—innocent victims who were driving that car down the freeway or on a country road when the ignition was bumped, when the key ring had too many keys and their car stopped, the airbag failed to operate, and some died.

I requested the DOJ to have GM establish a fund to compensate injured consumers. It is a civil remedy that can be done as an interim step in a criminal prosecution. The Department of Justice has the authority to request many kinds of relief, and in light of the continuity of personnel between the old GM and the new GM, this kind of remedy would be absolutely appropriate for the new GM and it could simply allocate some of its assets. And fortunately it is doing well. No one begrudges GM its success. We welcome its profitability. But it can do what is right and use some of those profits to correct this wrong.

If necessary, the Department of Justice also could enter into a deferred prosecution agreement, as it did recently with Toyota, and it reached a settlement there of $1.2 billion.

There is also a precedent for criminal investigations of this nature being resolved by settlements in the BP oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico. A $4 billion criminal settlement was distributed among groups working to mitigate the spill's effects and prevent future problems, including the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation, which has done great work, and the Oil Spill Liability Trust Fund.

If such a settlement were reached here, there should be priority on ensuring that funds compensate consumers who suffered the worst losses—the loved ones of people killed as well as the innocent victims who were injured or suffered economic loss.

In addition to the fund, I also requested that the Department of Justice intervene in pending civil actions to oppose GM's effort to deny knowledge or responsibility for damage. What GM has done is to remove State court cases to Federal court and then asked for a transfer to the bankruptcy court, all the while knowing that the bankruptcy proceeding cannot be reopened, and in any event the old GM has vastly insufficient assets to satisfy any real judgment.

I believe there are answers here that will satisfy fairness and justice and enable GM to live up to the integrity and image that befits them. I believe that the Department of Justice, or another consumer protection agency, must ensure that consumers are aware of the potential dangers in this continuing defective series of vehicles, including the Cobalt, the Saturn, and other models over those same years.

I would never let one of my children behind the wheel of one of those cars without a major repair. I don't know that anyone else should—or anyone driving themselves—be behind the wheel of these cars.

When a large national company such as GM markets a product, they have a responsibility. They have a moral and legal responsibility to ensure that the product is safe. When one of those companies—any company—becomes aware of safety issues, it has a responsibility to disclose them.

I joined a bill—with the leadership of Senator MARKEY—that would require better, faster disclosure by NHTSA, and I will speak on another occasion about the lapses in responsibility on the part of Federal watchdogs who failed to protect the public, failed to detect a pattern of problems in these cars, and failed to blow the whistle.

GM has its own responsibility, and I know that a new era of leadership at GM under a new leader may mean a new day in its acknowledging its moral and legal responsibility, and I hope for that new day.

The innocent victims of defective cars suffered life-ending and life-changing injuries. Many of them could have been avoided but for the purposefully misleading and deceptive conduct by GM. Our responsibility now is to see that justice is done either through ensuring that compensation is made available or through appropriate criminal enforcement or both. The criminal law, as we know in this body, is a means of seeking justice, and it can provide a good outcome if it is properly framed and enforced.

I thank the Presiding Officer.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. BLUMENTHAL. Mr. 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. BLUMENTHAL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to a period of morning business with Senators permitted to speak for up to 10 minutes each.

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

TRIBUTE TO JEAN M. MANNING

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I congratulate Jean Manning on her retirement from the Senate and thank her for her 21 years of dedicated service. Her wise counsel will be missed in the Senate. That is why the Senate recently passed S. Res. 391 designating Jean Manning as Chief Counsel for Employment Emeritus of the United States Senate.

Jean grew up in the heart of Chicago and received three degrees from the University of Illinois—a B.A., an M.B.A., and a J.D. While pursuing her law degree, Jean was a member and the articles editor of the University of Illinois Law Review and was awarded the Rickert Award for Excellence in Legal Writing. Not forgetting where she came from, today Jean remains very active at the University of Illinois, where she is a member of the University of Illinois Foundation and of the College of Law Board of Advisors, serving as president at one time.

In the early 1990s, Congress as a workplace underwent a sea change when all major employment laws became applicable. In 1993, following a nationwide search, Jean was tapped to establish and manage the Office of the Senate Chief Counsel for Employment. She and her staff helped guide Senate offices as these employment laws were implemented and has continued to assist our offices to this day. Jean has counseled Senate offices to ensure compliance with the Equal Pay Act, the Family and Medical Leave Act, the Americans with Disabilities Act, the Age Discrimination in Employment Act and many other laws. It was her responsibility to see that Senate offices understood and followed employment laws so that Senate employees have the rights and protections the laws provide.

To Jean's credit, the Office of the Senate Chief Counsel for Employment

has earned a stellar reputation throughout the Senate. Her office provides impartial and discreet legal advice, training, and representation to Senate committees, support services, and the 247 Senators who have served in this body since Jean's hiring. Jean and the attorneys under her supervision have resolved countless administrative matters within the Senate and have always been ready to assist with any question a Senate office may have on employment matters. Considering the Senate is comprised of some 150 offices—Member, committee, and support services—this is no small task.

Jean also has represented Senate offices at all levels of the Federal court system, including the U.S. Supreme Court. And since its inception 21 years ago, the Office of the Senate Chief Counsel for Employment has never lost a case.

I thank Jean for her exceptional service to the Senate. The Senate is losing a great legal advocate, educator and source of institutional knowledge. We will miss her, though I will be among the many who will gladly welcome her back when she returns to Illinois.

SUNSCREEN INNOVATION ACT

Mr. REED. Mr. President, I am pleased to be joined by Senator ISAKSON and Representatives DINGELL and WHITFIELD in the introduction of the Sunscreen Innovation Act.

According to the American Cancer Society, skin cancer is the most common form of cancer in the United States. In 2014, over 2 million people will be diagnosed with skin cancer, and 20 percent of Americans will get skin cancer at some point during their lifetime. Melanoma, a dangerous form of skin cancer that often spreads throughout the body if not treated, will be diagnosed in an estimated 76,000 individuals this year, and will take the lives of almost 10,000 Americans. Many skin cancers are preventable with the use of effective sunscreen and by avoiding certain activities, like the excessive use of tanning beds.

Throughout my time in Congress, I have been working to ensure consumers have adequate information to prevent skin cancer. For example, I authored the 2007 Tanning Accountability and Notification Act, which has helped spur the Food and Drug Administration's, FDA review of indoor tanning bed labels. Through letters to the FDA and report language in the annual appropriations bill, I continue to press the FDA to implement new tanning bed labeling standards found to be most effective in warning consumers about the harm caused by indoor tanning.

In addition, after working with my former colleague, Senator Chris Dodd, since 1997 to compel the FDA to strengthen sunscreen labeling standards, in 2011 the FDA finally began to take action to finalize parts of the sunscreen monograph relating to the testing and labeling of sunscreen lotions. These regulations were over 30 years in the making. Last year, I urged the FDA to complete its review of sunscreen sprays and the use of sun protection factor, SPF, numbers higher than 50 on product labels.

One barrier to improved sunscreens has been the rate at which new over-the-counter, OTC sunscreen ingredients have been approved by the FDA. Indeed, the last such ingredient approved by the FDA was in the 1990s, with the eight new ingredients submitted since 2002 still awaiting review. It is critical that the FDA perform its due diligence to guarantee that the sunscreen products are safe and effective, but this review process also needs to occur in a timeline that allows these necessary products to get into the hands of consumers.

Many of these ingredients have been used in sunscreen products in Europe, Asia, and Central and South America, in some cases for many years. Unfortunately, delays in the FDA review process have kept these products off of the shelves in the United States for years while awaiting approval.

Our bipartisan, bicameral Sunscreen Innovation Act aims to improve the application process for these new OTC ingredients and ensure consumers have access to new and potentially more effective sunscreen products in a timely manner. Americans have waited far too long for the most advanced, effective ways to protect themselves from the sun.

I am pleased that this legislation has the support of the PASS Coalition, which is made up of such organizations as the Melanoma Research Alliance, the Prevent Cancer Foundation, the Skin Cancer Foundation, and many others.

I look forward to working with these and other stakeholders, as well as Senator ISAKSON, Representatives DINGELL and WHITFIELD, and the rest of our colleagues to pass the Sunscreen Innovation Act in order to improve access to new and more effective sunscreen products. Indeed, as we look to the coming warmer months, it is important that we undertake serious efforts that will give consumers greater peace of mind that the sunscreen products they purchase offer the strongest possible protection against the sun's harmful rays.

GOULDSBORO, MAINE

Ms. COLLINS. Mr. President, I wish to commemorate the 225th anniversary of the town of Gouldsboro, ME. Known today as a beautiful gateway to the Schoodic Peninsula section of Acadia National Park, Gouldsboro was built with a spirit of determination and resiliency that still guides the community today.

Gouldsboro's incorporation in 1789 was but one milestone on a long journey of progress. For more than 10,000 years, the area was a favorite hunting and fishing grounds of the Abenaki, the Native American tribe of northeastern North America. The name ''Schoodic'' comes from their word for a place of plentiful fish in waters kept ice-free through the winter by the moderating currents of the Gulf of Maine. The reverence of the Abenaki for nature remains strong among all who call the peninsula home today.

The original name of Acadia National Park—Sieur de Monts National Monument recognizes the ongoing influence of the French explorers who visited the area in the early 1600s. In 1763, the Seven Years' War between France and Great Britain for control of North America ended with a British victory. With peace came bold pioneers seeking opportunity.

The first recorded non-Native American settler on the peninsula was Thomas Frazer, who built a salt works at the mouth of a creek that today bears his name. Another early settler was the town's namesake, Robert Gould, whose untiring efforts and boundless optimism helped attract new members to the growing community. By the early 1800s, Gouldsboro was a thriving town of lumber and grain mills, fishing, and shipbuilding.

The character of the people of Gouldsboro of years gone by and of today is best represented by one of the town's historic treasures, the bell of the SS *Queen Victoria*. In 1864, leaders of the Canadian Confederation gathered on that great steamship anchored at Charlottetown, Prince Edward Island, and reached the agreement to found a new nation.

Two years later, the *Queen Victoria* sank in a hurricane off the coast of Cape Hatteras, NC. Captain Rufus Allen, from the Gouldsboro village of Prospect Harbor, steered his Gouldsboro-built brig *Ponvert* into harm's way and was able to rescue 42 of the 43 officers and crew. In recognition of his heroism, Captain Allen was presented with one of the few items saved from the doomed steamship—the bronze bell. He gave the 95-pound bell to the Prospect Harbor School upon his retirement in 1875.

In 2004, 138 years after Captain Allen's daring rescue, the people of Gouldsboro recognized the significance of the *Queen Victoria* to Canadian history and commissioned Prospect Harbor artist and craftsman Dick Fisher to create a replica, which was given to the people of Charlottetown.

That single gesture reaffirmed Gouldsboro's connection to the sea and strengthened the enduring friendship between the United States and Canada.

Today, Gouldsboro is a place where fishing families and summer visitors cherish that connection to the sea. Through hard work and ingenuity, Gouldsboro has become not just a gateway but an essential part of the Acadia experience. With its charming villages, working waterfronts, artist studios, and many recreation opportunities, Gouldsboro is a true gem on the Maine coast.

One of Gouldsboro's early and most influential citizens was David Cobb of Massachusetts, a hero of the American Revolution who served as General Washington's aide during the British surrender at Yorktown.

As the war neared its end and American independence was secured, General Washington urged his aide to leave rocky and cold New England and make his future in Virginia, which he argued had a superior climate and more fertile soil. With his sights already set on Maine, Colonel Cobb replied, ''Sir, we have our heads and our hands.''

That is the spirit that made a thriving town out of the wilderness more than two centuries ago and that sustains a vibrant community today. It is a pleasure to congratulate the people of Gouldsboro, ME, on their 225th anniversary and to wish them all the best in the years to come.

COSI 50TH ANNIVERSARY

Mr. PORTMAN. Mr. President, I wish to honor the Center of Science and Industry, COSI, located in central Ohio as it celebrates its 50th anniversary. In 1964, COSI opened its doors as a hands-on center of science education. Fifty years later, COSI has witnessed tremendous growth and expansion as well as national recognition. COSI has welcomed more than 30 million visitors from all 50 States and in 2008 COSI was named America's No. 1 science center for families by Parents Magazine.

COSI has collaborated with schools and organizations across Ohio to provide interactive STEM education in order to prepare our children for the future, and inspire the innovators of tomorrow. Part of COSI's mission is to ''motivate a desire toward a better understanding of science, industry, health, and history . . . for the enrichment of the individual and for a more rewarding life on our planet, Earth.'' They accomplish this mission through partnerships with organizations including WOSU@COSI, the only working television station in a science center, the Columbus Historical Society, and Battelle.

I have visited COSI a number of times, starting with my children when they were in grade school. I have been able to see firsthand the great experience it provides to visitors. I am pleased to honor 50 years of success as COSI continues to lead the way in science education in Ohio.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

TRIBUTE TO ROSS ARAGÓN

• Mr. BENNET. Mr. President, today we recognize the distinguished public service of Ross Aragón on the occasion of his retirement after serving 36 years as mayor of Pagosa Springs—the longest serving mayor in Colorado. Since taking office in 1978, Mayor Aragón has fulfilled his duties with passion, diligence, and honor. Over his more than three decades of service he has never missed a regular monthly scheduled meeting. For over a generation, the citizens of Pagosa Springs have known Ross Aragón as the best man for the job.

Mayor Aragón's steadfast approach to city management led to many notable accomplishments, including improving the quality of police and fire protection, expanding the community's recreational programs and facilities, and establishing the town's popular river walk. He also spearheaded the development of the San Juan River's kayaking, rafting, and tubing features, improving the community for both residents and tourists alike.

Of his many achievements, which are too many to list here, two projects in particular embody Mayor Aragón's approach to leadership more than most: his advocacy for local food produced using Pagosa Springs' geothermal resources was a clear demonstration of Mayor Aragon's ability to harness Pagosa's rich assets and translate them into a brighter future; and his successful efforts to designate Chimney Rock as a national monument exemplified the enthusiasm, dedication, and collaborative mindset Mayor Aragón brought to his job. Thanks to his leadership, an important part of Southwest Colorado's cultural heritage will forever be protected.

On behalf of Pagosa Springs in particular and Southwest Colorado in general, thank you, Mayor Aragón, for your many years of public service. We wish you well in your retirement and we can't wait to see what challenges you tackle next.•

TRIBUTE TO JOHN LANIGAN

• Mr. BROWN. Mr. President, I wish to honor John Lanigan, the longtime northeast Ohio radio personality, who will broadcast his final show on WMJI/Cleveland on March 31, 2014.

John and I haven't always agreed on all of the issues, but he has always been well-read and outspoken, and his at times sharp-witted, controversial personality captured the attention of Cleveland listeners, whether you agreed with him or not.

John grew up in Ogallala, NE, and got his start in radio broadcasting while still in high school. He worked in Arizona, New Mexico, Texas, and Colorado—where he would work the overnight shift in Denver and then travel to Colorado Springs for the dayshift—before coming to Cleveland in 1970.

He was hired at WGAR to replace Don Imus, and, within a year, the show's ratings had nearly doubled, no doubt thanks to his trademark style of interjecting jokes in between songs.

John would go on to Tampa for 2 years, but returned to Cleveland and WMJI in 1985, where he made his mark.

In 1989, comedian Jimmy Malone appeared on the show, and the ''Lanigan and Malone Show'' was created soon after. No topic was off limits for John—politics, sports, music, and entertainment—he covered it all. And, if you were a guest, you had better come prepared because John was always ready to fire off the tough questions.

John would occasionally take the show on the road to DC and broadcast live from my office in the Senate. I would arrange for guests like then-Senators Hillary Rodham Clinton or Barack Obama, to come on and be interviewed with me.

While John cemented his loyal following on the radio, they came with him when he took his skills to the silver screen, hosting a weekly TV show named ''Prize Movie'' on WUAB.

While he is not on the air, John dedicates his time to benefitting his adopted city. He volunteers for the Our Lady of the Wayside, an organization that serves hundreds of children and adults with developmental disabilities throughout northeast Ohio, even winning their Starlight Guardian Humanitarian Award in 2012.

John came to Cleveland nearly 40 years ago, and though his talents could have taken him to any big city in the country, he chose to stay in Cleveland. He won the ear of his listeners and viewers because they could trust him.

It is that admirable trait that we will miss with his retirement, but it is also what has earned him this retirement—and no more early morning wake-up calls.

John, I wish you all the best in your retirement. Thank you for all you have done for your listeners, viewers, and for the city of Cleveland.•

FIGHT AGAINST CHILDHOOD HUNGER

• Mr. CARDIN. Mr. President, on this day I hope Marylanders across our State can ''Hear the Maryland Crunch!'' of students eating a healthy school breakfast. Thanks to the leadership of Maryland Hunger Solutions, the ''Hear the Maryland Crunch!'' campaign offers all Marylanders the opportunity to become more aware of the daily struggle of our food insecure children and stand together in support of school breakfast. I wish to continue to highlight this critical issue facing our children.

Maryland has the highest median income in the nation. Yet even in Maryland one in five children is food insecure. These children lack consistent access to adequate food resources. Yet I am happy to announce we are making strides to ensure our children are fed and ready to learn. Approximately 262,000 students in Maryland participate in the 100 percent federally funded National School Lunch Program and receive either free or reduced price lunches. These students know that when they come to school, they are able to receive a nutritious school lunch.

Only 149,000 children or 59 percent of students receiving a school lunch start

their day ready to learn with a school breakfast. At this time, Maryland ranks 14th in the nation in school breakfast participation rate after making tremendous progress over the past 5 years to ensure all children have access to nutritious meals. Over the course of 5 years Maryland's school breakfast program participation rate has increased by 37 percent, and our school lunch participation rate has more than doubled with a 56 percent increase.

I am encouraged by these developments and efforts to continue to expand school breakfast access for all children. Marylanders are united in the vision that the ability of children to learn and succeed in our classrooms should not be impaired because they come to school hungry. Thanks to the partnership between Governor Martin O'Malley, the Maryland General Assembly, national organizations such as the Share Our Strength's No Kid Hungry campaign, the Family League of Baltimore, and Maryland Hunger Solutions, our State has continued to make efforts to expand access to school breakfast with the Maryland Meals for Achievement Program.

Maryland Meals for Achievement allows schools where 40 percent of students or more qualify for free or reduced price school lunch to provide school breakfast meals for all students at no cost to the child. This program combines the expansion of the school breakfast program with innovative efforts to encourage increased participation, including a change in the traditional breakfast delivery model of serving school breakfast meals in the cafeteria to an in-classroom setting. Schools have shown a positive increase in school breakfast participation rates from the new ''Grab and Go'' breakfasts or ''Breakfast After the Bell'' programs, allowing more students to be better prepared to succeed in the classroom. I commend Governor O'Malley for requesting additional funding this fiscal year for the Maryland Meals for Achievement Program that will allow an additional 40,000 students to receive a healthy breakfast.

According to a study sponsored by the Share Our Strength's No Kid Hungry campaign, research has shown students who receive a school breakfast are better prepared to learn and perform in their classwork, are less likely to be overweight, have more strength and endurance throughout the day, are less likely to cause classroom disruptions, and are less likely to be absent from school than if they were not receiving a school breakfast.

In closing, I am honored to join with Maryland Hunger Solutions and Marylanders across our State who are committed to do better for our children. On this Maryland day, we reflect on our rich past and look forward to a bright future in which the only hunger our schoolchildren have is a hunger to learn. I am proud that Maryland is leading the fight against childhood hunger. Together, let's all ''Hear the Maryland Crunch!''●

MARYLAND DAY

● Mr. CARDIN. Mr. President, I wish to celebrate Maryland Day and the proud history of my home State. Marylanders across the State are taking a moment to reflect on our proud history and contributions to the Nation. I wish to spend a few minutes to highlight the importance of this State holiday and the activities that are underway.

On this day 380 years ago, two ships commissioned by Lord Baltimore, The Ark and The Dove, carried the first English settlers to land at St. Clement's Island in what is now recognized as St. Mary's County. Leonard Calvert, a son of Lord Baltimore who eventually served as the first Governor of Maryland, led the 150 settlers who came ashore to St. Clement's Island after spending more than four months at sea. This landing represented the first time European settlers came to Maryland and those settlers eventually formed just the third English colony to be settled in British North America.

The origin of Maryland Day began with the Maryland State Board of Education placing an emphasis on State and local histories in public schools. In 1903, the Maryland State Board of Education officially recognized Maryland Day as a tool for students and teachers to increase instruction of Maryland history in public schools. The Maryland General Assembly, which held its first session in St. Mary's County not long after the landing at St. Clement's Island, enacted Maryland Day as an official State holiday in 1916. Young learners across our State will spend today learning about the significant contributions of Maryland to the Nation and important historical figures in Maryland.

I am proud to say that every region of my home State has played a role in shaping our Nation. From the Eastern Shore of Maryland, for instance, Harriet Ross Tubman was born into slavery in 1820 in Buckstown, MD along the marshes of the Blackwater River in Dorchester County. After learning she would be sold to settle her late master's debts, Tubman escaped from slavery to Philadelphia, PA, marking the first of many expeditions over the course of the next 11 years to and from the Eastern Shore of Maryland to lead nearly 70 slaves out of slavery. In addition to becoming a famous conductor on the Underground Railroad, she held a lifelong commitment to the women's suffrage movement and worked as a nurse, cook, spy, and scout for the Union Army during the Civil War in Port Royal, SC. She became the first woman to lead an armed assault during the Civil War in Combahee Ferry Raid, liberating nearly 750 slaves. In her later years, she worked tirelessly for the women's suffrage movement, speaking before countless women's groups with fellow suffrage movement leaders Susan B. Anthony and Emily Howland. When asked if she believed women deserved the right to vote, she would reply, ''I suffered enough to believe it.''

In Western Maryland, Maryland citizens played a key role in the military and political struggles of the Civil War. The control of Maryland territory was crucial due to the State's proximity to Washington, DC, the State's border with Virginia and with other States that remained in the Union, and Baltimore's position as a key railroad link to the West. In 1862, GEN Robert E. Lee led his Confederate Army of Northern Virginia across the Potomac River around Leesburg, VA into Maryland, marking his first invasion into the North during the Civil War. The Maryland Campaign consisted of a number of battles along Maryland's westernmost counties and often pitted Marylanders on opposite sides of the fighting. In the single bloodiest day battle in American history, the Battle of Antietam in Sharpsburg, MD formed a turning point in the Civil War. With savage close range fighting lasting over a period of 12 hours, the Union and Confederate forces suffered nearly 23,000 total casualties. This battle forced General Lee to withdraw his Confederate Army back across the Potomac River into Virginia, thus ending the invasion of the North and the last major battle that took place on Union soil. The people of Maryland honor those who valiantly fought in the Civil War, endured the hardships brought on by the conflict, and made the ultimate sacrifice in order to form a more perfect Union.

Perhaps the most recognizable contribution Maryland has provided to our Nation is the national anthem. During the War of 1812, British troops enacted heavy damage to Washington, DC, setting both the U.S. Capitol and the White House ablaze. The British forces then marched towards Baltimore. Citizens of Baltimore, including free blacks, quickly mobilized to protect their city. Barricades stretching more than 1 mile long were constructed to protect the harbor, hulls were sunk to impede navigation, and a chain of masts was erected across the harbor entrance. When the British fleet approached Baltimore at North Point, Marylanders fought the British Army and helped repulse the British Navy from Fort McHenry during the Battle of Baltimore. It's important to note that American forces during the Battle of North Point were volunteer militia, heavily outnumbered by the highly trained British infantry, but they managed to delay the British forces long enough for 10,000 American reinforcements to arrive, preventing a land attack against Baltimore. Following 25 hours of intense British naval bombardment at Fort McHenry, the American defenders refused to yield, and the British were forced to depart.

During the bombardment, American lawyer Francis Scott Key, who was

being held on board an American flag-of-truce vessel in Baltimore Harbor, took notice of the American flag still flying atop Fort McHenry. Key realized then that the Americans had survived the battle and stopped the enemy advance. He was so moved by the sight of the American flag flying following the horrific bombardment, he composed a poem called the ''The Defense of Fort McHenry,'' which was published in the Baltimore Patriot and Advertiser newspaper later that year. This poem, and later the song, inspired love of country among the American people and not only helped usher in the Era of Good Feelings immediately after the war, but became a timeless reminder of American resolve. ''The Star Spangled Banner'' officially became our national anthem in 1931. The flag that flew over Fort McHenry and inspired this anthem is now a national treasure on display at the Smithsonian Institution, a very short distance from where we are today.

On this Maryland Day, Marylanders are in the midst of celebrating Baltimore's role in the bicentennial anniversary of the War of 1812. The Pride of Baltimore II, named in honor of the Baltimore clipper the Chasseur, set sail from the Baltimore Inner Harbor to the State capital while carrying a replica of the Star Spangled Banner ''that was still there'' after the bombardment of Fort McHenry in September 1814. Sewn by volunteers of the Maryland Historical Society, this flag will be presented to Governor Martin O'Malley and members of the Maryland General Assembly at the Annapolis Statehouse.

I am proud of the legacy of my home State and the efforts Marylanders have made and continue to make to remember those who have come before us. I thank all of those who participated in Maryland Day ceremonies and congratulate the students who learned something new about our great State today.●

CONGRATULATING PENNY REYNOLDS AND ANDREA DAVIS

● Mr. HELLER. Mr. President, I wish to congratulate Carson City teacher, Penny Reynolds, and 12th grade senior, Andrea Davis, on their Nevada Restaurant Association ProStart State culinary competition victories. Each was named Teacher and Student of the Year, respectively. Nevada is proud to offer education in a wide variety of subjects, including the culinary arts.

For nearly 30 years, Ms. Reynolds has been an educator in my home State of Nevada. Ms. Reynolds and her 173 students serve lunch four times a week to the community in their student-operated establishment. Ms. Reynolds' Teacher of the Year designation, based on her high expectations for her program and her students' knowledge, is nothing short of deserving. I commend Ms. Reynolds for her leadership and positive influence in Nevada's education system.

Along with her team of chef classmates, 18-year-old Andrea Davis competed at and won this year's ProStart State hot foods competition, making for 10 first place finishes at the annual event for my alma mater, Carson High School. The five culinary students were each awarded scholarships for their winning dish. I wish Ms. Davis the best of luck on her and the entire team's trip to the national arena.

I admire and recognize the commitment of our teachers to uphold high education standards for Nevada. Educators work tirelessly to ensure our Nation's students are prepared to compete in the 21st century, and I am grateful for Ms. Reynolds's strong leadership and positive influence on Nevada's youth. My home State of Nevada is proud and privileged to acknowledge such an extraordinary educator and leader.

Nevada is fortunate to have such strong educational leadership serving the students of the Silver State. I ask my colleagues to join me in congratulating Ms. Reynolds, Ms. Davis, and the entire Carson High Culinary Arts program on their appetizing successes thus far.●

REMEMBERING RAYMOND JOHN NOORDA

● Mr. LEE. Mr. President, this month, the Utah Valley Chamber of Commerce will honor Raymond John Noorda, posthumously, with the 2014 ''Pillar of the Valley'' Award. I would like to take a moment to recognize the achievements of this great Utahn.

Raymond Noorda, or ''Ray,'' as everyone knew him, was born in Ogden, UT in 1924 to Dutch immigrants, Bertus and Alida Noorda. Like nearly all Americans who grew up during the Depression, Ray learned the virtue of hard work early on, and he never stopped working throughout his life. The Deseret News reports that during his youth, Ray worked ''in a candy shop, setting pins in a bowling alley, as a loading clerk at a train station, picking cherries, selling magazines, and even herding sheep.''

He was an outstanding baseball player, and he was asked to join a professional team right out of high school. However, his mother had other plans for young Ray, and he subsequently enrolled in classes at Weber State College. During World War II, Ray put school on hold and served in the Navy as an electronics technician, working on radar systems. At the conclusion of his military service, he returned to his studies, transferring from Weber to the University of Utah, where he earned a degree in engineering. Ray married his sweetheart Tye shortly after graduating from college, and they were together for 56 years, until Ray's passing in 2006.

After his graduation from college, Ray worked for General Electric for 21 years, where he was known as an innovator and entrepreneur. He eventually left the company and led a number of businesses to success in the following years. In the early 1980s, Ray became the leader of a struggling Utah company called Novell Data Systems, which would shortly thereafter become Novell.

Ray worked to put together a team of engineers, dubbed ''SuperSet.'' The team eventually invented powerful networking software, which opened the doors to modern networking. For this and other contributions, Ray has been called the ''Father of Network Computing.'' This development set Novell on a path to success and pushed the company far ahead of their early competitors in computer networking throughout the 1980s and into the 1990s.

Of Novell's success under Ray's leadership, The Independent reported, ''Novell's NetWare product was to become the de facto standard networking software from the late 1980s through to the mid-1990s. Noorda oversaw the growth of the company from 17 to 12,000 staff, whilst still maintaining a community spirit for his employees, whom he treated with immense respect and who, in turn, affectionately referred to him as Uncle Ray.'''

Ray was a visionary and humble leader, who believed that cooperation with competitors would help grow the emerging computer networking industry. Thus, he led his company with a term he coined—''co-opetition''—and Novell was a leader in cooperative advancements in the computing industry. One of Novell's Vice Presidents once said of Ray, ''What he preaches is what you always wanted to hear from your father—love, sharing—and he uses those words.'' When Ray spoke to employees, he was rarely, if ever, without a joke, and he was always positive and encouraging.

Ray's success in business was a testament to his personal character and virtues. He loved children, and enjoyed serving in his church. His philanthropy knew no bounds, and his family continues that legacy in Utah and throughout the country each day. Ray was a titan of business, and his life is a shining example for not only business leaders, but also Americans in general. I join with the Utah Valley Chamber in honoring his wife Tye and his family, and I thank them for their support of such a great man. I pray that we will honor the life of Ray Noorda by doing the best we can in our individual capacities, and by helping those around us achieve greatness, success, and happiness throughout life.●

TRIBUTE TO ELDER DALLIN H. OAKS

● Mr. LEE. Mr. President, this month, the Utah Valley Chamber of Commerce will honor Elder Dallin H. Oaks, of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, with the 2014 ''Pillar of the Valley'' Award. I would like to take a moment to recognize the achievements of

this great man who is dear to my heart.

Elder Oaks was born in Provo, UT in 1932. He spent his youth in Utah Valley and Vernal, and he started working from a very young age to support his two younger siblings and widowed mother. Elder Oaks remembers that his mother was ''an extraordinary mother,'' who gave him ''a great deal of responsibility and freedom'' and ''encouraged [him] to have a job.'' He graduated from Brigham Young High School in 1950, where he was the senior class president and played on the football team. He also became a licensed first-class radiotelephone operator in his teenage years.

Elder Oaks was a member of the National Guard from 1949 to 1954. During this period, he met his wife June Dixon, and they were married in 1952. They raised six beautiful children together. After more than 45 years of marriage, June, stricken with cancer, passed from this mortal existence. Elder Oaks' extraordinary faith and trust in God's plan during this time of trial was an example for all of us who have lost a loved one to cancer.

Elder Oaks has worked tirelessly to lift those around him and to achieve greatness throughout his life. After graduating from Brigham Young University, BYU, with a bachelor's degree in accounting, Oaks went on to law school at the University of Chicago. His hard work at Chicago led him to the tremendous opportunity of clerking at the Supreme Court for Chief Justice Warren. He subsequently returned to Chicago to go into private practice, and eventually joined the faculty at the University of Chicago.

It was during this time that my parents moved to Chicago so that my father could earn his law degree at the University of Chicago. Elder Oaks and June kindly welcomed them, and they became lifelong friends. While in Chicago, Elder Oaks also had the opportunity to serve as assistant state's attorney for Cook County, a position in which he excelled.

After years of extraordinary work and service in Chicago, the Oaks family was called home to Utah Valley, as Elder Oaks was appointed president of BYU in 1971. He was a brilliant leader, who inspired the students to learn as much as possible and to be advocates for virtue and goodness throughout the world. He also set a high bar for his successors, one of whom was my father, who praised Elder Oaks as a man of great humility and wisdom.

After 9 years as president, he was nominated and confirmed as a justice of the Utah Supreme Court. Before and during his service as a justice, Elder Oaks was on multiple short lists for nomination to the Supreme Court of the United States. He served with distinction on the Utah Supreme Court from 1980 to 1984, when he resigned to answer a call to serve in the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Placing his faith above worldly success, Elder Oaks has travelled the world, bearing testimony of Jesus Christ and strengthening the faith of millions. He has been an ardent defender of religious liberty, and continually works to bring members of all faiths together to accomplish good.

Elder Oaks has been an inspiration to millions of individuals all over the world. I congratulate him and his wife Kristen on their many wonderful accomplishments over the last 14 years together. Elder Oaks is not only an example of a genius legal mind to which all jurists, including myself, aspire, but also a tireless advocate for truth, virtue, freedom, and goodness throughout the world. I am proud to say that I know such an individual, and I believe that our world would be a much better place if more men strived to emulate his virtues.●

MESSAGES 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 has passed the following bill, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate:

H.R. 3771. An act to accelerate the income tax benefits for charitable cash contributions for the relief of victims of the Typhoon Haiyan in the Philippines.

At 11:47 a.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Mr. Novotny, one of its reading clerks, announced that the House has passed the following bills, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate:

H.R. 1036. An act to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 103 Center Street West in Eatonville, Washington, as the ''National Park Ranger Margaret Anderson Post Office''.

H.R. 1376. An act to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 369 Martin Luther King Jr. Drive in Jersey City, New Jersey, as the ''Judge Shirley A. Tolentino Post Office Building''.

H.R. 1451. An act to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 14 Main Street in Brockport, New York, as the ''Staff Sergeant Nicholas J. Reid Post Office Building''.

H.R. 1813. An act to redesignate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 162 Northeast Avenue in Tallmadge, Ohio, as the ''Lance Corporal Daniel Nathan Deyarmin, Jr., Post Office Building''.

H.R. 2391. An act to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 5323 Highway N in Cottleville, Missouri as the ''Lance Corporal Phillip Vinnedge Post Office''.

H.R. 3060. An act to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 232 Southwest Johnson Avenue in Burleson, Texas, as the ''Sergeant William Moody Post Office Building''.

H.R. 4275. An act to amend the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974 and the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to provide for cooperative and small employer charity pension plans.

ENROLLED BILL SIGNED

At 4:24 p.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Mr. Novotny, one of its reading clerks, announced that the Speaker had signed the following enrolled bill:

H.R. 3771. An act to accelerate the income tax benefits for charitable cash contributions for the relief of victims of the Typhoon Haiyan in the Philippines.

The enrolled bill was subsequently signed by the President pro tempore (Mr. LEAHY).

MEASURES REFERRED

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

H.R. 1036. An act to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 103 Center Street West in Eatonville, Washington, as the ''National Park Ranger Margaret Anderson Post Office''; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

H.R. 1376. An act to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 369 Martin Luther King Jr. Drive in Jersey City, New Jersey, as the ''Judge Shirley A. Tolentino Post Office Building''; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

H.R. 1451. An act to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 14 Main Street in Brockport, New York, as the ''Staff Sergeant Nicholas J. Reid Post Office Building''; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

H.R. 1813. An act to redesignate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 162 Northeast Avenue in Tallmadge, Ohio, as the ''Lance Corporal Daniel Nathan Deyarmin Post Office Building''; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

H.R. 2391. An act to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 5323 Highway N in Cottleville, Missouri as the ''Lance Corporal Phillip Vinnedge Post Office''; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

H.R. 3060. An act to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 232 Southwest Johnson Avenue in Burleson, Texas, as the ''Sergeant William Moody Post Office Building''; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

MEASURES PLACED ON THE CALENDAR

The following bill was read the second time, and placed on the calendar:

S. 2149. A bill to provide for the extension of certain unemployment benefits, and for other purposes.

MEASURES READ THE FIRST TIME

The following bill was read the first time:

S. 2157. A bill to amend titles XVIII and XIX of the Social Security Act to repeal the Medicare sustainable growth rate and to improve Medicare and Medicaid payments, and for other purposes.

EXECUTIVE AND OTHER COMMUNICATIONS

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

EC–4963. A communication from the Acting Assistant Secretary, Department of State, transmitting, pursuant to law, an addendum to a certification, of the proposed sale or export of defense articles and/or defense services to a Middle East country regarding any possible affects such a sale might have relating to Israel's Qualitative Military Edge over military threats to Israel (OSS–2014–0358); to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC–4964. A communication from the President of the United States, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to the issuance of an Executive Order further expanding the scope of the national emergency declared in Executive Order 13660 of March 6, 2014, and expanded in Executive Order 13661 of March 16, 2014, with respect to the unusual and extraordinary threat to the national security and foreign policy of the United States posed by the situation in Ukraine; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC–4965. A communication from the Secretary of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, a six-month periodic report on the national emergency with respect to Somalia that was declared in Executive Order 13536 on April 12, 2010; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC–4966. A communication from the Assistant Secretary of the Army (Civil Works), transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to the Illinois Shoreline Erosion, Interim III, Wilmette, Illinois, to the Illinois-Indiana State Line (Chicago Shoreline) project; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–4967. A communication from the Assistant Secretary of the Army (Civil Works), transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to the Western Sarpy and Clear Creek, Nebraska, flood risk reduction project; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–4968. A communication from the Acting Director, Office of Congressional Affairs, Nuclear Regulatory Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Commission's revised Strategic Plan for the period of fiscal year 2014 through fiscal year 2018; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–4969. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Revision to the Idaho State Implementation Plan; Approval of Fine Particulate Matter Control Measures; Franklin County'' (FRL No. 9908–38–Region 10) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 19, 2014; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–4970. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Approval and Promulgation of State Plans (Negative Declarations) for Designated Facilities and Pollutants: Connecticut, Maine, New Hampshire, and Vermont; Withdrawal of State Plan for Designated Facilities and Pollutants: New Hampshire; Technical Corrections to Approved State Plans (Negative Declarations): Rhode Island and Vermont'' (FRL No. 9908–37–Region 1) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 19, 2014; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–4971. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Approval and Promulgation of Air Quality Implementation Plans; Indiana; Evansville Area; 1997 Annual Fine Particulate Matter Maintenance Plan Revision to Approved Motor Vehicle Emissions Budgets'' (FRL No. 9908–16–Region 5) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 13, 2014; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–4972. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Approval and Promulgation of Implementation Plans; State of Iowa'' (FRL No. 9907–77–Region 7) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 13, 2014; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–4973. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Approval and Promulgation of State Implementation Plans; Hawaii; Infrastructure Requirements for the 1997 8-Hour Ozone and the 1997 and 2006 Fine Particulate Matter National Ambient Air Quality Standards'' (FRL No. 9907–73–Region 9) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 13, 2014; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–4974. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Approval and Promulgation of Implementation Plans; California San Francisco Bay Area and Chico Nonattainment Areas; Fine Particulate Matter Emissions Inventories'' (FRL No. 9906–92–Region 9) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 13, 2014; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–4975. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Regulation of Fuel and Fuel Additives: Reformulated Gasoline Requirements for the Atlanta Covered Area'' (FRL No. 9907–91–OAR) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 13, 2014; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–4976. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Approval and Promulgation of Implementation Plans; State of Arizona; Payson PM10 Air Quality Planning Area'' (FRL No. 9908–00–Region 9) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 13, 2014; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–4977. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Approval and Promulgation of Implementation Plans, State Plans for Designated Facilities and Pollutants, and Operating Permits Program; State of Missouri'' (FRL No. 9907–79–Region 7) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 13, 2014; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–4978. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Approval and Promulgation of Implementation Plans; State of Missouri'' (FRL No. 9908–02–Region 7) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 13, 2014; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–4979. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Approval and Promulgation of Air Quality Implementation Plans; West Virginia; Approval of Redesignation Requests of the West Virginia Portion of the Steubenville-Weirton, OH–WV Nonattainment Area for the 1997 Annual and 2006 24-Hour Fine Particulate Matter Standards'' (FRL No. 9908–05–Region 3) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 13, 2014; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–4980. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Approval and Promulgation of Air Quality Implementation Plans; Virginia; Section 110(a)(2) Infrastructure Requirements for the 2010 Nitrogen Dioxide National Ambient Air Quality Standards'' (FRL No. 9908–04–Region 3) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 13, 2014; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–4981. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Protection of Stratospheric Ozone: Updates to HCFC Trade Language as Applied to Article 5 Countries; Ratification Status of Parties to the Montreal Protocol; and Harmonized Tariff Schedule Commodity Codes'' (FRL No. 9906–75–OAR) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 13, 2014; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–4982. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Partial Approval and Partial Disapproval of Air Quality State Implementation Plans; Nevada; Infrastructure Requirements for Lead (Pb)'' (FRL No. 9908–09–Region 9) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 19, 2014; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

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

By Mr. MARKEY (for himself and Mr. BLUMENTHAL):

S. 2151. A bill to enhance the early warning reporting requirements for motor vehicle manufacturers; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

By Ms. HEITKAMP:

S. 2152. A bill to direct Federal investment in carbon capture and storage and other clean coal technologies, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. RUBIO:

S. 2153. A bill to establish a National Regulatory Budget, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

By Mr. CASEY (for himself and Mr. HATCH):

S. 2154. A bill to amend the Public Health Service Act to reauthorize the Emergency Medical Services for Children Program; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. KIRK:

S. 2155. A bill to amend the National Telecommunications and Information Administration Organization Act to create a Federal Spectrum Reallocation Commission, to provide for the use of a portion of the proceeds from the auction of reallocated Federal spectrum for deficit reduction, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

By Mr. VITTER (for himself and Mr. MANCHIN):

S. 2156. A bill to amend the Federal Water Pollution Control Act to confirm the scope of the authority of the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency to deny or restrict the use of defined areas as disposal sites; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

By Mr. WYDEN:

S. 2157. A bill to amend titles XVIII and XIX of the Social Security Act to repeal the Medicare sustainable growth rate and to improve Medicare and Medicaid payments, and for other purposes; read the first time.

SUBMISSION OF CONCURRENT AND SENATE RESOLUTIONS

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

By Mr. BURR (for himself, Ms. COLLINS, and Mrs. MURRAY):

S. Res. 395. A resolution designating the month of April 2014 as ''Military and Veterans Caregiver Month''; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. ISAKSON (for himself and Mr. CASEY):

S. Res. 396. A resolution designating March 25, 2014, as ''National Cerebral Palsy Awareness Day''; considered and agreed to.

By Mr. TESTER (for himself, Mr. BEGICH, Mr. BROWN, Mr. CARPER, Mr. LEVIN, Mr. SCHATZ, Mr. WARNER, Mrs. GILLIBRAND, Mr. CARDIN, and Mr. KAINE):

S. Res. 397. A resolution expressing the sense of the Senate that public servants should be commended for their dedication and continued service to the United States during Public Service Recognition Week; considered and agreed to.

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

S. Res. 398. A resolution to authorize the production of records by the Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations of the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs; considered and agreed to.

By Mr. RUBIO (for himself, Ms. AYOTTE, Mr. VITTER, Mr. INHOFE, Mr. CORNYN, Mr. WALSH, Mr. WICKER, and Mr. RISCH):

S. Con. Res. 34. A concurrent resolution expressing the sense of Congress that the President should hold the Russian Federation accountable for being in material breach of its obligations under the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

ADDITIONAL COSPONSORS

S. 15

At the request of Mr. PAUL, the name of the Senator from Arkansas (Mr. BOOZMAN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 15, a bill to amend chapter 8 of title 5, United States Code, to provide that major rules of the executive branch shall have no force or effect unless a joint resolution of approval is enacted into law.

S. 84

At the request of Ms. MIKULSKI, the name of the Senator from Arkansas (Mr. PRYOR) was added as a cosponsor 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. 200

At the request of Ms. MURKOWSKI, the names of the Senator from Minnesota (Mr. FRANKEN) and the Senator from Minnesota (Ms. KLOBUCHAR) were added as cosponsors of S. 200, a bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to authorize the interment in national cemeteries under the control of the National Cemetery Administration of individuals who served in combat support of the Armed Forces in the Kingdom of Laos between February 28, 1961, and May 15, 1975, and for other purposes.

S. 411

At the request of Mr. ROCKEFELLER, the name of the Senator from Massachusetts (Mr. MARKEY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 411, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to extend and modify the railroad track maintenance credit.

S. 635

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

At the request of Mr. BROWN, the name of the Senator from New Mexico (Mr. HEINRICH) was added as a cosponsor of S. 635, supra.

S. 738

At the request of Mr. WICKER, the name of the Senator from Maine (Ms. COLLINS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 738, a bill to grant the Secretary of the Interior permanent authority to authorize States to issue electronic duck stamps, and for other purposes.

S. 741

At the request of Mr. VITTER, the name of the Senator from Maine (Ms. COLLINS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 741, a bill to extend the authorization of appropriations to carry out approved wetlands conservation projects under the North American Wetlands Conservation Act through fiscal year 2017.

S. 1049

At the request of Mr. HELLER, the name of the Senator from Virginia (Mr. WARNER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1049, a bill to direct the Secretary of the Interior and Secretary of Agriculture to expedite access to certain Federal lands under the administrative jurisdiction of each Secretary for good Samaritan search-and-recovery missions, and for other purposes.

S. 1174

At the request of Mr. BLUMENTHAL, the names of the Senator from Missouri (Mrs. MCCASKILL), the Senator from Indiana (Mr. DONNELLY) and the Senator from Maryland (Mr. CARDIN) were added as cosponsors of S. 1174, a bill to award a Congressional Gold Medal to the 65th Infantry Regiment, known as the Borinqueneers.

S. 1349

At the request of Mr. MORAN, the names of the Senator from Nevada (Mr. HELLER) and the Senator from Montana (Mr. WALSH) were added as cosponsors of S. 1349, a bill to enhance the ability of community financial institutions to foster economic growth and serve their communities, boost small businesses, increase individual savings, and for other purposes.

S. 1364

At the request of Mr. WYDEN, the name of the Senator from Montana (Mr. WALSH) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1364, a bill to promote neutrality, implicity, and fairness in the taxation of digital goods and digital services.

S. 1733

At the request of Ms. KLOBUCHAR, the name of the Senator from California (Mrs. FEINSTEIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1733, a bill to stop exploitation through trafficking.

S. 1803

At the request of Mr. DURBIN, the name of the Senator from Oregon (Mr. MERKLEY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1803, a bill to require certain protections for student loan borrowers, and for other purposes.

S. 1810

At the request of Mrs. GILLIBRAND, the name of the Senator from Hawaii (Ms. HIRONO) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1810, a bill to provide paid family and medical leave benefits to certain individuals, and for other purposes.

S. 1828

At the request of Mr. DONNELLY, the name of the Senator from Arizona (Mr. FLAKE) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1828, a bill to amend the Truth in Lending Act to modify the definitions of a mortgage originator and a high-cost mortgage.

S. 1862

At the request of Mr. BLUNT, the names of the Senator from Texas (Mr. CORNYN) and the Senator from Louisiana (Ms. LANDRIEU) were added as cosponsors of S. 1862, a bill to grant the Congressional Gold Medal, collectively, to the Monuments Men, in recognition of their heroic role in the preservation, protection, and restitution of monuments, works of art, and artifacts of cultural importance during and following World War II.

S. 1992

At the request of Ms. BALDWIN, the name of the Senator from Washington (Mrs. MURRAY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1992, a bill to amend title XIX of the Social Security Act to provide a standard definition of therapeutic foster care services in Medicaid.

S. 2008

At the request of Ms. LANDRIEU, the name of the Senator from Maryland (Mr. CARDIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2008, a bill to strengthen resources for entrepreneurs by improving the SCORE program, and for other purposes.

S. 2082

At the request of Mr. MENENDEZ, the names of the Senator from Minnesota (Ms. KLOBUCHAR) and the Senator from Pennsylvania (Mr. CASEY) were added as cosponsors of S. 2082, a bill to provide for the development of criteria under the Medicare program for medically necessary short inpatient hospital stays, and for other purposes.

S. 2125

At the request of Mr. JOHNSON of South Dakota, the name of the Senator from Minnesota (Ms. KLOBUCHAR) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2125, a bill to amend the Communications Act of 1934 to ensure the integrity of voice communications and to prevent unjust or unreasonable discrimination among areas of the United States in the delivery of such communications.

S. 2133

At the request of Ms. BALDWIN, the name of the Senator from Hawaii (Ms. HIRONO) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2133, a bill to amend title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and other statutes to clarify appropriate liability standards for Federal antidiscrimination claims.

S. RES. 384

At the request of Mr. KAINE, the names of the Senator from California (Mrs. FEINSTEIN) and the Senator from Maine (Ms. COLLINS) were added as cosponsors of S. Res. 384, a resolution expressing the sense of the Senate concerning the humanitarian crisis in Syria and neighboring countries, resulting humanitarian and development challenges, and the urgent need for a political solution to the crisis.

AMENDMENT NO. 2853

At the request of Mr. BARRASSO, the names of the Senator from North Dakota (Mr. HOEVEN), the Senator from Mississippi (Mr. WICKER), the Senator from Texas (Mr. CRUZ), the Senator from Kentucky (Mr. PAUL), the Senator from Arizona (Mr. FLAKE) and the Senator from Louisiana (Mr. VITTER) were added as cosponsors of amendment No. 2853 intended to be proposed to S. 2124, an original bill to support sovereignty and democracy in Ukraine, and for other purposes.

At the request of Mr. INHOFE, his name was added as a cosponsor of amendment No. 2853 intended to be proposed to S. 2124, supra.

AMENDMENT NO. 2854

At the request of Mr. COATS, the names of the Senator from Illinois (Mr. KIRK) and the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. BLUMENTHAL) were added as cosponsors of amendment No. 2854 intended to be proposed to S. 2124, an original bill to support sovereignty and democracy in Ukraine, and for other purposes.

STATEMENTS ON INTRODUCED BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

By Ms. HEITKAMP:

S. 2152. A bill to direct Federal investment in carbon capture and storage and other clean coal technologies, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Finance.

Ms. HEITKAMP. Mr. President, today I am introducing the Advanced Clean Coal Technology for Our Nation (ACCTION) Act. This bill seeks to remedy one of the main impediments to the development of advanced clean coal technologies, in particular carbon capture and sequestration, CCS, by laying out concrete funding mechanisms to encourage investment, innovation, and collaboration between the Federal Government and companies looking to build the next generation of coal-fired power plants in this country. The Federal Government continues to put in place regulations that seek to further reduce emissions from our nation's coal-fired power plants, yet they provide little to no incentive for utilities and other coal stakeholders to invest in and develop advanced clean coal technologies.

The Federal Government invests heavily in our renewable resources and provides an environment for oil and gas producers, efforts that I wholeheartedly support. However, if we are to truly invest in an all-of-the-above energy policy that will provide the most robust and diverse portfolio of energy sources then we must find a path forward for coal-fired power. The ACCTION Act will put coal back on a level playing field with our other resources by incentivizing technologies that reduce the carbon footprint of coal-fired power through Federal funding programs, offering Federal support for private investment, and putting forth recommendations on how best to support future CCS projects in the United States.

The ACCTION Act will increase Federal investment in clean coal technology by: developing large-scale carbon storage programs to support the commercial-scale application of enhanced oil recovery and geologic storage of carbon dioxide; increasing access to and streamlining existing Federal funding programs for coal projects and; revamping existing research and development programs for advanced coal, and carbon capture and sequestration technologies by including transformational coal-related technologies; increasing to 30 percent the current tax credit for carbon sequestration from coal facilities; establishing a variable price support for companies that capture CO_2 for use in enhanced oil recovery operations; creating clean energy coal bonds to provide tax credits for coal-powered facilities that sequester CO_2 or meet efficiency targets; and requiring reports and recommendations to Congress on existing carbon capture projects and how those projects can be duplicated with a combination of public and private financing.

The ACCTION Act takes into account two very important realities and attempts to address the seemingly divergent points by looking for a solution. First, the climate is changing, and we need to recognize we will be functioning in a carbon constrained world moving forward. We will have to continue to innovate and look for new ways to reduce emissions while at the same time meeting our energy needs. Second, coal is not going anywhere. The Energy Information Administration has stated that coal will still be providing a third of our electricity decades into the future. If we continue to support and invest in advanced technologies, coal will remain in the energy mix for decades beyond that.

Finding a path forward for coal is critical for our Nation and my State. North Dakota is one of the top ten states for percentage of our electricity generated from coal, with coal-fired power providing almost 80 percent of the State's electricity needs. At the same time, our state maintains some of the lowest rates per kilowatt-hour in the Nation. North Dakota is also one of the top 10 coal producing States in the Nation. It is estimated that over 4,000 North Dakotans were directly employed as a result of lignite-related coal activities in 2012, and as many as 13,000 other jobs in the state were supported indirectly by the lignite coal industry.

Coal use continues to increase around the world, and if the United States wants to truly be a leader on emissions reduction and advanced energy technologies, then we must be fully committed in investing the necessary funding and resources to develop and implement clean coal technologies here and abroad. These efforts will come with significant costs, and will not happen overnight, but we must take the necessary steps now to further reduce emissions while providing a path-forward for coal-fired power.

Coal-fired power remains the most reliable, redundant, affordable source of electricity for major portions of this country. Coal remains an abundant resource in this country. The ACCTION Act lays out a path-forward for coal-fired power and advanced clean coal technologies, and I hope my colleagues will join me in this effort.

SUBMITTED RESOLUTIONS

SENATE RESOLUTION 395—DESIGNATING THE MONTH OF APRIL 2014 AS ''MILITARY AND VETERANS CAREGIVER MONTH''

Mr. BURR (for himself, Ms. COLLINS, and Mrs. MURRAY) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on the Judiciary:

S. RES. 395

Whereas more than 2,400,000 members of the Armed Forces have been deployed to Iraq and Afghanistan since October 2001, 6,800 have been killed in action, more than 51,000

have been wounded in action, and 1,558 have undergone an amputation for a battle-related injury;

Whereas the signature wounds of members of the Armed Forces who have served in Operation Enduring Freedom, Operation Iraqi Freedom, and Operation New Dawn are traumatic brain injury and post-traumatic stress disorder;

Whereas, between January 1, 2000, and January 10, 2014, 287,911 cases of traumatic brain injury were diagnosed among members of the Armed Forces, and approximately 7,100 cases were classified as severe or penetrating;

Whereas studies have shown that the prevalence of post-traumatic stress disorder among veterans who served in Operation Enduring Freedom or Operation Iraqi Freedom ranges between 15 and 20 percent, and reports from the Department of Veterans Affairs show that 29 percent of veterans who served in Operation Enduring Freedom or Operation Iraqi Freedom and sought health care during fiscal years 2002 through 2012 had post-traumatic stress disorder;

Whereas many of the members of the Armed Forces and veterans who served in Operation Enduring Freedom or Operation Iraqi Freedom and suffered these injuries require assistance from a family caregiver to complete activities of daily living such as bathing, dressing, and feeding, or instrumental activities such as transportation, meal preparation, and health management;

Whereas as many as 1,000,000 spouses, parents, and children of veterans have served or are currently serving as family caregivers to veterans who served in Operation Enduring Freedom or Operation Iraqi Freedom, according to a study of military caregivers conducted by the RAND Corporation;

Whereas section 1672 of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2008 (Public Law 110–181; 10 U.S.C. 1071 note) introduced an expansion of medical care available to family caregivers, and the Caregivers and Veterans Omnibus Health Services Act of 2010 (Public Law 111–163) facilitated a new program for access to health insurance, mental health services, caregiver training, and respite care by family caregivers of veterans who served in Operation Enduring Freedom or Operation Iraqi Freedom;

Whereas the program provided under the Caregivers and Veterans Omnibus Health Services Act of 2010 (Public Law 111–163) is limited to veterans enrolled in the Veterans Health Administration, who sustained a serious injury in the line of duty after September 11, 2001, and who require at least 6 months of personal care services because of an inability to perform activities of daily living or who require supervision due to neurological impairment; and

Whereas the primary caregivers of members of the Armed Forces and veterans injured in the line of duty make tremendous sacrifices of their own, saving the United States millions of dollars in health care and potential institutionalization costs: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) designates the month of April 2014 as ''Military and Veterans Caregiver Month'';

(2) honors caregivers of members of the Armed Forces and veterans for their service and sacrifice to the United States; and

(3) calls upon the people of the United States—

(A) to observe the month with appropriate activities and events; and

(B) to participate in activities that will show support to military families and the sacrifices endured by those families in service to the United States.

SENATE RESOLUTION 396—DESIGNATING MARCH 25, 2014, AS ''NATIONAL CEREBRAL PALSY AWARENESS DAY''

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

S. RES. 396

Whereas the term ''cerebral palsy'' refers to a group of permanent disorders of the development of movement and posture that are attributed to non-progressive disturbances that occur in the developing brain;

Whereas cerebral palsy, the most common motor disability in children, is caused by damage to 1 or more specific areas of the developing brain, which usually occurs during fetal development, before, during, or after birth;

Whereas the majority of children who have cerebral palsy are born with the disorder, although cerebral palsy may remain undetected for months or years;

Whereas individuals with cerebral palsy also have at least 1 co-occurring condition, with 41 percent of such individuals having co-occurring epilepsy and nearly 7 percent having co-occurring autism spectrum disorder;

Whereas the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has released information indicating that cerebral palsy is not decreasing in prevalence and that an estimated 1 in 323 children has cerebral palsy;

Whereas approximately 800,000 people in the United States are affected by cerebral palsy;

Whereas although there is currently no cure for cerebral palsy, treatment often improves the capabilities of a child with cerebral palsy;

Whereas scientists and researchers are hopeful that breakthroughs in cerebral palsy research will be forthcoming;

Whereas researchers across the United States are conducting important research projects involving cerebral palsy; and

Whereas the Senate is an institution that can raise awareness in the general public and the medical community about cerebral palsy: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) designates March 25, 2014, as ''National Cerebral Palsy Awareness Day'';

(2) encourages all people of the United States to become more informed and aware of cerebral palsy; and

(3) respectfully requests the Secretary of the Senate to transmit a copy of this resolution to Reaching for the Stars: A Foundation of Hope for Children with Cerebral Palsy.

SENATE RESOLUTION 397—EXPRESSING THE SENSE OF THE SENATE THAT PUBLIC SERVANTS SHOULD BE COMMENDED FOR THEIR DEDICATION AND CONTINUED SERVICE TO THE UNITED STATES DURING PUBLIC SERVICE RECOGNITION WEEK

Mr. TESTER (for himself, Mr. BEGICH, Mr. BROWN, Mr. CARPER, Mr. LEVIN, Mr. SCHATZ, Mr. WARNER, Mrs. GILLIBRAND, Mr. CARDIN, and Mr. KAINE) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 397

Whereas the week of May 4 through 10, 2014 has been designated as ''Public Service Recognition Week'' to honor the employees of the Federal Government and State and local governments of the United States;

Whereas Public Service Recognition Week provides an opportunity to recognize and promote the important contributions of public servants and honor the diverse men and women who meet the needs of the United States through work at all levels of government;

Whereas millions of individuals work in government service in every city, county, and State across the United States and in hundreds of cities abroad;

Whereas public service is a noble calling involving a variety of challenging and rewarding professions;

Whereas the Federal Government and State and local governments are responsive, innovative, and effective because of the outstanding work of public servants;

Whereas the United States is a great and prosperous country, and public service employees contribute significantly to that greatness and prosperity;

Whereas the United States benefits daily from the knowledge and skills of the highly-trained individuals who work in public service;

Whereas public servants—

(1) defend the freedom of the people of the United States and advance the interests of the United States around the world;

(2) provide vital strategic support functions to the Armed Forces of the United States and serve in the National Guard and Reserves;

(3) fight crime and fires;

(4) ensure equal access to secure, efficient, and affordable mail service;

(5) deliver Social Security and Medicare benefits;

(6) fight disease and promote better health;

(7) protect the environment and the parks of the United States;

(8) enforce laws guaranteeing equal employment opportunity and healthy working conditions;

(9) defend and secure critical infrastructure;

(10) help the people of the United States recover from natural disasters and terrorist attacks;

(11) teach and work in schools and libraries;

(12) develop new technologies and explore the Earth, the Moon, and space to help improve understanding of how the world changes;

(13) improve and secure transportation systems;

(14) promote economic growth; and

(15) assist the veterans of the United States;

Whereas members of the uniformed services and civilian employees at all levels of government make significant contributions to the general welfare of the United States, and are on the front lines in the fight to defeat terrorism and maintain homeland security;

Whereas public servants work in a professional manner to build relationships with other countries and cultures in order to better represent the interests and promote the ideals of the United States;

Whereas public servants alert Congress and the public to government waste, fraud, and abuse, and of dangers to public health;

Whereas the men and women serving in the Armed Forces of the United States, as well as the skilled trade and craft Federal employees who provide support to their efforts, are committed to doing their jobs regardless of the circumstances, and contribute greatly to the security of the United States and the world;

Whereas public servants have bravely fought in armed conflict in defense of the

United States and its ideals, and deserve the care and benefits they have earned through their honorable service;

Whereas government workers have much to offer, as demonstrated by their expertise and innovative ideas, and serve as examples by passing on institutional knowledge to train the next generation of public servants; and

Whereas the week of May 4 through 10, 2014 marks the 30th anniversary of Public Service Recognition Week: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) supports the designation of the week of May 4 through 10, 2014 as ''Public Service Recognition Week'';

(2) commends public servants for their outstanding contributions to this great country during Public Service Recognition Week and throughout the year;

(3) salutes government employees for their unyielding dedication to and spirit for public service;

(4) honors those government employees who have given their lives in service to their country;

(5) calls upon a new generation to consider a career in public service as an honorable profession; and

(6) encourages efforts to promote public service careers at all levels of government.

SENATE RESOLUTION 398—TO AUTHORIZE THE PRODUCTION OF RECORDS BY THE PERMANENT SUBCOMMITTEE ON INVESTIGATIONS OF THE COMMITTEE ON HOMELAND SECURITY AND GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS

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

S. RES. 398

Whereas, the Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations of the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs conducted an investigation into offshore tax evasion and the effort to collect unpaid taxes on billions in hidden offshore accounts;

Whereas, the Subcommittee has received a request from a state regulatory agency for access to records of the Subcommittee's investigation;

Whereas, by the privileges of the Senate of the United States and Rule XI of the Standing Rules of the Senate, no evidence under the control or in the possession of the Senate can, by administrative or judicial process, be taken from such control or possession but by permission of the Senate;

Whereas, when it appears that evidence under the control or in the possession of the Senate is needed for the promotion of justice, the Senate will take such action as will promote the ends of justice consistent with the privileges of the Senate: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Chairman and Ranking Minority Member of the Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations of the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs, acting jointly, are authorized to provide to law enforcement officials, regulatory agencies, and other entities or individuals duly authorized by federal, state, or foreign governments, records of the Subcommittee's investigation into offshore tax evasion and the effort to collect unpaid taxes on billions in hidden offshore accounts.

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION 34—EXPRESSING THE SENSE OF CONGRESS THAT THE PRESIDENT SHOULD HOLD THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION ACCOUNTABLE FOR BEING IN MATERIAL BREACH OF ITS OBLIGATIONS UNDER THE INTERMEDIATE-RANGE NUCLEAR FORCES TREATY

Mr. RUBIO (for himself, Ms. AYOTTE, Mr. VITTER, Mr. INHOFE, Mr. CORNYN, Mr. WALSH, Mr. WICKER, and Mr. RISCH) submitted the following concurrent resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations:

S. CON. RES. 34

Whereas the Russian Federation is in material breach of its obligations under the Treaty Between the United States of America and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics on the Elimination of Their Intermediate-Range and Shorter-Range Missiles, commonly referred to as the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces (INF) Treaty, signed at Washington December 8, 1987, and entered into force June 1, 1988; and

Whereas such behavior poses a threat to the United States, its deployed forces, and its allies: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the Senate (the House of Representatives concurring), That it is the sense of Congress that—

(1) the President should hold the Russian Federation accountable for being in material breach of its obligations under the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty;

(2) the President should demand the Russian Federation completely and verifiably eliminate the military systems that constitute the material breach of its obligations under the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty;

(3) the President should not engage in further reductions of United States nuclear forces generally and should not engage in nuclear arms reduction negotiations with the Russian Federation specifically until such complete and verifiable elimination of the military systems has occurred; and

(4) the President, in consultation with United States allies, should consider whether it is in the national security interests of the United States to unilaterally remain a party to the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty if the Russian Federation is still in material breach of such Treaty beginning one year after the date of the adoption of this concurrent resolution.

AMENDMENTS SUBMITTED AND PROPOSED

SA 2856. Mr. UDALL of Colorado (for himself, Mr. BEGICH, and Ms. HEITKAMP) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 2124, to support sovereignty and democracy in Ukraine, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2857. Mr. PORTMAN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 2124, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2858. Mr. JOHNSON of Wisconsin (for himself, Mr. CRUZ, Mr. INHOFE, Mr. VITTER, Mr. SESSIONS, Mr. CORNYN, Mr. BARRASSO, and Mr. LEE) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 2124, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2859. Mr. VITTER submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 2124, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2860. Mr. CORNYN (for himself, Mr. WICKER, and Ms. AYOTTE) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 2124, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2861. Mr. RISCH submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 2124, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2862. Mr. RISCH submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 2124, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2863. Mr. RISCH submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 2124, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2864. Mr. THUNE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 2124, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2865. Mr. THUNE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 2124, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2866. Mr. THUNE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 2124, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2867. Mr. REID (for Mr. MENENDEZ (for himself and Mr. CORKER)) proposed an amendment to the bill H.R. 4152, to provide for the costs of loan guarantees for Ukraine.

SA 2868. Mr. VITTER submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 2124, to support sovereignty and democracy in Ukraine, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table.

TEXT OF AMENDMENTS

SA 2856. Mr. UDALL of Colorado (for himself, Mr. BEGICH, and Ms. HEITKAMP) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 2124, to support sovereignty and democracy in Ukraine, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 30, after line 23, add the following:

SEC. ___. EXPEDITED APPROVAL OF EXPORTATION OF NATURAL GAS TO WORLD TRADE ORGANIZATION MEMBER COUNTRIES.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 3(c) of the Natural Gas Act (15 U.S.C. 717b(c)) is amended—

(1) by striking ''(c) For purposes'' and inserting the following:

''(c) EXPEDITED APPLICATION AND APPROVAL PROCESS.—

''(1) DEFINITION OF WORLD TRADE ORGANIZATION MEMBER COUNTRY.—In this subsection, the term 'World Trade Organization member country' has the meaning given the term 'WTO member country' in section 2 of the Uruguay Round Agreements Act (19 U.S.C. 3501).

''(2) EXPEDITED APPLICATION AND APPROVAL PROCESS.—For purposes''; and

(2) in paragraph (2) (as so designated), by inserting ''or to a World Trade Organization member country'' after ''trade in natural gas''.

(b) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by subsection (a) shall apply to applications for the authorization to export natural gas under section 3 of the Natural Gas Act (15 U.S.C. 717b) that are pending on, or filed on or after, the date of enactment of this Act.

SA 2857. Mr. PORTMAN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 2124, to support sovereignty and democracy in Ukraine, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 10, line 25, strike ''integrity.'' and insert the following: ''integrity; and

(9) in order to strengthen long-standing treaty obligations of the United States and Ukraine related to the civil use of nuclear energy, including the Agreement for Cooperation Between the United States of America and Ukraine Concerning Peaceful Uses of Nuclear Energy, done at Kiev, May 6, 1998, and entered into force May 29, 1999, coordinate with the Secretary of Energy and the Secretary of Commerce to assist the Government of Ukraine in identifying nuclear fuel requirements for Ukraine's power sector, identifying and supporting commercial production capabilities for alternative nuclear fuel supplies and any other assistance determined necessary by the Secretary of Energy and the Secretary of Commerce to maintain safe, secure, and sustainable operation of nuclear reactors in Ukraine, and to consider expansion of such assistance to other Central and Eastern European counties as determined appropriate by the Secretary Energy, the Secretary of Commerce, and the Secretary of State.

SA 2858. Mr. JOHNSON of Wisconsin (for himself, Mr. CRUZ, Mr. INHOFE, Mr. VITTER, Mr. SESSIONS, Mr. CORNYN, Mr. BARRASSO, and Mr. LEE) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 2124, to support sovereignty and democracy in Ukraine, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

Beginning on page 21, strike line 9 and all that follows through page 30, line 23, and insert the following:

SEC. 10. ANNUAL REPORT ON MILITARY AND SECURITY DEVELOPMENTS INVOLVING THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION.

(a) REPORT.—Not later than June 1, 2015, and June 1 of each year thereafter through 2020, the Secretary of Defense shall submit to the specified congressional committees a report, in both classified and unclassified form, on the current and future military power of the Russian Federation (in this section referred to as ''Russia''). The report shall address the current and probable future course of military-technological development of the Russian military, the tenets and probable development of the security strategy and military strategy of the Government of Russia, and military organizations and operational concepts, for the 20-year period following submission of such report.

(b) MATTERS TO BE INCLUDED.—The report required under subsection (a) shall include the following:

(1) An assessment of the security situation in regions neighboring Russia.

(2) The goals and factors shaping the security strategy and military strategy of the Government of Russia.

(3) Trends in Russian security and military behavior that would be designed to achieve, or that are consistent with, the goals described in paragraph (2).

(4) An assessment of the global and regional security objectives of the Government of Russia, including objectives that would affect the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, the Middle East, or the People's Republic of China.

(5) A detailed assessment of the sizes, locations, and capabilities of the nuclear, special operations, land, sea, and air forces of the Government of Russia.

(6) Developments in Russian military doctrine and training.

(7) An assessment of the proliferation activities of the Government of Russia and Russian entities, as a supplier of materials, technologies, or expertise relating to nuclear weapons or other weapons of mass destruction or missile systems.

(8) Developments in the asymmetric capabilities of the Government of Russia, including its strategy and efforts to develop and deploy cyberwarfare and electronic warfare capabilities, details on the number of malicious cyber incidents originating from Russia against Department of Defense infrastructure, and associated activities originating or suspected of originating from Russia.

(9) The strategy and capabilities of space and counterspace programs in Russia, including trends, global and regional activities, the involvement of military and civilian organizations, including state-owned enterprises, academic institutions, and commercial entities, and efforts to develop, acquire, or gain access to advanced technologies that would enhance Russian military capabilities.

(10) Developments in Russia's nuclear program, including the size and state of Russia's stockpile, its nuclear strategy and associated doctrines, its civil and military production capacities, and projections of its future arsenals.

(11) A description of the anti-access and area denial capabilities of the Government of Russia.

(12) A description of Russia's command, control, communications, computers, intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance modernization program and its applications for Russia's precision guided weapons.

(13) In consultation with the Secretary of Energy and the Secretary of State, developments regarding United States-Russian engagement and cooperation on security matters.

(14) Other military and security developments involving Russia that the Secretary of Defense considers relevant to United States national security.

(c) SPECIFIED CONGRESSIONAL COMMITTEES DEFINED.—In this section, the term ''specified congressional committees'' means—

(1) the Committee on Foreign Relations and the Committee on Armed Services of the Senate; and

(2) the Committee on Foreign Affairs and the Committee on Armed Services of the House of Representatives.

SEC. 11. RESCISSIONS FROM FOREIGN RELATIONS ACCOUNTS.

(a) INTERNATIONAL NARCOTICS CONTROL AND LAW ENFORCEMENT.—Of the funds appropriated under the heading ''International Security Assistance, Department of State, International Narcotics Control and Law Enforcement'' in title IV of division K of the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2014 (Public Law 113–76), $65,000,000 are rescinded.

(b) CONTRIBUTION TO THE INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT ASSOCIATION.—Of the funds appropriated under the heading ''Multilateral Assistance, International Financial Institutions, Contribution to the International Development Association'' in title V of division K of the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2014 (Public Law 113–76), $43,525,000 are rescinded.

(c) CONTRIBUTION TO THE ASIAN DEVELOPMENT FUND.—Of the funds appropriated under the heading ''Multilateral Assistance, International Financial Institutions, Contribution to the Asian Development Fund'' in title V of division K of the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2014 (Public Law 113–76), $9,000,000 are rescinded.

(d) CONTRIBUTION TO THE AFRICAN DEVELOPMENT FUND.—Of the funds appropriated under the heading ''Multilateral Assistance, International Financial Institutions, Contribution to the African Development Fund'' in title V of division K of the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2014 (Public Law 113–76), $16,475,000 are rescinded.

(e) SUBSIDY APPROPRIATION FOR THE EXPORT-IMPORT BANK OF THE UNITED STATES.—Of the unexpended balances available under the heading ''Export and Investment Assistance, Export-Import Bank of the United States, Subsidy Appropriation'' from prior Acts making appropriations for the Department of State, foreign operations, and related programs, $23,500,000 are rescinded.

SA 2859. Mr. VITTER submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 2124, to support sovereignty and democracy in Ukraine, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

Strike section 13 and insert the following:

SEC. 13. ELIGIBILITY FOR CHILD TAX CREDIT.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Subsection (e) of section 24 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 is amended by striking ''under this section to a taxpayer'' and all that follows and inserting ''under this section to any taxpayer unless—

''(1) such taxpayer includes the taxpayer's valid identification number (as defined in section 6428(h)(2)) on the return of tax for the taxable year, and

''(2) with respect to any qualifying child, the taxpayer includes the name and taxpayer identification number of such qualifying child on such return of tax.''.

(b) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendment made by this section shall apply to taxable years beginning after the date of the enactment of this Act.

SA 2860. Mr. CORNYN (for himself, Mr. WICKER, and Ms. AYOTTE) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 2124, to support sovereignty and democracy in Ukraine, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 13, beginning on line 9, strike ''Not later than'' and all that follows through line 13 and insert the following:

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 60 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the President shall submit to the appropriate congressional committees a strategy to carry out the activities set forth in subsection (a).

(2) ELEMENTS.—The strategy required under paragraph (1) shall include the following elements:

(A) A preliminary assessment of deficiencies in the defensive military capabilities of Ukraine and other countries in Central and Eastern Europe, including air defense systems and anti-armor capabilities.

(B) A detailed description of which types of defense articles, defense services, and areas of military training can and will be provided to help address any deficiencies.

SA 2861. Mr. RISCH submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 2124, to support sovereignty and democracy in Ukraine, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

Insert after section 11 the following new section:

SEC. 12. REPLACEMENT OF FOREIGN SERVICE NATIONALS SERVING AT UNITED STATES DIPLOMATIC FACILITIES IN RUSSIA.

The Secretary of State shall ensure that, not later than 2 years after the date of the enactment of this Act, every individual employed by the United States Government and serving at a United States diplomatic facility in the Russian Federation shall be a citizen of the United States and shall have

passed, and be subject to, a thorough background check.

SA 2862. Mr. RISCH submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 2124, to support sovereignty and democracy in Ukraine, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

Insert after section 11 the following new section:

SEC. 12. INCLUSION OF RESTRICTED ACCESS SPACES IN UNITED STATES DIPLOMATIC FACILITIES IN RUSSIA AND ADJACENT COUNTRIES.

Each United States diplomatic facility that, after the date of the enactment of this Act, is constructed in, or undergoes a construction upgrade in, the Russian Federation or any country that shares a land border with the Russian Federation shall be constructed to include a restricted access space.

SA 2863. Mr. RISCH submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 2124, to support sovereignty and democracy in Ukraine, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

Insert after section 11 the following new section:

SEC. 12. DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE ASSESSMENT OF WEAPON SYSTEMS PROHIBITED BY THE INTERMEDIATE RANGE NUCLEAR FORCES TREATY FROM BEING PROVIDED TO NATO COUNTRIES.

Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Defense shall submit to Congress a report containing an assessment of weapon systems the development and provision of which to North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) countries is prohibited by the Treaty Between the United States of America and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics on the Elimination of Their Intermediate-Range and Shorter-Range Missiles, done at Washington December 8, 1987 (commonly referred to as the ''Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty'').

SA 2864. Mr. THUNE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 2124, to support sovereignty and democracy in Ukraine, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

Insert after section 11 the following new section:

SEC. 12. ENHANCED ASSISTANCE FOR LAW ENFORCEMENT IN UKRAINE.

(a) STATEMENT OF POLICY.—It shall be the policy of the United States to assist Ukraine to eliminate the human rights abuses associated with the Berkut forces in order to foster a democratically-reformed police force with strong public oversight, which is critical to fostering political unity and stability throughout Ukraine.

(b) AVAILABILITY OF FUNDS.—Of amounts made available to carry out section 1207 of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2012 (Public Law 112–81; 22 U.S.C. 2151 note) for fiscal year 2014, $8,000,000 may be made available to enhance United States efforts to assist Ukraine to strengthen law enforcement capabilities and maintain the rule of law.

(c) NOTIFICATION REQUIREMENT.—The congressional notification requirements contained in section 1207(l) of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2012 (Public Law 112–81; 22 U.S.C. 2151 note) shall apply to the initiation of activities under a program of assistance under subsection (b) to the same extent and in the same manner as such congressional notification requirements apply to the initiation of activities under a program of assistance section 1207(b) of such Act.

SA 2865. Mr. THUNE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 2124, to support sovereignty and democracy in Ukraine, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 7, line 2, strike ''security.'' and insert the following: ''security; and

(18) to ensure that the United States strategically deploys defensive ballistic missile interceptors and x-band radar capabilities to provide realistic security assurances to European and NATO allies, including Ukraine.

SA 2866. Mr. THUNE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 2124, to support sovereignty and democracy in Ukraine, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 12, between lines 14 and 15, insert the following:

(2) as part of the NATO summit to be held in the United Kingdom on September 4, 2014, prioritize the expansion of NATO membership to include applicant countries.

SA 2867. Mr. REID (for Mr. MENENDEZ (for himself and Mr. CORKER)) proposed an amendment to the bill H.R. 4152, to provide for the costs of loan guarantees for Ukraine; as follows:

Strike all after the enacting clause and insert the following:

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the ''Support for the Sovereignty, Integrity, Democracy, and Economic Stability of Ukraine Act of 2014''.

SEC. 2. DEFINITIONS.

In this Act:

(1) ALIEN.—The term ''alien'' has the meaning given that term in section 101(a) of the Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C. 1101(a)).

(2) APPROPRIATE CONGRESSIONAL COMMITTEES.—The term ''appropriate congressional committees'' means—

(A) the Committee on Foreign Relations, the Select Committee on Intelligence, the Committee on Appropriations, and the majority leader and minority leader of the Senate; and

(B) the Committee on Foreign Affairs, the Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence, the Committee on Appropriations, and the Speaker and minority leader of the House of Representatives.

(3) MATERIALLY ASSISTED.—The term ''materially assisted'' means the provision of assistance that is significant and of a kind directly relevant to acts described in paragraph (1), (2), or (3) of section 8(a) or acts described in section 9(a)(1).

(4) UNITED STATES PERSON.—The term ''United States person'' means—

(A) a United States citizen or an alien lawfully admitted for permanent residence to the United States; or

(B) an entity organized under the laws of the United States or of any jurisdiction within the United States, including a foreign branch of such an entity.

SEC. 3. UNITED STATES POLICY TOWARD UKRAINE.

It is the policy of the United States—

(1) to condemn the unjustified military intervention of the Russian Federation in the Crimea region of Ukraine and its concurrent occupation of that region, as well as any other form of political, economic, or military aggression against Ukraine;

(2) to reaffirm the commitment of the United States to, and to remind Russia of its ongoing commitment to, the 1994 Budapest Memorandum on Security Assurances, which was executed jointly with the Russian Federation and the United Kingdom and explicitly secures the independence, sovereignty, and territorial integrity and borders of Ukraine, and to demand the immediate cessation of improper activities, including the seizures of airfields and other locations, and the immediate return of Russian forces to their barracks;

(3) to work with United States partners in the European Union, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, and at the United Nations to ensure that all nations recognize and not undermine, nor seek to undermine, the independence, sovereignty, or territorial or economic integrity of Ukraine;

(4) to use all appropriate economic elements of United States national power, in coordination with United States allies, to protect the independence, sovereignty, and territorial and economic integrity of Ukraine;

(5) to support the people of Ukraine in their desire to forge closer ties with Europe, including signing an Association Agreement with the European Union as a means to address endemic corruption, consolidate democracy, and achieve sustained prosperity;

(6) to use the voice and vote of the United States to secure sufficient resources through the International Monetary Fund to support needed economic structural reforms in Ukraine under conditions that will reinforce a sovereign decision by the Government of Ukraine to sign and implement an association agreement with the European Union;

(7) to help the Government of Ukraine prepare for the presidential election in May 2014;

(8) to reinforce the efforts of the Government of Ukraine to bring to justice those responsible for the acts of violence against peaceful protestors and other unprovoked acts of violence related to the antigovernment protests in that began on November 21, 2013;

(9) to support the efforts of the Government of Ukraine to recover and return to the Ukrainian state funds stolen by former President Yanukovych, his family, and other current and former members of the Ukrainian government and elites;

(10) to support the continued professionalization of the Ukrainian military;

(11) to condemn economic extortion by the Russian Federation against Ukraine, Moldova, Lithuania, and other countries in the region designed to obstruct closer ties between the European Union and the countries of the Eastern Partnership and to reduce the harmful consequences of such extortion;

(12) to condemn the continuing and longstanding pattern and practice by the Government of the Russian Federation of physical and economic aggression toward neighboring countries;

(13) to enhance and extend our security cooperation with, security assistance to, and military exercises conducted with, states in Central and Eastern Europe, including North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) member countries, NATO aspirants, and appropriate Eastern Partnership countries;

(14) to reaffirm United States defense commitments to its treaty allies under Article V of the North Atlantic Treaty;

(15) that the continued participation of the Russian Federation in the Group of Eight

(G–8) nations should be conditioned on the Government of the Russian Federation respecting the territorial integrity of its neighbors and accepting and adhering to the norms and standards of free, democratic societies as generally practiced by every other member nation of the G–8 nations;

(16) to explore ways for the United States Government to assist the countries of Central and Eastern Europe to diversify their energy sources and achieve energy security; and

(17) to ensure the United States maintains its predominant leadership position and influence within the International Monetary Fund, and to guarantee the International Monetary Fund has the resources and governance structure necessary to support structural reforms in Ukraine and respond to and prevent a potentially serious financial crisis in Ukraine or other foreign economic crises that threatens United States national security.

SEC. 4. PROVISION OF COSTS OF LOAN GUARANTEES FOR UKRAINE.

(a) IN GENERAL.—From the unobligated balance of amounts appropriated or otherwise made available under the heading ''ECONOMIC SUPPORT FUND'' under the heading ''FUNDS APPROPRIATED TO THE PRESIDENT'' in title III of the Department of State, Foreign Operations, and Related Programs Appropriations Act, 2014 (division K of Public Law 113–76) and in Acts making appropriations for the Department of State, foreign operations, and related programs for preceding fiscal years (other than amounts designated pursuant to section 251(b)(2)(A) of the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985 (2 U.S.C. 901(b)(2)(A))), amounts shall be made available for the costs (as defined in section 502 of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974 (2 U.S.C. 661a)) of loan guarantees for Ukraine that are hereby authorized to be provided under this Act.

(b) INAPPLICABILITY OF CERTAIN LIMITATIONS.—Amounts made available for the costs of loan guarantees for Ukraine pursuant to subsection (a) shall not be considered ''assistance'' for the purpose of provisions of law limiting assistance to Ukraine.

SEC. 5. RECOVERY OF ASSETS LINKED TO GOVERNMENTAL CORRUPTION IN UKRAINE.

(a) ASSET RECOVERY.—The Secretary of State, in coordination with the Attorney General and the Secretary of the Treasury, shall assist, on an expedited basis as appropriate, the Government of Ukraine to identify, secure, and recover assets linked to acts of corruption by Viktor Yanukovych, members of his family, or other former or current officials of the Government of Ukraine or their accomplices in any jurisdiction through appropriate programs, including the Kleptocracy Asset Recovery Initiative of the Department of Justice.

(b) COORDINATION.—Any asset recovery efforts undertaken pursuant to subsection (a) shall be coordinated through the relevant bilateral or multilateral entities, including, as appropriate, the Egmont Group of Financial Intelligence Units, the Stolen Asset Recovery Initiative of the World Bank Group and the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, the Camden Asset Recovery Inter-Agency Network, and the Global Focal Point Initiative of the International Criminal Police Organization (INTERPOL).

(c) INVESTIGATIVE ASSISTANCE.—The Secretary of State, in coordination with the Attorney General, shall assist the Government of Ukraine, the European Union, and other appropriate countries, on an expedited basis, with formal and informal investigative assistance and training, as appropriate, to support the identification, seizure, and return to the Government of Ukraine of assets linked to acts of corruption.

(d) PRIORITY ASSIGNED.—The Secretary of the Treasury shall ensure that the Financial Crimes Enforcement Network of the Department of the Treasury assists the Government of Ukraine, the European Union, and other appropriate countries under section 314(a) of the Uniting and Strengthening America by Providing Appropriate Tools Required to Intercept and Obstruct Terrorism Act of 2001 (31 U.S.C. 5311 note).

SEC. 6. DEMOCRACY, CIVIL SOCIETY, GOVERNANCE, AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE FOR UKRAINE AND OTHER STATES IN CENTRAL AND EASTERN EUROPE.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of State shall, subject to the availability of appropriations, directly or through nongovernmental organizations—

(1) improve democratic governance, transparency, accountability, rule of law, and anti-corruption efforts in Ukraine;

(2) support efforts by the Government of Ukraine to foster greater unity among the people and regions of the country;

(3) support the people and Government of Ukraine in preparing to conduct and contest free and fair elections, including through domestic and international election monitoring;

(4) assist in diversifying Ukraine's economy, trade, and energy supplies, including at the national, regional, and local levels;

(5) strengthen democratic institutions and political and civil society organizations in Ukraine;

(6) expand free and unfettered access to independent media of all kinds in Ukraine and assist with the protection of journalists and civil society activists who have been targeted for free speech activities;

(7) support political and economic reform initiatives by Eastern Partnership countries; and

(8) support the efforts of the Government of Ukraine, civil society, and international organizations to enhance the economic and political empowerment of women in Ukraine and to prevent and address violence against women and girls in Ukraine, and support the inclusion of women in Ukraine in any negotiations to restore Ukraine's security, independence, sovereignty, or territorial or economic integrity.

(b) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There is authorized to be appropriated to the Secretary of State $50,000,000 for fiscal year 2015 to carry out the activities set forth in subsection (a). Amounts appropriated for the activities set forth in subsection (a) shall be used pursuant to the authorization and requirements contained in this section. Additional amounts may be authorized to be appropriated under other provisions of law.

(c) STRATEGY REQUIREMENT.—Not later than 60 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the President shall submit to the appropriate congressional committees a strategy to carry out the activities set forth in subsection (a).

(d) NOTIFICATION REQUIREMENT.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Funds appropriated or otherwise made available pursuant to subsection (b) may not be obligated until 15 days after the date on which the President has provided notice of intent to obligate such funds to the appropriate congressional committees.

(2) WAIVER.—The President may waive the notification requirement under paragraph (1) if the President determines that failure to do so would pose a substantial risk to human health or welfare, in which case notification shall be provided as early as practicable, but in no event later than three days after taking the action to which such notification requirement was applicable in the context of the circumstances necessitating such waiver.

SEC. 7. ENHANCED SECURITY COOPERATION WITH UKRAINE AND OTHER COUNTRIES IN CENTRAL AND EASTERN EUROPE.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The President shall, subject to the availability of appropriations—

(1) enhance security cooperation efforts and relationships amongst countries in Central and Eastern Europe and among the United States, the European Union, and countries in Central and Eastern Europe;

(2) provide additional security assistance, including defense articles and defense services (as those terms are defined in section 47 of the Arms Export Control Act (22 U.S.C. 2794)) and military training, to countries in Central and Eastern Europe, including Ukraine; and

(3) support greater reform, professionalism, and capacity-building efforts within the military, intelligence, and security services in Central and Eastern Europe, including Ukraine.

(b) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There is authorized to be appropriated to the President a total of $100,000,000 for fiscal years 2015 through 2017 to carry out this section. Amounts appropriated for the activities set forth in subsection (a) shall be used pursuant to the authorization and requirements contained in this section. Additional amounts may be authorized to be appropriated under other provisions of law.

(c) STRATEGY REQUIREMENT.—Not later than 60 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the President shall submit to the appropriate congressional committees a strategy to carry out the activities set forth in subsection (a).

(d) NOTIFICATION REQUIREMENT.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Funds appropriated or otherwise made available pursuant to subsection (b) may not be obligated until 15 days after the date on which the President has provided notice of intent to obligate such funds to the appropriate congressional committees and the Committees on Armed Services of the Senate and the House of Representatives.

(2) WAIVER.—The President may waive the notification requirement under paragraph (1) if the President determines that failure to do so would pose a substantial risk to human health or welfare, in which case notification shall be provided as early as practicable, but in no event later than three days after taking the action to which such notification requirement was applicable in the context of the circumstances necessitating such waiver.

SEC. 8. SANCTIONS ON PERSONS RESPONSIBLE FOR VIOLENCE OR UNDERMINING THE PEACE, SECURITY, STABILITY, SOVEREIGNTY, OR TERRITORIAL INTEGRITY OF UKRAINE.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The President shall impose the sanctions described in subsection (b) with respect to—

(1) any person, including a current or former official of the Government of Ukraine or a person acting on behalf of that Government, that the President determines has perpetrated, or is responsible for ordering, controlling, or otherwise directing, significant acts of violence or gross human rights abuses in Ukraine against persons associated with the antigovernment protests in Ukraine that began on November 21, 2013;

(2) any person that the President determines has perpetrated, or is responsible for ordering, controlling, or otherwise directing, significant acts that are intended to undermine the peace, security, stability, sovereignty, or territorial integrity of Ukraine, including acts of economic extortion;

(3) any official of the Government of the Russian Federation, or a close associate or family member of such an official, that the President determines is responsible for,

complicit in, or responsible for ordering, controlling, or otherwise directing, acts of significant corruption in Ukraine, including the expropriation of private or public assets for personal gain, corruption related to government contracts or the extraction of natural resources, bribery, or the facilitation or transfer of the proceeds of corruption to foreign jurisdictions; and

(4) any individual that the President determines materially assisted, sponsored, or provided financial, material, or technological support for, or goods or services in support of, the commission of acts described in paragraph (1), (2), or (3).

(b) SANCTIONS DESCRIBED.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The sanctions described in this subsection are the following:

(A) ASSET BLOCKING.—The exercise of all powers granted to the President by the International Emergency Economic Powers Act (50 U.S.C. 1701 et seq.) to the extent necessary to block and prohibit all transactions in all property and interests in property of a person determined by the President to be subject to subsection (a) if such property and interests in property are in the United States, come within the United States, or are or come within the possession or control of a United States person.

(B) EXCLUSION FROM THE UNITED STATES AND REVOCATION OF VISA OR OTHER DOCUMENTATION.—In the case of an alien determined by the President to be subject to subsection (a), denial of a visa to, and exclusion from the United States of, the alien, and revocation in accordance with section 221(i) of the Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C. 1201(i)), of any visa or other documentation of the alien.

(2) PENALTIES.—A person that violates, attempts to violate, conspires to violate, or causes a violation of paragraph (1)(A) or any regulation, license, or order issued to carry out paragraph (1)(A) shall be subject to the penalties set forth in subsections (b) and (c) of section 206 of the International Emergency Economic Powers Act (50 U.S.C. 1705) to the same extent as a person that commits an unlawful act described in subsection (a) of that section.

(3) EXCEPTION RELATING TO THE IMPORTATION OF GOODS.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—The requirement to block and prohibit all transactions in all property and interests in property under paragraph (1)(A) shall not include the authority to impose sanctions on the importation of goods.

(B) GOOD DEFINED.—In this paragraph, the term ''good'' has the meaning given that term in section 16 of the Export Administration Act of 1979 (50 U.S.C. App. 2415) (as continued in effect pursuant to the International Emergency Economic Powers Act (50 U.S.C. 1701 et seq.)).

(4) EXCEPTION TO COMPLY WITH UNITED NATIONS HEADQUARTERS AGREEMENT.—Sanctions under paragraph (1)(B) shall not apply to an alien if admitting the alien into the United States is necessary to permit the United States to comply with the Agreement regarding the Headquarters of the United Nations, signed at Lake Success June 26, 1947, and entered into force November 21, 1947, between the United Nations and the United States, or other applicable international obligations.

(c) WAIVER.—The President may waive the application of sanctions under subsection (b) with respect to a person if the President—

(1) determines that such a waiver is in the national security interests of the United States; and

(2) on or before the date on which the waiver takes effect, submits to the Committee on Foreign Relations and the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on Foreign Affairs and the Committee on Financial Services of the House of Representatives a notice of and a justification for the waiver.

(d) REGULATORY AUTHORITY.—The President shall issue such regulations, licenses, and orders as are necessary to carry out this section.

SEC. 9. SANCTIONS ON PERSONS IN THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION COMPLICIT IN OR RESPONSIBLE FOR SIGNIFICANT CORRUPTION.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The President is authorized and encouraged to impose the sanctions described in subsection (b) with respect to—

(1) any official of the Government of the Russian Federation, or a close associate or family member of such an official, that the President determines is responsible for, or complicit in, or responsible for ordering, controlling, or otherwise directing, acts of significant corruption in the Russian Federation, including the expropriation of private or public assets for personal gain, corruption related to government contracts or the extraction of natural resources, bribery, or the facilitation or transfer of the proceeds of corruption to foreign jurisdictions; and

(2) any individual who has materially assisted, sponsored, or provided financial, material, or technological support for, or goods or services in support of, an act described in paragraph (1).

(b) SANCTIONS DESCRIBED.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The sanctions described in this subsection are the following:

(A) ASSET BLOCKING.—The exercise of all powers granted to the President by the International Emergency Economic Powers Act (50 U.S.C. 1701 et seq.) to the extent necessary to block and prohibit all transactions in all property and interests in property of a person determined by the President to be subject to subsection (a) if such property and interests in property are in the United States, come within the United States, or are or come within the possession or control of a United States person.

(B) EXCLUSION FROM THE UNITED STATES AND REVOCATION OF VISA OR OTHER DOCUMENTATION.—In the case of an alien determined by the President to be subject to subsection (a), denial of a visa to, and exclusion from the United States of, the alien, and revocation in accordance with section 221(i) of the Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C. 1201(i)), of any visa or other documentation of the alien.

(2) PENALTIES.—A person that violates, attempts to violate, conspires to violate, or causes a violation of paragraph (1)(A) or any regulation, license, or order issued to carry out paragraph (1)(A) shall be subject to the penalties set forth in subsections (b) and (c) of section 206 of the International Emergency Economic Powers Act (50 U.S.C. 1705) to the same extent as a person that commits an unlawful act described in subsection (a) of that section.

(3) EXCEPTION RELATING TO THE IMPORTATION OF GOODS.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—The authority to block and prohibit all transactions in all property and interests in property under paragraph (1)(A) shall not include the authority to impose sanctions on the importation of goods.

(B) GOOD DEFINED.—In this paragraph, the term ''good'' has the meaning given that term in section 16 of the Export Administration Act of 1979 (50 U.S.C. App. 2415) (as continued in effect pursuant to the International Emergency Economic Powers Act (50 U.S.C. 1701 et seq.)).

(4) EXCEPTION TO COMPLY WITH UNITED NATIONS HEADQUARTERS AGREEMENT.—Sanctions under paragraph (1)(B) shall not apply to an alien if admitting the alien into the United States is necessary to permit the United States to comply with the Agreement regarding the Headquarters of the United Nations, signed at Lake Success June 26, 1947, and entered into force November 21, 1947, between the United Nations and the United States, or other applicable international obligations.

(c) WAIVER.—The President may waive the application of sanctions under subsection (b) with respect to a person if the President—

(1) determines that such a waiver is in the national security interests of the United States; and

(2) on or before the date on which the waiver takes effect, submits to the Committee on Foreign Relations and the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on Foreign Affairs and the Committee on Financial Services of the House of Representatives a notice of and a justification for the waiver.

(d) REGULATORY AUTHORITY.—The President shall issue such regulations, licenses, and orders as are necessary to carry out this section.

SEC. 10. ANNUAL REPORT ON MILITARY AND SECURITY DEVELOPMENTS INVOLVING THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION.

(a) REPORT.—Not later than June 1, 2015, and June 1 of each year thereafter through 2020, the Secretary of Defense shall submit to the specified congressional committees a report, in both classified and unclassified form, on the current and future military power of the Russian Federation (in this section referred to as ''Russia''). The report shall address the current and probable future course of military-technological development of the Russian military, the tenets and probable development of the security strategy and military strategy of the Government of Russia, and military organizations and operational concepts, for the 20-year period following submission of such report.

(b) MATTERS TO BE INCLUDED.—The report required under subsection (a) shall include the following:

(1) An assessment of the security situation in regions neighboring Russia.

(2) The goals and factors shaping the security strategy and military strategy of the Government of Russia.

(3) Trends in Russian security and military behavior that would be designed to achieve, or that are consistent with, the goals described in paragraph (2).

(4) An assessment of the global and regional security objectives of the Government of Russia, including objectives that would affect the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, the Middle East, or the People's Republic of China.

(5) A detailed assessment of the sizes, locations, and capabilities of the nuclear, special operations, land, sea, and air forces of the Government of Russia.

(6) Developments in Russian military doctrine and training.

(7) An assessment of the proliferation activities of the Government of Russia and Russian entities, as a supplier of materials, technologies, or expertise relating to nuclear weapons or other weapons of mass destruction or missile systems.

(8) Developments in the asymmetric capabilities of the Government of Russia, including its strategy and efforts to develop and deploy cyberwarfare and electronic warfare capabilities, details on the number of malicious cyber incidents originating from Russia against Department of Defense infrastructure, and associated activities originating or suspected of originating from Russia.

(9) The strategy and capabilities of space and counterspace programs in Russia, including trends, global and regional activities, the involvement of military and civilian organizations, including state-owned enterprises, academic institutions, and commercial entities, and efforts to develop, acquire, or gain access to advanced technologies that would enhance Russian military capabilities.

(10) Developments in Russia's nuclear program, including the size and state of Russia's stockpile, its nuclear strategy and associated doctrines, its civil and military production capacities, and projections of its future arsenals.

(11) A description of the anti-access and area denial capabilities of the Government of Russia.

(12) A description of Russia's command, control, communications, computers, intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance modernization program and its applications for Russia's precision guided weapons.

(13) In consultation with the Secretary of Energy and the Secretary of State, developments regarding United States-Russian engagement and cooperation on security matters.

(14) Other military and security developments involving Russia that the Secretary of Defense considers relevant to United States national security.

(c) SPECIFIED CONGRESSIONAL COMMITTEES DEFINED.—In this section, the term ''specified congressional committees'' means—

(1) the Committee on Foreign Relations, the Committee on Armed Services, the Select Committee on Intelligence, and the majority leader and minority leader of the Senate; and

(2) the Committee on Foreign Affairs, the Committee on Armed Services, the Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence, and the Speaker and minority leader of the House of Representatives.

SA 2868. Mr. VITTER submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 2124, to support sovereignty and democracy in Ukraine, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

Insert after section 11 the following new section:

SEC. 12. SENSE OF CONGRESS REGARDING CYBER ATTACKS AND DEFENSE.

It is the sense of Congress that—

(1) a direct Russian cyber attack or cyber violation against NATO or United States operations that causes significant disruption or destruction, or against Ukraine's critical infrastructure, would be considered a violation of peace agreements; and

(2) the United States Government should establish effective cyber deterrence policies and pursue the establishment of objectives to defend Europe against Russian short- and medium-range ballistic missiles.

NOTICE OF HEARING

COMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND NATURAL RESOURCES

Ms. LANDRIEU. Mr. President, I would like to announce for the information of the Senate and the public that a business meeting has been scheduled before the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources. The business meeting will be held on Thursday, March 27, 2014, at 9:45 a.m., in room, SD–366 of the Dirksen Senate Building.

The purpose of the business meeting is to resume consideration of the following nominations: Rhea S. Suh, to be the Assistant Secretary for Fish and Wildlife and Parks; and Janice M. Schneider, to be an Assistant Secretary of the Interior, Land and Minerals Management.

The Committee previously met to consider the two nominations on February 13, 2014, but the meeting was adjourned in the absence of a quorum.

In addition, the Committee will be asked to approve new subcommittee assignments, appointing Senator WYDEN to subcommittee assignments previously held by Senator LANDRIEU.

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, United States Senate, 304 Dirksen Senate Office Building, Washington, DC 20510–6150, or by email to *Sam*__Fowler@energy.senate.gov.

For further information, please contact Sam Fowler at (202) 224–7571 or Sallie Den at (202) 224–6836.

AUTHORITY FOR COMMITTEES TO MEET

COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Armed Services be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on March 25, 2014, at 9:30 a.m.

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

COMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND NATURAL RESOURCES

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on March 25, 2014, at 10 a.m., in room SD–366 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building, to conduct a hearing entitled ''Importing Energy, Exporting Jobs. Can it be Reversed?''

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

COMMITTEE ON HEALTH, EDUCATION, LABOR, AND PENSIONS

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions be authorized to meet, during the session of the Senate, on March 25, 2014, at 2:30 p.m. in room 430 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building, to conduct a hearing entitled ''Teacher Preparation: Ensuring a Quality Teacher in Every Classroom.''

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

COMMITTEE ON EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT, INTERGOVERNMENTAL RELATIONS, AND THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Subcommittee on Emergency Management, Intergovernmental 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 March 25, 2014, at 2:30 p.m. to conduct a hearing entitled, ''Transparency and Training: Preparing our First Responders for Emerging Threats and Hazards.''

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

SUBCOMMITTEE ON EMERGING THREATS AND CAPABILITIES

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Subcommittee on Emerging Threats and Capabilities of the Committee on Armed Services be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on March 25, 2014, at 2:15 p.m.

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

SELECT COMMITTEE ON INTELLIGENCE

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Select Committee on Intelligence be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on March 25, 2014, at 2:30 p.m.

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

PRIVILEGES OF THE FLOOR

Mr. BLUMENTHAL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that Senator MURRAY's Budget Committee's legal extern, Elizabeth Mendoza, be granted floor privileges beginning March 26 and ending April 30, 2014.

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

RESOLUTIONS SUBMITTED TODAY

Mr. BLUMENTHAL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration en bloc of the following resolutions which were submitted earlier today: S. Res. 396, S. Res. 397, and S. Res. 398.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the resolutions en bloc.

S. RES. 398

Mr. REID. Mr. President, the Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations of the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs has received a request from a State regulatory agency seeking access to records that the subcommittee obtained during its recent investigation into offshore tax evasion and the effort to collect unpaid taxes on billions in hidden offshore accounts.

This resolution would authorize the chairman and ranking minority member of the Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations, acting jointly, to provide records, obtained by the Subcommittee in the course of its investigation, in response to this request and requests from other government entities and officials with a legitimate need for the records.

Mr. BLUMENTHAL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the resolutions be agreed to, the preambles be

agreed to, and the motions to reconsider be laid upon the table en bloc, with no intervening action or debate.

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

The resolutions were agreed to.

The preambles were agreed to.

(The resolutions, with their preambles, are printed in today's RECORD under ''Submitted Resolutions.'')

MEASURE READ THE FIRST TIME—S. 2157

Mr. BLUMENTHAL. Mr. President, I understand S. 2157, introduced earlier today by Senator WYDEN, is 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 legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 2157) to amend titles XVII and XIX of the Social Security Act to repeal the Medicare sustainable growth rate and to improve Medicare and Medicaid payments, and for other purposes.

Mr. BLUMENTHAL. I now ask for its second reading and 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 WEDNESDAY, MARCH 26, 2014

Mr. BLUMENTHAL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that when the Senate completes its business today, it adjourn until 10 a.m. Wednesday, March 26, 2014; that following the prayer and the pledge, the morning hour be deemed expired, the Journal of proceedings be approved to date, and the time for the two leaders be reserved for their use later in the day; that following any leader remarks, the Senate be in a period of morning business until 11 a.m., with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each and the time equally divided and controlled by the two leaders or their designees, with Republicans controlling the first half and the majority controlling the final half; and that following morning business, the Senate proceed to executive session under the previous order.

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

PROGRAM

Mr. BLUMENTHAL. There will be four rollcall votes at 11 a.m. tomorrow and another series at 2:30 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT UNTIL 10 A.M. TOMORROW

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

There being no objection, the Senate, at 7:16 p.m., adjourned until Wednesday, March 26, 2014, at 10 a.m.

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

HONORING ARTHUR J. FILKINS, JR., 90TH BIRTHDAY

HON. MARKWAYNE MULLIN

OF OKLAHOMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 25, 2014

Mr. MULLIN. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize my constituent, Mr. Arthur J. Filkins, Jr., who will celebrate his 90th birthday on April 10th, 2014.

Larry Filkins is a World War II veteran, and I cannot thank him enough for his strength of character, his service to our country, and his patriotism.

He was a combat medic with the 3rd Armored Division, First Army. He landed on Omaha Beach three weeks after D-Day, endured the bitter cold of the Battle of the Bulge, and pressed on to Germany.

At age 18, Mr. Filkins was an Army private. At war's end, he came home, age 21 and a Sergeant. He is an example to those who will follow in his footsteps, and it is a privilege to be a part of thanking him and acknowledging him. He is the kind of person who makes Oklahoma great. I am fortunate to be able to represent him, and I wish him all the best on his 90th birthday.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues join me in celebrating Mr. Arthur J. Filkins, Jr.'s 90th birthday, and the many years to come.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. PETER J. VISCLOSKY

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 25, 2014

Mr. VISCLOSKY. Mr. Speaker, on March 24, 2014, I was absent from the House and missed rollcall Vote 136 and rollcall Vote 137.

Had I been present for rollcall Vote 136, on the motion to suspend the rules and pass H.R. 3060, I would have voted ''yes.''

Had I been present for rollcall Vote 137, on the motion to suspend the rules and pass, as amended, H.R. 1813, I would have voted ''yes.''

HELEN A. RIZZO'S 100TH BIRTHDAY

HON. LOU BARLETTA

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 25, 2014

Mr. BARLETTA. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor Helen A. Rizzo of Jim Thorpe, Pennsylvania who is turning 100 years old on March 21, 2014.

Mrs. Rizzo was born in Norristown, Pennsylvania on March 21, 1914. She worked as a seamstress and married Daniel G. Rizzo. Mrs. Rizzo has two children, Carmen and Marian, as well as five grandchildren and six great grandchildren.

Mr. Speaker, as she turns 100, I wish Helen Rizzo a happy and health birthday.

IN RECOGNITION OF MARIN SANITARY SERVICE AND CENTRAL MARIN SANITATION AGENCY

HON. JARED HUFFMAN

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 25, 2014

Mr. HUFFMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Marin Sanitary Service and Central Marin Sanitation Agency in celebration of the ribbon cutting held on March 18, 2014, for their Food-to-Energy (F2E) program, a public-private partnership designed to cut fossil fuel use and landfill waste by converting leftover kitchen scraps into a renewable energy source. Marin Sanitary Service, an innovative waste disposal company that plays an integral role in achieving Marin County's exceptional 75 percent diversion rate and its zero waste by 2025 goal, will turn food scraps from restaurants, caterers, and supermarkets into renewable energy at Central Marin Sanitation Agency's wastewater treatment plant.

Central Marin Sanitation Agency, a public agency, and Marin Sanitary Service, a family-owned local business, developed this cutting edge program to divert food scraps from the landfill and use it to generate energy. The F2E program and this public-private partnership is a first for Marin County and one of only two programs of its kind in California.

Mr. Speaker, the Food-to-Energy program represents an important and exciting step in the right direction for the environment and people of California. Public-private partnerships such as this serve as an innovative example for other communities to follow in an effort to reduce our impact on the environment. It is therefore appropriate that we celebrate the beginning of this pilot program.

IN CELEBRATION OF THE 50TH ANNIVERSARY OF BAYLOR MEDICAL CENTER AT GARLAND

HON. PETE SESSIONS

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 25, 2014

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Baylor Medical Center at Garland as they celebrate fifty years of success.

Over the past fifty years, their commitment to provide high quality health care to their community has remained steadfast. Since its founding as Memorial Hospital of Garland in 1964, Baylor Medical Center at Garland has grown from a 100-bed hospital to a 240-bed hospital, expanded its campus to four Medical Plazas, and opened the Don and Ruth Buchholz Pavilion. I want to commend Baylor Garland for being nationally recognized, including ranked as a Top Metro Hospital in the Dallas/Fort Worth Metro Area by the U.S. News & World Report and receiving the Heart Failure Gold Achievement Award from the American Heart Association. Their integrity and care are evident through the personalized and excellent health care they provide which recognizes and fulfills the needs of all patients. I am deeply grateful for Baylor Garland and the positive impact they have on their community.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my esteemed colleagues to join me in expressing our heartiest congratulations and best wishes to Baylor Medical Center at Garland for another fifty years of continued success.

STEPHANIE JALLEN, 2014 U.S. WINTER PARALYMPICS TEAM

HON. LOU BARLETTA

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 25, 2014

Mr. BARLETTA. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor Stephanie Jallen of Harding, Pennsylvania who represented the United States in the women's alpine skiing competition in the 2014 Winter Paralympics in Sochi, Russia.

Stephanie is one of about 60 people worldwide born with a rare condition called Congenital Hemidysplasia Ichthyosis Limb Defect (CHILD) syndrome that leaves the left side of the body underdeveloped. At the age of nine, she attended the Camelback Adaptive Ski Camp in Tannersville, Pennsylvania and fell in love with the sport. Despite her instructor's attempts to put her in a bi-ski, Stephanie insisted on learning to ski standing up. She continued to work with the Pennsylvania Center for Adapted Sports and quickly became an accomplished skier.

Stephanie has received many accolades for her achievements in alpine skiing. In 2011, she was named to the U.S. Paralympics Alpine National Team at the age of 15. Since then, she has taken home numerous first, second and third place medals in contests ranging from national championships to world cups. During the 2014 Winter Paralympics, she won two bronze medals, one in the Women's Super Combined (standing), and one in the Women's Super-G (standing).

Despite her intense training schedule, Stephanie remains a true scholar athlete. She is currently a senior at Wyoming Area Secondary Center. After graduating this year, she will attend Kings College in Wilkes Barre, Pennsylvania.

Mr. Speaker, Stephanie Jallen has demonstrated tremendous grit and determination in pursuing her Paralympic dreams. Therefore, I commend her for her hard work and achievements as part of the United States Paralympic alpine skiing team, and I wish her the best in her future endeavors.

HONORING THE TRINITY VALLEY COMMUNITY COLLEGE LADY CARDINALS

HON. JEB HENSARLING

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 25, 2014

Mr. HENSARLING. Mr. Speaker, today I would like to recognize the outstanding achievement of the Trinity Valley Community College Lady Cardinals as the 2014 National Junior College Athletics Association (NJCAA) Division I Women's Basketball Champions. This marks the 3rd consecutive NJCAA Championship for the Lady Cardinals, a new NJCAA Division 1 record.

In a 65 to 46 victory, the Lady Cardinals closed out their season with a 35–1 record. The success enjoyed by the team is truly remarkable and a testament to the hard work and dedication of its players as well as Head Coach Elena Lovato, Assistant Coaches Gerald Ewing and Spencer Robertson, and Team Manager Scott Pellegrin. Trinity Valley Community College President Dr. Glendon Forgey, faculty, staff, and students are also to be commended for TVCC's success both on the court and in the classroom.

In addition to the record breaking team performance of the Lady Cardinals this season, I also want to recognize Adut Bulgak for being named the tournament's Most Valuable Player, and Coach Lovato being named ''Coach of the Tournament.''

Trinity Valley Community College Lady Cardinals include: Adut Bulgak, Roddricka Patton, Shlonte' Allen, Jazmine Spears, Julianne Anchling, Kuaneshia Baker, Deborah Meeks, Sylvia Smith-Gatson, Leashja Grant, Kyhonta Doughty, Autummn Williams, and Dominique Brooks.

On behalf of the citizens of Athens and the Fifth District of Texas, I am honored to be able to recognize the Lady Cardinals in the United States House of Representatives.

PAT SOLANO, 2013 ATTORNEY JOSEPH SAPORITO SR. GREATER PITTSTON LIFETIME OF SERVICE AWARD WINNER

HON. LOU BARLETTA

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 25, 2014

Mr. BARLETTA. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor Pat Solano, the recipient of the 2013 Attorney Joseph Saporito Sr. Greater Pittston Lifetime of Service Award.

Mr. Solano was born on June 22, 1925 in Pittston Township, Pennsylvania. In 1942, he graduated from Pittston Township High School and immediately joined the U.S. Army Air Corp. During World War II, Mr. Solano flew 23 combat missions over Germany with the Eighth U.S. Army Corp Heavy Bombardment Group. For his service, he received the Group Presidential Citation, the Air Force Medal with two Oak Leaf Clusters, and the European Combat Theatre Medal with two Bronze Stars. Once home from the war, Mr. Solano met and married his wife Marie, and they had six daughters.

After serving in the Army, Mr. Solano dedicated his life to public service, beginning as the assistant police chief for Pittston Township. In 1950, he became the Third District Republican Chairman, and later was named the County Republican Chairman in 1968. He also served two terms as a member of the Pittston Township School Board. Since 1969, Mr. Solano has worked for and advised ten Pennsylvania governors from both sides of the aisle. In 2002, he retired after 40 years of federal service.

Mr. Solano's dedication to Pennsylvania does not end with his work. He was a member of the Pittston Township Bicentennial Committee, Assistant Scout Master for Troop 212 at Our Lady of Mount Carmel Church, 3rd Degree Knight of Columbus, the Columbus League of Luzerne County, Pittston Memorial Library fundraising co-chairman, and Luzerne County Community College trustee.

For his commitment to improving Pennsylvania, Mr. Solano has received many accolades and awards. He was honored by the Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, an agency he helped start 20 years ago. He also received the Greater Wilkes-Barre Chamber of Commerce's Lifetime Achievement Award, the Pennsylvania Environmental Council's Thomas P. Shelbourne Environmental Leadership Award, a Doctor of Humane Letters from Misericordia University, and the United States Army Corps of Engineers Commander's Award.

Mr. Speaker, Pat Solano has shown outstanding dedication to our nation, the state of Pennsylvania, and his local community. Therefore, I commend him for his service and receipt of the 2013 Attorney Joseph Saporito Sr. Greater Pittston Lifetime of Service Award, and wish him the best in his future endeavors.

SGR REPEAL AND MEDICARE PROVIDER PAYMENT MODERNIZATION ACT OF 2014

SPEECH OF

HON. CHRIS VAN HOLLEN

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, March 14, 2014

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Mr. Speaker, using Medicare as a political pawn in their 51st attempt to undermine the Affordable Care Act is a new low, even for House Republicans.

Americans are waiting for Congress to stop wasting time and start passing constructive solutions to the real challenges this country faces. The broken Medicare physician payment system is one such challenge. And there is a bipartisan, bicameral plan to reform Medicare physician payments to promote quality and efficiency.

Unfortunately, today's vote isn't about that plan at all. We know this because the bill includes a poison pill that guarantees it will never become law. This is nothing more than one more tired exercise in Republicans indulging their obsessive hatred of the Affordable Care Act. Rather than working with Democrats to reach agreement on how to advance Medicare payment reform in a fiscally responsible way, Republicans instead attached a five-year delay of the Affordable Care Act's requirement that everyone take responsibility for having health insurance. The White House has indicated the President would veto this bill if it were to reach his desk.

Private health insurers object to today's anti-Obamacare exercise. America's Health Insurance Plans and Blue Cross BlueShield Association wrote:

> ''we have deep concerns about packaging the Medicare physician payment bill with legislation that would sever the link between the ACA's individual mandate and its market reforms. The experience of states that attempted this in the 1990s demonstrates that removing this important linkage will result in more uninsured Americans, higher costs, and reduced choices for individuals and families. To avoid these outcomes, we are asking Congress to reject efforts to repeal or delay the individual mandate in the debate on Medicare physician payment reform.''

The American Academy of Family Physicians had this to say:

> ''It is disturbing that work designed to expand access to quality health care would be advanced alongside a policy that deliberately removes access to quality health care coverage. Providing access to health care coverage for millions of Medicare beneficiaries while eliminating access to health care coverage for millions more is simply poor public policy and we urge that such approach be abandoned.''

This vote today is further evidence—as if any more were needed—that Republicans in Congress simply are not serious about addressing our real challenges. We need to fix Medicare physician payments. We need to improve opportunity in this country. We need to raise the minimum wage. We need to renew extended unemployment benefits. Currently over two million Americans out of work through no fault of their own have been left in the lurch by Republicans' refusal to renew these benefits. We were elected to this body to solve problems, not to posture endlessly.

If Congressional Republicans were serious about fixing Medicare physician payments, they would not pull stunts like this. If they cared more about solving problems than they do about fulfilling their anti-Obamacare fetish, they would not pull stunts like this. Americans deserve better. Medicare beneficiaries deserve better, as do the doctors who treat them. To the majority, I say, stop wasting everyone's time.

RECOGNIZING THE CELEBRATION OF NOWRUZ

HON. HENRY A. WAXMAN

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 25, 2014

Mr. WAXMAN. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased with this opportunity to recognize Nowruz, a traditional Persian holiday that began on March 20 and celebrates the arrival of spring.

Nowruz has been observed by millions of individuals of Persian descent for more than 3,000 years as a time of renewal health, happiness, and prosperity. The holiday's ecumenical values are celebrated by adherents of many religions including Islam, Judaism, Zoroastrianism, and the Bahai'I faith. It is considered a special time to share with family and friends and to honor cultural traditions.

In the United States, Nowruz serves to remind us of the many noteworthy and lasting contributions of Iranian-Americans to the social and economic fabric of American society.

In Los Angeles, which is home to the largest Iranian-American community in the United States, there is great pride in the community's devotion to civic activism, philanthropy, and entrepreneurship. I ask my colleagues in joining me to wish all those celebrating Nowruz a happy and prosperous new year.

RECOGNIZING ROBERT S. ''BOB'' STRAUSS

HON. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 25, 2014

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Robert S. ''Bob'' Strauss who passed away last Wednesday, March 19 at age 95. Strauss was not only a fixture in Dallas and Texas, he was nationally revered as a close advisor to presidents of both parties, from Lyndon B. Johnson to George W. Bush.

Not only was Strauss politically valuable to our nation, his personality was unforgettable. Bob Strauss was personally influential and I admire him greatly. Strauss' weight on our political world today was extremely vast. His contributions to Dallas and to Texas will not be forgotten.

Strauss had early success as a graduate of the University of Texas at Austin where he campaigned for a state-assembly candidate and volunteered for Lyndon B. Johnson's first congressional campaign. Strauss completed his law degree at the University of Texas and worked as a special agent for the Federal Bureau of Investigations during World War II. At the end of the war, he and fellow FBI agent founded the law firm Gump and Strauss which later evolved into Akin, Gump, Strauss, Hauer, and Feld. In law school, he met former Texas Governor John Connally who helped Strauss cultivate his political career.

Strauss served as the Chairman of the Democratic National Committee between 1972 and 1977. Strauss has been credited for the Democratic Party's reunification that helped to elect President Jimmy Carter in 1976. During the Carter Administration, Strauss served as the United States Trade Representative and as Middle East negotiator. During the first Bush Administration, he served as the U.S. ambassador to the Soviet Union and subsequently as the U.S. ambassador to Russia. Strauss played a major role for American interests during the Soviet Union's breakdown and the emergence of a democratic Russia. Strauss was awarded the Presidential Medal of Freedom by President Carter in 1981.

Strauss had the unique ability to serve presidents and political leaders on both sides of the aisle. His political astuteness and skill are rare traits and will be fondly remembered. I urge my colleagues to recognize and celebrate the life of Bob Strauss.

A TRIBUTE TO BISHOP JOSEPH P. McFADDEN

HON. ROBERT A. BRADY

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 25, 2014

Mr. BRADY of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Bishop Joseph P. McFadden, a distinguished former member of the Philadelphia education and Catholic community.

Bishop McFadden was born in Philadelphia on May 22, 1947. Attending Catholic schools for his elementary and secondary education, Bishop McFadden was an involved and active student. He then enrolled in Philadelphia's Saint Joseph University, where he matriculated with a Bachelor of Science degree in Politics. Bishop McFadden's childhood and education prepared him well to be a life-long advocate for education in Philadelphia.

After teaching and coaching at West Catholic Boys High School from 1969–1976, Bishop McFadden entered Saint Charles Borromeo Seminary. Ordained as a priest on May 16, 1981, Bishop McFadden continued in his passion of higher education. He received a Master of Divinity, graduating Summa Cum Laude, upon completing his studies at Saint Charles Seminary.

Bishop McFadden served as an Honorary Prelate to Pope John Paul II for two years. In 1993, Cardinal Bevilacqua appointed Bishop McFadden as the first President of Cardinal O'Hara High School. As President, the Bishop was vital to increasing the school's enrollment to 2000 students and initiating the program ''Laptops for Learning.''

Bishop McFadden began his service as a pastor in Downingtown in 2001, until he was appointed to be an Auxiliary Bishop in Philadelphia in June 2004. He was ordained to the Episcopacy on July 28, 2004 and was named the tenth Bishop of Harrisburg on June 22, 2010. Unfortunately, Bishop McFadden passed away on March 2, 2013. His passing is still mourned by the Catholic community. This week, Bishop McFadden will posthumously be given the Distinguished Catholic School Graduates Award by the Archdiocese of Philadelphia for his service to Catholic School education in the state of Pennsylvania.

I invite you and all of my colleagues to join me in commemorating Bishop Joseph P. McFadden. May his legacy and commitment be an inspiration to all of us in the years to come.

COMMEMORATING ARTS ADVOCACY DAY

HON. MIKE QUIGLEY

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 25, 2014

Mr. QUIGLEY. Mr. Speaker, entrepreneur Steve Jobs once said, ''It is in Apple's DNA that technology alone is not enough—it's technology married with liberal arts, married with the humanities, that yields us the results that make our heart sing.''

I rise today to recognize National Arts Advocacy Day and to stress the importance of arts and arts education for advancing technology and growing our economy.

I am proud to represent the Illinois delegation of thirteen arts and cultural leaders on Capitol Hill today, which include Ingenuity, a group that works with Chicago Public Schools, and whose mission it is to make arts education available to every child in every school.

Students in the arts and humanities learn how to explore, discover and innovate. Arts education engages kids in school, promotes confidence and builds a foundation for success for every student, but it also grows our economy.

In Illinois, the non-profit arts and culture sector generates 2.75 billion dollars and supports more than 78,000 full-time-equivalent jobs. Additionally, Illinois is home to nearly 34,000 non-profit and for-profit arts businesses. These creative enterprises employ more than 140,000 people in jobs that cannot be outsourced.

I continue to be a proud supporter of arts education, and I've consistently supported robust funding for the National Endowment for the Arts—I encourage my colleagues to do the same.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. LUCILLE ROYBAL-ALLARD

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 25, 2014

Ms. ROYBAL-ALLARD. Mr. Speaker, I was absent due to illness and was not present for rollcall votes on Monday, March 24, 2014. Had I been present, I would have voted in this manner:

H.R. 3060—A bill to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 232 Southwest Johnson Avenue in Burleson, Texas, as the ''Sergeant William Moody Post Office Building''—''yes.''

H.R. 1813—A bill to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 162 Northeast Avenue in Tallmadge, Ohio, as the ''Lance Corporal Daniel Nathan Deyarmin Post Office Building''—''yes.''

RECOGNIZING THE CONSERVATION AND LAND PRESERVATION EFFORTS OF EAST BRADFORD TOWNSHIP, CHESTER COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA

HON. JIM GERLACH

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 25, 2014

Mr. GERLACH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate East Bradford Township, Chester County, Pennsylvania on receiving the Growing Greener Communities Award bestowed by Natural Lands Trust and the Chester County Association of Township Officials.

East Bradford Township's 30-year-old Open Space Initiative, designed to protect natural areas and connect them through a trail network, has resulted in 6,000 acres of permanently protected land, 16 parks, and 26 miles of trails. In 2013 alone, the Township secured county funding for conservation easement on more than 80 acres of Township land, spearheaded a volunteer effort to plant 750 trees, commissioned stewardship plans for three of its sixteen parks, constructed more than two miles of trails, and organized the second annual Trail Blazer Race, the proceeds of which will be used to fund trail construction and maintenance.

Mr. Speaker, in light of the community's long-standing commitment to conservation and land preservation, and on the occasion of being honored with the Growing Greener

Communities Award, I ask that my colleagues join me today in recognizing the outstanding efforts of East Bradford Township, Chester County, Pennsylvania.

SOUTHERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF LAW 40TH ANNIVERSARY

HON. WILLIAM L. ENYART

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 25, 2014

Mr. ENYART. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor an outstanding institution of higher education in Illinois. Southern Illinois University School of Law celebrates its 40th anniversary this month.

We spend our time on the House floor discussing, debating, and voting on laws which impact American citizens, while the faculty and staff of SIU Law develop the next generation of great legal minds.

With humble beginnings in 1973, that first year began with 90 students and 8 faculty members. SIU Law today is a nationally recognized institution with alumni practicing in 49 states and 11 countries. The school's 3,800 graduates include military general officers, over 90 state and federal judges, and at least one United States Congressman.

Please join me in congratulating my alma mater, Southern Illinois University School of Law, for 40 years of serving students. Go Dawgs.

UNITED STATES ARMY SERGEANT FIRST CLASS WILLIAM K. LACEY

HON. RON BARBER

OF ARIZONA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 25, 2014

Mr. BARBER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor United States Army Sergeant First Class William K. Lacey, or Kelly, as his family wants him to be remembered, who was killed in action on January 4, 2014 after a rocket propelled grenade attack by insurgents hit his unit in Nangarhar Province, Afghanistan. He leaves behind his wife, Ashley, and his loving family and friends.

Born at Eglin Air Force Base where his father, Master Sergeant John H. Lacey, was stationed, Kelly spent most of his childhood in Florida. He attended Niceville High School before joining the Army in 2003. While in the Army, he attended Meridian Community College and received an Associate Degree. Sergeant First Class Lacey was assigned to the F Company, 201st Brigade Support Battalion, 3rd Infantry Brigade Combat Team, 1st Infantry Division, based in Fort Knox, Kentucky.

Kelly was on his second deployment to Afghanistan, and he had already completed three previous deployments to Iraq: the first a 5 month deployment, the second a 14 month deployment and the other a year-long deployment. From April 2011 until March 2012, Kelly served in Afghanistan.

From his earliest time in the Army, Sergeant First Class Lacey was considered a great soldier. Over his career he earned more than a dozen honors including three Army Commendation Medals, four Army Achievement Medals, three Army Good Conduct Medals, two Afghanistan Campaign Medals with Bronze Service Star and two Iraq Campaign Medals with Bronze Service Stars. For his bravery in action, Sergeant First Class Lacey was awarded a Bronze Star with combat distinguishing device "V", two Bronze Stars and a Purple Heart posthumously.

We remember Kelly and offer our deepest condolences and prayers to his family. Everyone in our great nation owes Sergeant First Class Lacey and his family a debt of gratitude for his selfless sacrifice and courage. It is vital that we keep our men and women in uniform who are in harm's way in our thoughts and prayers. I call on my colleagues and all Americans to remember Kelly and the many others who have made the ultimate sacrifice in defending our freedoms and all that we value as a nation.

THE INTRODUCTION OF THE PROTECTING AIRLINE PASSENGERS FROM SEXUAL ASSAULTS ACT

HON. ELEANOR HOLMES NORTON

OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 25, 2014

Ms. NORTON. Mr. Speaker, today, I rise to introduce the Protecting Airline Passengers from Sexual Assaults Act, a bill to require the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) to collect and maintain data on the number of sexual assaults that occur on commercial airplanes. At the moment, there are no real-time statistics or documentation. As a result, we cannot gain either the necessary information to prosecute these crimes or the insights to help eliminate them and improve complicated onboard sexual assault investigations by the Federal Bureau of Investigation. Passengers expect that after going through extensive security at airports that they will be safe aboard their flights, but a recent surge in reports of sexual assaults occurring on planes suggests otherwise. Those who staff flights and who may witness these crimes should have guidance as to how to proceed. Law enforcement and the flying public deserve to have access to data on sexual assaults that occur on planes so that we can work towards preventing these devastating crimes.

In recent years, there has been an increase in reports of sexual assaults on flights in the United States. Oftentimes, the survivors of these crimes were asleep during part of the assault, but were so afraid and shocked that they did not call for help. In these cases, the dynamics of surviving a sexual assault are amplified. In order for the FAA and law enforcement to better gauge the extent of these horrendous crimes that have taken place on aircraft and to work towards prevention, data on the number of sexual assaults needs to be collected and shared with the public.

My bill would require the FAA to establish a program to collect and maintain data on the number of sexual assaults that occur on commercial flights, including international flights and domestic flights that land or take off in the United States. Even more importantly, my bill would require the FAA to make this data available to the public on its website.

Sexual assaults on airplanes are criminal acts that elude police and prosecutors more than many other crimes due to a number of factors, including fear on the part of the survivor, lack of witnesses, and a lack of education on how to respond to such acts. We need to know where the source of the surge is. This data is also very important because the public deserves to know that such incidents have happened.

I urge support of this bill.

CELEBRATING THE BOYS & GIRLS CLUBS OF AMERICA

HON. STENY H. HOYER

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 25, 2014

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, I rise to pay tribute to the important role that the Boys & Girls Clubs of America play in communities across the country. This week, in celebration of National Boys & Girls Club Week and to highlight their successes in the areas of academic achievement, good character, citizenship, and healthy lifestyles, representatives from Boys & Girls Clubs will be here in Washington for their first annual Boys & Girls Clubs Day of Advocacy.

Mr. Speaker, I was a member of the local Boys Club in my youth, as were many others who have served in government and as leaders in our economy, the law, the arts, the sciences, education, and the military. Like mine, their Boys & Girls Clubs experiences instilled lessons about citizenship, character, and both personal and social responsibility that continue to guide them today in their careers and in their service to our country. Those who participate in the Clubs today are given the opportunity to learn about their country, community, and the world, to develop positive behaviors that nurture a healthy life and outlook, and to challenge themselves as future leaders.

Every year, I am proud to join the Boys & Girls Clubs for their annual gathering, where I have the opportunity to meet those who are named Youth of the Year finalists and hear about their service projects and their aspirations for the future. I look forward to joining them again this year to reflect on my own experiences as a Boys & Girls Club alumnus and to meet the next generation of leaders for our country.

Frederick Douglass, from my State of Maryland, once said: "It is easier to build strong children than to repair broken men." This continues to be the guiding principle behind the Boys & Girls Clubs of America. It is more than an organization; it is a movement to inspire young people to recognize the potential in themselves and the contributions they can make as members of their communities, as citizens of our country, and as citizens of the world.

I join once again in saluting the Boys & Girls Clubs of America for the extraordinary work they do across our country every day. I hope my colleagues will join me in thanking the organization and in sending a strong message of support for our Nation's youth.

HONORING LAMEY-WELLEHAN FOR 100 YEARS OF OUTSTANDING BUSINESS AND COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

HON. MICHAEL H. MICHAUD

OF MAINE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 25, 2014

Mr. MICHAUD. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Lamey-Wellehan on its 100th anniversary.

One hundred years ago last week, Dan Wellehan and Charlie Lamey opened Lamey-Wellehan Shoes on Lisbon Street in Lewiston, ME. Despite Dan being sent to fight in World War I and Charlie tragically passing away at a young age, this Maine institution has persisted for a century, expanding to six locations and more than 100 employees, fitting countless young Mainers with their first pair of shoes.

Since the death of Dan Wellehan in 1976, Lamey-Wellehan has been under the stewardship of his son, Jim Wellehan, who began working in the store's stockroom as a young high school student. Under Jim's leadership, Lamey-Wellehan has continued to grow, build strong relationships in Maine's communities and separated itself as an environmentally conscious business. Over the years, Lamey-Wellehan has made concerted efforts to reduce its carbon footprint by recycling up to 96 percent of its solid waste, increasing its use of solar energy, and most recently ceasing its use of plastic bags.

Although Jim Wellehan does not have specific retirement plans, he is working to ensure that when he does retire the company remains in good hands by slowly having his employees buy the business. As Lamey-Wellehan moves into its second century of business, I am confident that it will continue to successfully serve Mainers in the years to come.

Mr. Speaker, please join me again in recognizing Lamey-Wellehan's 100th anniversary.

125TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REGULATORY UTILITY COMMISSIONERS

HON. PETER WELCH

OF VERMONT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 25, 2014

Mr. WELCH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to acknowledge the 125th anniversary of the National Association of Regulatory Utility Commissioners, the national association representing our nation's State utility economic regulators.

The work of our nation's public utility regulators often goes unnoticed and unheralded until the lights go out or our utility rates increase. But rest assured, the work these officials do on a daily basis impacts every single one of us in the country.

State utility regulators ensure the rates we pay for utility services are fair, just, and reasonable. They help make sure the utilities deliver these services—electricity, natural gas, water, and telecommunications—in a safe and reliable manner.

NARUC offers its members countless opportunities for education, sharing of best practices, advocacy, and much more. Since March of 1889, the Association has provided resources aimed at improving regulatory practices. Since just about all of us pay utility bills in some way or another, we have all benefited from NARUC's work over the last century and a quarter.

One hundred and twenty five years ago the electricity industry was in its infancy. Alexander Graham Bell was still perfecting his groundbreaking invention called the telephone. We were still learning how best to transport water and natural gas.

We can now electrify our homes from solar rooftops. We can carry our personal computers in our pockets on our smart phones. We are using new technologies to find abundant resources of natural gas.

The one constant has been NARUC and the quality utility regulation it promotes. I want to thank NARUC and congratulate it on this 125th year anniversary.

OUR UNCONSCIONABLE NATIONAL DEBT

HON. MIKE COFFMAN

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 25, 2014

Mr. COFFMAN. Mr. Speaker, on January 20, 2009, the day President Obama took office, the national debt was $10,626,877,048,913.08.

Today, it is $17,548,206,894,037.06. We've added $6,921,329,845,123.98 to our debt in 5 years. This is over $6.9 trillion in debt our nation, our economy, and our children could have avoided with a balanced budget amendment.

TRIBUTE TO MR. SANTANA GONZALEZ

HON. TED POE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 25, 2014

Mr. POE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, today I would like to pay tribute to Mr. Santana Gonzalez on his retirement with thirty-five years of service with Chevron Corporation. Santana began his professional career with Gulf Oil, and since then, he has held a succession of public and government relations assignments in Texas, New Mexico, and Southern California. Throughout his career, he has demonstrated a unique ability to engage governmental, media, and community stakeholders as well as provide support to incident response activities.

Most recently, Santana has served with distinction in Chevron's State Government Relations office and as the Manager for Policy, Government and Public Affairs for Chevron Pipeline in Chevron's Gas and Midstream.

One of his career highlights includes receiving the Chevron Chairman's Award, an award that recognizes colleagues and teams who demonstrate ingenuity and initiative to achieve extraordinary results for the company. In addition, his service to the Hispanic community earned him the National Council of La Raza's President's Award.

Santana Gonzalez grew up in South Texas, in the Brownsville-Harlingen area. His family moved to Houston in 1968. He attended Bellaire High School and, coincidentally, his last work assignment was also in Bellaire. Gonzalez graduated from the University of Texas–Pan American in 1976 and went on to receive his Juris Doctorate from the University of Houston School of Law in 1979.

To say that Santana will be missed on his retirement is an understatement. His gift of gab and contagious laugh are legendary amongst his colleagues and all who know him. Those who work most closely with him have admired his capacity for work, his intelligence and wise and wry counsel. No challenge has been too big for him to manage, and Chevron's reputation was lifted by his every engagement with communities, governments and business partners.

Santana and his wife Nellie reside in Pearland. She is looking forward to having Santana as her personal chef and tour guide during retirement. Santana is looking forward to doing a lot of reading and spending time with his two beautiful daughters, Lisa and Amber, and his granddaughter, Crysalynn Mae. He and Nellie are anxiously awaiting another grandchild into the world in the near future.

I congratulate Santana on his retirement, and thank him for his diligent service to the energy industry, particularly in the great state of Texas. I wish him all the best that retirement has to offer. And that's just the way it is.

HONORING DR. NORMAN E. BORLAUG

HON. BILL FLORES

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 25, 2014

Mr. FLORES. Mr. Speaker, today, I would like to pay tribute to Dr. Norman E. Borlaug, who is most commonly known as the "Father of the Green Revolution."

The United States Congress today dedicated a statue of Dr. Borlaug in Statuary Hall of the United States Capitol. This dedication happens to coincide with what would have been his one hundredth birthday.

Dr. Borlaug's groundbreaking work in wheat improvement has been able to save millions of starving people around the globe. He crossbred thousands of wheat varieties from around the world to produce new breads resistant to diseases. He crafted dwarf wheat varieties, which kept stalks erect, salvaging them from becoming unharvestable. Additionally, he came up with the technique of shuttle breeding, which involves growing two successive plantings, in different regions, a year.

These advancements in wheat have helped food deficient countries, such as Mexico and India, become self-sufficient in producing high-yield, disease-resistant grains.

Dr. Borlaug touched millions of lives through his research, knowledge and teachings in advancing agriculture to help end hunger worldwide. His outstanding work has been recognized with the Nobel Peace Prize, U.S. Presidential Medal of Freedom, U.S. Congressional Gold Medal, United Nations FAO Agricola Medal and over fifty honorary doctorate degrees.

In 1984, Dr. Borlaug joined the faculty at Texas A&M University as Distinguished Professor of International Agriculture. He continued to teach and inspire young scientists at Texas A&M until his death in 2009.

Dr. Borlaug's work continues to live through the Norman Borlaug Institute for International Agriculture at Texas A&M University. The institute leads long-term agricultural efforts by focusing other design and implementation of sustainable programs of international development that integrate research, training and education to benefit developing countries around the globe.

I would like to thank Dr. Norman Borlaug for all of his work and his commitment to ending worldwide hunger. He will forever be remembered as great humanitarian, scientist, agriculturalist and professor.

God bless the continuing legacy of Dr. Borlaug and the United States of America.

SUPPORT OF WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH AND THE ECONOMIC AGENDA FOR WOMEN

HON. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 25, 2014

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of Women's History Month and specifically, the Economic Agenda for Women. While our women leaders in history have paved the way for our success, we must continue to fight for justice, rights, and values.

The facts are staggering; women continue to earn only 77 cents for every dollar that a man makes, the poverty rate for women is at its highest in two decades, and family and medical leave protections do not cover nearly half of full-time employees. Each March, we celebrate our progress through Women's History Month. But we must not forget what more we can do for our future. When Women Succeed, America Succeeds is an agenda that each town, city, county, and state must adopt so that we can continue the work to provide women with economic security and opportunities.

There are so many women that can legitimately be acknowledged during these days of Women's History Month. Women have been at the forefront in every community in every worthy cause. Today, I would like to call attention to a few extraordinary women that I have had the pleasure of sharing my congressional experience who have completed their earthly journey with care, skill, and commitment. Cardiss Collins was the first African American woman to represent Illinois in Congress and chaired the Congressional Black Caucus with leadership and skill. Julia Carson was the first woman and the first African American to represent the 7th District of Indiana and lead the House measure to award the Congressional Gold Medal to Rosa Parks. Juanita Millender-McDonald represented the 37th District of California and was the first African American woman to chair the House Committee on House Administration. Stephanie Tubbs Jones was the first African American woman to be elected to Congress from Ohio and served as the Chairwoman of the House Committee on Standards of Official Conduct during the 110th Congress.

There are three outstanding former members who have retired back to their home areas who served with distinction as well. Carrie Meek was elected to Congress in 1992 after fourteen years in the Florida legislature. Meek, who retired at the end of her term in 2003, served as the first African American lawmaker elected to represent Florida in Congress since Reconstruction and faced the difficult task of helping her district recover from the devastation of Hurricane Andrew. Eva Clayton was the first African American woman, with Congressman Mel Watt being the first African American, to serve in the House of Representatives from North Carolina. When Clayton retired in 2003, the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization appointed her Assistant Director-General. Diane Watson, who recently retired after the 111th Congress, represented the 33rd District of California and was appointed by President Bill Clinton to be the U.S. Ambassador to Micronesia. I applaud these African American women who truly are history makers.

Though we see gains in leadership and in Congress for women each year, we are far from done. Hardworking, responsible American women are depending on us for leadership in policy. With smart economic policy changes, we can achieve even more. I urge my colleagues to think of the women who have shaped our history and to help support the women who have the potential to shape our future.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. RUSH HOLT

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 25, 2014

Mr. HOLT. Mr. Speaker, on March 24, 2014, I was not present to vote.

Had I been present, I would have voted "aye" on all votes: H.R. 3060: The Sergeant William Moody Post Office Building in Burleson, Texas; and H.R. 1813: The Lance Corporal Daniel Nathan Deyarmin Post Office Building in Tallmadge, Ohio.

RECOGNIZING TECH MOLDED PLASTICS AS PLASTICS NEWS' PROCESSOR OF THE YEAR AWARD

HON. MIKE KELLY

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 25, 2014

Mr. KELLY of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to offer my heartiest congratulations to Tech Molded Plastics Inc., a family-owned injection mold company, on being named Plastics News' Processor of the Year.

Located in Meadville, Pennsylvania, Tech Molded Plastics celebrated its 40th year in business just last year. In 1973, Bill Hanaway and his wife Eva started their family business in a rented garage. Over the years, Tech Molded has expanded and diversified its business through smart investments in their people and technology. In the mid-1990s, Tech Molded erected the factory building that now houses its company headquarters. In 2011, the company expanded again by purchasing the building adjacent to it with an investment of more than $1.5 million. Today, sons Scott and Mark still run the family business along with their mother, Eva, manufacturing precision parts for the electronics, automotive and medical industry. Employing 120 Pennsylvanians and generating sales of $17.7 million, Tech Molded Plastics embodies the best of America's family-owned small businesses.

Mr. Speaker, in light of being awarded Processor of the Year, I ask that my colleagues join with me today in recognizing Tech Molded Plastics for its national leadership in the plastics industry and for the invaluable contributions of the Hanaway family to the citizens of Meadville and Western Pennsylvania.

CELEBRATING GREEK INDEPENDENCE DAY

HON. DINA TITUS

OF NEVADA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 25, 2014

Ms. TITUS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today as the only Hellenic-American woman serving in Congress, to recognize and celebrate Greek Independence Day.

This holiday commemorates the Greek people's victory in their struggle for independence from the Ottoman Empire in 1821. It is a day of singing praise, dancing, eating, and paying homage to those who fought so bravely to restore democracy to its birthplace. As Sir Winston Churchill said during World War II, "Hence you will not say that Greeks fight like heroes but that heroes fight like Greeks."

This is also a day for honoring the strong bonds that have long existed between Greece and the United States. Our form of democratic government owes much to the principles established in Ancient Greece and our international success today relies on Greece as a valued NATO ally.

Our culture has also been influenced by Hellenic art, architecture, and letters dating back to the days of Homer and Euripides, Sophocles and Hippocrates. As President James Monroe said, "The mention of Greece fills the mind with the most exalted sentiments."

So today let us reaffirm our support for Greece in good times and trying circumstances. And let me encourage my colleagues to visit Greece and experience for themselves the beauty of the land, the power of the antiquities, and the warmth of the people.

REMEMBERING ASHLEY EARL

HON. ADAM SMITH

OF WASHINGTON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 25, 2014

Mr. SMITH of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I rise with great sadness to mourn the death of Peace Corps volunteer Ashley Earl. Ashley passed away on Saturday, March 8 in her beloved host community of Oshakati, Namibia.

As a community health volunteer, Ashley worked tirelessly for the health and well-being of the residents of Oshakati, a community she

was proud to be a part of. Working with Catholic AIDS Action, she coordinated after-school programs for youth in the local area. Those who worked with her say she ''cared deeply for her students, and taught them to show respect for others as well as respect for themselves.''

Ashley's time as a volunteer in the Peace Corps was just one component of her legacy of service. Prior to joining, she served six years in the Army Reserve and worked for a variety of social service organizations on behalf of women, children, and veterans.

At the beginning of her Peace Corps service, Ashley wrote, ''I am hoping that I will be able to instill or inspire positive change in the community I will be working with.'' I can say with confidence that Ashley not only instilled and inspired positive change in the community of Oshakati, but also in those who encountered her. We all have much to learn from her heart for service and passion for life.

Mr. Speaker, it is with great sadness, and even greater admiration that we remember the legacy of Ashley Earl. Our hearts go out to her parents, Phylliss and Lee Lundquist, and her sister, Stacy Earl.

RECOGNIZING THE RECORD-BREAKING SEASON OF THE DICKINSON RED DEVILS MEN'S BASKETBALL TEAM

HON. JIM GERLACH

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 25, 2014

Mr. GERLACH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today, along with my colleagues, Representative LOU BARLETTA (PA–11) and Representative BILL SHUSTER (PA–9), to congratulate the players and coaches of the Dickinson College Red Devils Men's Basketball Team of Carlisle, Pennsylvania on their incredible season which was capped by their advancement to the ''Elite Eight'' in the 2014 NCAA Division III National Championship Tournament.

The Dickinson Red Devils won a program-best 24 games, including establishing a record of 15 wins in Centennial Conference play. The Red Devils scored a school record 2,335 points during the season and broke the single game record for three-point shots (17) in their win over nationally ranked Guilford College on December 28, 2013.

The Red Devils' 2013–2014 roster includes: Brandon Angradi, Jonah Brooks, CJ Burke, Steve Collins, Chris Cox, Zacc Dwan, Brian Erhhart, Brian Gerney, Ted Hinnenkamp, Adam Honig, Matt Jackson, Tucker Landy, Brian Lissak, Tom McInerney, Robert Picka, Gerry Wixted, and Pete Yingst. The Red Devils are ably led by Head Coach Alan Seretti, Assistant Coach Ethan Stewart-Smith, Student Assistant Adam Spinella and Scorekeeper Madeline Kern, with dedicated administrative support by College Athletic Director Dr. Les Poolman.

Additionally, as a result of their terrific performances, both senior guard Adam Honig and junior forward Gerry Wixted achieved individual honors by being named to the D3hoops.com All-Mid-Atlantic Region Team. Head Coach Alan Seretti likewise was named Mid-Atlantic Region Coach of the Year.

Mr. Speaker, in light of their outstanding accomplishments and history-making season, we ask that our colleagues join me today in recognizing the players and coaches of the Dickinson College Red Devils Men's Basketball Team of Carlisle, Pennsylvania.

IN HONOR OF INDEPENDENCE, OHIO'S BICENTENNIAL CELEBRATION

HON. DAVID P. JOYCE

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 25, 2014

Mr. JOYCE. Mr. Speaker, Independence, created by a glacier on the west bank of the Cuyahoga River first sheltered Indians, then became a settlement, grew with the Ohio and Erie Canal, expanded into a stone quarrying center, then slumbered along as a farming community until urbanization of Cuyahoga County which resulted in its growth as a suburban city. Independence was organized as a Township in 1814. With the opening of the Ohio and Erie Canal in 1827, Independence Township became accessible to trade and settlers.

Centrally located at the crossroads of Interstate 480 and Interstate 77, Independence is widely known as the ''Heart of Cuyahoga County'' and the region. With approximately 7,133 residents in 9.73 square miles, the City of Independence exhibits all the character and charm of a small town community that embraces family values and its rich history, while maintaining a robust commercial setting as well. The community boasts of a great school system, excellent city services and a diverse residential and business population. It is my honor to recognize their Bicentennial celebration and wish them all the best for their next 200 years.

Daily Digest

Senate

Chamber Action

Routine Proceedings, pages S1697–S1740

Measures Introduced: Seven bills and five resolutions were introduced, as follows: S. 2151–2157, S. Res. 395–398, and S. Con. Res. 34. **Pages S1730–31**

Measures Passed:

Philippines Charitable Giving Assistance Act: Senate passed H.R. 3771, to accelerate the income tax benefits for charitable cash contributions for the relief of victims of the Typhoon Haiyan in the Philippines. **Page S1706**

Subsequently, Senate indefinitely postponed S. 1821, to accelerate the income tax benefits for charitable cash contributions for the relief of victims of Typhoon Haiyan in the Philippines. **Page S1706**

Cooperative and Small Employer Charity Pension Flexibility Act: Senate passed H.R. 4275, to amend the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974 and the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to provide for cooperative and small employer charity pension plans. **Page S1710**

National Cerebral Palsy Awareness Day: Senate agreed to S. Res. 396, designating March 25, 2014, as ''National Cerebral Palsy Awareness Day''. **Pages S1739–40**

Public Service Recognition Week: Senate agreed to S. Res. 397, expressing the sense of the Senate that public servants should be commended for their dedication and continued service to the United States during Public Service Recognition Week. **Pages S1739–40**

Authorizing Production of Records: Senate agreed to S. Res. 398, to authorize the production of records by the Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations of the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs. **Pages S1739–40**

Measures Considered:

Support for the Sovereignty, Integrity, Democracy, and Economic Stability of Ukraine Act—Agreement: Senate continued consideration of the motion to proceed to consideration of S. 2124, to support sovereignty and democracy in Ukraine. **Pages S1703–06, S1706–10, S1710–20**

A unanimous-consent agreement was reached providing that the motion to proceed be withdrawn. **Pages S1719–20**

Ukraine Loan Guarantees—Agreement: Senate began consideration of H.R. 4152, to provide for the costs of loan guarantees for Ukraine, taking action on the following amendment proposed thereto: **Pages S1719–20**

Pending:

Reid (for Menendez/Corker) Amendment No. 2867, to provide a complete substitute. **Page S1720**

A unanimous-consent-time agreement was reached providing that no other amendments be in order; that no points of order or motions be in order other than budget points of order and the applicable motions to waive; that following morning business on Thursday, March 27, 2014, there be two hours of debate equally divided between the two Leaders, or their designees, prior to a vote on or in relation to Reid (for Menendez/Corker) Amendment No. 2867 (listed above); that upon disposition of Reid (for Menendez/Corker) Amendment No. 2867, the bill be read a third time and Senate vote on passage of the bill, as amended, if amended. **Pages S1719–20**

Protecting Volunteer Firefighters and Emergency Responders Act: Senate began consideration of the motion to proceed to consideration of H.R. 3979, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to ensure that emergency services volunteers are not taken into account as employees under the shared responsibility requirements contained in the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act. **Page S1720**

Cooper, Harpool, McHugh, Smith, and Westphal Nominations—Agreement: A unanimous-consent-time agreement was reached providing that at 11 a.m., on Wednesday, March 26, 2014, Senate vote on the motions to invoke cloture on the nominations of Christopher Reid Cooper, of the District of Columbia, to be United States District Judge for the District of Columbia, M. Douglas Harpool, of Missouri, to be United States District Judge for the Western District of Missouri, Gerald Austin

McHugh, Jr., of Pennsylvania, to be United States District Judge for the Eastern District of Pennsylvania, and Edward G. Smith, of Pennsylvania, to be United States District Judge for the Eastern District of Pennsylvania; that if cloture is invoked on any of these nominations, the time until 2:30 p.m. be equally divided between the Leaders, or their designees, and that at 2:30 p.m., all post-cloture time be expired, and Senate vote on confirmation of the nominations in the order upon which cloture was invoked; that following Senate action on these nominations, Senate vote on confirmation of the nomination of Joseph William Westphal, of New York, to be Ambassador to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, Department of State; and that there be two minutes for debate prior to each vote and all roll call votes after the first vote in each sequence be 10 minutes in length. **Page S1720**

Messages from the House: **Page S1729**

Measures Referred: **Page S1729**

Measures Placed on the Calendar: **Pages S1697, S1729**

Measures Read the First Time: **Pages S1729, S1740**

Executive Communications: **Pages S1729–30**

Additional Cosponsors: **Pages S1731–32**

Statements on Introduced Bills/Resolutions: **Pages S1732–34**

Additional Statements: **Pages S1726–29**

Amendments Submitted: **Pages S1734–39**

Notices of Hearings/Meetings: **Page S1739**

Authorities for Committees to Meet: **Page S1739**

Privileges of the Floor: **Page S1739**

Adjournment: Senate convened at 10 a.m. and adjourned at 7:16 p.m., until 10 a.m. on Wednesday, March 26, 2014. (For Senate's program, see the remarks of the Acting Majority Leader in today's Record on page S1740.)

Committee Meetings

(Committees not listed did not meet)

APPROPRIATIONS: DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS

Committee on Appropriations: Subcommittee on Military Construction and Veterans Affairs, and Related Agencies concluded a hearing to examine proposed budget estimates for fiscal year 2015 for the Department of Veterans Affairs, after receiving testimony from Eric K. Shinseki, Secretary, Robert A. Petzel, Under Secretary for Health, Allison A. Hickey, Under Secretary for Benefits, Steven L. Muro, Under Secretary for Memorial Affairs, Stephen Warren, Executive in Charge for Information and Technology, and Helen Tierney, Executive in Charge for the Office of Management and Chief Financial Officer, all of the Department of Veterans Affairs.

APPROPRIATIONS: UNITED STATES CAPITOL POLICE, SENATE SERGEANT AT ARMS, AND THE SECRETARY OF THE SENATE

Committee on Appropriations: Subcommittee on Legislative Branch concluded a hearing to examine proposed budget estimates for fiscal year 2015 for the United States Capitol Police, the Senate Sergeant at Arms, and the Secretary of the Senate, after receiving testimony from Kim C. Dine, Chief of Police, United States Capitol Police; Terrance W. Gainer, Sergeant at Arms and Doorkeeper of the Senate; and Nancy Erickson, Secretary of the Senate.

DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION REQUEST AND FUTURE YEARS DEFENSE PROGRAM

Committee on Armed Services: Committee concluded a hearing to examine United States Pacific Command and United States Forces Korea in review of the Defense Authorization Request for fiscal year 2015 and the Future Years Defense Program, after receiving testimony from Admiral Samuel J. Locklear III, USN, Commander, United States Pacific Command, and General Curtis M. Scaparrotti, USA, Commander, United Nations Command, Combined Forces Command, and United States Forces Korea, both of the Department of Defense.

MAINTAINING U.S. MILITARY TECHNOLOGY SUPERIORITY

Committee on Armed Services: Subcommittee on Emerging Threats and Capabilities received a closed briefing on challenges to maintaining United States military technology superiority from Frank Kendall III, Under Secretary for Acquisition, Technology, and Logistics, and Alan R. Shaffer, Acting Assistant Secretary for Research and Engineering, both of the Department of Defense.

IMPORTING ENERGY AND EXPORTING JOBS

Committee on Energy and Natural Resources: Committee concluded an oversight hearing to examine importing energy and exporting jobs, after receiving testimony from Adam Sieminski, Administrator, Energy Information Administration, Department of Energy; Jaroslav Neverovic, The Republic of Lithuania Minister of Energy, Vilnius; and W. David Montgomery, NERA Economic Consulting, David L. Goldwyn, Brookings Institution, and Edward C. Chow, Center

for Strategic and International Studies, all of Washington, D.C.

TRANSPARENCY IN TRAINING

Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs: Subcommittee on Emergency Management, Intergovernmental Relations, and the District of Columbia concluded a hearing to examine transparency and training, focusing on preparing our first responders for emerging threats and hazards, after receiving testimony from Mike King, Acting Director of National Training and Education, Superintendent of the Center for Domestic Preparedness, Federal Emergency Management Agency, Department of Homeland Security; Tim McLean, Casselton Fire Chief, Wheatland, North Dakota; and Lisa A. Stabler, Transportation Technology Center, Inc., Pueblo, Colorado, on behalf of the Association of American Railroads.

TEACHER PREPARATION

Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions: Committee concluded a hearing to examine teacher preparation, focusing on ensuring a quality teacher in every classroom, after receiving testimony from Jeanne M. Burns, Louisiana Board of Regents Associate Commissioner for Teacher and Leadership Initiatives, Baton Rouge; Edward Crowe, Woodrow Wilson National Fellowship Foundation, Princeton, New Jersey; Mary Brabeck, Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation, and Timothy Daly, The New Teacher Project, both of New York, New York; and Mari Koerner, Arizona State University Mary Lou Fulton Teachers College, Tempe.

INTELLIGENCE

Select Committee on Intelligence: Committee held closed hearings on intelligence matters, receiving testimony from officials of the intelligence community.

Committee recessed subject to the call.

House of Representatives

Chamber Action

Public Bills and Resolutions Introduced: 8 public bills, H.R. 4290–4297; and 3 resolutions, H. Con. Res. 94–95; and H. Res. 523 were introduced. **Page H2644**

Additional Cosponsors: **Page H2645**

Reports Filed: Reports were filed today as follows:

H.R. 4005, to authorize appropriations for the Coast Guard for fiscal years 2015 and 2016, and for other purposes, with an amendment (H. Rept. 113–384) and

H. Res. 524, providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 1459) to ensure that the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 applies to the declaration of national monuments, and for other purposes, and providing for consideration of motions to suspend the rules (H. Rept. 113–385). **Page H2644**

Speaker: Read a letter from the Speaker wherein he appointed Representative Massie to act as Speaker pro tempore for today. **Page H2613**

Recess: The House recessed at 10:37 a.m. and reconvened at 12 noon. **Page H2617**

Chaplain: The prayer was offered by the guest chaplain, Reverend John Rosenberg, Lutheran Church of the Good Shepherd, Olympia, Washington. **Page H2617**

Journal: The House agreed to the Speaker's approval of the Journal by voice vote. **Pages H2617, H2635**

Committee Election: The House agreed to H. Res. 523, electing a Member to certain standing committees of the House of Representatives. **Page H2621**

Preventing Government Waste and Protecting Coal Mining Jobs in America: The House passed H.R. 2824, to amend the Surface Mining Control and Reclamation Act of 1977 to stop the ongoing waste by the Department of the Interior of taxpayer resources and implement the final rule on excess spoil, mining waste, and buffers for perennial and intermittent streams, by a recorded vote of 229 ayes to 192 noes, Roll No. 141. **Pages H2621–34, H2634–35**

Rejected the Bera (CA) motion to recommit the bill to the Committee on Natural Resources with instructions to report the same back to the House forthwith with an amendment, by a recorded vote of 197 ayes to 224 noes, Roll No. 140. **Pages H2633–34**

Pursuant to the rule, an amendment in the nature of a substitute consisting of the text of Rules Committee Print 113–41, modified by the amendment printed in part A of H. Rept. 113–374, shall be considered as an original bill for the purpose of amendment under the five-minute rule. **Pages H2628–29**

Rejected:

Lowenthal amendment (No. 1 printed in part B of H. Rept. 113–374) that sought to require States to implement the June 30, 1983 Office of Surface Mining Reclamation and Enforcement stream buffer zone rule, unless a State has a program with greater stream protection (by a recorded vote of 188 ayes to 231 noes, Roll No. 138) and **Pages H2629–30, H2631–32**

Cartwright amendment (No. 2 printed in part B of H. Rept. 113–374) that sought to ensure that States maintain the ability to issue their own stream buffer rules (by a recorded vote of 196 ayes to 225 noes, Roll No. 139). **Pages H2630–31, H2632**

H. Res. 501, the rule providing for consideration of the bills (H.R. 2824) and (H.R. 2641), was agreed to on March 6, 2014.

Announcement by the Chair: The Speaker addressed the Members on matters of decorum in the House. **Page H2634**

Senate Message: Message received from the Senate today appears on page H2634.

Quorum Calls—Votes: Four recorded votes developed during the proceedings of today and appear on pages H2631–32, H2632, H2633–34, and H2635. There were no quorum calls.

Adjournment: The House met at 10 a.m. and adjourned at 4:31 p.m.

Committee Meetings

APPROPRIATIONS—DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY, APPLIED ENERGY FUNDING

Committee on Appropriations: Subcommittee on Energy and Water Development held a hearing on the Budget for Department of Energy, Applied Energy Funding. Testimony was heard from David Danielson, Assistant Secretary, Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy; Pete Lyons, Assistant Secretary, Nuclear Energy; Christopher Smith, Acting Assistant Secretary, Fossil Energy; and Patricia Hoffman, Assistant Secretary, Electricity Delivery and Energy Reliability.

APPROPRIATIONS—USDA FOOD, NUTRITION, AND CONSUMER SERVICES FY 2015 BUDGET

Committee on Appropriations: Subcommittee on Agriculture, Rural Development, FDA, and Related Agencies held a hearing on USDA Food, Nutrition, and Consumer Services FY 2015 Budget. Testimony was heard from Kevin Concannon, Under Secretary, Food, Nutrition, and Consumer Services, Department of Agriculture; Audrey Rowe, Administrator, Food and Nutrition Service, Department of Agriculture; and Michael Young, Budget Officer, Department of Agriculture.

APPROPRIATIONS—NAVY AND MARINE CORPS FY 2015 BUDGET

Committee on Appropriations: Subcommittee on Defense held a hearing for Navy and Marine Corps FY 2015 Budget. Testimony was heard from Ray Mabus, Secretary, United States Navy; Admiral Jonathan W. Greenert, Chief of Naval Operations, United States Navy; and General James F. Amos, Commandant, United States Marine Corps.

APPROPRIATIONS—TRANSPORTATION SECURITY ADMINISTRATION FY 2015 BUDGET

Committee on Appropriations: Subcommittee on Homeland Security held a hearing on Transportation Security Administration FY 2015 Budget. Testimony was heard from John Pistole, Administrator, Transportation Security Administration.

APPROPRIATIONS—LABOR, HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES, AND EDUCATION

Committee on Appropriations: Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education held a hearing for public and outside witnesses. Testimony was heard from public witnesses.

APPROPRIATIONS—DEPARTMENT OF INTERIOR FY 2015 BUDGET

Committee on Appropriations: Subcommittee on Interior, Environment and Related Agencies held a hearing on Department of the Interior FY 2015 Budget. Testimony was heard from Sally Jewell, Secretary, Department of the Interior.

APPROPRIATIONS—DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY, SCIENCE

Committee on Appropriations: Subcommittee on Energy and Water Development, and Related Agencies, held a hearing on Department of Energy, Science Budget. Testimony was heard from Patricia Dehmer, Acting Director, Office of Science, Department of Energy.

APPROPRIATIONS—FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION FY 2015 BUDGET

Committee on Appropriations: Subcommittee on Financial Services and General Government held a hearing on Federal Communications Commission FY 2015 Budget. Testimony was heard from Tom Wheeler, Chairman, Federal Communications Commission.

NATIONAL DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION BUDGET—DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY

Committee on Armed Services: Full Committee held a hearing on Fiscal Year 2015 National Defense Authorization Budget Request from the Department of the Army. Testimony was heard from John McHugh, USA, Secretary of the Army, U.S. Army; and General Raymond T. Odierno, Chief of Staff of the Army, U.S. Army.

MILITARY PERSONNEL OVERVIEW

Committee on Armed Services: Subcommittee on Military Personnel held a hearing on Military Personnel Overview. Testimony was heard from Lieutenant General Howard B. Bromberg, Deputy Chief of Staff, G–1, U.S. Army; Vice Admiral William F. Moran, Chief of Naval Personnel and Deputy Chief of Naval Operations, Manpower, Personnel, Training and Education, U.S. Navy; Sheryl E. Murray, Assistant Deputy Commandant for Manpower and Reserve Affairs Headquarters, U.S. Marine Corps; and Jessica L. Wright, Acting Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness, Department of Defense.

MISSILE DEFENSE

Committee on Armed Services: Subcommittee on Strategic Forces held a hearing on Fiscal Year 2015 Missile Defense. Testimony was heard from M. Elaine Bunn, Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Nuclear and Missile Defense Policy, Department of Defense; Lieutenant General David L. Mann, U.S. Army, Commander, United States Strategic Command, Joint Functional Component Command for Integrated Missile Defense; and Vice Admiral James D. Syring, U.S. Navy, Director, Missile Defense Agency.

MEMBERS' DAY

Committee on the Budget: Full Committee held a hearing entitled ''Members' Day''. Testimony was heard from the following members of Congress: Schneider; Danny Davis (IL); Schakowsky; Christensen; Reed; Foster; Johnson (GA); Lummis; Kilmer; LaMalfa; Titus; McDermott; Fattah; Lofgren; McGovern; Ellison; Posey; Mulvaney; Griffith (VA); Gosar; Perry; and Esty.

STRENGTHENING THE CHILD CARE AND DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT PROGRAM

Committee on Education and the Workforce: Subcommittee on Early Childhood, Elementary, and Secondary Education held a hearing entitled ''The Foundation for Success: Strengthening the Child Care and Development Block Grant Program''. Testimony was heard from Gloria Jarmon, Deputy Inspector General for Audit Services, Office of the Inspector General, Department of Health and Human Services; and public witnesses.

MISCELLANEOUS MEASURE

Committee on Energy and Commerce: Subcommittee on Communications and Technology concluded markup on a bill to amend the Communications Act of 1934 to extend expiring provisions relating to the retransmission of signals of television broadcast stations, and for other purposes. The bill was forwarded to the full committee, as amended.

LEGISLATIVE MEASURE

Committee on Energy and Commerce: Subcommittee on Energy and Power held a hearing on H.R. 6, the ''Domestic Prosperity and Global Freedom Act''. Testimony was heard from Paula Gant, Deputy Assistant Secretary, Oil and Natural Gas, Department of Energy; Anita Orbán, Ambassador-at-Large for Energy Security, Government of Hungary; and public witnesses.

WHY DEBT MATTERS

Committee on Financial Services: Full Committee held a hearing entitled ''Why Debt Matters''. Testimony was heard from public witnesses.

MISCELLANEOUS MEASURES

Committee on Foreign Affairs: Full Committee held a markup on H.R. 4278, the ''Ukraine Support Act''; H. Res. 494, affirming the importance of the Taiwan Relations Act; and H. Res. 418, urging the Government of Burma to end the persecution of the Rohingya people and respect internationally recognized human rights for all ethnic and religious minority groups within Burma. The following bill and resolutions were ordered reported, as amended: H.R. 4278; H. Res. 418; and H. Res. 494.

DEVELOPMENT AID PROGRAMS TO BOLSTER HEALTH AND NUTRITION

Committee on Foreign Affairs: Subcommittee on Africa, Global Health, Global Human Rights, and International Organizations held a hearing entitled ''The First One Thousand Days: Development Aid Programs to Bolster Health and Nutrition''. Testimony was heard from Tjada D'Oyen McKenna, Acting Assistant to the Administrator, Bureau for Food Security, U.S. Agency for International Development; and public witnesses.

U.S. DISENGAGEMENT FROM LATIN AMERICA: COMPROMISED SECURITY AND ECONOMIC INTERESTS

Committee on Foreign Affairs: Subcommittee on Western Hemisphere held a hearing entitled ''U.S. Disengagement from Latin America: Compromised Security and Economic Interests''. Testimony was heard from public witnesses.

FEDERAL EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY'S FY 2015 BUDGET REQUEST

Committee on Homeland Security: Subcommittee on Emergency Preparedness, Response, and Communications held a hearing entitled ''The Federal Emergency Management Agency's FY 2015 Budget Request: Ensuring Effective Preparedness, Response, and Communications''. Testimony was heard from W. Craig Fugate, Administrator, Federal Emergency Management Agency, Department of Homeland Security.

LEGISLATIVE MEASURES

Committee on Natural Resources: Subcommittee on Public Lands and Environmental Regulation held a hearing on the following legislation: H.R. 863, the ''Commission to Study the Potential Creation of a National Women's History Museum Act of 2013''; H.R. 3006, to authorize a land exchange involving the acquisition of private land adjacent to the Cibola National Wildlife Refuge in Arizona for inclusion in the refuge in exchange for certain Bureau of Land Management lands in Riverside County, California, and for other purposes; H.R. 4017, to designate a peak located in Nevada as ''Mount Reagan''; H.R. 4120, to amend the National Law Enforcement Museum Act to extend the termination date; and H.R. 4253, to permanently withdraw, reserve, and transfer Bureau of Land Management lands used for military purposes in Alaska, Nevada, and New Mexico to the appropriate Secretary of the military department concerned. Testimony was heard from the following Representatives: Blackburn; Maloney (NY); and Hoyer; and Ned Farquhar, Deputy Assistant Secretary, Lands and Mineral Management, Bureau of Land Management, Department of Interior; and Bob Vogel, Superintendent, National Mall and Memorial Parks, National Park Service, Department of Labor.

LEGISLATIVE MEASURES

Committee on Natural Resources: Subcommittee on Water and Power held a hearing entitled ''Examining the Proposed Fiscal Year 2015 Spending, Priorities and the Missions of the Bureau of Reclamation, the Four Power Marketing Administrations and the U.S. Geological Survey's Water Program''. Testimony was heard from Jerad Bales, Acting Associate Director for Water, U.S. Geological Survey; Lowell Pimley, Acting Commissioner, U.S. Bureau of Reclamation; Elliot Mainzer, Administrator, Bonneville Power Administration; Mark Gabriel, Administrator, Western Area, Power Administration; Christopher Turner, Acting Administrator, Southwestern Power Administration; and Kenneth Legg, Administrator, Southeastern Power Administration.

ENSURING PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT IN THE CREATION OF NATIONAL MONUMENTS ACT

Committee on Rules: Full Committee held a hearing on H.R. 1459, the ''Ensuring Public Involvement in the Creation of National Monuments Act''. The Committee granted by record vote of 6–3, a structured rule for H.R. 1459. The rule provides one hour of general debate equally divided and controlled by the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on Natural Resources. The rule waives all points of order against consideration of the bill. The rule provides that the bill shall be considered as read. The rule waives all points of order against provisions in the bill. The rule makes in order only those amendments printed in the Rules Committee report. Each such amendment may be offered only in the order printed in the report, may be offered only by a Member designated in the report, shall be considered as read, shall be debatable for the time specified in the report equally divided and controlled by the proponent and an opponent, shall not be subject to amendment, and shall not be subject to a demand for division of the question. The rule waives all points of order against the amendments printed in the report. The rule provides one motion to recommit with or without instructions. In Section 2, the rule provides that it shall be in order at any time on the legislative day of March 27, 2014, for the Speaker to entertain motions that the House suspend the rules relating to a measure addressing the Medicare payment system for physicians and a measure addressing Ukraine. Testimony was heard from Chairman Hastings (WA) and Representative Bishop (UT).

MISCELLANEOUS MEASURE

Committee on Small Business: Full Committee held a markup to consider the views and estimates on the Small Business Administration's FY 2015 budget request. The Committee passed the views and estimates.

THE ROLE OF TRADING IN ACHIEVING CLEAN WATER OBJECTIVES

Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure: Subcommittee on Water Resources and Environment held a hearing entitled ''The Role of Trading in

Achieving Clean Water Objectives''. Testimony was heard from public witnesses.

LEGISLATIVE MEASURES

Committee on Veterans' Affairs: Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations held a hearing on H.R. 3593, the ''VA Construction Assistance Act of 2013''; H.R. 4261, the ''Gulf War Health Research Reform Act of 2014''; and H.R. 4281, the ''Protecting Business Opportunities for Veterans Act of 2014''. Testimony was heard from Stella S. Fiotes, Executive Director, Office of Construction and Facilities Management, Office of Acquisition, Logistics and Construction, Department of Veterans Affairs; and Gregory Wilshusen, Director, Information Security Issues, Government Accountability Office; and public witnesses.

LEGISLATIVE MEASURES

Committee on Veterans' Affairs: Subcommittee on Economic Opportunity held a hearing on the following legislation: H.R. 2942, to amend title 38, United States Code, to reestablish the Professional Certification and Licensure Advisory Committee of the Department of Veterans Affairs; H.R. 3056, the ''Warriors' Peer-Outreach Pilot Program Act''; H.R. 3614, the ''Military Skills to Careers Act''; H.R. 4031, to amend title 38, United States Code, to provide for the removal of Senior Executive Service employees of the Department of Veterans Affairs for performance, and for other purposes; H.R. 4037, the ''Improving Veterans' Access to Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment Act of 2014''; H.R. 4038, the ''Veterans Benefits Administration Information Technology Improvement Act of 2014''; H.R. 4147, the ''Student Veterans IT Upgrade Act''; H.R. 4150, the ''Veterans Employment and Training Service Longitudinal Study Act of 2014''; and H.R. 4151, the ''Veterans Education Survey Act of 2014''. Testimony was heard from Curtis Coy, Deputy Under Secretary for Economic Opportunity, Department of Veterans Affairs; Keith Kelly, Assistant Secretary, Veterans' Employment and Training Service, Department of Labor; and public witnesses.

Joint Meetings

No joint committee meetings were held.

NEW PUBLIC LAWS

(For last listing of Public Laws, see DAILY DIGEST, *p. D297)*

H.R. 2650, to allow the Fond du Lac Band of Lake Superior Chippewa in the State of Minnesota to lease or transfer certain land. Signed on March 21, 2014. (Public Law 113–88)

H.R. 3370, to delay the implementation of certain provisions of the Biggert-Waters Flood Insurance Reform Act of 2012. Signed on March 21, 2014. (Public Law 113–89)

H.R. 4076, to address shortages and interruptions in the availability of propane and other home heating fuels in the United States. Signed on March 21, 2014. (Public Law 113–90)

S.J. Res. 32, providing for the reappointment of John W. McCarter as a citizen regent of the Board of Regents of the Smithsonian Institution. Signed on March 21, 2014. (Public Law 113–91)

COMMITTEE MEETINGS FOR WEDNESDAY, MARCH 26, 2014

(Committee meetings are open unless otherwise indicated)

Senate

Committee on Appropriations: Subcommittee on Department of the Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies, to hold hearings to examine proposed budget estimates for fiscal year 2015 for the Department of the Interior, 9:15 a.m., SD–124.

Subcommittee on Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies, to hold hearings to examine proposed budget estimates for fiscal year 2015 for the Department of Agriculture, 10 a.m., SD–192.

Subcommittee on Department of Defense, to hold hearings to examine proposed budget estimates for fiscal year 2015 for the Department of the Navy, 10 a.m., SD–106.

Committee on Armed Services: Subcommittee on Personnel, to hold hearings to examine the Active, Guard, Reserve, and civilian personnel programs in review of the Defense Authorization Request for fiscal year 2015 and the Future Years Defense Program, 10 a.m., SR–222.

Subcommittee on Readiness and Management Support, to hold hearings to examine the the current readiness of United States forces in review of the Defense Authorization Request for fiscal year 2015 and the Future Years Defense Program, 2:30 p.m., SR–232A.

Subcommittee on Strategic Forces, to hold hearings to examine strategic forces programs of the National Nuclear Security Administration and the Office of Environmental Management of the Department of Energy in review of the Defense Authorization Request for fiscal year 2015 and the Future Years Defense Program, 2:30 p.m., SR–222.

Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs: Subcommittee on Financial Institutions and Consumer Protection, to hold hearings to examine if alternative financial products are serving consumers, 10 a.m., SD–538.

Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation: to hold hearings to examine protecting personal consumer information from cyber attacks and data breaches, 2:30 p.m., SR–253.

Committee on Environment and Public Works: to hold an oversight hearing to examine the President's proposed

budget request for fiscal year 2015 for the Environmental Protection Agency, 10 a.m., SD–406.

Committee on Foreign Relations: to hold hearings to examine Syria after Geneva, focusing on the next steps for United States policy, 2:30 p.m., SD–419.

Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs: to hold hearings to examine strengthening public-private partnerships to reduce cyber risks to our nation's critical infrastructure, 10 a.m., SD–342.

Committee on Indian Affairs: to hold an oversight hearing to examine the President's proposed budget request for fiscal year 2015 for Tribal Programs, 2:30 p.m., SD–628.

Committee on the Judiciary: to hold hearings to examine reauthorization of, ''The Satellite Television Extension and Localism Act'', 10 a.m., SD–226.

Special Committee on Aging: to hold hearings to examine preventing Medicare fraud, focusing on the best way to protect seniors and taxpayers, 2:15 p.m., SD–562.

United States Senate Caucus on International Narcotics Control: to hold hearings to examine America's addiction to opioids, focusing on heroin and prescription drug abuse, 2:30 p.m., SD–192.

House

Committee on Agriculture, Subcommittee on Conservation, Energy, and Forestry, hearing to Review the impacts of Endangered Species Act and related litigation on National Forest System management, 10 a.m., 1300 Longworth.

Committee on Appropriations, Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice, and Science, and Related Agencies, hearing on Federal Bureau of Investigation's Post 9/11 Reform Efforts FY 2015 Budget and Oversight, 9 a.m., H–309 Capitol.

Subcommittee on Agriculture, Rural Development, FDA, and Related Agencies, hearing on USDA Research, Education and Economic FY 2015 Budget, 10 a.m., 2362–A Rayburn.

Subcommittee on Defense, hearing on Air Force Budget FY 2015, 10 a.m., H–140 Capitol.

Subcommittee on Energy and Water Development, hearing on U.S. Army Corps of Engineers FY 2015 Budget, 10 a.m., 2362–B Rayburn.

Subcommittee on Homeland Security, hearing on Federal Emergency Management Agency, FY 2015 Budget, 10 a.m., 2359 Rayburn.

Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education oversight hearing entitled ''Future of Biomedical Research'', 10 a.m., 2358–C Rayburn.

Subcommittee on Defense, hearing on U.S. Pacific Command and U.S. Forces Korea, 2 p.m., H–140 Capitol. This is a closed hearing.

Subcommittee on Energy and Water Development, hearing on Bureau of Reclamation FY 2015 Budget, 2 p.m., 2362–B Rayburn.

Subcommittee on Financial Services and General Government, hearing on the Judiciary FY 2015 Budget, 2 p.m., 2359 Rayburn.

Committee on Armed Services, Subcommittee on Strategic Forces, hearing on Interim Report of the Advisory Panel on the Governance of the Nuclear Security Enterprise, 10 a.m., 2118 Rayburn.

Subcommittee on Tactical Air and Land Forces, hearing on Fiscal Year 2015 Navy, Marine Corps and Air Force Combat Aviation Programs, 12:30 p.m., 2118 Rayburn.

Subcommittee on Intelligence, Emerging Threats and Capabilities, hearing on Department of Defense Fiscal Year 2015 Science and Technology Programs: Pursuing Technology Superiority in a Changing Security Environment, 2 p.m., 2212 Rayburn.

Subcommittee on Seapower and Projection Forces, hearing on Department of the Navy Fiscal Year 2015 Budget Request for Seapower and Projection Forces, 3:30 p.m., 2118 Rayburn.

Committee on Education and the Workforce, Full Committee, hearing entitled ''Reviewing the President's Fiscal Year 2015 Budget Proposal for the Department of Labor'', 10 a.m., 2175 Rayburn.

Committee on Energy and Commerce, Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations, hearing entitled ''Where Have All the Patients Gone? Examining the Psychiatric Bed Shortage'', 10 a.m., 2123 Rayburn.

Committee on Foreign Affairs, Full Committee, hearing entitled ''The Geopolitical Potential of the U.S. Energy Boom'', 10 a.m., 2172 Rayburn.

Subcommittee on Asia and the Pacific, hearing entitled ''The Shocking Truth about North Korean Tyranny'', 2 p.m., 2172 Rayburn.

Committee on Homeland Security, Subcommittee on Oversight and Management Efficiency, markup on H.R. 4228, the ''DHS Acquisition Accountability and Efficiency Act'', 2 p.m., 311 Cannon.

Committee on the Judiciary, Subcommittee on Crime, Terrorism, Homeland Security and Investigations, hearing entitled ''Innocence for Sale: Domestic Minor Sex Trafficking'', 10 a.m., 2141 Rayburn.

Subcommittee on Regulatory Reform, Commercial and Antitrust Law, hearing entitled ''Exploring Chapter 11 Reform: Corporate and Financial Institution Insolvencies; Treatment of Derivatives'', 4 p.m., 2141 Rayburn.

Committee on Natural Resources, Full Committee, hearing entitled ''Collision Course: Oversight of the Obama Administration's Enforcement Approach for America's Wildlife Laws and Its Impact on Domestic Energy'', 10 a.m., 1324 Longworth.

Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, Full Committee, hearing entitled ''Examining the IRS Response to the Targeting Scandal'', 9:30 a.m., 2154 Rayburn.

Committee on Science, Space, and Technology, Full Committee, hearing entitled ''A Review of the President's Fiscal Year 2015 Budget Request for Science Agencies'', 10 a.m., 2318 Rayburn.

Committee on Small Business, Subcommittee on Contracting and Workforce, hearing entitled ''Barriers to Opportunity: Do Occupational Licensing Laws Unfairly Limit Entrepreneurship and Jobs?'', 10 a.m., 2360 Rayburn.

Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, Subcommittee on Coast Guard and Maritime Transportation, hearing entitled ''President's Fiscal Year 2015 Budget

Request for Coast Guard and Maritime Transportation Programs'', 9:30 a.m., 2167 Rayburn.

Committee on Veterans' Affairs, Subcommittee on Disability Assistance and Memorial Affairs, hearing on the following legislation: H.R. 2018, the ''Honor Those Who Served Act of 2013''; H.R. 2088, to direct the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to carry out a pilot program to establish claims adjudication centers of excellence; H.R. 2119, the ''Veterans Access to Speedy Review Act''; H.R. 2529, the ''Veteran Spouses Equal Treatment Act''; H.R. 3671, to amend title 38, United States Code, to expand the eligibility for a medallion furnished by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to signify the veteran status of a deceased individual; H.R. 3876, the ''Burial with Dignity for Heroes Act of 2014''; H.R. 4095, the ''Veterans' Compensation Cost-of-Living Adjustment Act of 2014''; H.R. 4102, to amend title 38, United States Code, to clarify that the estate of a deceased veteran may receive certain accrued benefits upon the death of the veteran, and for other purposes; H.R. 4141, to amend title 38, United States Code, to authorize the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to enter into enhanced-use leases for excess property of the National Cemetery Administration that is unsuitable for burial purposes; and H.R. 4191, the ''Quicker Veterans Benefits Delivery Act'', 3:30 p.m., 334 Cannon.

Joint Meetings

Joint Hearing: Senate Committee on Veterans' Affairs, to hold a joint hearing with the House Committee on Veterans' Affairs to examine the legislative presentation of The American Legion, 10 a.m., SD–G50.

Joint Economic Committee: to hold hearings to examine unwinding quantitative easing, focusing on how the Fed should promote stable prices, economic growth, and job creation, 2 p.m., SH–216.

Next Meeting of the SENATE

10 a.m., Wednesday, March 26

Senate Chamber

Program for Wednesday: After the transaction of any morning business (not to extend beyond 11 a.m.), Senate will vote on the motions to invoke cloture on the nominations of Christopher Reid Cooper, of the District of Columbia, to be United States District Judge for the District of Columbia, M. Douglas Harpool, of Missouri, to be United States District Judge for the Western District of Missouri, Gerald Austin McHugh, Jr., of Pennsylvania, to be United States District Judge for the Eastern District of Pennsylvania, and Edward G. Smith, of Pennsylvania, to be United States District Judge for the Eastern District of Pennsylvania.

And, that if cloture is invoked on the nominations, Senate will vote on confirmation of the nominations at 2:30 p.m.

Following the 2:30 p.m. votes, Senate will vote on confirmation of the nomination of Joseph William Westphal, of New York, to be Ambassador to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, Department of State.

Next Meeting of the HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

10 a.m., Wednesday, March 26

House Chamber

Program for Wednesday: Begin consideration of H.R. 1459—Ensuring Public Involvement in the Creation of National Monuments Act (Subject to a Rule).

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