United States of America

Congressional Record

PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES OF THE 113th CONGRESS, SECOND SESSION

Vol. 160 WASHINGTON, THURSDAY, JUNE 5, 2014 No. 87

Senate

The Senate met at 10 a.m. and was called to order by the Honorable JOHN E. WALSH, a Senator from the State of Montana.

PRAYER

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

Let us pray.

Eternal Spirit, Your ways are right. Make Your face to shine upon us and keep us under the shelter of Your wings. Thank You for the life that stirs within us and for our bright and beautiful world. Lord, the works of Your hands bring us joy, creating in us a desire to bless Your Name.

Today fill the hearts of our Senators with praise and peace as they seek to accomplish Your purposes. Give them wings of faith to rise above the challenges that keep them tethered to sectarian paralysis. Provide them with everything they need to live a life that glorifies You.

Lord, we thank You for our gifted Senate pages who faithfully serve You and country.

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 bill clerk read the following letter:

U.S. SENATE,
PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE,
Washington, DC, June 5, 2014.

To the Senate:

Under the provisions of rule I, paragraph 3, of the Standing Rules of the Senate, I hereby appoint the Honorable JOHN E. WALSH, a Senator from the State of Montana, to perform the duties of the Chair.

PATRICK J. LEAHY,
President pro tempore.

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

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

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

BIPARTISAN SPORTSMEN'S ACT OF 2014—MOTION TO PROCEED

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I now move to proceed to Calendar No. 384, S. 2363, the Hagan sportsmen's legislation.

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

The bill clerk read as follows:

Motion to proceed to Calendar No. 384, S. 2363, a bill to protect and enhance opportunities for recreational hunting, fishing, and shooting, and for other purposes.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

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

SCHEDULE

Mr. REID. Mr. President, following my remarks and those of the Republican leader, the Senate will be in a period of morning business until 1:45 p.m., with the majority controlling the first 30 minutes and the Republicans controlling the next 30 minutes.

At 1:45 p.m. the Senate will proceed to executive session for at least one rollcall vote. First, there will be a vote on the confirmation of Sylvia Burwell to be Secretary of Health and Human Services and then a vote on the confirmation of Carolyn Hessler Radelet to be Director of the Peace Corps. We hope to confirm the Radelet nomination by voice vote.

MEASURE PLACED ON THE CALENDAR—S. 2432

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I understand S. 2432 is at the desk and due for a second reading.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will read the bill by title for the second time.

The bill clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 2432) to amend the Higher Education Act of 1965 to provide for the refinancing of certain Federal student loans, and for other purposes.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I would object to any further proceedings with respect to the legislation at this time.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Objection is heard. The bill will be placed on the calendar.

INVASION OF NORMANDY

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I am aware of the remarks I am about to make in recognition of the Presiding Officer who has, prior to coming to this body, led hundreds of troops into Iraq during some of the most difficult combat that any soldiers faced during that conflict.

When I first came to the Senate, we had many combat veterans, but that has changed over the years, quite remarkably.

We all look to Senator MCCAIN as someone who certainly understands what it means to be in a conflict in war, but things have changed since we lost Medal of Honor winners: Dan Inouye on his passing; Bob Kerrey as a result of his retiring; Fritz Hollings, a Silver Star winner, combat veteran of World War II; Ted Stevens flying airplanes into the Far East, a dedicated heroic pilot; and many other people, so there aren't many left anymore.

That is why I focus attention on the Presiding Officer today, because he is representative of the best of people who fight for freedom.

On June 6, 1944, President Franklin Roosevelt began his national radio address in a very unusual way, one not entirely common then or now, because the Commander in Chief, the President of the United States, asked the American people to join him in prayer. Why

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

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did he do that? His prayer was not for himself but for the 156,000 allied soldiers who, as he spoke, were fighting their way onto the beaches of Normandy.

As he implored the American people on behalf of those soldiers, he said:

> They will be sore tried, by night and by day, without rest until the victory is won. The darkness will be rent by noise and flame. Men's souls will be shaken with the violence of war. For these men are lately drawn from the ways of peace. They fight not for the lust of conquest. They fight to end conquest. They fight to liberate.

That was part of his request, that the American people pray for these valiant soldiers. Of course, while this battle for Europe was going on throughout the South Pacific, people were dying as he spoke. Virtually all of the troops who stormed the beaches of France that day were not professional soldiers. They were schoolteachers, farmers, ranchers, mechanics, and clerks. These fathers, husbands, sons, and brothers were pulled away from their peaceful lives and instead were sent to liberate an entire continent. They fought courageously for liberty. They hurtled themselves into the line of fire to defeat tyranny.

We can probably all look back at people who fought in World War II. They were our relatives, our neighbors, and I mentioned a few whom I served with in the Senate.

From the little town I come from in Nevada, Searchlight, there was a man there named Junior Cree. His name was Junior Cree. That was his given name. I grew up there as a little boy.

He had a service station, a little bar, and did a number of different things. He was an entrepreneur, as was his dad.

Many years after I was no longer a little boy, he came to my home in Searchlight and wanted to see my new home. Junior and I sat and talked with his daughter Sandy. I had asked him: Junior, what did you do in the invasion of Normandy? He proceeded to tell me. Yet at this time he was an 80-year-old man.

He told me he had fought in the North African conflict first. He was in the infantry. He was not in the first wave to go onto the beaches, but he was in one of the first, in one of the amphibious vehicles. There were about 35 or 40 people on one of those.

His job—he had his rifle of course but his job was to carry signs—he was a big man—into the water onto the beaches, and he had instructions on what to do with the signs, to designate who they were and what they were supposed to do. The water was much deeper than anyone said. Well, this man, who was well over 6 foot, went right to the bottom and nearly drowned because these signs were so heavy. He made it onto the beach and found security under a damaged half-track, I think he called it. He was shot in the rear end, and that ended his military adventures during World War II.

These people were everyplace. Junior Cree was one of 156,000 people on those beaches. They were all heroes. They were all people just like Junior Cree. They fought courageously for liberty. As I have indicated, they hurtled themselves into the line of fire. Can you imagine going onto the beach with the machine gun fire coming down on top of you.

Tomorrow is the 70th anniversary of D-day. On that day 156,000 heroic soldiers turned the tide against Adolf Hitler's savagery and unshackled the nations of Europe. This afternoon there are about 10 or 11 Senators who are going to go to that 70th anniversary which is being held on the beaches of Normandy. President Obama will be there, world leaders will be there, and I appreciate very much those Senators going and representing the Senate, as well as the Presiding Officer.

Proof of these soldiers' bravery can be seen in faraway France today, every day, not just for the celebration that is going to take place recognizing the 70th anniversary of this conflict—every day—because there are massive graves there, all over Europe. These seemingly endless rows of white headstones testify to their valor. Crosses and Stars of David are reminders of the debt we owe to those who refused to balk in the face of the evil, and that was Hitler. Adolf Hitler's Nazis were evil.

May we always honor their sacrifice and never forget the price they paid to protect, not only this Nation but the entire world.

HONORING VETERANS

One of the ways in which we honor soldiers in our democracy is to care for our veterans. As we celebrate the 70th anniversary of D-day, it is fitting that Members of this body are working on a bipartisan basis to ensure that American veterans get the help they need and deserve. In light of the disturbing reports of the practices of the Department of Veterans Affairs hospitals and other facilities, chairman BERNIE SANDERS, of the Senate Veterans' Affairs Committee, is leading the effort to craft a bill to improve care at VA hospitals.

I applaud his efforts. I applaud the efforts of Senator MCCAIN. As we speak, they are meeting to try to come up with some bipartisan solution to the problems of wait times at VA facilities. I am hopeful an agreement will be reached that guarantees American veterans are receiving the care we as a grateful nation have promised. It is the least we can do for these gallant men and women who have fought to protect our great country.

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

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

NORMANDY INVASION

Mr. MCCONNELL. Tomorrow marks the 70th anniversary of the invasion of Normandy, a day known across the world as D-day.

On this fateful day, which proved to be such a decisive turning point for the allied victory in Europe, thousands of allied forces were killed or wounded in the invasion. While we are sadly losing more and more members of the ''greatest generation'' with each passing year—including the last of the original Navajo code talkers whom we lost just yesterday—the heroism of these brave Americans can never be forgotten.

I have one constituent, Bob Williams from Boone County, KY, who jumped on D-day, jumped again 50 years later, and was on the front cover of Time magazine. I saw him earlier this year, and he says he is not going to jump again because his wife will not let him, but Bob Williams is still in good shape 70 years after the day he jumped into the night of D-day.

Tomorrow I will be honored to commemorate the most important anniversary by meeting with a number of Kentucky heroes—veterans from World War II and the Korean war—who will be visiting the national monuments built here in the Nation's Capital to honor their service and sacrifice. They will be making a trip with the help of the Bluegrass Chapter of the Honor Flight Program, which has already brought more than 1,000 veterans—mostly from Kentucky—to Washington for this very purpose. The program provides transportation, lodging, and food for the veterans.

Without Honor Flight, many would not be able to visit the World War II Memorial—a memorial erected to honor the sacrifice of the men and women who served on D-day and throughout that era.

I have met with groups of Honor Flight veterans before, and it is always a moving experience. It is gratifying to see these heroes receive the recognition they deserve. Many of them never thought they would be able to make the trip, and for every veteran who does, I am sure they hold cherished memories of their fellow soldiers in arms who did not.

I look forward to greeting them tomorrow and thanking them for their extraordinary service to our country. I am proud and honored that Kentucky is home to so many of these brave heroes.

BURWELL NOMINATION

Today the Senate will vote on President Obama's newest choice to head the Department of Health and Human Services—in other words, the person he will be sticking with the impossible task of trying to make ObamaCare work.

By most accounts Sylvia Burwell is a smart and skilled public servant, but her embrace of ObamaCare calls her policy judgment into question. When it comes to the task of implementing this ill-conceived and disastrous law, the President may as well have nominated Sisyphus because, as I indicated, Ms. Burwell is being asked to do the impossible.

ObamaCare has already inflicted tremendous pain on the lives of countless middle-class Americans, including

many thousands in my own State. It is increasing costs for families all across the country—despite endless promises to the contrary. It has reduced access to the doctors and hospitals my constituents relied on—despite endless promises to the contrary. It has caused Kentuckians to lose the plans they liked and wanted to keep—despite endless promises to the contrary.

A constituent of mine from Pulaksi County wrote to tell me that as a result of ObamaCare he lost his insurance and that he was ''floored'' when he saw the cost of the ObamaCare-approved plan to replace it. With a spike in his premium and a $6,300 deductible, he wrote to ask me how ''[he] or any working man [could] afford the Affordable . . . Care Act.'' He makes an important point.

Nearly every major ObamaCare promise from several years ago is a broken ObamaCare promise today. Even more recent promises from the administration can't be relied on either. In January the Secretary certified to Congress that she would verify that people were actually eligible for ObamaCare subsidies before they were sent out. In recent weeks we learned from media accounts and testimony that many of the systems needed to protect taxpayers against inaccurate or fraudulent payments still have not been built, tested, or used. Yesterday we learned that nearly one in four applications may have an inconsistency that could affect the accuracy of these payments from American taxpayers. Any wasted tax dollar is a problem, but when you consider that many of these are dollars raised from tax increases or raided from Medicare to make payouts by mistake or through fraud, it is enough to make your head spin.

This is just the kind of thing everyone warned about as Washington Democrats tried to ram this law through, and it will only get worse if we give up now and just accept the giant mess they have made of our health care. I mean, if they can't even get a Web site fixed after spending hundreds of millions of taxpayer dollars, how can they possibly regulate such a huge sector of our economy in any effective way?

How can any administration official possibly repair all the broken ObamaCare promises? The question answers itself: They can't. The nominee before us can't. No one can. The problem is the law itself. ObamaCare is what prevents the successful implementation of ObamaCare. And Americans don't want it. They want real health reforms—reforms that can actually lower costs, increase choice, and help the middle class. So, in my view, the Senate shouldn't be focusing on a new captain for the Titanic; it should focus on steering away from the iceberg.

As HHS Secretary, the nominee would oversee many important programs aimed at protecting public health, promoting medical research, and providing a safety net for seniors and working families, but she would also be the chief operating officer of ObamaCare implementation—a law that is doing incredible damage to middle-class families in our country. Her embrace of this disastrous law is reason enough to oppose her confirmation.

I will be voting against this nominee because I think we need to focus on repealing and replacing this law, not trying to do the impossible by pretending we can make it work.

HONORING OUR ARMED FORCES

STAFF SERGEANT CHRISTOPHER T. STOUT

Mr. President, I rise to mourn the loss and celebrate the life of one brave soldier from Kentucky who died while serving this country. SSG Christopher T. Stout of Worthville, a chaplain's assistant, was killed on July 13, 2010, in Kandahar City, Afghanistan, from wounds suffered when the enemy attacked his unit with rifles, rocket-propelled grenades, and small-arms fire. He was 34 years old.

For his service in uniform, Sergeant Stout received several medals, awards, and decorations, including the Bronze Star Medal, the Purple Heart, two Army Commendation Medals, the Army Achievement Medal, three Army Good Conduct Medals, the National Defense Service Medal, two Afghanistan Campaign Medals with Bronze Service Stars, the Global War on Terrorism Service Medal, the Army Service Ribbon, the Overseas Service Ribbon, the NATO Medal, and the Combat Action Badge.

Staff Sergeant Stout's commanding officer, chaplain CPT Ludovic O. Foyou, said this of his fallen comrade:

> Staff Sergeant Christopher Stout was not just a chaplain assistant; he was my friend, brother and shield of armor. His immensely pure love for his fellow paratroopers epitomizes the spirit of the Army Chaplain Corps. His love for his wife Misty and three princesses, Jacqueline, Audreanna, and Kristen, always kept a radiant smile on his face.

Christopher's hometown pastor, the Reverend Raymond Sharon of Worthville United Pentecostal Church, added:

> [Chris] was just a fantastic good boy all the way around. Faithful to church, faithful to his family, his wife.

Chris was born on New Year's Day in 1976 in Louisville and graduated from Carroll County High School.

His mother, Sharon Neuner, remembers Chris's childhood fondly:

> We had some hard times because I was a single parent . . . but those things just brought us closer together. Our song name was ''You and Me Against the World.'' I remember you used to want name-brand things that we couldn't afford, so you went to work in an elderly woman's flower garden. You weeded, painted, and mowed lawns to get money for those name-brand things. In doing so, you learned that it isn't the clothes or the shoes that make the man, but who you are as a person that makes you a great man.

Chris was an accomplished singer and often preached the gospel at Worthville United Pentecostal Church. He joined the Army in 1997 and originally served as a parachute rigger with the 782nd Main Support Battalion at Fort Bragg, NC. In September of 2006, at his request, he was reclassified as a chaplain's assistant. From 2007 to 2008, he deployed with Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 82nd Airborne Division, until in 2009 he was reassigned to 1st Battalion, 508th Parachute Infantry Regiment, 4th Brigade Combat Team, 82nd Airborne Division, based out of Fort Bragg. It was with this unit that Chris deployed to Afghanistan for what would be his final deployment.

In late July 2010, shortly after he was killed, his family, friends, and those who wished to pay their respects gathered at the veterans memorial in General Butler State Park in Carrollton, KY, to remember Christopher Stout.

Daughter Jacqueline Stout sang ''Amazing Grace'' in his honor to a crowd of nearly 500.

Chaplain LTC David Graetz told the crowd that Chris lived by the chaplain's motto ''Pro Deo et Patria''—Latin for the phrase ''For God and Country.''

The Reverend Raymond Sharon of Chris's hometown church also spoke. ''He is a hero,'' Reverend Sharon said of Chris. ''He has set an example for all the young people here today. Nothing can stop you from accomplishing in life a great place in society, as Chris has done. Chris stood for the truth. He lived it. He talked it.''

With that, the crowd stood at respectful attention for the firing of a three-volley salute by the American Legion Post No. 41, followed by a bugler playing ''Taps.'' Then the Carroll County judge-executive unveiled for Chris's family a brick to be placed in the veterans memorial to honor his sacrifice.

His mother said:

> Thank you, Chris. You gave your all. I hope my mind stays healthy so that I always have my memories of your smiling blue eyes, your warm smile, those dimples and freckles, and our time of you and me against the world. Those will have to do me until we meet again at Heaven's gates.

We are thinking of Chris's family today as I share his story with my colleagues, including his wife Misty, his daughters Jacqueline, Audreanna, and Kristen, his parents Sharon and Billy Neuner, and many other beloved family members and friends. I wish for them to know that this Senate is privileged to pay tribute to SSG Christopher T. Stout for his life of service in honor of the ideals of ''Pro Deo et Patria''—''For God and Country.'' We recognize his service, and we honor his ultimate sacrifice. He truly was a man of God who died defending our country. Kentucky is proud to call this good and faithful servant one of our own, and we mourn his loss.

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 until 1:45 p.m., with Senators permitted to speak therein up to 10 minutes each, with the time equally divided between the two leaders or their designees, with the majority controlling the first 30 minutes and the Republicans controlling the next 30 minutes.

The Senator from Delaware.

BURWELL NOMINATION

Mr. CARPER. Mr. President, while Senator MCCONNELL is still here in the Senate Chamber, I wish to follow up on his comments about the loss of Christopher Stout.

My wife and I have a son of our own named Christopher. He is roughly 10 years younger than Christopher Stout at his death. So as soon as Senator MCCONNELL began talking about the loss of his life, it resonated with me as a father. It also resonated with me as a former commander chief in the National Guard for 8 years and as a Navy veteran who served three tours in Southeast Asia in the Vietnam war.

Sometimes we don't focus enough on what is being accomplished by our service men and women such as Christopher Stout and their service to our country in Afghanistan and our purpose there. Our role has been to go into a place in which 9/11 attacks were conceived and guided, killing thousands of Americans. Our purpose is, as we draw down on our troops there at the end of this year, to be down to about 9,800 troops, roughly half a year from now, and even fewer in the years to come. But our goal is threefold; that is, when we leave, we leave behind not only a place that is less likely to foment and launch attacks against this country or any other country, but also we leave behind a country that can feed itself, defend itself, and govern itself.

The Presiding Officer was adjutant general for the State of Montana, and he understands full well, having served in combat and for a long period of time, the importance of the role the Christopher Stouts have played and the reverence we hold for them and for their service in life and beyond.

I also hasten to add in following up on the minority leader's comments, there are some things we had in the military. I served 5 years Active Duty, 18 years Reserve as a P–3 aircraft naval flight officer and later as a mission commander. There are some things we had in the military that frankly a lot of people in this country haven't had for too many years. Until last year about 40 million people in this country did not have health care. They did not have access to health care, and we have changed that. We have changed that dramatically.

Does everybody have access to affordable health care today? No, but we no longer have 40 million people anxious to get access to health care. That has been cut by roughly one-quarter. We will reduce it again this year and again next year, but among the things we had in the military is an annual physical. The idea is that you actually get an annual physical in your birthday month. My birthday month is January. I got my first annual physical, I think, when I was 17 from a Navy doctor, and I got them for years and years after that.

A lot of people in this country, including people on Medicare—they could have lived to be 105—and until about 3 years ago with the option of the Affordable Care Act they got one annual physical paid for by Medicare when they turned 65 and joined Medicare. That was it. It was called the Welcome to Medicare physical. If they could have lived another 40 years, they would have gotten another one paid for by Medicare.

The reason the military provides annual physicals for its members, Active Duty and Reserve, is in order to catch health care problems when they are small, when they can be treated, and we do this to save money. I served in the military and in and out of military bases all over the country, all over the world, and in almost every one of them there was not just a doctor, a Navy corpsman and so forth, but there was a place to go—if you had a problem and needed medical attention, you could get it—a clinic. Today we have thousands and thousands of clinics all over this country where people, whether they have 5 cents or $5 or $50 to their name, have health care coverage. They can go get primary health care. They can get primary health care. We have grown dramatically access to primary health care in places all over America, not just Delaware but all the other 49 States as well.

There has been a lot of attention on the VA, some of the very disappointing circumstances that are going on in Phoenix and other places such as that in terms of waiting lists, and they need to be aggressive and they will be, but one of the great innovations the VA came up with 15 or more years ago was electronic health care records.

When I was in the Navy and on Active Duty, and the Presiding Officer may remember, we used to carry around with us—roughly this size—a brown manila folder, and it included my medical records for years, from the time I got my first physical as a 17-year-old Navy midshipman until my last one. People on Active Duty don't carry these around anymore. We have electronic health records pioneered by the VA and now we have them in the Department of Defense. The reason we have them is because it enables us to better coordinate delivery of health care to people who otherwise may not have it. The Affordable Care Act actually introduces for the first time for millions of people electronic health care records, not for them to carry around or access necessarily—although, in some cases they can—but so the people providing care for them can do it in a better coordinated and smarter way and a more cost-effective way, providing better results for less money.

The other thing we had in the military was the medicine. If someone needed to take medicine, prescription medicines or that sort of thing, they could actually get a medicine that was going to help them, keep them well or help them stay well, be productive. We adopted about 7 or 8 years ago the primary Medicare Part D prescription drug program in Medicare which has turned out to be a great success, although they had a big problem with it when people would fall into the doughnut hole. A lot of folks who got pretty good coverage for maybe the first half of the year would lose their coverage and have to pay. They didn't get any help from Medicare Part D. We started fixing—filling the doughnut hole—with the passage of the Affordable Care Act, and over the next 6 or 7 years we will complete fixing that doughnut hole and people will not fall off the cliff, the Medicare Part D participants, as they have been, because of what is in the Affordable Care Act. Do you know who pays for that? The pharmaceutical companies pay for that, not the taxpayers. The pharmaceutical companies pay for that expansion, making Medicare Part D a good program, cost-effective, under budget, and 85 percent of the people who use it like it. All of those things coincide with the benefits we enjoyed in the military, and they are made available in part and parcel for more people through the adoption of the Affordable Care Act.

Are there problems with the Affordable Care Act? Sure there are. Are there things we need to fix? Sure we should. Will Sylvia Mathews Burwell help us fix those? She will provide great leadership. She and I, interestingly, have our lives intertwined in a strange way. We found out when I first met her. I called Erskine Bowles. I learned over 1 year ago the President had nominated Sylvia Mathews Burwell to be President Obama's OMB Director. I noticed she had worked in the Clinton White House with Erskine Bowles when he was Chief of Staff to President Clinton the second term.

So I called Erskine, and I said: Tell me about Sylvia Mathews Burwell.

He said: I will tell you about Sylvia Mathews Burwell. I have known people as smart as Sylvia. I have known people who are as good at working with other people as Sylvia is. I have known people as good as Sylvia at getting things done. I have not known one person who does all three of those things as well as she does.

He told me a story when she was working as Bob Rubin's right-hand person, top assistant. Bob Rubin was then the Secretary of the Treasury. President Clinton was meeting with Chief of Staff Erskine Bowles, Bob Rubin, the

Secretary of the Treasury. Bob Rubin had one of his top aides with him, Sylvia Burwell. Erskine recounted the story of how the President was grilling Treasury Secretary Rubin on a particular issue and Secretary Rubin was kind of struggling to respond in an appropriate way to the President's inquiries. Sylvia Mathews Burwell, the assistant, wrote a note, and when the President was not looking, handed it discreetly to advise Bob Rubin, who glanced at the note and then reengaged the President on the issue, and the President said: That is a brilliant insight. That is really a brilliant insight, Bob.

Erskine Bowles, not to be deterred, said to the President: Mr. President, Sylvia wrote a note and gave it to him. That is how he was able to give you that answer.

If I had people as smart as Sylvia on my staff, I would look a lot smarter too. But she covered herself with glory in those years at the White House. She finished up. This is a gal who grew up in Hinton, WV, a little coal mining town on the New River where I lived when I was 4 years old. Her husband Stephen proposed to her at the Blue Stone Dam on the New River where my grandfather and father used to take me as a little boy to fish.

She later graduated from Hinton High School, a public high school, a little coal mining town. Where did she go to school? She went to Harvard. After that where did she go to school? She was a Rhodes Scholar. She went to Oxford, and she came out and she went to work for a great consulting company, McKinsey & Company, and started working in the White House doing all kinds of things during the Clinton administration, higher and higher responsibilities, ending up as OMB Deputy Director the last part of the year, when we actually had four balanced budgets in a row, if you will recall.

She knows how to manage. She knows how to manage people, she knows how to manage financial resources, and she is terrific working with people. That is why Senator TOM COBURN, my wingman in terms of leadership on the Senate Committee on Homeland Security & Governmental Affairs, actually came along with Senator JAY ROCKEFELLER from West Virginia, actually came, a Republican and a Democrat, to introduce her for her confirmation hearing before the Senate Finance Committee, on which I served, to endorse her candidacy. I thank Dr. COBURN for doing that. One would expect Senator ROCKEFELLER to do that. He has been a longstanding huge fan, but Senator COBURN and I have only gotten to know her for the last year and a half and have loved working with her and think she has done a terrific job at OMB and that she will do a terrific job at the Department of Health and Human Services.

I wish to say a special thank-you to her parents who are still alive and who still live in Hinton, WV, a real thank-you for raising not one but two young women, including Sylvia's younger sister Stephanie, for instilling the kind of values and the kind of education in them that has enabled them both to go on and do extraordinary things with their life.

I say thank you to Stephen, who proposed marriage to then-Sylvia Mathews at that Blue Stone Dam on the New River all those years ago. I thank him for sharing his wife with our country. These are tough jobs, demanding jobs, and in some cases thankless jobs, and he is willing to take on some extra responsibility as a dad in helping to raise their children, both under the age of 10. I think Helene is about 6 and I think the younger daughter is maybe 4 years old. They know their mom is changing jobs. They know she still has a job. If we confirm her today, it is a huge job.

Is there work to do? Sure, there is. Is there work to do in implementing the Affordable Care Act? Sure, there is. Is there work to do in tweaking it and making it better? Sure, there is.

I will close with this for my Republican friends—and I love them all. For my Republican friends who moan and groan about the enormous burden the Affordable Care Act is putting on the American people, let me say this: I have a friend who if you ask him: How are you doing, says: Compared to what?

If things are so bad now with the Affordable Care Act, let's just say: Compared to what?

Here is where we were 3 or 4 years ago. The country of Japan spends 8 percent of their GDP on health care. We spent 18 percent, until recently, with the Affordable Care Act. They get better results, higher rates of longevity, lower rates of infant mortality, arguably better results than we did until at least a couple of years ago, and in Japan they cover everybody. Until this year we had about 40 million people who went to bed at night who did not have health care coverage.

I regret that anybody who is inconvenienced or disadvantaged all because of the adoption of the Affordable Care Act. I regret it for every one of those people, but you know what. I regret that all those folks in this country, tens of millions of them, didn't have access to health care. I regret the fact that all those people on Medicare never got a second physical, and if they had gotten one, they would have a much better life. I regret that all the folks in the Medicare prescription drug program—millions of senior citizens—fell into the doughnut hole and stopped taking their medicines and got sick, had to be hospitalized, and ended up in nursing homes. It cost a lot of money and they died with not a happy life. I feel badly for them.

My dad used to say to us, rather than moan about our problems, fix them—fix them. There are plenty of things we can do to make the Affordable Care Act better. I know what they are. But the idea about going back to where we were? That dog doesn't hunt. It is not a good thing in Delaware and I don't think it is a good thing in Kentucky, where Gov. Steven Beshear has led, provided great leadership in his State to make sure the hundreds of thousands of people who needed health care have it today who didn't have it before.

We want to make sure the opportunity they have realized in Kentucky and those States that don't have that opportunity, that have no exchange to sign up in—they have no expansion of the Medicaid Program—my hope is they will look to Kentucky as an example and to Delaware as an example, to see what we can do for our people.

Last point. Most of the people who serve here are people of faith—some are Protestant, some are Catholic, some are Jewish, different religions. Most people here are people of faith. Most of our sacred Scriptures have a couple things in common. One of the things they have in common is the Golden Rule. Chaplain Barry Black, who gives the opening prayer most days the Senate is in session, likes to say that the Golden Rule is: Treat other people the way you want to be treated, love thy neighbor as thyself. He says those are the CliffsNotes of the New Testament. As it turns out, the Golden Rule is the CliffsNotes of every major religion in the world. I don't care if you are Protestant, Catholic, Jewish, Muslim, Hindu, Buddhist, almost all of them have something like the Golden Rule in their sacred Scriptures.

In the New Testament, in the Book of Matthew, Matthew 25, there is something we have all heard. Not everybody knows where it came from or even that it is in the Bible, but it is. The Scripture talks about, when I was hungry, did you feed me? When I was thirsty, did you give me to drink? When I was naked, did you clothe me? When I was sick and in prison, did you come to see me?

Matthew 25 doesn't say anything about when I had no health care, and when I had to depend on the emergency room for health care when I got very sick and ran up a big tab that somebody else had to pay for because I was hospitalized for a while—a long while. It doesn't say that in Matthew 25, but the intent is the same.

Where were you? We were here, and we voted to try to do something about it, to make sure people did have better access to health care, and we can improve on what we have done and we need to do that. We have a moral imperative to the least of these in our society to look out for them, to help them look out for themselves as well. We also have the fiscal imperative given our budget constraints to meet that moral imperative in a fiscally responsible way. Sylvia Mathews Burwell understands that as well as anybody I know. She has demonstrated that in her leadership in OMB. She will demonstrate that if we confirm her today to be the Secretary at the Department of Health and Human Services.

I hope my colleagues, Democrats and Republicans, will follow the leadership of Senator TOM COBURN, a Republican from Oklahoma, and his wingman TOM CARPER, a Democrat from Delaware, in supporting this nomination.

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

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

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, this afternoon we are going to vote on the nomination of Ms. Burwell to be the Secretary of HHS. I am going to support that nomination. I am here on the floor to alert people to some of the problems she will face and hopefully she can correct.

For starters, I hope that everybody remembers the government has checks and balances. Congress passes laws, the executive branch enforces them, and it is our responsibility to make sure that those laws are enforced according to the intent of Congress. When they are not enforced, we have a responsibility to point that out, and that is what I will be doing. I hope she will be able to correct the issues that my colleagues and I will be pointing out this morning.

We also have a situation where Congress passed the Affordable Care Act, and in that process the President has done a lot of things that some of us think are illegal and in some cases even unconstitutional. Hopefully, she, as the new director, will make sure that those practices don't continue.

When Ms. Burwell was nominated, I said that anyone put in charge of ObamaCare would be set up to fail. The theme of this law has really been ''by any means necessary.'' In other words, it doesn't really matter what the law says, do whatever it takes to get this program underway: the President can fix it later. He has done that 38 times—and surely sometimes contrary to what the law says and contrary to the oath he took to uphold the laws of this country: The legislative process was certainly, by no means, necessary; if you want to change it, change it.

The implementation of this law has operated similarly. The department we are considering Ms. Burwell to lead has ignored the plain read of the statute whenever it was considered necessary. In other words, don't bother to come to Congress to correct something you think is not working; just correct it yourself. Deadlines were considered to be written in pencil.

If the statute needed to be creatively reinterpreted to make the program work, the Department of HHS did so, and that still continues today. Consequently, that is why I am pleading with Ms. Burwell to change things.

The Department is supposed to implement the employer mandate, which is a year overdue, and it has been significantly altered from the statute. The Department is supposed to implement risk corridors this year, although the legal authority to distribute funds is questionable and the standards used to make those distributions will likely be kept very quiet.

Speaking of things that will be kept quiet, Congress is going to want to know what the premiums will be next year for health insurance. We consider the information very important and relevant.

My State of Iowa is considered to be one of the States most at risk for premium spikes. The Department will want to use any means necessary to hide the premiums until after the November elections unless, of course, the premium numbers are good, and then I am sure the Department will shout them from the rooftops, much as they did with enrollment numbers.

We have heard over and over about enrollment numbers, but the enrollment numbers don't tell the whole story—not even close. I was under the impression that the law was supposed to increase coverage and lower costs. So far that is not the case. The independent research firm McKinsey found that 74 percent of the people getting coverage through ObamaCare plans were previously insured. If those numbers are accurate, that means one in four people getting coverage was previously uninsured. Certainly that is what I hear from my constituents. They have had to change their coverage, and often that coverage has been much more expensive.

Furthermore, the McKinsey research also found that the majority of people who shopped for an ObamaCare plan but did not purchase that plan cited affordability as the No. 1 reason for not buying that insurance.

A poll released by the Kaiser Foundation found that roughly 4 in 10 uninsured Americans named affordability as their primary reason for going without health insurance. It is not working as it was intended.

I hope Ms. Burwell will change the relationship the Department has with Congress. I hope she will be willing to break the ''by any means necessary'' mindset that we have seen for the last 5 years. I hope she doesn't disappear into the bunker over there in that office building and that we will never hear from her again.

Her challenge is very severe. The law appears to be shifting around the previously insured more than it is covering the previously uninsured. The previously uninsured are citing costs as a primary reason for not purchasing insurance.

I will support the nomination of Ms. Burwell today and hope that down the road—several months from now—I am not sorry I did that. I think she is a person who has the capability of turning things around, and that she will do that. But the law remains far from being worthy of support.

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

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

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. 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.

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, the ObamaCare train wreck just keeps rolling on. Every day it seems there is another story about another ObamaCare failure.

Mr. President, 80,000 Oregonians must reenroll in health plans after the State's ObamaCare exchange site failed. The health care coverage of 2 million Americans enrolled on the exchanges could be in jeopardy.

The Congressional Budget Office says there have been so many delays and changes to ObamaCare that it can no longer estimate the fiscal effects of the law. And that is just the ObamaCare news from yesterday. The Democrats' victory lap is a distant memory replaced by the constant flow of stories about ObamaCare's many failures. Americans are losing their health insurance, Americans are losing their doctors, Americans are unable to obtain medications, employers are facing higher costs, and employees are facing higher costs. The list goes on.

The President promised that his health care law was going to be a solution for American families. If they liked their health care plans and their doctors, they could keep them. If they didn't like their health care or if they didn't have health care, they would be able to get an affordable plan. Those were the promises that were made.

Unfortunately, Americans quickly discovered those promises were not to be kept. Millions of Americans were forced off their health care plans and into the exchanges where they frequently found they were paying more and getting less. Too many Americans discovered their new health care coverage meant losing doctors and hospitals they liked and that their choice of replacement was limited.

When the President was campaigning for his health care law, he claimed families would see their health care premiums drop by $2,500. In fact, health care premiums have increased by almost $3,700 under the President, and they are still going up.

Middle-class Americans are hurting. The past 5½ years of the Obama administration have brought higher prices and fewer opportunities. Gas prices have almost doubled. Food prices have risen. Meanwhile, Americans' household income has declined by more than $3,500 on the President's watch. So Americans who once confidently expected to be able to put their children through college and retire comfortably are now struggling to make ends meet. Too many families are living paycheck

to paycheck, desperately praying they won't be faced with any unexpected bills. ObamaCare was supposed to make things better for these families. It was supposed to make health care more affordable and ease Americans' health concerns. Instead, it is making things much worse.

Today the Senate will vote on Sylvia Burwell's nomination to be Secretary of the Department of Health and Human Services. As much as Democrats might want it to be true, a change in personnel at the Department of Health and Human Services won't make the mess ObamaCare has created disappear. Changing HHS Secretaries isn't going to lower Americans' health care costs or give them back the doctor or the health plan they lost. It is not going to help the small businesses that are struggling under ObamaCare's burdensome mandates or restore the $1 trillion Americans will lose in wages, thanks to the health care law. It is not going to bring back the jobs that have been lost as a result of ObamaCare.

Every Senator who voted for this law owes the American people an explanation. Every Senator who voted for this law ought to be telling American families what he or she is going to do to fix this mess. Americans deserve better than ObamaCare, and we could give them better than ObamaCare, if Members of the Senate would decide this was the wrong approach and decide to go in a different direction. I hope eventually they will come to that conclusion.

I yield the floor.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Wyoming.

Mr. BARRASSO. Mr. President, I come to the floor today with huge concerns about the Obama health care law. I do it as a physician, as a doctor, who has taken care of families all around the State of Wyoming for a couple of decades; as a past president of our State medical society; as someone committed to preventive care, coordinated care; as the medical director of the Wyoming health fairs to give people low-cost screenings for health care around the State Those continue today. There is one in the small community of Afton, WY, this very Saturday—2 days from today. So the effort continues to actually make sure people can get prevention, early recognition of problems, and actual care.

The President's health care law hasn't done that. The President keeps focusing on the word ''coverage'' instead of what people wanted, which was care. It is interesting today, because in the Wyoming Tribune Eagle, front page, today's newspaper, headline: Health-care law plagued by inconsistencies. At least 2 million people, the headline says, enrolled in insurance have problems with data that could affect their coverage. This is an Associated Press article on the front page of the Wyoming Tribune Eagle. A huge paperwork headache for the government could also be jeopardizing coverage for some of the people who just got health insurance under the President's health care law.

The President went on television 4 days before the kickoff of the exchanges and said this is going to be easier to use than amazon.com. He said that. It is cheaper than your cell phone bill. And, of course, he said people could keep their doctor if they liked their doctor.

When people see how this rolled out and the problems they have had with it, they now have huge concerns about whether they can actually trust the Federal Government with anything. They see all of the problems coming out of Washington and they are saying, Why should we trust the government, the Washington-based government, with anything?

Let's take a look at some of the States that set up their own exchange. Yesterday's Wall Street Journal: State Exchanges Seek Costly Fix. Five States that launched health exchanges under the Affordable Care Act expect to spend as much as $240 million to fix their sites or switch to the Federal marketplace.

Not one person is going to get care because of that. That is $240 million to fix the bad sites that have already wasted money. How can people in these States of Oregon, Minnesota, Massachusetts, Maryland, Nevada—how can they say this is good for them? This health care law—for people who wanted the care they need from a doctor they choose at lower cost find more wasted government money—in Oregon alone, $255 million, money previously spent. The FBI is investigating them now in Oregon because of this. They say they want more money to upgrade the system. Minnesota: $141 million. What are we hearing from Minnesota? We are hearing school districts say we have to pay a lot more, so we are not going to be able to pay for teachers. We are not going to be able to pay for bus drivers. We are going to have to take it away from students to pay for the mistakes of this administration, this government, this law forced down the throats of the American public and voted for by many in this Chamber who never read it. They never read the bill, because they trusted NANCY PELOSI. She said, First you have to pass it before you get to find out what is in it.

We don't have to turn the clock back very far to go to the June 4 article posted in Roll Call, the local paper. Headline: Fiscal diagnosis—now, as a physician we do a physical diagnosis, but they are talking about a fiscal diagnosis: Fiscal Diagnosis Only Gets Tougher for Health Care Law. The first paragraph says, For Democratic lawmakers who were hesitant to sign onto this sweeping 2010 health care law, one of the most powerful selling points was that the Affordable Care Act would actually reduce the federal budget deficit . . .

Four years later, headline: Fiscal Diagnosis Only Gets Tougher for Health Care Law.

So we can talk about all of those numbers, but I want to talk about people who have actually been hurt by the health care law. There are people who have been helped, but there are many who have been hurt. People in my State—thousands and thousands—have had letters of cancellation. If they have gone onto the Web site and bought insurance, they found they paid a lot more for what they had to buy, because a lot of times it wasn't actually what they needed for themselves or for their family or what was best for them; it included coverage they would never use and don't want but still had to pay for, because the President seems to think he knows better what that family in Wyoming wants or needs than they do. That is not what America was built on—the government telling people what they have to buy, what they have to choose, what they have to have as their health insurance or their care.

It is interesting that even National Public Radio has a story about a couple, a family—because one of my colleagues from Connecticut comes to the floor and says he thinks ObamaCare is working. This couple says it doesn't work—does not work. ''Frustrated By The Affordable Care Act, One Family Opts Out.'' This is a family in Texas, reported on National Public Radio. Rachel's husband wanted to make sure they had insurance. Rachel was skeptical, but Nick, her husband, went on line and started shopping. He had a lot of trouble getting through the glitchy Web site at first, but eventually he found a plan that would work just for his wife. He was concerned about his wife. She was pregnant. So this past January, as soon as the plan began, Nick printed out a list of obstetricians from the plan's Web sites. He said: I handed it to Rachel, fully confident, fully feeling like I had accomplished something for her, I had come through for my wife.

Well, they called obstetricians because she was pregnant. Some would just say, We don't take Obama. One of the best was: ''The doctor takes it here in the actual practice, but whatever hospital you use''—none of those hospitals take ObamaCare.

She said: It was mind numbing, because I was sitting there thinking, I am paying close to $400 a month just for me to have insurance that doesn't even work. What am I paying for?

How could this not be working, her husband said. The United States Government has set this up. It is this whole big deal, he said. They are having commercials everywhere saying we need to use this, and these people are just saying, no, no, no, and it just made me so mad.

So, as the headline says, they opted out.

That is what the President has given the American people; not affordable care, not available care, not quality care, not access to care but a lot of promises not delivered upon. Many people across this country have been hurt by this health care law.

I am going to continue to work on ways to reform health care in America in a way that is good for patients as well as the providers who take care of them, and responsible for the American taxpayers.

Thank you, Mr. President. I yield the floor.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Ohio.

Mr. PORTMAN. Mr. President, my colleague from Wyoming, Dr. BARRASSO, has been talking about a lot of the issues related to the Affordable Care Act, otherwise known as ObamaCare. He has talked about the fact that the mandates in this legislation don't work for many Americans. The one-size-fits-all approach that was taken doesn't work in my State of Ohio and around the country.

He also spoke about the cost. Unfortunately, it is not the Affordable Care Act; it tends to be, for a lot of people, the unaffordable care act. Costs have gone up already too high. We are now finding a lot of small businesses in my home State of Ohio are simply squeezed to the point where they are worried whether they will be able to provide health care at all, given the huge increases in cost.

These are all very serious concerns and reasons that I think we need to repeal and replace with policies that work better to provide people more choices and provide people lower cost of care so they can get health care for themselves and their families.

I want to talk about a very specific aspect of ObamaCare and its implementation that concerns me. I came to the floor a couple of days ago to talk about this because I had just learned, actually from some press reports, about some potential problems with implementation. Unfortunately, since that time it has been confirmed through other sources that many of my concerns are legitimate. The concern is very simple: That despite assurances by the administration to the contrary, they have yet to put in place a mechanism to assure that the people who are getting the subsidies under ObamaCare are eligible for them. This is a major problem because we are talking about billions and billions of dollars. It is a surprise, probably, to a lot of my constituents and other folks who might be listening today that the administration hasn't even put in place the basic processes, the mechanisms we would expect in an automated system, to ensure that when people apply for these subsidies—which are substantial; up to 400 percent of poverty, remember, and up to 10,000 bucks for a family of 4, for instance—that they may or may not be eligible and yet they may be getting these payments. Some people may be overstating their income and some people may be understating their income, and some folks may get a very unfortunate surprise of a big tax bill because of it.

It is unbelievable that after a few years of implementation, still there is not in place some sort of a system to ensure that the right people are getting these huge amounts of taxpayer dollars. Improper payments of these subsidies may be going, we are told, to over a million people who aren't eligible to receive them. Yesterday the Associated Press reported that the number is actually closer to 2 million people who are receiving subsidies, despite apparent discrepancies between what they are submitting—the data they are giving about their income information—and what the IRS already has. By the way, the Health and Human Services folks and CMS confirmed this report yesterday when they said: ''The typical family of four generated 21 separate pieces of information that required verification, and all were attested to under penalty of perjury.'' Given that we expect this subsidy program to cost about $36 billion this year alone, these improper payments would likely result in billions of wasted taxpayer dollars.

So at the very least, I am concerned that folks are going to find they have some very unpleasant and unexpected tax bills coming up, and the most we are seeing is a lot of taxpayer dollars that aren't going to the intended purpose.

It is not as if we did not anticipate this problem. This is obviously something a lot of people thought about and talked about. In fact, we knew it would be difficult to verify all these dozens of pieces of information we just heard about from CMS. That is why last year Congress acted in a bipartisan fashion to require the Department of Health and Human Services to certify that it had these controls in place to verify the eligibility of subsidy recipients. We enshrined that requirement in law as part of what was called the Continuing Appropriations Act—better known as the Ryan-Murray budget agreement—at the end of last year. Part of the Ryan-Murray budget agreement was to say that CMS at HHS had to have in place these controls to ensure people were getting the funds that were appropriate for them.

On January 1, as required by law, Secretary Sebelius certified to Congress ''that the American Health Benefit Exchanges [the so-called marketplaces] verify that applicants for advance payments of the premium tax credit and cost-sharing reductions are eligible for such payments and reductions, consistent with the requirements of [the Affordable Care Act].'' So Secretary Sebelius made certain commitments there. She also further told Congress that the exchanges had ''implemented numerous systems and processes to carry out'' their verification responsibilities, including their income verification responsibilities. So this is an assurance given to us by the Secretary of Health and Human Services. We are now learning through reports in the press—which were spurred by confidential sources within HHS, by the way—that these verification methods are not in place or, if they are, they are very poorly functioning at best. In fact, HHS is planning to begin the verification process—here we are 5 months later—for some of this information by hand at some point in the future.

When I learned of these reports—and they have been in the Washington Post and they have been in Politico—I hoped they were mistaken. So I wrote to the Secretary of Health and Human Services. I also wrote to the IRS Commissioner—this was last month—asking if these allegations were true and, if they were, what HHS was planning on doing about them.

If the Post or Politico got the story wrong, I would have expected a quick response saying: No, these reports are wrong. The internal reports they are referring to are inaccurate.

But instead I did not get an answer. I gave them until June 1 to give me an answer, to give them some time to get back to me. It is now June 5 and I have received nothing—nothing to address my concerns. In fact, I have received no answer at all. I know some of my colleagues have raised similar concerns without receiving answers. Like so many issues that have arisen with the implementation of ObamaCare, the administration's response has been nothing but silence and stonewalling—no transparency.

We do not have time for political games. The American people do not have time for it. We have true budget pressures. Folks are already paying a lot in terms of income taxes. They do not want to pay more. They certainly do not want the income taxes they are paying going to folks who are not eligible for this $36 billion worth of benefits going out this year.

Since the administration refuses to voluntarily provide the information we need to do our job overseeing the expenditure of these funds, I think serious action is necessary. That is why today I am making a formal written request to HHS Inspector General Daniel R. Levinson to begin an investigation into these reports which call into question the accuracy of the Secretary's certification required, again, by the Continuing Appropriations Act, the Ryan-Murray legislation at the end of the year.

I know the IG is scheduled to provide a report to Congress next month regarding how effective HHS has been in preventing subsidy payments on the basis of inaccurate or fraudulent information, but in light of the apparent inconsistencies between the Secretary's certification and the recent media reports, I think a more in-depth and targeted investigation is warranted. The IG's office has promised that ''ensuring that taxpayer dollars are spent for their intended purposes'' under ObamaCare is its ''top priority.'' That is what that said. So these allegations certainly should strike at the very heart of that mission.

If it is true that HHS has failed to implement a modern, effective system

for verifying the eligibility of folks seeking subsidies, we need know about it. They say sunlight is the best disinfectant. Well, I think that is the case here. The best way to ensure that these tax dollars are not wasted is to simply get the information. Let us know what is going on.

I hope the Obama administration and, after her confirmation—I think she will be confirmed—Secretary Burwell will show their commitment to responsible government by joining me in calling for this investigation and responding quickly and accurately to whatever shortcomings it uncovers. But if the administration does not, then it will fall to those of us in this Chamber on both sides of the aisle to take action. I sincerely hope it will not come to that.

I plan to support Director Burwell's nomination today because I think she is a manager, and I think that is what we need right now at the Department of Health and Human Services. I would say this ought to be one of her top priorities as the new manager at HHS—to ensure that the problems we have seen with the implementation of ObamaCare do not continue and specifically that we are not seeing huge amounts of taxpayer dollars being misspent, being wasted through inaccurate verification of these subsidies.

With that, I yield the floor for my colleague from Nebraska.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. BOOKER). The Senator from Nebraska.

Mr. JOHANNS. Mr. President, at the very start of my comments, let me make it clear that the nominee we are voting on today will have my support. I like her from a personal standpoint. I think she is competent. I think she is able to do the job that is before her. But I do believe the problem she is going to face is that this law is so fatally flawed that she cannot be successful in implementing it.

The simple fact is that it is deeply flawed, and it was from the beginning. The policy simply does not work. We know now that ObamaCare drives up costs, it comes between the doctor and the patient, and it limits health care choices for individuals and for their families. But I urge the new head of HHS—when and assuming she is confirmed—to address all those things that are within her control.

It is critical that the new leader work to restore the transparency and accountability that has been lacking at this Department. One of the latest has been mentioned in other comments by Senators, but it is especially disturbing. It comes from the Washington Post. The article from the Post said: ''The government may be paying incorrect subsidies to more than 1 million Americans.'' Mr. President, 1 million Americans are getting incorrect subsidies. The article goes on to say that the computer systems necessary to verify individuals' income were either defective or they were not even built. That calls into question Secretary Sebelius's commitment to Congress in January that, in fact, the systems were ready and they were working.

Senator MORAN and I wrote a letter. We asked for answers from HHS about this news report. Well, nothing but crickets, no response whatsoever.

Just yesterday the Associated Press reported that more than 1 in 4—or at least 2 million—ObamaCare exchange enrollees have data discrepancies, casting even more doubt on HHS's competency to administer the ObamaCare subsidies.

Families could be in for a shock next April when the IRS notifies them that they must repay money to the Treasury because HHS miscalculated their subsidy. This is troubling because Nebraskans are definitely feeling the effect of ObamaCare, just like citizens across the country. Let me talk about a couple of stories quickly.

A college instructor from Nebraska wrote to me saying:

> Due to ObamaCare, I will be unable to teach more than two courses per term.
>
> Overall, I am losing at least 20 percent of my adjunct income, and I will definitely be in a rough situation with zero money coming in this summer.

Regarding ObamaCare, she explains:

> We have a one-shoe-fits-all situation, and I don't wear that shoe.

A young college student in Nebraska shared identical or similar concerns. She says:

> Through my job, I was previously able to work 32 hours a week, but am now only allowed 28 hours.
>
> That is a very significant amount of my already small college student budget.

Americans like these constituents do not want a law that decreases their earnings and mandates Washington-prescribed insurance that costs more with fewer benefits.

My colleagues and I stand ready to work toward a better health care alternative. We are committed to vigilant oversight of ObamaCare because Americans' health care and trillions in taxpayer dollars are at stake.

But it is my hope that Ms. Burwell, if confirmed, will reverse these troubling patterns at HHS and provide Congress and the American people with the responsiveness, the accountability, and the transparency this post requires.

With that, I yield the floor for my colleague, Senator SESSIONS.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Alabama.

Mr. SESSIONS. I thank my colleague.

I serve as the ranking member of the Budget Committee and have worked with Ms. Burwell in her now just 13 months, I think, of service in the tremendously important position of Director of the Office of Management and Budget. I do not believe she has the background, the qualities, and experience—proven managerial leadership—required at that huge Department of Health and Human Services. She has 500 people working in the budget office, and that is an important office. At HHS there are over 70,000. She once served on a board of a local hospital. She simply is not the person whom we need today to bring order out of the disarray we have in the health care system of this country and the total collapse of integrity and consistency in the implementation of ObamaCare.

There are a couple things I care about, but I really think it time for this administration to stop moving around insiders, political allies, and put some people in these critical positions capable of operating them at the highest possible level.

Ms. Burwell violated the Medicare trigger, for example. If the trustees of Medicare issue a report that it is heading to insolvency, it is a critical matter. The administration by law is required within 2 weeks to submit a plan to fix Medicare. They have been submitting this report for years.

As the President's director, under 31 U.S.C. 1105, Ms. Burwell was the person responsible for submitting Medicare legislation to Congress. We asked her about that before she was confirmed. During her hearings, she said she would ''do everything in her power'' to comply with the Federal law. Yet, despite this assurance, she refused to comply with the law and never submitted a plan. Don't we need a plan to fix Medicare? Don't we need the Chief Executive of America, through the budget director, to submit a plan to fix it?

She also violated the law and denied Congress needed transparency with respect to the health care law, the ObamaCare law. The Omnibus appropriations bill signed into law in January required HHS to include in its fiscal year 2015 budget a detailed accounting of spending to implement the health law. But neither the budget director, Ms. Burwell, nor the agency she now will head submitted sufficient information to comply with that.

My time is up, but I will say that I am very much taken with Ms. Burwell. She is a delightful person. Many of my colleagues think highly of her, and some, like our West Virginia Senators and others, really think she will do a good job. But this is not the right position for her. This government is drifting into disarray in a whole host of ways. We need the strongest possible, capable leader, with proven health care managerial experience for the good of America and for the good of President Obama. This is not the right nominee.

I thank the Chair and yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Maryland.

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. President, first let me comment on Sylvia Burwell, the nominee who is before us. She has done an excellent job as the Director of OMB. Her credentials are incredible. She is acknowledged by both Democrats and Republicans as being an outstanding manager, a person who is fully capable to manage HHS, an extremely important agency that has over 70,000 workers who work for Health and Human Services, has a

budget of over $1 trillion, and 11 Federal agencies. Sylvia Burwell is the right person to manage that agency and to move it forward in carrying out the very important work of our country.

For Maryland, I take pride because some of the agencies are headquartered in my State. The National Institutes of Health—world class. The best research in the world is done right here as a result of U.S. leadership, and that comes under HHS.

The FDA, which insures us safe products in food and drugs, is headquartered in Maryland. But, again, that is world class—the best in the world. It is important that we get the very best person as our Secretary, and Sylvia Burwell is that person.

CMS is headquartered in Baltimore, with Medicare and Medicaid—over 100 million people. Again, it is the best in the world. So I am very pleased that Sylvia Burwell is willing to step forward at this time to head that agency. I encourage my colleagues to confirm her nomination. We will have that vote a little later today.

I wanted to take a moment to thank Secretary Sebelius for her service to our country. Through very difficult times—and these have not been easy political times—she has steered a very steady ship at HHS and did this country proud. I thank her very much for her service to our country and for helping the hundreds of millions who have benefited from the services at HHS.

But a significant part of the mission at HHS is the implementation of the Affordable Care Act of 2010. I have heard my colleagues talk about it, so let me point out how much progress we have made. What a difference the Affordable Care Act has made. I would urge the people in this country to look at the facts. My colleagues make comments that just are not true. Look at the facts. The growth of health care costs has gone down. The projected expenses are less today than they were in 2010 when we passed the Affordable Care Act.

We have bent the cost curve of health care. Yes, the Affordable Care Act has helped us do it. One of the reasons is we have more people who have health insurance today and who have third-party payment. They go to doctors rather than emergency rooms. That brings down the growth rate of health care costs. We are keeping people healthier. That was the whole concept of the Affordable Care Act.

Unfortunately, for my friends on the other side of the aisle, their answer is: Repeal, repeal, repeal. They have no plan for health care. We have seen under the Affordable Care Act that we have implemented delivery system reforms that keep people out of hospitals, keep readmission rates down, that provide preventive health care, so that we keep people healthy. That was the concept of the Affordable Care Act. Now that we are implementing it—and it takes time to implement it because it is a complicated law when you are dealing with health care.

It would have been more helpful if we had had support to look at ways that we could make it even better. But we have not had that type of cooperation in the Congress.

So more people are insured. The cost rates have been brought down. We reduced the debt and deficit of this country. But for the passage of the Affordable Care Act, our deficits would be larger today. That is not one Member saying that. Look at what those who are charged with doing the projections for this country have said. They have said that the debt today is smaller as a result of the passage of the Affordable Care Act.

As far as those who pay the costs, the consumers who pay the health insurance premiums and pay the doctor bills and hospital bills, they have seen relief under the Affordable Care Act. There is guaranteed value for their insurance premium. At least 80 to 85 percent of that premium dollar must go to direct benefits. As a result, millions of Americans in 2012—over 8 million Americans—received rebates from their insurance company. They actually got checks back equaling about half a billion dollars.

Consumers are getting better value for their dollars. We know it is not easy at times for actuaries to be able to predict the exact costs of health care. But now we have protection in the code. If the premium they charge you is too much, you will get a rebate for the excess that you paid—real protection.

I must tell you, as I go around the State of Maryland—I know the Presiding Officer finds the same thing in the State of New Jersey—families are happy they can keep their adult children on their insurance policies until the age of 26. Millions of Americans have taken advantage of that provision in the Affordable Care Act. They are very happy about that.

I cannot tell you how many people I have talked to in Maryland who have benefited from the elimination of preexisting conditions or the fear of losing their insurance policy because someone has gotten sick. Insurance companies can no longer do that. So if you have a child with asthma and you are trying to get insurance, before the Affordable Care Act they would not have covered the cost of taking care of that child's asthma. Today you get full coverage.

We have eliminated preexisting conditions because that is what insurance should do. It should cover your needs. Now it does. Before the Affordable Care Act, there were limits, caps—no longer caps. People had insurance and still had to file personal bankruptcy. Those days are over thanks to the Affordable Care Act. It is being implemented in a way that Americans are benefiting from the passage and implementation of the Affordable Care Act.

In regard to our seniors and our disabled population who are covered under Medicare, they are very happy the preventive health care benefits are now without any copayment. They can take care of their health care needs. They can get the care they need.

As the Presiding Officer knows, when we passed the prescription drug plan, we had what is known as the doughnut hole, which is a coverage gap. After you incurred a certain amount of cost, then 100 percent was your expense. Many seniors had to leave prescription drugs on the counter at the drug store because they could not afford to pay for the cost of prescription drugs, even though they thought they had coverage.

Thanks to the passage of the Affordable Care Act, that is being eliminated today. We are providing full coverage. Despite the claims on the other side of the aisle, take a look at the facts. Medicare is more solvent today than it was before the passage of the Affordable Care Act. We helped ensure the future of Medicare by the passage of the Affordable Care Act. That is the fact. That is the record.

We are on this path to improve our health care system. It is working. We have reduced hospital readmissions. The accountable care organization is a provision where we take the creativity of private operators where they can work together to figure out how they can help people be healthier. In my State of Maryland, there are several that are working, that are figuring out ways they can use community facilities and health care to keep people healthier and to reduce the cost of health care and make it more efficient by delivery system reform. It is working. It is working.

We strengthened the primary care network. We all talk about that. We knew we had to provide more primary care doctors and nurses. We have done that under the Affordable Care Act. It takes time. But we are already seeing the benefit of that. We have increased dramatically community health center budgets. I have visited the community health centers in my State. I now see where they have mental health services being provided in the community that was not being provided before the Affordable Care Act.

They now have dental services that are being provided in underserved areas that were not being provided before the Affordable Care Act. We now have prenatal services that are being provided in communities that did not have that service before the passage of the Affordable Care Act. What is the result? For low birth-weight babies we have reduced that number. Infant survival rates are increasing.

I take pride that in supporting the Affordable Care Act I helped bring about those results. We are providing more resources in our communities. That is the record of the Affordable Care Act. That is what we have been able to do. I am particularly proud of the fact that under the essential health benefits, we now provide pediatric dental benefits. That is a little personal to

us in Maryland, because in 2007 we lost a youngster, a 12-year-old, Deamonte Driver.

He lived not more than 10 miles from here. His mom tried to get him to a dentist. He had a tooth problem. She could not get him to a dentist. Nobody would treat him. He had no insurance. His tooth decay became an abscessed tooth. That problem went into his brain. He had two emergency surgeries costing a quarter of a million dollars. He should have had $80 of dental care. That would have taken care of his needs. As a result of that, he lost his life.

This bill is making a huge difference. My point is this. For small businesses, they have greater choice and they have credits available to make it easier. We have expanded Medicaid. We have done a lot. We have the best health care in the world that is provided right here in the United States. We are now on the path of having the best health care system in the world. The Affordable Care Act helps us get there. We can take a giant step in that direction by approving the nomination of Sylvia Burwell as Secretary of Health and Human Services.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Louisiana.

Mr. VITTER. Mr. President, on April 29 of this year, Louisiana's House Republican delegation wrote a letter to Senator LANDRIEU, as well as myself, urging us to represent a majority of Louisianan's opinions and oppose the nomination of Sylvia Burwell to become HHS Secretary unless significant changes were made to the path we are on regarding the implementation of ObamaCare.

They asked us to oppose Ms. Burwell's nomination until an agreement is reached to provide for the equitable treatment and protection of all Americans under ObamaCare, and until the administration, including Ms. Burwell, committed not to pick and choose what parts of the law they would implement; not to pick and choose what deadlines they would meet, what deadlines they would ignore; not to pick and choose mandates they would enforce, such as the individual mandate, and what mandates they would ignore, such as the employer mandate.

This is that letter dated April 29. I ask unanimous consent that it be printed in the RECORD. I agreed with that sentiment. I agreed with those concerns. So I responded shortly thereafter in a letter dated May 19 that I would oppose Ms. Burwell's nomination because of those concerns, because there is no evidence that Ms. Burwell would put an end to any of that, would put an end to the administration's common practice of creating special rules for big business, special rules for Washington insiders, for not simply following the law, not simply implementing the law but picking, choosing, and doing parts of the law, such as delaying parts of the law when it was politically convenient.

The Senate's consideration of Ms. Burwell's nomination to become Secretary of HHS invited a conversation to discuss all of that, to discuss her responsibilities for the full, impartial, fair, legal implementation of ObamaCare. I paid attention very much to that discussion. I was hopeful about it. Unfortunately, it was disappointing, in my view, in terms of her responses.

During the nomination process, Ms. Burwell was asked on a number of occasions how she would continue to implement and enforce various aspects of ObamaCare. Again, these concerns obviously arose because of the administration's decisions to make more than 20 unilateral changes to the law as written, to timing, to applicability of various provisions.

One of these decisions which was particularly highlighted in my House colleagues' letter of April 29 was to give big business relief from the employer mandate while there was no relief for individuals. Millions will face a steep penalty—face it right now under the individual mandates. Not only did Ms. Burwell punt to the Treasury Department, her response failed to even acknowledge that the administration has failed to execute the law as written because the law is broken.

The American people have really had enough of the administration passing blame through certain Federal agencies or to bureaucrats or to Congress or to political parties. They have had enough of the blame game. They have had enough of finger pointing. What I find even more hypocritical in this regard is that the administration worked with many Members of Congress behind closed doors to give Congress and Washington insiders special treatment under ObamaCare, to give them a way to avoid higher costs and lower quality care, the way Americans are suffering from that.

So I will also oppose Ms. Burwell's nomination until the American people get the same relief from ObamaCare as the Washington elite, as the Washington exemption from ObamaCare, as the Congressional subsidy. To date, at least 4.7 million Americans, including 92,000 Louisianans, have had their health insurance plans canceled as a result of the mandates of the law.

Many of these folks were then dealt with a choice of going without health insurance or taking the gamble of purchasing an expensive plan on the government-run ObamaCare exchange.

Again, the law, as written, was intended to make every Member of Congress and our staff walk in those same shoes, but the administration, again, was fast and loose with the law and created a special rule contrary to statute. Ms. Burwell was part of that administration, creating a special exemption, a special subsidy, a special rule not found in the statute.

So in contrast to that experience of many Louisianians, millions of Americans, Members of Congress, and congressional staff can get out of that mandate of ObamaCare. Many congressional staff have been exempted from having to go to the exchange, which is clearly a requirement under the statute. Members of Congress and staff who do go to the exchange get a huge taxpayer funded subsidy—nowhere in the statute and nowhere available to any other American at the same income levels.

For all of these reasons, because of this disparate treatment, because of ignoring the law, because of amending the law over and over by administrative fiat, I have to oppose Ms. Burwell's nomination.

She gave no indication in any of her testimony or in any discussions leading up to this confirmation vote that she would change any of that, and it is pretty clear she will not.

I will oppose the nomination.

If Ms. Burwell is passed by the Senate as Secretary of the HHS, I urge her to take heed of these calls. We have a law before us. We need to follow the law—not in some cases but in all cases, not implement here but not there, not give some folks special treatment and special exemptions not found under the statute but implement the law as written.

That will be her responsibility as much as anyone in the administration. I urge her to be a true leader in the administration, to start doing that in an appropriate, legal way.

I ask unanimous consent to have printed in the RECORD the April 29, 2014, and May 19, 2014, letters I referred to previously.

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

CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES,
Washington, DC, April 29, 2014.

Senator MARY LANDRIEU,
U.S. Senate, Hart Senate Office Building, Washington, DC.

Senator DAVID VITTER,
U.S. Senate, Hart Senate Office Building, Washington, DC.

DEAR SENATOR LANDRIEU AND SENATOR VITTER: We write to respectfully request that you place a hold on the nomination of Ms. Sylvia Burwell for Secretary of the Department of Health and Human Services until an agreement is reached to provide for the equitable treatment and protection of all Americans under the Affordable Care Act (ACA). The President's signature health care law, which contains a laundry list of job-killing mandates and taxes, is wreaking havoc on our economy and creating hardships for hardworking taxpayers who received cancellation letters for their health insurance policies due to unworkable ACA requirements. To date, at least 4.7 million Americans, including at least 92,000 Louisianans, have had their health insurance plans cancelled as a result of this law. In addition to losing their health insurance coverage, Americans across the country are seeing their health insurance premiums and deductibles skyrocket while their provider networks become narrower. In Louisiana, some individuals are seeing premium increases greater than 100%.

Since the passage of the ACA, the Obama Administration, through the Department of

Health and Human Services and the Department of the Treasury, has unilaterally delayed or changed the law at least 20 times. For instance, the Administration has delayed the enforcement of the employer mandate for large employers until 2015 and for businesses with between 50 and 99 employees until 2016. In December, the Department of Health and Human Services decided to vastly expand the ''hardship exemption'' to include individuals who ''received a notice saying that your current health insurance plan is being cancelled, and you consider the other plans available unaffordable.'' These actions, among many others, are tacit admissions that the Obama Administration knows this law is both unworkable and unpopular. Unfortunately, the Administration has yet to provide this relief to all Americans.

Families across Louisiana have faced cancelled health insurance plans, rising health insurance premiums, and the loss of access to doctors and hospitals while watching the Administration pick political favorites through selective exemptions from the ACA. It is wholly unfair for families to still be threatened with penalties from the IRS at the same time as insurance companies and businesses are granted unilateral relief. Please join us in calling for fairness for all under the law by placing a hold on Ms. Burwell's nomination until she agrees to provide equitable treatment for all Americans under the Affordable Care Act.

Sincerely,

STEVE SCALISE,
Member of Congress.
BILL CASSIDY,
Member of Congress.
VANCE MCALLISTER,
Member of Congress.
CHARLES BOUSTANY,
Member of Congress.
JOHN FLEMING,
Member of Congress.

U.S. SENATE,
Washington, DC, May 19, 2014.

Congressman STEVE SCALISE,
House of Representatives, Rayburn House Office Building, Washington, DC.
Congressman CHARLES BOUSTANY,
House of Representatives, Longworth House Office Building, Washington, DC.
Congressman VANCE MCALLISTER,
House of Representatives, Cannon House Office Building, Washington, DC.
Congressman BILL CASSIDY,
House of Representatives, Longworth House Office Building, Washington, DC.
Congressman JOHN FLEMING,
House of Representatives, Cannon House Office Building, Washington, DC.

DEAR LOUISIANA CONGRESSIONAL COLLEAGUES: I write in response to your letter asking to hold the nomination of Ms. Silvia Burwell for Secretary of the Department of Health and Human Services until an agreement is reached to provide the American people the same treatment under Obamacare as large businesses. 1 share your opinion that the Administration's decision to give large businesses relief from the employer mandate while millions still face a penalty under the individual mandate is both unfair and drives a deeper wedge between the American people and those with powerful lobbyists and access to power. What I find even more hypocritical is that Congress worked behind closed doors to give themselves special treatment under Obamacare to avoid higher costs and lower quality care. I will oppose Ms. Burwell's nomination until the American people get the same relief from Obamacare as the Washington elite and their corporate allies.

Like you, I have heard from hardworking Louisianans every day on skyrocketing premiums, higher out of pocket costs as a result of lower quality health plans being offered on the federal exchange, and limited access to their doctors. Members of Congress and their staff would be facing these exact consequences had they not bent the rules last summer to keep their generous employer-based, taxpayer funded subsidy to avoid higher costs and only make available high-quality, gold level health plans to ensure they were able to keep their doctors.

To date, at least 4.7 million Americans, including at least 92,000 Louisianans, have had their health insurance plans canceled as a result of this law. Many of these people were then dealt with the choice of going without health insurance or taking the gamble of purchasing an expensive plan on the government run Obamacare exchange. In contrast, high level Congressional staff who often negotiate directly with the Administration were able to alleviate the inconvenience of procuring their health insurance on the broken federal exchange and keep the plan they liked on the Federal Employee Health Benefits Program (FEHBP).

I join your efforts in calling for fairness for all under the law, and will oppose Ms. Burwell's nomination and any other bureaucrat that puts the needs of the political elite before the American people.

Sincerely,

DAVID VITTER,
U.S. Senator.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Virginia.

Mr. KAINE. I rise today also to speak about health care issues, the Affordable Care Act, and Sylvia Mathews Burwell, the nominee to be Secretary of Health and Human Services.

The Affordable Care Act has completed its first year of open enrollment. Despite some significant technical challenges, 8 million Americans have used the State or Federal health insurance marketplaces, as created by the ACA, to access insurance.

I want to talk about the status of the ACA today, some challenges—including some comments made by my colleague from Louisiana—and then talk about Sylvia Mathews Burwell.

Of the 8 million Americans who have used the exchanges to access health insurance, over 216,000 of them are Virginians. In addition to the 8 million, 3 million more people have been enrolled in Medicaid or CHIP as of February—in addition to the marketplaces open—and those Medicaid and CHIP expansions were because of the Affordable Care Act provisions.

In addition, an estimated 3.1 million young adults have gained coverage by being able to stay on family policies until age 26. The combined number, just in this expansion of coverage, is now more than 14 million Americans.

Let me put that in context. One year in, 14 million Americans have insurance through the ACA. That is more than the total population of the following States: West Virginia, Idaho, Hawaii, New Hampshire, Montana, Delaware, South Dakota, North Dakota, Vermont, and Wyoming. One year in, more people have insurance through the ACA than the combined populations—entire populations—of those 10 States.

The number dwarfs the population of New Jersey, which is about 9 million today—this 14 million number, which is growing every day. So imagine a program, even with all the challenges and the rollout, within 1 year providing insurance to more people than the combined population of these 10 States, significantly more than the Virginia population as well.

Gallup has polled, since 2008, the percentage of Americans who don't have health insurance—American adults who don't have health insurance. The number was down to 13.4 percent when the poll was last taken in April, which is the lowest monthly uninsured rate since Gallup started taking this poll.

Have there been challenges? Sure. Have there been those who have had some difficulty? Sure. We have been dealing with them on the phone—as the Presiding Officer has too. But the uninsured rate is dropping dramatically. Even at 1 year with the problems, people are receiving insurance as a result of the ACA.

Each one of them has a story. Each one of them has a story of what it was like to live without health insurance and what it is like to live now with the security and comfort of health insurance—not only for when you get ill but also for when you are going to bed at night worried about what will happen to you if you get ill, what will happen to you if your spouse is in an auto accident, what will happen to you if your children get diagnosed with something that might well be a preexisting condition under an earlier day.

The stories aren't just about the 14 million who have health insurance because of the ACA. They are also stories of the nearly 20 million Americans who have received rebates because they overpaid premiums and the insurance companies now have to send them money. It is people who cannot be charged discriminatory rates because they are women. It is seniors who are able to get preventive care under Medicare for free or reduced-price prescription drugs for free. It is all the Americans who had preexisting conditions which would have blocked them from insurance coverage before the ACA passed.

Just briefly, I am one of these stories. When I went onto the open market to buy health insurance a couple of years ago—and like most good families, when you want to do something, you put this really smart person on it—my wife. She started to call around about health insurance. Two insurance companies said to her: We can write you a policy on four of your five family members.

One wouldn't insure me. I think politics is viewed as a dangerous line of work.

One wouldn't insure one of my children. Well, here is an important safety tip. Don't tell my wife or any wife or mother: We will only insure part of your family.

My wife said in each instance: I actually think this is against the law now. I think you have to provide insurance

for everybody, and not just for four of the five. The insurance company rep called the boss and then called back and said: We are sorry; you are right. We have to write you insurance on every member of the family.

Everybody has a story and increasingly these stories accumulate. Whether it's coverage or a preexisting condition ban or equal treatment in rates between men and women, these stories are starting to accumulate and are showing us that this ACA can and will be successful.

Of course, there are measures to improve it that we still need to embrace. I am proud to cosponsor today a bill that the lead sponsor, Senator FRANKEN, called the Family Coverage Act. It was introduced today.

The ACA requires large employers to offer affordable health care coverage to the employees. The IRS definition of affordability suggests that means that an employee's share of the premiums of individual coverage, rather than family coverage, is less than 9.5 percent of family income.

If the employee has an offer of affordable insurance, the employee in the family cannot receive premium tax credits. If it is not affordable, you can receive tax credits.

This measure of affordability, based on what the premium is for the individual, versus what the family premium is, leaves a lot of spouses and families cut out from the possibility of receiving tax credits under the ACA.

An average plan for an individual costs about $5,600, but according to the Kaiser Family Foundation, that average rises to about $15,700 for families. GAO estimates that the currently used definition of affordability would prevent nearly 460,000 uninsured kids from accepting tax credits, even though their parents qualify for the tax credit under the ACA. This is known as the family glitch. It was sort of an unforeseen consequence when the bill was written.

The Family Coverage Act, which Senator FRANKEN is championing with many other cosponsors, would change the definition of affordability within the ACA so that family members of the parent who works for a company that offers health insurance can qualify for tax credits as well.

I have cosponsored fixes and improvements to the ACA in the Small Business Tax Credit Accessibility Act, a small business tax credit enhancement, and in the Expanded Consumer Choice Act. Through a plan called the ''copper plan,'' it provides all of the coverage but at a lower premium, because those choosing the plan will pay more on the deductible so they can buy down their premium by more cost sharing.

There is the Commonsense Reporting Act of 2014, introduced by Senator WARNER, to ease the compliance burden on employers, and the Protect Volunteer Firefighters and Emergency Responders Act. Many of us were cosponsors of that bill. There is an act called the EACH Act, which is a technical correction to the religious exemption in the ACA.

I have also written a lot of letters to the administration asking them to do things within their administrative purview to make the act better.

This is what we should be doing. We shouldn't be talking about repealing the Affordable Care Act and taking 14 million people who have insurance through the ACA and telling them: Back out into street with you.

We shouldn't be talking about stonewalling a wonderful public servant from coming in and being head of the HHS. We should be engaged in the business of reforms and improvements.

This is what legislators do. When I was Governor of Virginia, my legislature would pass about 1,000 bills a year. They would come to my desk for my review, editing, amending, signing, and potentially vetoing. What I noticed was that of the action of my legislative body, 800 bills were reforms to existing law. Only about 200 were new laws.

What legislative bodies do is they go into existing laws, improve them, fix them, and make them better, and that is what we should be about here.

Certainly we have learned, through the bad rollouts and some other things, that nobody can stand back and say this thing is perfect and no reforms are needed. Reforms are always needed.

But I would also hope my colleagues might have learned something—those who wanted to repeal the Affordable Care Act. Those who were willing to shut down the Government of the United States to advocate a repeal of the Affordable Care Act should also be focused now on reforms not repeals, because repeals mean those 14 million would lose insurance and families like mine would now be subject again to being turned down because of preexisting health conditions.

It strikes me that the reform caucus is growing and the repeal caucus is shrinking—as it should. Every day finds more and more people who have had this experience and understand that the ACA should not be allowed to be repealed. I am thrilled that is occurring.

One more item about the Affordable Care Act. It has been stated by some, including some in this Chamber, that the Affordable Care Act has done a horrible thing by allowing Members of Congress and their staffs to get a subsidy in their health insurance that the American public doesn't get. Then there are those who have stood and made that case on the floor of this body, on television, and in this country. They have talked about that subsidy as this horrible thing that these congressional staffers—such as those who are sitting here at the desk or those who work in my office—shouldn't be getting.

The Presiding Officer knows—and I know—that statement is inaccurate. The subsidy that anyone gets in this building is an employer contribution to their health insurance premium. It has been a long and standard feature of employer-provided health care plans in this country that employers contribute to the health insurance of their employees.

In the private sector, over 55 million Americans have employers who contribute to the health insurance premium of their employees. Hard-working men and women who are working in this Senate or working in the House or who are working on congressional staffs have every bit as much right to have an employer that would contribute part of the premium cost for them as do the people who work at newspapers, automobile manufacturers, retail stores, and restaurants. All over this country, employer provision of a portion of the premium is a standard feature of how insurance has been provided for decades.

For those who say that Members of Congress are getting some special treatment, some congressional subsidy, when the reality—and they know the reality—is that this subsidy is just the employer-provided share of a premium that is standard among all Americans, I find it very troubling.

What would they propose? Would they propose that uniquely, if you happen to work for the article I branch—the legislative branch—you should be denied an employer contribution to your health insurance, just like other Americans get, because you work for the article I branch that is specified in the Constitution? I think that is essentially their argument.

I had not intended to get into this topic today, but I think it is very clear we should make plain to the American people that public servants who do work in this Chamber and in the House Chamber, and for Members who were elected in the States and districts in this country—they are entitled to the same kind of treatment by their employer, which is a standard feature of life in most American companies, nonprofits, State and local governments, and other institutions.

I have known Sylvia Mathews Burwell for 25 years. I met her when she was working for the Clinton administration as a young hotshot West Virginia student, educated at Harvard, a Rhodes scholar like some other notable Members of this body.

I am proud to support her confirmation to be Secretary of Health and Human Services. She has had a strong background not only in the public sector, most recently as the Director of the Office of Management and Budget, but she has also had a superb track record in the private sector. When dealing with health care issues, we know that strong private sector experience is very important in an issue that is so significant.

I have been very impressed with Sylvia Mathews Burwell's work in the Office of Management and Budget. I think she brought a more businesslike

and regular order approach to the Federal budgeting issues that are so important, and I think she will take that approach and expertise into the HHS position—not just around matters of the Affordable Care Act but around a whole portfolio of issues which are so critically important.

We have got to be about reforms and improvement. Sylvia Mathews Burwell is a person who walks in to work every day, wanting things to be better today than they were yesterday, and she has the experience to do this job. I am proud to stand and support her nomination.

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 assistant bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. COONS. 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.

TRANSPORTATION INFRASTRUCTURE

Mr. COONS. Mr. President, in my home State of Delaware today we have a problem. Just this week the critical I–495 bridge over the Christina River in Wilmington—which carries more than 90,000 drivers each and every day, north and south on this critical artery on the east coast of the United States—was closed indefinitely.

While engineers and workers were on an unrelated project in the area, they noticed that four of the key pillars holding up the bridge were alarmingly slanted, causing widespread concerns about the bridge's safety and prompt action to shut it down.

Now as the Delaware Department of Transportation and the Federal Highway Administration do everything they can to get to the bottom of this problem and to work to make this bridge safe again, tens of thousands of commuters are forced onto already crowded streets and highways, creating even worse traffic for everyone in our area, hurting our economy, and taking people away from where they need to be.

It is, sadly, yet another example—one that hits particularly close to home for me—in a string of major infrastructure emergencies, some due to unforeseeable events, and some due to a long-term critical lack of investment that signifies why investment in our infrastructure is so important.

Every day when Americans drive to work or drop off their kids at school, they make a simple bargain, an unconscious bargain with their government: They assume the roads will be safe to drive on. They expect that if they drive safely, they will be able to get to where they need to go in a reasonable amount of time.

Unfortunately, it has been quite clear that while Americans keep doing what they can to move our Nation and our economy forward, we here in Congress aren't holding up our end of the bargain. We aren't meeting our responsibilities to invest in critical areas that we all know need work. We have a lot of infrastructure needs, but we simply aren't keeping up with them today.

This is about the end of the school year for most families with kids in school around the country. Like many other parents, I was going over with my kids what they think their grades are at the end of the year. Well, the country also gets a grade. We get a grade from the American Society for Civil Engineers. These are the folks whose job it is to manage and supervise and survey the health and capabilities of our infrastructure—our bridges and roads and highways. This group, the American Society for Civil Engineers, gave our roadways a D.

The Federal Highway Administration estimates that we are dramatically behind in investing in keeping our highways and bridges and tunnels up to speed. They say we need $170 billion more in capital investments every year to improve road conditions and performance.

That group of civil engineers, the ASCE, has also determined a quarter of our bridges are functionally obsolete or structurally deficient. In little old Delaware, that comes to 175 bridges that fail to meet what we would all expect of our government—Federal and State and county and local governments—that we maintain bridges to the highest level of safety that we would expect.

We will always face unforeseen crises and challenges, but this is one we can see coming. There may be hurricanes such as the great Superstorm Sandy that wiped out a lot of infrastructure in my region or there may be other unforeseeable events that impact our transportation infrastructure. But this one we have been seeing coming for years.

This inconvenience in Delaware—the closing of the critical bridge on 495 that has put so many at inconvenience—was nowhere near the biggest transportation disaster we have had in recent years. Just last year in Washington State, the Skagit River Bridge, built in 1955, literally collapsed after a truck drove into its framework. Seventy-one thousand drivers were using that bridge on a daily basis.

I think many of us remember, way back in August of 2007, tragedy struck Minneapolis when its I–35 West Bridge, which extends over the Mississippi River, literally collapsed under the rush hour traffic weight. More than 100 cars were thrown into the water, 13 people lost their lives, and 145 were injured.

If we don't act soon—together—we are going to face many more such tragic incidents like these. We have to address this problem and get over our unwillingness together to invest in infrastructure that we all depend on and value.

The simple fact, as I have said, is current Federal investments are not keeping pace with our needs. We are, sadly, months away from exhausting the Federal highway trust fund—the trust fund that finances much of the highway, bridge, and tunnel work around the country on the Interstate Highway System—because the gas tax that funds it hasn't risen in 20 years, but the amount of gas being consumed and thus gas tax revenue generated has gone down. Yet we don't seem here to have the political will to implement a solution to this basic problem that folks have been saying is coming at us, hurtling like an oncoming truck for years.

We talk a lot about our children—about the kind of world we want to leave them, about our hopes for the future, and it is just one of the reasons I am so concerned about our Nation's long-term balance sheet. Many of us talk about our Nation's deficits and our potentially crippling Federal debt. It is irresponsible of us to continue to rack up debt on our national balance sheet and leave it to our children and grandchildren. But I highlight today that when we neglect our transportation infrastructure—our highways and tunnels and roads and ports and bridges—these are things we use every single day in transporting our families and ourselves or goods to and from work or to and from home, to school, to soccer, to vacation. These are critical pieces of the American infrastructure. We are also racking up a huge debt there too. These investments have to be made one way or the other. I know we value these systems because we depend on them every day.

So if we can't come together in the short term to fix the highway trust fund, I am left to wonder how we are going to come together on the much larger problem of meeting our broader infrastructure needs, of which that trust fund is one small but crucial part. We face short-term, medium-term, and long-term problems. As I said, we have to fix this highway trust fund before it runs out of funding this summer. It is what often funds 80 percent of State highway work. It is a critical part of construction projects already scheduled to go on this summer. We have kept it funded by transferring money from the general fund for the last few years, but that is not how it is supposed to work. So we have got to come to terms with a solution that is responsible and meets this challenge.

We have a range of options, but none of them are appealing: Increasing the gas tax, putting a surcharge on vehicles, charging for vehicle miles traveled. All of these are unappealing politically, but it is essential that we come up with something to solve this long-term problem.

I thank Chairman WYDEN of the Finance Committee, who is working hard with other members of that committee even today to find a path forward and a solution.

Second, in the medium term, we have to reauthorize—we have to approve—ongoing work for highways, roads, and bridges, and we need to have a reauthorization for surface transportation by this fall. The Chair and ranking member of the relevant committee—BARBARA BOXER of California and DAVE VITTER of Louisiana—have shown, as has my senior Senator TOM CARPER from Delaware, who also serves on this committee, that Federal infrastructure investment is a bipartisan value. They have been able to come out of that committee with bipartisan reauthorizations a number of times over the last couple of years, and that is encouraging to me.

We also, a few minutes ago, came out of the transportation subcommittee markup on appropriations, the committee that says: Here is how much we will spend. That came out with a very strong bipartisan vote earlier today and will come to the floor in the next few months. This progress is encouraging, but it doesn't mean anything if we don't have a way to pay the bill when the bill comes due. We need to figure out how to finance infrastructure for the long term in this country.

There are several bills with good ideas that have been put forward in this committee and in this Chamber. I have supported two bills. One is called the BRIDGE Act and the other is called the Partnership to Build America Act. These bills will provide the critical steps we need to bring private sector money in off the sidelines and facilitate a real partnership between government money and private sector money. These bills have been led by Senators WARNER, BLUNT, and BENNET, are genuinely bipartisan, and enjoy support from groups who often don't work well together—from industry to labor, from the AFL–CIO to the U.S. Chamber of Commerce and the National Association of Manufacturers.

There are several strong bipartisan bills that show the way forward, but we don't seem to be able to get them to the floor, get them approved, and get them moving forward.

Right now, the truth is that the debate on this floor comes nowhere close to matching the reality of the scope of the problems in front of us. As I mentioned earlier, we have an enormous infrastructure debt. By 2020—in just the next 6 years—it is estimated that our Nation will need $3.6 trillion of new infrastructure investment so we can fix and maintain our roads, bridges, rail, transit, drinking water, ports, sewers, wastewater treatment, and beyond. This is an enormous debt which is unpaid and for which we currently have no path forward.

I know many of us who serve on the Budget Committee and pay attention to the balance sheet of our country are concerned about our structural national debt. I wanted to take a minute today—on a day when everyone in my hometown and home State is concerned about how we will tackle the problem of the I–495 bridge—and remind all of my colleagues of the scale of this national infrastructure debt.

At the heart of this problem and at the heart of so many of the problems we have is our unwillingness to pay for what we want, to pay the bill that is long overdue for our long-overdue improvements to the infrastructure of this great country.

Fixing this problem is going to take a great deal of revenue. We can reform taxes, we can involve the private sector, we can reprioritize funding, and we can reform the way government works. We don't lack for innovative ideas, but at the end of the day what we currently lack is our will.

The people of the United States, through us, need to step up to the challenge of paying the bill. In my hometown, just in the last few hours and over the last few days, we have become more engaged in this debate than we have been in a long time because a bridge that is critical, a vital artery for our community, has stopped. It is closed indefinitely. We need to work together to find the resources to fix this bridge and get America moving together again. It is my hope and plea that my colleagues will step up to this challenge, which I know every community in our country faces.

I thank the Presiding Officer.

I yield the floor.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Republican whip.

D-DAY

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, as all of us know, tomorrow, June 6, marks the 70th anniversary of the Normandy landings, which we have come to know as D-day. D-day, of course, was the greatest military operation in history—one that brought together 150,000 troops, 5,000 ships, and 13,000 aircraft in a sweeping attack on Nazi-occupied France and marked the beginning of the end for Adolf Hitler and the Third Reich. The Allied Powers, of course, united as one and changed the course of history. It was our troops and our allies who freed a continent from the clutches of tyranny and our troops who helped win a war.

As a country, it is important that we recall occasions such as the 70th anniversary of the Normandy invasion and D-day because the greatest danger is that we forget—we forget about the face of evil and what it means to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness—but it also means we need to remind ourselves on a regular basis about the heroism and courage and sacrifice of the people who gave all they had, including their lives, in order to preserve for us what we now have and what we too often take for granted.

We often hear that freedom is not free, and, of course, we all agree with that, but it almost has become a cliche, and it should not be. When we think about our freedom, we ought to think about those men who stormed the beaches at Normandy, many of whom lost their lives. We must always remember those who fought in places such as Iwo Jima and ran into a buzz saw of enemy fire, many of whom never came back. We need to remember those important events on a day such as this, and we need to tell the story not only to remind ourselves, but we also need to tell the story to our children and grandchildren because they will, before long, have a responsibility for preserving this great experiment we have had in America for over 230 years—a self-governing democracy that has been purchased by the blood and the treasure of those who have gone on before. The free world as we know it owes its existence to the courage, grit, and sacrifice of those who fought in places like Normandy, and, of course, they will not be forgotten.

For me personally, I can't help but think about Normandy—which my wife and I had an opportunity to visit a few years ago—without thinking of my father-in-law, who landed on Utah Beach on the second day of the Normandy invasion. He said that after the first day it was much easier to get on the beach, but the effort to clear out the German Army and the hedgerows was murderous work and very dangerous. Thankfully, he came home, like so many, as part of the ''greatest generation'' that helped to build America into the powerhouse we are today.

My father-in-law passed away recently at the age of 96 and lived a long and rewarding life. But I can't let the occasion pass without remembering him as one of those brave men who stormed the beaches at Normandy 70 years ago.

Of course, there is another chilling number when we think about World War II. Fifty million people lost their lives during World War II. It was the bloodiest conflict in the history of the world—50 million people.

During World War II, of course, we recall that brutal dictators and totalitarian ideologies threatened the very existence of the civilized world, and we are reminded of people like Adolf Hitler and what he did and what other countries did in response either by way of appeasement or by way of challenging his aggression. And then we know about the war, of course, following the Pearl Harbor attack in Hawaii. America had to fight wars on two fronts—one in Asia and the other in Europe.

When the United States crossed the Atlantic and joined its allies on the beach of Normandy, the rescue of Europe had begun. History tells us that the weather and conditions that day were harsh. In fact, one soldier described the battle as everything going wrong from the beginning. Without a doubt, they knew what awaited them there, and they were not deterred.

You might wonder, as I have from time to time, what it took for our men and women in uniform to charge a beach occupied by the German military

in France. What could have inspired the kind of courage we have seen?

Well, I had occasion to read a book a few years ago, as perhaps other colleagues have, written by James McPherson. It is called ''For Cause and Comrades: Why Men Fought in the Civil War.'' When you learn about the brutality of the Civil War and how many people lost their lives and, indeed, the likelihood of losing your life—being tragically injured, acquiring an infection, and then losing your life in some of the most painful and horrendous ways you can imagine—it was instructive for me to realize not only did they fight for our country, but they fought for each other as well, which, of course, is the lesson of all wars—fighting for a cause and fighting for each other.

Undeniably, much of the success on D-day was the result of a great strategy and plan by American war planners, including a man born in Denison, TX, by the name of Dwight David Eisenhower, who served as the Supreme Allied Commander.

I see my colleague from Kansas on the floor, and I know Kansas lays claim to Dwight D. Eisenhower, but I want to state here on the floor of the Senate that he was born in Denison, TX, and not in Kansas, although we are proud to share his legacy between both of our States and as a country.

General Eisenhower's address to the troops on the eve of the landing stands as one of the most memorable exhortations to bravery in the face of evil in the annals of world history. I would like to take a moment to read some of those words.

Here is what General Eisenhower wrote:

> Soldiers, Sailors and Airmen of the Allied Expeditionary Force! You are about to embark on a great crusade, toward which we have striven these many months. The eyes of the world are upon you. The hopes and prayers of liberty loving people everywhere march with you.

He continued:

> The free men of the world are marching together to victory! I have full confidence in your courage, devotion to duty and skill in battle. We will accept nothing less than full victory!

At a different time, Eisenhower once said: ''Morale is the single most important factor in successful wars.'' Morale was what united the Allied Powers—not the desire to conquer real estate but the desire to defeat the tyrants of Europe, to liberate the prisoners of war and those in concentration camps, and to forever defeat the evil ideology that motivated Adolf Hitler and his ilk.

We know the world we live in is always filled with great uncertainty and, unfortunately, with evil men and those who would smash democracy and self-government under the boot heel of dictators and tyrants. So while we always pray fervently for peace, we must also be ready to defeat tyrants, dictators, and those who would crush democracy under their boot heel. D-day reminds us that the United States can and should always stand with our friends against terror and tyranny.

Back home in Texas, we have another reminder of this day. For the first time since the war, the battle flag that was raised above the USS Texas as it entered the waters off Point du Hoc on June 6, 1944, is now on public display at the Houston Museum of Natural Science in honor of D-day's 70th anniversary. Crewman Emil Saul, who was aboard the USS Texas, preserved the flag for 48 years and gave it to the museum in 1992. Now possessing the space and conditions to properly exhibit the flag, the museum has made this flag public for the first time in honor of the 70th anniversary of D-day. This flag, of course, symbolizes the valor our troops demonstrated that day and makes sure future generations will never, ever forget their sacrifices.

I yield the floor.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Kansas.

Mr. MORAN. Mr. President, thank you.

I certainly appreciate the remarks of my colleague, the Senator from Texas, in regard to honoring those who served our country so nobly and so courageously 70 years ago, as we recognize this weekend the anniversary of that invasion of Europe, called D-day.

We have many veterans in our country, many military men and women who continue to serve and many who now are veterans and have served in the past, and I am here today to pay tribute not only to those D-day military men and women and those who served our country on such a special occasion in which the course of history was changed, but also to pay tribute to all of those who served our country in all circumstances.

I am not a veteran. I have great regard for those who are. My life is shaped by the fact that the Vietnam war was ongoing during my days as a high school student, and much of my time was spent talking to those a few years older than I who were volunteering or who were drafted, and those who were a little bit older than that who returned home after service in Vietnam. I clearly remember as a 16- or 17-year-old watching the evening news, ''CBS Evening News with Walter Cronkite,'' and every day the news was consumed with reports from Vietnam, the consequences we found ourselves in, and the sacrifice men and women were making on that battlefield every day.

Again, I didn't serve in Vietnam, but I learned a couple of things from my time observing our country and seeing the sacrifice and service of those who were willing to serve in that war. One of the things I take from that experience is we will always honor, care for, respect those who serve our country in the military in whatever circumstance they have been called to do that.

It was a month ago that I was on the floor on this spot, concerned about the Department of Veterans Affairs and the way our veterans are currently being treated. I asked for a dramatic step of the Secretary of the Department of Veterans Affairs to submit his resignation and for President Obama to accept it. As I indicated a month ago, that was the first and only time as a Senator that I ever asked a Cabinet Secretary to depart his or her position—and I didn't do it lightly—but what had transpired, and what has transpired over a period of time, is a Department of Veterans Affairs that many veterans no longer believe is capable of caring for them. In fact, what was so discouraging and disappointing to me was the number of veterans, men and women who served our country, who had lost faith, who had lost hope in the Department of Veterans Affairs.

That Department was created in 1930 for purposes of providing the benefits and health care supporting those who were called to duty, those who responded to their country's call. I certainly know that throughout the course of history the Department of Veterans Affairs has had its challenges, but what seems so compelling to me over the last several years is the sense that no longer was there a plan, no longer was there the effort to make certain that Department lived up to its commitment to those who previously served our country.

A lot has transpired in the last month, and there is now an Acting Secretary of the Department of Veterans Affairs. And of course we have reports from across the country of secret lists, concerns about waiting times, and the potential of service men and women, veterans, who have suffered as a result of those lists, as a result of having to wait. I guess we will know more about that over the course of time.

I am surprised and disappointed to learn that Kansas hospitals, Kansas facilities, the VA hospital in Wichita is on that list where investigations are now ongoing and where the Department of Veterans Affairs has admitted to a list that delayed access to health care. I would not have expected that in our State. I think we are different. We are special. But the reality is this challenge and the problems we face are systemwide and across the country. What we want is a Department of Veterans Affairs that is worthy of the sacrifice and service of the men and women who served in our military. We don't want damage control from the Department of Veterans Affairs. What we want is the end of damage to those who served our country.

The purpose of my conversation on the floor today is to make certain we don't lose sight. The news cycle comes and goes, and while there are serious issues our country faces in many facets, I don't want this Senate to lose sight of its responsibility to make certain the Department of Veterans Affairs is caring for those who need our care and treatment.

I am worried, and I hope my worries are unfounded. I have only served in

the Senate for 4 years. I have been frustrated by being a Member of the Senate. I came here to work on behalf of Americans, on behalf of Kansans. My plea is—my plea is to the Democratic leaders, to Republican leaders, to individual Senators, whatever party they are: Let's not follow the path we have followed so many times in the short period of time I have been here in which there is a Republican plan to fix a problem and there is a Democratic plan to fix a problem. Surely our veterans deserve something more than each of us being able to say we cast a vote for their benefit. Surely they deserve the opportunity to actually have legislation that will address the challenges and problems the Department of Veterans Affairs has. My plea and my request of all in this body is, for these veterans, to make certain we conduct ourselves in a different way than unfortunately I have seen in most instances as a Senator.

We have this phrase around here, ''Well, we will get a side-by-side,'' meaning there is a Democratic plan and a Republican plan; and when you talk about that. What that means is we never expect either one of those plans to pass. So to the chairman and ranking member of the Senate Veterans' Affairs Committee, to Senator REID, the majority leader of the Senate: Please take us down a path that demonstrates once again the Senate can rise to the occasion and do something worthy of the veterans who have served our country.

Every once in a while in this frustration about the way this place doesn't work, I will put on my running shoes and I will walk down to the Lincoln Memorial. It certainly is an inspiring visit to the Lincoln Memorial, but perhaps more importantly on that walk you now go by the World War II Memorial that memorializes those the Senator from Texas was talking about. You then walk by the Vietnam Wall, the war that was ongoing in my teenage years. On your way back you come by the Korean War Memorial, the forgotten war. What I am reminded of and what I would call to the attention of my colleagues is not a person recognized in any of those memorials volunteered or was drafted for purposes of advancing the cause of the Republican Party or the Democratic Party. There was no interest in partisan politics by those who served our country. They served their country because they believed in a higher calling. They believed they could make a difference. They believed it mattered to their kids and grandkids. It was about freedom and liberty. It wasn't about who scores points in the next election.

Please, leaders of the Senate, all of my colleagues, make certain we rise to the occasion, that we have the same standard, the same motivation, the same reason that we come here every day to be the same as theirs: to make America a better place, to make sure our kids and grandkids live with freedom and liberty, to make sure the American dream is alive and well. If there is an issue that we ought to be able to do that, an issue perhaps different than anything else we deal with, surely we have the ability as a Senate to deal with the issues necessary legislatively to resolve and address the problems of the Department of Veterans Affairs and to make certain that every veteran who has served our country has the ability to access quality health care provided in a timely fashion, and that once again the Senate doesn't do what it has done too many times, and that is we all cast a vote and we can claim we have done something, we supported something, but the end result is that nothing happened. Let's avoid nothing happening.

Finally, let me conclude by saying that World War II Memorial is special to me. I have a 98-year-old father home in Plainville, KS, a World War II veteran. I walked up to the World War II Memorial 10 years ago, just a few days before it was being dedicated, and I wanted to see what it was going to look like. It was an inspiring moment. I happened to have my cell phone with me and I walked over to the Kansas pillar and thought about those who served our country in that war, including my dad back home. I walked away from the memorial and used my cell phone to call my dad at home. The message I delivered to my dad that day was: ''Dad, I am at the World War II Memorial. It is a memorial built for you. Dad, I want you to know that I thank you for your service. I respect you and I love you.''

That conversation, fortunately, took place on an answering machine and not in person, and was easier to deliver, although a few minutes later my cell phone rang and it was my dad, who said, ''Gerald, you left me a message, but I couldn't understand it. Could you tell me again?''

The point I want to make is, we are called upon as American citizens and certainly as members of the Senate to do all that is possible to demonstrate that we thank our veterans for their service, we respect them, and we love them. The Senate needs to rise to the occasion and not let the partisan politics of this place and this country divide us in a way in which we only symbolically respond but the end result is that we fail those who served, and we fail our veterans who depend upon us just as we have depended upon them for their service to our country.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Florida.

BURWELL NOMINATION

Mr. NELSON. Mr. President, I want to speak on behalf of Sylvia Mathews Burwell. We have had a lot of commentary out here that she has shown her capability in her time as the head of the Office of Management and Budget, OMB, and she is going to have a similar success now in the Department of Health and Human Services. We are going to be voting on her just before 2:00 this afternoon, and I am certainly looking forward to what is going to be a resounding vote. I think it is because most people feel she has done an excellent job at OMB.

In this Senator's experience with her, discussing with her one of the smaller agencies of government, where this Senator felt as though OMB had targeted that little agency, instead of allowing the experts who were driving that agency—and specifically I am talking about NASA—purely from a finance and budgetary standpoint, instead of what we wanted to accomplish in the Nation's space program, Ms. Burwell understood that, and she tried to help out from an agency that is more concerned just with budgetary aspects of government, and she understood you have got to get into what you want the agency to accomplish instead of just looking at the budgetary aspects. I appreciated that very much. I think we are going to have a similar kind of experience at HHS with Ms. Burwell.

Now, goodness gracious, she takes over an agency that certainly has its hands full, as we are, for example, just trying to continue to expand Medicaid and expand it to all of the people in the States that have denied the expansion of Medicaid. So what we asked during the confirmation hearings is that she consider working with the States to find some types of compromises on a way to do that—to expand Medicaid—when the States are balking. Twenty-four States have not taken the Federal Government up on the offer to pay the full cost of expansion for the first 3 years, and then after the year 2020 the Federal Government will pay 90 percent of the cost of expansion.

I offer an example in my own State of Florida. The State of Florida, ostensibly because they did not want to incur the 10-percent cost of Medicaid expansion after the year 2020—that was the reason they gave, but it really wasn't the real reason they didn't want to expand; they just didn't want to have anything to do with the Affordable Care Act. Many of them labeled it ''ObamaCare.'' As a result, what they have done in Florida is denied a population of over 1 million people—specifically 1.2 million people in Florida—the availability of health care by expanding the eligibility for all Medicaid up to the level of 138 percent of poverty. That level is for a family of four—$32,500 a year.

A person thinks of a million people—over a million who otherwise could get health care—and they are making $32,000 or less, we can't expect them to buy health insurance if they are only bringing in $32,000 for a family of four. That is not reasonable. That is why we expanded Medicaid in the Affordable Care Act. But politics has a way of getting in the way, and there are 24 States that did not expand.

In Florida's case, this means over this period of time there is $51 billion of Floridians' Federal taxpayer money that would be brought to Florida to pay for those additional 1.2 million people who would get health care. Well, first of all, it is an issue of quality of life. Why don't we want people to have health care who can't afford it? That is the whole idea of increasing the percentage of the poverty level in order to make people eligible for Medicaid.

But aside from that, if the Federal money is available for providing that health care—in this case, $51 billion—why wouldn't we want to take the Federal money to pay for the health care of the people—and ''the people'' being a substantial number of people—over 1 million.

In addition, if we care about the creation of jobs, we are talking about 125,000 jobs additionally created because of this expansion of providing health care.

So all the way around, it is a win-win-win. It provides jobs, it certainly provides quality of life by providing health care, and the Federal money is already dedicated.

Again, politics gets in the way, and politics got in the way in the State of Florida and 23 other States.

Now, what to do about it. OK. The stated reason was that we don't want our State to have the obligation of additional spending—10 percent—after the year 2020. What we have shown is a program that is already in place in State law to provide for poor people's health care through the low-income pool and other assistance to hospitals that serve that poor population, a tax base that already pays for that, taxes at the local level.

We suggested this: We don't have to raise any new taxes to pay the State's share of the 10 percent. Those taxes are already being paid. We shift the money that is there because we are going to expand Medicaid and take care of all the poor people—some of whom are being taken care of now—and just use that tax base in place of the State of Florida share of 10 percent.

The Legislature of Florida would not buy it in the closing days and weeks of the session. It is my hope they will in the future. But that is the kind of example that the new Secretary of HHS will be dealing with, as the previous Secretary of HHS has already dealt with in iterations of how to cover additional Medicaid populations. States such as Arkansas and Michigan have worked with HHS to find ways, some of them using the private marketplace to expand coverage.

So it is my hope that with the new Secretary, with the obvious need of additional health care for people who cannot afford it in the private insurance market, we will see this turned around in the next session of the legislature; otherwise, every day the State of Florida loses $7 million that would be coming to the State for health care for people of low income.

I want to say I am very proud of our State. During the open enrollment period, nearly 1 million people in Florida signed up for health insurance coverage in the State exchange that is run under the Federal rules. Of the 8 million people nationwide who signed up on the State exchanges, almost 1 million of that 8 million were in our State of Florida. So it shows us the hunger of folks there, knowing that if they can get health insurance or health care through Medicaid, they certainly want that very much. I hope that under the leadership of Ms. Burwell, we are going to be able to make that a reality in the coming year. I know she is going to do a great job as Secretary of HHS.

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

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

The assistant bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

Mr. HATCH. Madam President, today the Senate is expected to vote on the nomination of Sylvia Mathews Burwell to be the next Secretary of the Department of Health and Human Services. I expect her to be confirmed, and I expect she will receive a fair number of votes from both sides of the aisle. I, for one, plan to vote in favor of confirming Ms. Burwell. I believe she is well qualified and well suited for this position.

But let's be clear. If Ms. Burwell is confirmed, she will have a difficult job ahead of her, particularly when it comes to implementation of the so-called Affordable Care Act.

While I support Ms. Burwell's nomination, no one should mistake that to mean that I have somehow softened in my resolve against ObamaCare. Indeed, I am as committed as ever to repealing and replacing this horribly misguided law.

I hold this position not due to politics or partisanship but due to the real—very real—problems this law is causing for our citizens, for our government, and for our Nation's health care system.

I would like to take a few minutes today to talk about some of the specific problems we are seeing with ObamaCare and what some of my colleagues and I are doing to address them.

As we all know, under the Affordable Care Act, States are required to have an online exchange where citizens can go to purchase health insurance. The law gives the States the option of creating their own exchange, using the exchange provided by the Federal Government or using a hybrid of the two.

The Department of Health and Human Services gave every State $1 million to fund research and analysis to determine what type of an exchange they would use. Additional grants were given in two stages—two stages—for those States that chose to build all or part of their own exchanges.

On top of that, HHS awarded seven early innovator grants to States that decided early on to build their own exchanges in order to help support the development and early implementation of the necessary information technology systems.

All told, States received $4.7 billion from HHS to assist them in building their exchanges.

The problem we are seeing now is that, apparently, this money was just handed out with little or no accountability.

At least seven States—seven States—have failed to build a successful Web site and exchange, even though they received and accepted Federal taxpayer dollars specifically for that purpose. Now these States are scrambling to either rebuild their entire systems or to transition to the Federal exchange.

These seven States received roughly $1.3 billion from HHS to build their exchanges. That is $1.3 billion—with a ''B''—to just seven States in the Union. That is more than one-quarter of the total amount HHS provided to States for the purpose of building their own State health care exchanges. And apparently these States have little or nothing to show for it. In fact, at least three of them are looking to drop their own exchanges entirely and use the Federal exchange instead now.

You heard that right, three States—that between them received hundreds of millions of dollars from the Federal Government to build their exchanges—now want to abandon the prospect entirely and join the Federal exchange.

Let's keep in mind that adding them to the Federal exchange will not be simple, nor will it be cheap. More millions will be spent to transition these States—along with any other States that may choose the same course in the future—into the Federal exchange.

This is simply preposterous. Where is the accountability? Where is the outrage from HHS over those lost and misspent funds? There does not seem to be any.

For her part, the President's nominee to run HHS, Ms. Burwell has at least acknowledged that there is a problem here.

During her confirmation hearing in the Finance Committee, I asked her whether States that have negligently mismanaged their exchange funds should be required to reimburse the taxpayers for those losses and for their failures? Her answer was somewhat encouraging. She said that if she was confirmed she would want to get to the bottom of this problem and ''use the full extent of the law to get those funds back for the taxpayers.''

Unfortunately, in answer to my followup question—whether she would commit to withholding additional exchange-related funds from those failing States—she was not quite so definitive. Still, I was glad to hear her at least acknowledge the problem and make a

commitment to recouping taxpayer funds lost in these debacles. If she is confirmed, I hope with all my heart she will live up to this commitment, and I expect her to do so.

That said, it is clear that, if we are going to make the taxpayers whole on this matter, we are going to need to do something besides waiting around for HHS to address the problem. Indeed, if our experience has taught us anything, it is that commitments made in the context of a confirmation hearing often fall by the wayside. I do not intend to have this one fall by the wayside.

That has been particularly true, though, with this administration, especially when the commitments deal with ObamaCare. That is why I have joined with the ranking member of the Senate Judiciary Committee, Senator GRASSLEY, in an investigation into this matter. Congress needs to exercise proper oversight on this issue. We need to get answers. We need to get them now. One way or another we are going to get them.

Last month Senator GRASSLEY and I sent a letter to CMS Administrator Tavenner asking for information about CMS's communications with the States with regard to the difficulties they have had setting up exchanges and their use of Federal funds. As I said, all told, these failures amount to over $1 billion in lost funds. The American people deserve to know where the money went and why it was so horribly misused.

That is not all the American people deserve. They also deserve to be paid back for these losses. That is why I have joined with Senator BARRASSO in introducing the State Exchange Accountability Act, a bill to require the States to pay back these wasted funds. Every Senator here, Democrat or Republican, ought to be willing to back that bill.

Specifically, if enacted, our bill would require those States that operated a State exchange in 2014 and subsequently chose to use the Federal exchange to repay all of their establishment and early innovator exchange grants. The bill would give them a 10-year timeframe to do so. States would have to enter into an agreement with HHS to repay at a minimum 10 percent of the total grant money they received every year. States that fall under these requirements but fail to enter into such an agreement would see their Federal assistance medical percentages, or FMAP, reduced by HHS. The FMAP reduction would be uniform and take place over a 10-year period and would be equal to the amount of exchange grant money the State received.

Under the bill, HHS would be explicitly prohibited from reducing the amount of reimbursement that States owe to the Federal Government. I expect some would deem this approach to be too punitive, but they should not. I do not think anyone can reasonably dispute there is a problem that needs to be dealt with. Our solution is reasonable and achievable. All we ask is the States that have wasted taxpayer funds repay them within a reasonable period of time. We give these States 10 years to pay the money back. This is not punitive; it is necessary. More than anything, the failures we are seeing with the State health care exchanges demonstrate that the Affordable Care Act has been flawed from the beginning. Indeed, it was the law itself that included an open-ended appropriation to help States build their exchanges without any mechanism to make States accountable for wasting those funds. Given these fundamental problems, I expect we will see more States take this route, especially if there are no steps taken to make them accountable.

Congressional oversight into these failings is vital. I hope the administration will cooperate in our effort to resolve these problems. Our legislation is no less important. It is the only way to guarantee the American taxpayers get their money back. But that is not all we need to do. Make no mistake, ObamaCare is doing serious damage to our Nation's health care system and our Nation's fiscal future.

When it comes to his health law, the President's favorite argument is that Republicans have not produced an alternative of their own. However, this is simply untrue. I suspect the President knows that. Earlier this year two of my colleagues and I unveiled a legislative proposal that would undo the damage ObamaCare has inflicted on the American people. Unlike the Affordable Care Act, our proposal would actually reduce costs and shore up our entitlements. It would do so without all of the harmful distortive mandates and regulations we see under ObamaCare. Once again, in the immediate future, we need to solve this problem with the failed State exchanges. But we also need to keep our eyes focused on the long-term goal of repealing ObamaCare once and for all and replacing it with something that will actually work for the American people.

I hope that as time wears on, more of my colleagues, particularly those on the other side of the aisle, will recognize this is what we really need to do.

As I said, I intend to vote today in favor of Ms. Burwell's nomination to lead HHS. I have helped that process to go smoothly. I want it to go smoothly. I believe she is a good choice for this job. I am hoping with all my heart that she will be that good choice she has indicated she is, and I have deduced she is. But I still have a number of concerns about the direction the agency is headed. During the course of her confirmation hearing, Ms. Burwell made two very important commitments to me. The first commitment she made was to respond promptly, within 30 days, to questions and inquiries submitted to HHS from Members of Congress.

This is an important commitment, one I hope she lives up to. Under this administration HHS has been one of the least transparent of all Federal agencies. Letters and inquiries oftentimes have been ignored entirely. When we do receive letters in return from HHS, they are almost in every case unresponsive. Ms. Burwell is committed to changing that practice. I respect her for it. It is part of the reason I led the charge to have her confirmed. Once again, I surely hope she does help change that practice.

I mentioned the other major commitment she made to me earlier in dealing with the failed State exchanges. Ms. Burwell committed to doing everything in her power to retrieve the wasted taxpayer funds. This commitment is also important, because thus far HHS has refused to acknowledge many of the problems they faced in implementing the Affordable Care Act. The fact that she made this commitment to me demonstrates she is at least willing to admit there are some major problems with the program.

I support Ms. Burwell's nomination in large part because of these commitments she has made. I hope she lives up to them. I think she has the ability to live up to them. I have high hopes of that. No one should misread my vote today as an acknowledgement that all is now right in the world of ObamaCare and at HHS, because nothing can be further from the truth. But Ms. Burwell has, for her part, acknowledged that problems exist and has committed to doing what she can to fix those problems. Under this administration, that is probably the best we can hope for.

This is an important nomination. She is a very qualified woman, in my opinion. She has had some significant experience in the Federal Government. I have high hopes that she will turn out to be a wonderful Administrator at HHS. It is almost an uncontrollable, unadministratable agency. I am going to give her all the help I possibly can to help get that agency under control and get it right again.

This is important. I feel deeply about it. People in the bureaucracy know if they work with me I will move heaven and Earth to try to help them. It is time our government is more responsive to its citizens, more responsive to what people believed when they were confirmed, and more responsive in solving those problems that are so significant, so costly, and so important to the American people.

Ms. MIKULSKI. Madam President, I wish to speak in strong support of Sylvia Mathews Burwell, who has been nominated to serve as Secretary of the Department of Health and Human Services, HHS.

HHS is a $1 trillion agency responsible for, among other things, managing Medicare, Medicaid, and implementation of the Affordable Care Act, ACA. HHS needs a strong leader. I believe Sylvia Burwell is up to the job.

President Obama could not have selected a better person to lead HHS into

future. I first got to know Sylvia during the Clinton administration, but I also worked with her when she was at Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation and the Walmart Foundation. I really got to know Sylvia more recently as she ran the Office of Management and Budget, OMB. She played a pivotal role in helping Congress come to agreement on a budget deal last December.

Her work at OMB has prepared her to step up to challenge of leading HHS. She is a problem solver who knows how to work with Congress. She is also a mom with kids. I am confident that Sylvia will be an outstanding HHS Secretary.

It is my hope that she is confirmed quickly. It is important that HHS has a leader in place. It is important that Congress has a point person in place as we work to pass the fiscal year 2015 Labor-HHS appropriations bill. And it is important for the country to have a Secretary of HHS confirmed so we can move forward with implementation of healthcare reform.

I would like to take a moment to express my deep appreciation to Ms. Kathleen Sebelius—our current HHS Secretary. Whether it was as Secretary of HHS or Governor of Kansas, Ms. Sebelius has always been a bright, hard-working, and devoted public servant. Despite constant and relentless opposition, she fought every day in every way to make health insurance a reality for millions of Americans. She was a phenomenal partner and tireless advocate in efforts to improve women's health, expand mental health benefits and services, fight childhood obesity, and protect people from dangerous influenza strains. She was a fierce advocate for those most in need and she will be missed. I wish her and her family well in all future endeavors.

As I mentioned earlier, HHS is a $1 trillion agency. Every single person worldwide benefits from work done at HHS. For instance, HHS oversees the National Institutes of Health, NIH—our Federal agency responsible for finding cures and treatments for the illnesses and diseases that impact our families. HHS also oversees the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, CDC—our Federal agency responsible for protecting the public health by preventing, tracking, and managing the spread of disease. HHS also oversees the Food and Drug Administration, FDA—our Federal agency responsible for protecting our Nation's food and drug supply. HHS oversees the Administration on Children and Families, ACF—our Federal agency responsible for running the Head Start Program and helping lower income families afford childcare. In addition, HHS is responsible for overseeing the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, CMS—our Federal agency responsible for managing Medicare for our Nation's seniors and Medicaid for those in need. These are only a few examples of how we rely on HHS agencies.

We also rely on HHS for implementation of Affordable Care Act. Unfortunately, healthcare reform remains a divisive issue, despite passing the House and Senate, being signed into law by the President, and being upheld by the Supreme Court of the United States. It also remains divisive despite all the benefits we have seen so far: More than 8 million Americans have obtained health insurance thanks to healthcare reform. More than 3 million young adults have been able to stay on their parents' health insurance plans. More than 3 million people have been newly enrolled in Medicaid and the Children's Health Insurance Program, CHIP. Thanks to healthcare reform, being a woman is no longer a preexisting condition and people can no longer be denied coverage or charged more for preexisting conditions. And thanks to healthcare reform's provisions to close the dreaded doughnut hole, more than 7 million seniors have saved $9 billion in prescription drug costs.

Despite the many successes of healthcare reform, there is still much to be done, and we need a Secretary in place to get that job done. We need a Secretary focused on ensuring smooth open enrollment periods that are glitch-free. We need a Secretary who is willing and able to work with States who are not yet where they need to be. We need a Secretary focused on protecting people's privation information in an ever-dangerous cyber climate, and we need a Secretary focused on getting young people enrolled in health insurance plans and focused on keeping premiums low for individuals and small businesses.

Running HHS is a big job. Ms. Burwell is the right woman for the job. I urge my colleagues to join me in support of her confirmation to serve as Secretary of HHS.

Mr. HARKIN. Madam President, today we consider the nomination of Sylvia Mathews Burwell to be the next Secretary of the Department of Health and Human Services. Ms. Burwell currently serves as Director of the Office of Management and Budget, a position to which she was confirmed by a vote of 96–0 in April 2013. Through a dynamic career in both public service and private sector leadership, she has proven herself as an effective manager with experience and skill in leading a wide range of organizations. During her confirmation hearing in the HELP Committee last month, she garnered strong support from Members on both sides of the aisle. Clearly, I am not alone in concluding that she is a deeply impressive nominee and is eminently qualified to serve as the next Secretary of Health and Human Services.

The United States faces serious public health challenges, many of which require urgent answers. Very often, the entire world looks to HHS for leadership. Just last month, this country confronted the first ever incident of MERS, Middle East Respiratory Syndrome, within our borders. HHS responded quickly to educate the public, investigate the situation, and develop a path forward.

We will count on our next Secretary for exactly that kind of informed, decisive action in the face of future challenges and crises, and to provide a steady hand overseeing an incredible range of activities across the Department.

For example, she will be responsible for research efforts at the National Institutes of Health, among other agencies. This federally sponsored research has made the United States the world leader in biomedical innovation, and has resulted in countless discoveries and breakthroughs, from the extraordinary application of genomics to cutting-edge pharmaceuticals to an unprecedented understanding of the human brain.

As Secretary, Ms. Burwell will also be in charge of another long-time priority of mine, disease prevention. She will lead our Nation's efforts to transform our health care system from a ''sick care system'' into one that focuses on wellness and prevention, not just at the doctor's office but also in our schools, workplaces, and communities.

Ms. Burwell will oversee the Food and Drug Administration—a critically important agency that protects and promotes public health by helping to keep our Nation's food and medical product supplies safe, among other things. In fact, FDA now oversees items that account for 25 cents out of every dollar spent by Americans.

The Department also ensures that we can meet the health care and education needs of our most vulnerable citizens through programs like the community health centers, Ryan White HIV programs, and the Head Start program.

The Secretary is also charged with oversight of programs that support millions of Americans with disabilities. Medicaid makes it possible for many with chronic disabilities to remain in their homes, to go to work or school, and to be active members of society. In tandem, the Administration for Community Living implements policies that help people with disabilities to stay in their homes, neighborhoods and places of work, with the result that people are healthier, happier, and have better quality of life.

And of course Ms. Burwell will have the critical role of overseeing implementation of the Affordable Care Act. We can be proud that thanks to the Affordable Care Act we have seen over 6 million new Medicaid enrollees, and more than 8 million more Americans have signed up for health insurance in the marketplaces. But there is more work to be done to continue successfully implementing the law and reforming our health care system.

The list goes on and on, but I have made my point that as Secretary, Ms. Burwell will shoulder incredibly important responsibilities that matter deeply to the health and wellness of the American people. I have no doubt that Ms. Burwell is up for the challenge.

Since her nomination Ms. Burwell has met with numerous members of

this body to discuss their individual priorities and her personal vision for the Department. I urge my colleagues to vote in support of Ms. Burwell and confirm her as our next HHS Secretary so she can begin the important work of advancing our Nation's health.

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

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

Mr. WYDEN. To close for our side, I would like to strongly urge my colleagues in a few minutes to support the nomination of Sylvia Mathews Burwell to be the next Secretary of the Department of Health and Human Services.

I want to start with a simple fact. Sylvia Mathews Burwell's nomination has a breadth of bipartisan support because she is really that good, she is really that capable, and she is really that qualified.

I am going to say to colleagues, nobody has to take my word for it. We all know that our colleague on the other side of the aisle, Senator COBURN, is a man of strong views. He says what he means, and he means what he says. As a ranking member of the Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee, Senator COBURN has had many opportunities to work closely with Ms. Burwell during her service as the OMB Director.

For example, he emphasized the nominee's competence, saying: The fact is when you have somebody who is confident, competent, and also has strong character, you find a way to get past your differences to try to solve problems.

He emphasized she is a good listener and that she is communicative.

He said:

> Responsiveness is key for the Congress, and I have to tell you I found her remarkably responsive. The fact is she is going to be committed to do the right thing and to keep Congress involved.

Finally, in a quote that I thought was particularly striking, Senator COBURN said:

> Even when she has made up her mind, which sometimes happens, she will listen to another point of view to get information she might not have.

Senator COBURN also said:

> That is a characteristic too often that we don't see, as Members of Congress, and in members of the administration, whether they are Republican or a Democrat.

Senator COBURN is not the only one who is part of this we could call it choir of bipartisan support for Sylvia Mathews Burwell.

When she went before the HELP Committee, our Republican colleague from North Carolina, Senator BURR, said:

> I support her nomination. I will vote for her in the Finance Committee, and it is for one primary reason, it is because she doesn't come with a single experience that would make her a good Secretary. She comes with a portfolio of experience that would make her a tremendous asset at addressing some of the challenges the agency specifically and uniquely has.

Senator BURR continued:

> I look forward to her confirmation being quick and our ability to then work together to be every bit as quick.

These are statements that reflect a nominee who is going to be, in my view, an active agent of bipartisanship. She is somebody who has already shown she can bring Democrats and Republicans together to solve big challenges, and I think she is going to show it at the Department of Health and Human Services.

Suffice it to say, we know Health and Human Services will need to have strong leadership in the days ahead. We know the debate about the Affordable Care Act is going to continue. It is going to continue in Hawaii, Oregon, and across the country.

My hope, as chair of the Finance Committee, is that Sylvia Mathews Burwell can help bring together Democrats and Republicans to build on the Affordable Care Act, just as many of us did to work with former President George W. Bush, to strengthen the Part D Program, the Medicare prescription drug program. Many of the first stories about Medicare Part D were much like the first stories about the Affordable Care Act. Yet Democrats and Republicans came together, were able to strengthen Part D to the point where now—enormous support among seniors—it has come in at more than 30 percent below the cost projected by the Congressional Budget Office.

So let's all work together with Sylvia Mathews Burwell to do for the Affordable Care Act what we did with George W. Bush's program on prescription drugs, and that has worked in a bipartisan way.

One of the reasons I am so enthused about Sylvia Mathews Burwell is we have big challenges that both sides, Democrats and Republicans, are going to have to team up on to tackle in the days ahead. For example, Medicare in 2014 is dramatically different than Medicare when it began in 1965. In 1965, for example, if a senior broke their ankle, if he or she needed to see a doctor, they went perhaps to an outpatient program, Part B of the Medicare Program. If they needed more attention—perhaps the ankle needed to be reset—they had to go to the hospital, they would get assistance in the hospital under Part A.

Today that is not primarily what Medicare is all about. Today, well over 80 percent of Medicare is tackling chronic disease. We are talking about diabetes, we are talking about cancer, we are talking about strokes and heart disease. Certainly if you add Alzheimer's on top of it, that is 90 percent of the Medicare Program. That broken ankle, when the senior has one, of course, has to be taken care of. But most of Medicare is about chronic disease.

What we are going to need is Democrats and Republicans coming together to tackle an issue that, frankly, has gotten short shrift in Washington, DC. It didn't come up a whole lot in the debate about the Affordable Care Act on any side, and yet it is going to be the issue that dominates the future of the flagship health care program in this country, Medicare; and much of what is done for chronic disease for the Medicare population will also be copied for the under-65 population, since the trend historically, when Medicare takes bold action, is often replicated in the private sector.

Some of this work has begun, but the fact is we need a strong leader with bipartisan support, as I have tried to highlight with Dr. COBURN's comments, Senator BURR's comments, and others. I think it was all summed up when Dr. COBURN and Senator ROCKEFELLER—the senior Democratic Senator from her home State—teamed up that first day and set the mood about how this would be a nominee with exceptional ability to reach out and tackle the big challenges of our time.

Medicare, of course, in my view, is the biggest. But the issue of family support, the child welfare programs the Department manages, these are programs that are critical lifelines for struggling Americans across the country. So many of our people are now falling between the cracks—falling between the cracks into poverty since the recession. The Department of Health and Human Services plays a powerful role ensuring that we have a strong safety net.

I have talked about her credentials before, but her education includes a stellar background, a graduate of Harvard and Oxford, where she was a Rhodes scholar. She was a staff director of the National Economic Council. This is someone who is very savvy on the big economic challenges, and she has superb experience. In 1977 she became Deputy Chief of Staff to the President and moving the following year to become the Deputy Director of the Office of Management and Budget.

She also has extensive experience in the nonprofit world. At the Gates Foundation she led efforts to tackle some of the most pressing global health challenges of our time.

At the Walmart Foundation, where she served in 2011, she offered outstanding leadership in the fight against hunger and to improve economic opportunity for women.

As Senators consider this nomination in the last couple of minutes before the vote, I only want to remind—perhaps not subtly—the Senate confirmed Sylvia Mathews Burwell for the position of Director of Office of Management and Budget 96 to 0. I think that is a very rare statement of bipartisanship for an extremely important position that not

only has Sylvia Mathews Burwell discharged very well, she has won additional plaudits for her bipartisan work, as I have indicated today.

She is going to respond to the biggest and the big challenges in a way that I believe brings Americans together. That is what Senators have said throughout the process, and they have said it whether you have a D or an R next to your name. What the country needs, in short, is somebody who is a true agent of bipartisanship.

I conclude my remarks by saying I have gotten to know Sylvia Mathews Burwell well in the past few years. She is the right choice for the right time, and I strongly urge my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to join me this afternoon in supporting her nomination.

I yield the floor.

CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Morning business is closed.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

NOMINATION OF SYLVIA MATHEWS BURWELL TO BE SECRETARY OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the Senate will proceed to executive session to consider the following nomination, which the clerk will report.

The assistant legislative clerk read the nomination of Sylvia Mathews Burwell, of West Virginia, to be Secretary of Health and Human Services.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the nomination of Sylvia Mathews Burwell, of West Virginia, to be Secretary of Health and Human Services?

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

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

The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Missouri (Mrs. MCCASKILL) is necessarily absent.

Mr. CORNYN. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from Arkansas (Mr. BOOZMAN), the Senator from Mississippi (Mr. COCHRAN), the Senator from Utah (Mr. LEE), and the Senator from South Carolina (Mr. SCOTT).

Further, if present and voting, the Senator from Arkansas (Mr. BOOZMAN) would have voted ''yea'' and the Senator from Utah (Mr. LEE) would have voted ''nay.''

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

The result was announced—yeas 78, nays 17, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 175 Ex.]

YEAS—78

Alexander	Flake	Merkley
Baldwin	Franken	Mikulski
Barrasso	Gillibrand	Murkowski
Begich	Graham	Murphy
Bennet	Grassley	Murray
Blumenthal	Hagan	Nelson
Booker	Harkin	Portman
Boxer	Hatch	Pryor
Brown	Heinrich	Reed
Burr	Heitkamp	Reid
Cantwell	Hirono	Rockefeller
Cardin	Hoeven	Sanders
Carper	Isakson	Schatz
Casey	Johanns	Schumer
Chambliss	Johnson (SD)	Shaheen
Coats	Johnson (WI)	Stabenow
Coburn	Kaine	Tester
Collins	King	Toomey
Coons	Klobuchar	Udall (CO)
Corker	Landrieu	Udall (NM)
Crapo	Leahy	Walsh
Donnelly	Levin	Warner
Durbin	Manchin	Warren
Enzi	Markey	Whitehouse
Feinstein	McCain	Wicker
Fischer	Menendez	Wyden

NAYS—17

Ayotte	Kirk	Rubio
Blunt	McConnell	Sessions
Cornyn	Moran	Shelby
Cruz	Paul	Thune
Heller	Risch	Vitter
Inhofe	Roberts	

NOT VOTING—5

Boozman	Lee	Scott
Cochran	McCaskill	

The nomination was confirmed.

NOMINATION OF CAROLYN HESSLER-RADELET TO BE DIRECTOR OF THE PEACE CORPS

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. KAINE). Under the previous order, the Senate will proceed to the consideration of the following nomination, which the clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read the nomination of Carolyn Hessler-Radelet, of Virginia, to be Director of the Peace Corps.

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, I will vote to confirm the President's nominee for Director of the Peace Corps. However, I want explain why I objected to any unanimous consent request relating to this nomination in March and why I have withdrawn my objection. I objected because I was informed by the Peace Corps inspector general that she was having difficulty accessing records from the agency. The nominee is the acting director of the agency. The records relate to sexual assaults reported by Peace Corps volunteers.

The inspector general is entitled to access these records under the Inspector General Act and the Kate Puzey Act. Both acts reinforce the principle that agency operations should be monitored by an independent and objective inspector general. The Kate Puzey Act requires the agency to better respond to volunteers who report sexual assault and implement certain protections for victims of sexual assault. To ensure that these protections are actually implemented, it also requires the inspector general to conduct ''a case review of a statistically significant number of cases'' of sexual assaults reported by volunteers.

However, the agency has gone out of its way to interpret the Kate Puzey Act as conflicting with the Inspector General Act. In fact, the agency repeatedly stated that certain provisions of the Kate Puzey Act override the Inspector General Act. That was never the intent of Congress. But the Peace Corps withheld most of the information that the inspector general requested from the agency.

Fortunately, the Peace Corps and the inspector general recently agreed on a memorandum of understanding, MOU. This MOU was agreed to only after I placed a hold on the Acting Director's nomination, and only after I sent three letters to the agency about the dispute, along with several other Members. Under the MOU, the Peace Corps has agreed to provide the inspector general with more information than before. For the time being, the inspector general believes that the MOU will allow her to carry out her oversight duties.

However, the inspector general has made it clear to me that the MOU has many shortcomings. Most importantly, the Peace Corps still refuses to acknowledge the inspector general's legal right to access the records in question. In addition, the MOU can be terminated by either party at any time. So the inspector general believes that she would be back at square one if the parties ever disagree in the future on the amount of information she needs to independently evaluate how the agency handled a specific case of sexual assault.

Still, the MOU represents progress. So I am voting in favor of this nomination. The law says that the inspector general is entitled to full and timely access to the records in question. So I will monitor this situation closely. And I will count on the nominee to guide the agency into full compliance with the law.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the nomination of Carolyn Hessler-Radelet, of Virginia, to be Director of the Peace Corps?

The nomination was confirmed.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the motions to reconsider are considered made and laid upon the table, and the President will be immediately notified of the Senate's actions.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Wyoming.

THE ENVIRONMENT

Mr. ENZI. I rise to talk about the new regulations President Obama proposed this week that are obviously aimed at the coal industry, but let's be frank, these regulations go far beyond the President's campaign to put coal out of business. These regulations target energy to make it less affordable and less abundant. Once again we are seeing how consumers, students, and low-income families are getting priced

out of the economy because of government policy. The more the government dictates and promotes a one-size-fits-all solution, the more it hits folks in their pocketbooks.

I don't think I have ever met a single person who said they were anti-environment. I cannot think of a single person who likes dirty water or polluted skies, but if we listen to my colleagues on the other side of the aisle, we would assume Republicans have made it their life's work to kill the planet. It makes for great sound bites and it can help rally their base; it does not, however, contribute much to the discussion at hand or make much of a difference.

Actions have consequences and these proposed regulations will have a real, tangible, measurable impact on the economy at a time when job creation should be our focus. The truth is coal powers America. Almost 70 percent of all energy produced in this country came from the ground and most of it was coal.

Even electric cars are powered by coal, but sadly you won't see that on a bumper sticker. That is what I call an inconvenient truth. If we were to shut down our coal facilities for even a single day, I think even my colleagues from the other side of the aisle would quickly be calling for these plants to be turned back on.

In my State coal is one of our largest employers. It provides high-paying jobs to our residents, as it does to folks all across the country. The revenue from energy production even provides scholarships for our students to get an education. For our State coal is not just an energy source, it is a livelihood.

The President may want us to run from coal, but I think we should be running toward it. George Washington Carver developed over 100 products from peanuts. Think what we could do with coal if we spent more time and resources developing our most abundant resource instead of trying to destroy it. American ingenuity would lead to our next energy revolution. But that is not happening. Instead, a project that the University of Wyoming and the private sector were working on to produce cleaner energy from coal was canceled because of the President's efforts to kill coal. There is no future in selling the products that would be developed to enhance coal.

We have to trust American ingenuity. No one likes to sit in the dark, and I imagine most folks like being able to run their air-conditioner in the summer. States that rely on coal for their power see an average of 30 percent lower electricity costs than States that use other fuels. An increase of that size would be noticed by almost everyone regardless of political affiliation.

We could learn a thing or two from Germany. They are going back to coal after experimenting with alternative sources. They realized that coal is readily available and will help them bring down energy prices.

Incidentally, coal is the only energy source you can stockpile for emergencies.

The plain fact is that this President is proposing a cap-and-tax proposal that already failed in Congress. My colleagues then realized that it is an extremely expensive idea, and the increased costs would be passed along to consumers, who must pay to use more expensive energy sources. But the fact that Congress rejected this proposal seems to have encouraged the administration to yet again sidestep Congress and implement another costly backdoor regulation. Even some of my colleagues on the other side of the aisle say they are angry about this tax imposed on the people without approval from their representatives in Congress.

I have heard comments about how courageous the President is for finally going after coal. It is not as if the President ever hid his disdain for energy that comes from the ground. He has been targeting it with redtape his entire Presidency. These ideas are purely political and will have a heavy impact on the economy with little or no measurable impact on the environment.

The Wall Street Journal pointed out in a recent editorial that ''based on the EPA's own carbon accounting, shutting down every single coal-fired power plant tomorrow and replacing them with zero-carbon sources would reduce the Earth's temperature by about one-twentieth of a degree Fahrenheit in a hundred years.''

Let me repeat that. The Wall Street Journal pointed out in a recent editorial that ''based on the EPA's own carbon accounting, shutting down every single coal-fired power plant tomorrow and replacing them with zero-carbon sources would reduce the Earth's temperature by about one-twentieth of a degree Fahrenheit in a hundred years.''

When government tries to pick winners and losers in any part of the market, everyone loses. Just look at how great our health care system is doing.

If we as a body allow the President to get his way on this regulation, we will be looking at billions in annual economic losses. Hundreds of thousands of people will lose their jobs. We will burden our businesses with billions of dollars in costs, all of which will be passed on to the consumers in the form of double-digit energy price increases. If you are elderly, a low-income or even middle-class family or living on a fixed income, are you willing to pay this energy tax that won't make a dent in CO_2 emissions? I can't imagine you would be. These new regulations will only succeed in making the pocketbooks lighter and the country darker.

When we have affordable and abundant energy, America stays competitive with the rest of the world. Low-cost energy could help create more than 1 million jobs over the next decade, and it could lure more investment into American manufacturing. The cost of energy is a big factor in manufacturing. We all say we need to put people back to work. Driving up costs to consumers and businesses doesn't seem to benefit anyone.

I hope my colleagues from the other side of the aisle will join me today and say enough is enough. The President is proposing to leave a permanent stain on our economy. We should not be putting people out of work or driving up energy prices.

I hope every American will call on their representatives to oppose this President's proposal. It is our constituents who keep us accountable.

The Republican leader has already introduced legislation to stop this reckless move by the EPA, and I am proud to join him in that effort. Our bill is simple. It requires that the President prove that this rule will not cause job losses, that it will not increase energy rates, and that it will not hurt our country's economic output. We know the President's regulations will put America at an economic disadvantage, but I worry we won't get a vote on this commonsense bill—or even done as an amendment—and that is a real shame because I think a majority of this body would support the bill and oppose the President's proposal.

I thank the Presiding Officer and yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Ohio.

D-DAY

Mr. PORTMAN. Mr. President, a momentous occasion is occurring tomorrow; that is, the 70th anniversary of D-day. Seventy years ago tomorrow, as the American people slept in their beds, the greatest naval invasion in history was underway.

On D-day, June 6, 1944, tens of thousands of American soldiers, sailors, and airmen joined allies from around the free world to begin what General Eisenhower called a great crusade—one that sought to free a continent. They came by amphibious landing craft, and I think my colleague from Louisiana is going to talk more about that in a moment. They also came by gliders laden with men and materiel and by parachutes deployed deep behind enemy lines. At beaches called Omaha and Utah and at the cliffs of Pointe du Hoc, they struck a mortal blow to the Nazi regime. Thousands would give their lives that day for that noble cause.

Like many in this Chamber, I have seen the American cemetery over there with rows of white crosses and Stars of David. They are a stark reminder of the price those brave heroes paid for all of us. These men did not go into battle alone. General Eisenhower said to the Allied Expeditionary Force on the eve of the battle, ''The hopes and prayers of liberty loving people everywhere march with you.'' Eisenhower was not exaggerating. As word of the invasion spread through the predawn hours of Tuesday morning, people gathered all over this country in churches, synagogues, meeting houses, public places

large and small, to seek God's blessing on men who were even then in harm's way.

As the battle raged on that day, President Franklin Roosevelt spoke to the Nation. He did not choose to address the American people with a speech; instead, he delivered words of prayer by radio address as the fate of Europe and, indeed, the entire free world hung in the balance. It is a very powerful prayer, transcending all faiths. It is a prayer that tells the story of why America fought and makes evident the sacrifices we were willing to make to see through to victory with God's help. It is a prayer that speaks to the horrors of war and the beauty of peace. It is a prayer that captures—perhaps better than anything else written since—the magnitude of what happened that day as we hit the beaches of Normandy.

I hope that prayer will never be forgotten, and that is why Senator LANDRIEU and I believe that prayer should be added as part of the World War II monument pursuant to bipartisan legislation we have been working on for a few years. I previously cosponsored it with Senator Lieberman and now with Senator LANDRIEU. It has gone through the Energy Committee twice with unanimous votes. It is called the World War II Memorial Prayer Act of 2013. This legislation also passed the House of Representatives by a significant vote, 286 to 26.

I would like to recite that prayer now with my colleague from Louisiana. I would like her to begin this prayer. After nearly 70 years, it still has the power to bring us together as a people and remind us that while we may have differences at times, there are so many things that do unite us.

Mr. President, I defer to my colleague from Louisiana.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Louisiana.

Ms. LANDRIEU. Mr. President, I thank my colleague for sharing this moment with me on the Senate floor and allowing me to work closely with him to present this bill to the Senate today. He has worked on this for several years, and I am pleased to join him for any number of reasons.

One thing I wish to mention before I share the reading of this prayer with him is that the official World War II museum happens to be located in New Orleans, LA. It was initiated by the great historian Stephen Ambrose. It has been promoted by an extraordinarily stellar group of civic and political leaders in our Nation. Former Senator Stevens and Senator Inouye joined arms together as brothers in the Senate and helped us to establish this official museum. It is almost complete.

On the eve of D-day, it is particularly striking that the two of us would be here to remember this prayer and to say to the country that this prayer, in our view, should be on the memorial here in DC.

I am also hoping, just as a suggestion, that it will be placed somewhere significantly in this fabulous, extraordinary, beautifully designed and beautifully executed museum that tells the story of the war—not how it was won but why it was fought. Why it was fought is the most important lesson for our country and the people of the world to know. Some of that is expressed in this prayer. More of that is expressed in the museum itself.

The Senator from Ohio would want to know that hundreds of citizens from New Orleans and Louisiana are actually on their way by boat to Normandy, and, of course, many of our elected officials, including the President, will be celebrating the 70th anniversary.

The reason this museum is in New Orleans is because the Higgins boats were actually built in New Orleans, and it is unusual that such a small city would have contributed so much. Eisenhower himself said that without these landing craft, we never could have gotten to the Normandy beach. They were built by an entrepreneur who had a small factory at the time that then grew, with 43,000 people employed. Men, women, African-Americans, and disabled workers were all being paid the same.

There is a remarkable story about the boats themselves that landed at Normandy, but this effort today is about a memorial prayer that I think we should remember and be reminded of.

I will begin by reciting this prayer which was given by President Roosevelt, and he asked the American people on that day to join him in this prayer.

He said:

> Almighty God: Our sons, pride of our nation, this day have set upon a mighty endeavor, a struggle to preserve our Republic, our religion, and our civilization, and to set free a suffering humanity.
>
> Lead them straight and true; give strength to their arms, stoutness to their hearts, steadfastness in their faith.
>
> They will need Thy blessings. Their road will be long and hard. For the enemy is strong. He may hurl back our forces. Success may not come with rushing speed, but we shall return again and again; and we know that by Thy grace, and by the righteousness of our cause, our sons will triumph.
>
> They will be sore tried, by night and by day, without rest—until the victory is won. The darkness will be rent by noise and flame. Men's souls will be shaken with the violences of war.
>
> For these men are lately drawn from the ways of peace. They fight not for the lust of conquest. They fight to end conquest. They fight to liberate. They fight to let justice arise, and tolerance and goodwill among all Thy people. They yearn but for the end of the battle, for their return to the haven of home. Some will never return. Embrace these, Father, and receive them, Thy heroic servants, into Thy kingdom.

Mr. PORTMAN. Mr. President, the prayer continues:

> And for us at home—fathers, mothers, children, wives, sisters, and brothers of brave men overseas, whose thoughts and prayers are ever with them—help us, Almighty God, to rededicate ourselves in renewed faith in Thee in this hour of great sacrifice.
>
> Many people have urged that I call the nation into a single day of special prayer. But because the road is long and the desire is great, I ask that our people devote themselves in a continuance of prayer. As we rise to each new day, and again when each day is spent, let words of prayer be on our lips, invoking Thy help to our efforts.
>
> Give us strength, too—strength in our daily tasks, to redouble the contributions we make in the physical and the material support of our armed forces.
>
> And let our hearts be stout, to wait out the long travail, to bear sorrows that may come, to impart our courage unto our sons wheresoever they may be.
>
> And, O Lord, give us faith. Give us faith in Thee; faith in our sons; faith in each other; faith in our united crusade. Let not the keenness of our spirit ever be dulled. Let not the impacts of temporary events, of temporal matters of but fleeting moment—let not these deter us in our unconquerable purpose.
>
> With Thy blessing, we shall prevail over the unholy forces of our enemy. Help us to conquer the apostles of greed and racial arrogances. Lead us to the saving of our country, and with our sister nations into a world unity that will spell a sure peace—a peace invulnerable to the schemings of unworthy men. And a peace that will let all of men live in freedom, reaping the just rewards of their honest toil.
>
> Thy will be done, almighty God. Amen.

Ms. LANDRIEU. Amen.

Mr. PORTMAN. Mr. President, that was the prayer that Franklin Roosevelt gave on that fateful day. Of course, many of the men who fought that day have gone on to their eternal reward, and some of them will mark tomorrow with quiet remembrances with families and friends.

Senator LANDRIEU has noted that there will be people from Louisiana going over to the D-day celebrations—it sounds like some by boat—also from Ohio and from all over the country. Our President will be there. Some will go there to retrace their steps and to see where they were on those beaches. Others will go just to see the cemeteries and remember their fallen comrades. There is a 93-year-old gentleman from Ohio named Jim Martin. He will be there too. He will be jumping from an airplane at 93 years old and parachuting onto the same soil he took back from the Nazis 70 years ago. On behalf of all of us, I wish Jim Godspeed.

There is very little we can add to the legacy they have created for themselves, but we can honor it and we can remember it, and that is what this bipartisan legislation is all about. Again, I crafted it originally with then-Senator Joe Lieberman and now have joined with Senator LANDRIEU to introduce it in this Congress. It directs the Secretary of the Interior to install in the area of the World War II Memorial a plaque with the inscription of the prayer we have just read.

Last Congress, the House of Representatives passed this legislation with an overwhelming vote of 386 to 26, and after a hearing on May 29, they are moving forward with doing so again. Today, on the eve of this historic anniversary, it is time for the Senate to lead the way toward enshrining this

singular moment in the history of our great country.

Senator LANDRIEU and I intend to call up Calendar No. 339 later this afternoon, and we hope in doing so we will achieve unanimous consent to be able to have the Senate proceed to consideration of this legislation, and then ask unanimous consent for it to be passed by this body. This is legislation we have worked on carefully. It has gone through the process of working with the Department of the Interior. We have ensured that it is consistent not just with the Department of Interior but also specifically with the Commemorative Works Act. It is something that, again, has been bipartisan and something that helps to bring this Congress and this country together during a critical time.

I thank my colleague from Louisiana for working with me. I think it is an incredibly important opportunity for us, on the eve of the 70th anniversary, to pass this legislation here in the Senate, thereby doing something positive for the future by telling them the importance of the past. This prayer is certainly part of that.

I yield for my colleague from Louisiana.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Louisiana.

Ms. LANDRIEU. Mr. President, let me join my colleague in asking for unanimous consent for this particular individual bill to pass by unanimous consent. It would be lovely if we could do this today because of the timing of our D-day celebration tomorrow. For the information of our colleagues who have other bills pending that are called lands bills, we are still working on a smaller package in addition to this. But we felt that this has such significance and importance and it is so timely today that it would really be important for us to do this.

So I hope our staffs can clear this on both sides and we can get this done before close of business today.

I thank the Senator from Ohio.

Mr. PORTMAN. Mr. President, I thank the Senator from Louisiana and I look forward to being back on the floor shortly to propound the unanimous consent request to pass this legislation and to do so prior to this momentous 70th anniversary tomorrow.

I yield back my time, and I note the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

VETERANS CARE

Mr. SANDERS. Mr. President, I believe every Member of this Senate and every American understands the very deep debt of gratitude we owe to the men and women who put their lives on the line to defend this country. That should not be a political issue. It should not be a partisan issue. I think all of us have been appalled by what we read about in Phoenix and in other locations about people manipulating data, pretending veterans were getting care in a timely manner when that was not the case.

It is my strong belief, as chairman of the Senate Veterans' Affairs Committee, that every veteran in this country is entitled to high-quality medical care and that they should get that care in a timely manner. I am going to do everything I can to make that happen.

We live, as everybody knows, in a politically divided country and a divided Congress. Reaching agreements is not easy and, quite frankly, does not take place very often in the Senate. Unfortunately, for whatever reason—without casting blame—it just does not happen. The American people understand that and are not happy about that. So reaching a compromise among people who look at the world very differently is not easy, but in this process, Senator JOHN MCCAIN of Arizona and I have tried our best to come forward with an agreement. It is an agreement which I am sure he is not 100 percent happy about and I can fully assure you I am not 100 percent happy about. I would have written a very different bill. I thank Senator HARRY REID for his strong support for this process, and CHUCK SCHUMER, PATTY MURRAY, and DICK DURBIN for pushing this effort forward. I hope we will be back on the floor to continue the effort to deal with the many unmet needs of veterans, but right now we have a crisis on our hands and it is imperative we deal with that crisis.

To my mind, the essence of the crisis is that we have learned in many parts of this country—not all parts but in many parts of this country—veterans cannot get the timely care they need. They cannot walk into a VA facility and within a reasonable period of time get the treatment they need.

So this bill, in a significant way, begins to address that important issue. Let me very briefly tell you how it does that.

For a start, there are many locations around the country where we need new facilities, we need refurbished facilities, we need expanded facilities. In fact, there are 26 locations in 18 States where that is the case. This legislation would allow the construction of 26 major medical facility leases in 18 States around the country. I believe that will help us in many parts of the country in providing the quality, timely care our veterans deserve.

In my view, there are areas of the country where we simply do not have the doctors, the nurses, and the other staff we need to provide the care our veterans deserve. Many primary care physicians get burned out by working 12, 14 hours a day. They quit. The turnover rate is too high. It is my view that the VA, by and large—and this is echoed by the views of the veterans community itself in independent studies—that when people get into the VA, the quality of care is good. But I will tell you, if we do not have the primary care physicians, the other physicians, the nurses we need to treat veterans, they are not going to get the care they need.

This legislation will target $500 million in unobligated balances for the hiring of new VA doctors and nurses. I see that as a significant step forward.

One of the great embarrassments or shocks that all of us feel is that within the military we have seen in recent years horrendous accounts of sexual assault. What this legislation does is say to those women and men who were sexually assaulted in the military that when they get into the VA, there is going to be quality care for their needs.

This legislation also touches on a couple of issues that are not directly related to health care but have overwhelming support in the House and the Senate.

We have heard from many young veterans who are in college as a result of the post-9/11 GI bill who right now cannot afford it because they are not getting instate tuition. This legislation addresses that issue.

I have talked, as I know Senator MCCAIN has, to Gold Star Wives. These are the women who have lost their husbands in combat who, I think for not a sensible reason, are unable to take advantage of the post-9/11 GI bill. They want to get their lives together. They want to be able to go to college or whatever. This bill addresses that issue.

There is another provision which was strongly supported by Senator MCCAIN and other Republican leaders—and Senator MCCAIN, I am sure, will go into it at great length, but essentially what this provision does is say if someone is 40 miles or farther away from a VA health care facility—a medical center, a CBOC or whatever it may be—they will be able to go to the doctor of their choice, under the strict supervision of the VA.

What this will do is prevent people from, in some cases in very rural areas—I think this is mostly a bill for people in very rural areas who now have to travel long distances to get their health care—this will make their lives easier. This is a 2-year trial project. We will see how it turns out, but that is in the bill as well.

The last point I wish to make is I do not think there is any disagreement in the Senate nor among the American people that when we have incompetent people in the VA or worse—dishonest people in the VA—they should be removed from their jobs immediately and that the Secretary of the VA should have the power to get rid of them. I do not think there is any debate about that.

Where there has been some debate is that in my view those employees deserve due process. I say that because I

do not want to see a situation where a new President comes in and for political reasons fires 400 top executives because they are Democrats or because they are Republicans or whatever. I do not want to see a situation where somebody is fired because she is a woman or Black or Hispanic or maybe gay, and maybe that is the underlying motive and that person has no course of appeal.

So what we have done is developed a very expedited process in terms of dismissal. We say if someone is dismissed, they are off the payroll tomorrow, they are gone, but they are going to have a week to file an appeal, and the appropriate body will have 3 weeks to rule on their appeal. I think that makes sense. I think when you think about it, it does make sense.

There are a few other important provisions. It is important, in my view, for the Nation to take advantage of the expertise that is out there in the private sector. How do we develop information technology for people accessing the VA? We want to do that. We have a commission that would help us do that. We have another Presidential commission that will help us with construction, which has been an ongoing problem in the VA.

That is a brief overview of what is in the legislation. Does it solve all of the problems facing our veterans? Absolutely not. Should we come back and continue to deal with this issue? Absolutely. But I think, given the crises we have right now, this is an important step forward.

I thank Senator MCCAIN. Senator MCCAIN's views on many issues are not my views. We look at the world differently, but that is what democracy is about. Our job was to sit down and work out the best agreement. We did. I think from day one Senator MCCAIN showed absolute good faith in this, a desire to reach a compromise. I hope he feels I did the same. We are where we are today.

So with that I yield the floor for Senator MCCAIN and thank him very much for his efforts.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Arizona.

Mr. MCCAIN. I thank the Presiding Officer.

I would like to say to the Senator from Vermont that I respect a great deal the work he has done on this legislation. I respect his commitment and his leadership of the Veterans' Affairs Committee. I respect the fact that BERNIE SANDERS is known as a fighter, and it has been a pleasure to do combat with him.

But I also would like to say that at the end of the day with strongly held views on different aspects of this issue, we were able to come together in a way that will help to relieve this terrible tragedy that seems to have befallen our Nation's veterans. It started in Phoenix, AZ, as my colleagues know, but it has spread all over the country. It begins with the terrible story of perhaps 40 veterans having literally died for lack of care.

I do not need to go through all of the different problems that have surfaced in the ensuing days since that began, but there should be no doubt in anyone's mind that we should accept the word of the inspector general who said these are systemic problems. This is not a scheduling problem. These are systemic problems that need to be addressed.

Our hope—as we concluded this legislation—was that perhaps we could put some of our other differences aside that have beset this body and move forward and address this legislation as quickly as possible and begin to repair the damage because we have, for all intents and purposes, in some ways betrayed the brave men and women who were willing to go out and sacrifice for the well-being and freedom of the rest of us.

So, again, I say to Senator SANDERS, I appreciate his leadership and I appreciate the fact that we both had to make some very tough compromises, but I have found in my experience that when tough compromises are made, usually that is a sign of bipartisanship and a sign that it is a good piece of legislation. I know that is not the popular thing to say nowadays in today's political environment, but I do not believe, if compromises had not been made, that we would be bringing to the floor of the Senate—and working with the House's chairman JEFF MILLER over there—that we would be doing what we are introducing today.

I would also like to say a word about two other individuals; that is, Senator BURR, the ranking member of the Veterans' Affairs Committee, whom I admire enormously—he has worked tirelessly on behalf of the veterans and he is a most respected member of our conference—and of course our most unique treasure, Dr. TOM COBURN, who had been my nominee to take over the Veterans' Administration, which almost destroyed a long and beautiful friendship, but Dr. COBURN is the conscience of our conference. He is the person whom we look up to and admire the most for his integrity, for his honesty, his intelligence. I thank both Senator BURR and Dr. COBURN for their enormous work. In some ways, I am sort of the spokesperson, when they did a great majority of the work.

As Senator SANDERS pointed out, I would like to just cover several aspects of this legislation and try to explain a little bit why some of these provisions are there.

Of course, a top priority for me for many years has been to give the veteran a choice. We ought to give the veteran a choice—the same choice as people who are Medicare recipients, those who have TRICARE; that is, the military health care program—where if they are outside of 40 miles from the nearest VA facility, if there is a wait time which is unacceptable, then they should be able to go to the health care provider right near their home, not have to get in a van and ride for 2 or 3 hours for routine medical care.

I also want to emphasize what I hope my colleagues understand, that this is in no way a comment on the Veterans' Administration—I will leave that to others and other judgments—because there are things done in the veterans health care system that only the veterans health care system can handle: PTSD, traumatic brain injury, spinal cord injury, prosthesis, war wounds, that only the VA can do. None of this that we are saying in any way denigrates or does anything that is uncomplimentary to the outstanding men and women who work in this system. We are proud of their work. It is the system that needs to be fixed. So I do not want anybody who is associated with the Veterans' Administration to believe we are criticizing them.

We are talking about a system that must be fixed. It is urgent that it be fixed. Every single day that goes by a veteran is deprived of the care he or she has earned serving this country is wrong. That is why I urge my colleagues: If you have amendments, if you think you can make this bill better, we welcome it. We would be glad to discuss with you amendments to this legislation. We would be glad, if you know how to make it better.

But in the meantime, can we sort of pledge that we are committed to seeing this thing all the way through? I would urge my colleagues to do that. Again, I know I speak for Senator SANDERS when I say: If you have a way to make this bill, this legislation, better, come on in. But let's not get hung up on certain other aspects of our differences that have characterized what most people would view as gridlock in this body.

I urge my colleagues to look at this compromise. It is a compromise. If you think you can make it better, we welcome your input. But also, we would like to have your commitment to seeing this through to the President's desk. I know that over on the other side of the Capitol they are working hard on this issue too.

So we bring up, as I mentioned, veterans should have that card. That veteran should be able to go to a facility of his or her choice. Accountability. Senator RUBIO and others, Congressman MILLER and others, have introduced legislation. Senator SANDERS has improved on it. This calls for the immediate firing—an immediate firing if there is evidence of work that is not in keeping with the standards we expect of our employees.

During that period, under appeal, that person will not receive a salary. That person will have some due process: 7 days to appeal to the Merit Systems Protection Board and there are 21 days for that Merit Systems Protection Board to render a final decision. Yes, we should have, as many of our colleagues want, accountability. But that accountability also in this proposal allows for due process for someone to at least have their case heard.

There is expedited hiring authority for VA doctors and nurses, and additional authority to hire new providers. There are unobligated funds out there. We are going to use unobligated funds to hire more doctors and nurses where they are needed. But I would also point out, in some cases doctors and nurses have to work harder where they are. Also, there are now pending, over the years, administration requests for 26 major facility leases to be entered into.

This has been the President's request. This has been a bipartisan agreement on the need for these facilities. I believe we should proceed with it. I would also point out to my colleagues, this legislation has some expenses. But the major expense is to move forward with the construction of these major medical facilities all over America. In the view of all, it is necessary.

This improves the access to health care for individuals who are the victims of military sexual assault. Sexual assault is probably one of the most vexing issues we face in the military today outside of combat. We do not know exactly what causes some of this. We do know many times it is because of a lack of discipline. But there is no doubt this is a problem in the military that needs to be addressed; otherwise, mothers and fathers will be not agreeable—in fact reluctant—to have their sons and daughters serve in the military unless we address this issue of sexual assault.

There are many efforts going on, in the Defense authorization bill, in the military, many other areas where we are working on this issue. But I think this provision in the bill will be very helpful in attempting to address that issue.

A commission needs to be appointed on scheduling and care. We know one of the problems is scheduling, and this whole issue of phantom lists and waiting lists that disappeared. We have to get to the bottom of it. I think the smartest people in America could help us on that. There is another commission on capital planning. What are the needs of our veterans?

One of the things we do know is we have an aging veteran population from World War II, those who are, God bless them, still with us, Korea and Vietnam. That is an aging veterans population and requires a different kind of care than those of Iraq and Afghanistan. To be frank, a lot of that is geriatric care. To be frank, geriatric care is very expensive. But we have to understand who this population is and what their needs are, just as we have to understand the Iraqi and Afghanistan war veterans and what their needs are.

Very frankly, our planning so far has not been very impressive to me. We need to have—this is a pure Senator SANDERS initiative—a GI bill tuition, eligibility for surviving spouses of those who died in the line of duty. It seems to me that is only fair. And a provision also that in-State tuition will be provided for all veterans at public colleges and universities.

Again, finally I want to say thank you to Senator SANDERS. I also want to say to my colleagues again: This is not a perfect document. We are ready to see any changes that we would consider, and perhaps germane amendments. But I would also hope we could focus our attention on the bill and the efforts to help our veterans, as opposed to other issues which seem to be with us on a daily basis.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. WARREN). The Senator from Vermont.

Mr. SANDERS. Madam President, I thank Senator MCCAIN again. I think his remarks were right on in terms of describing what is in this legislation. I support his appeal.

Look, everybody has an issue. Every time a bill comes up, I have my pet concerns that I could bring forth amendments on, Senator MCCAIN has his. But what we are appealing to right now is if you have a way to improve this bill for our veterans, bring forth that amendment. But please, please, do not bring forward extraneous amendments. Let's focus on the needs of veterans. Let's not make them political footballs. I hope very much we can proceed in that direction.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Virginia.

Mr. KAINE. Madam President, I rise to offer a few words about the colloquy that just was completed. I often find, when I am on the floor or presiding, that I feel sorry for the spectators in the Chamber. Either they are seeing the body not work as well as it should or sometimes they are watching a lot of silence, depending on when they are here. But I have been in the chair for the last hour. I think the spectators have been treated to what the Senate does when we do our best. First Senators PORTMAN and LANDRIEU put a bill on the floor dealing with a commemoration in connection with the 70th anniversary of D-day, which is tomorrow. It was a bill they are seeking unanimous consent for. It was a very worthy one.

But, second, I know many of us, all of us in the Chamber, have been very discouraged about the recent revelations and challenges within the VA. Many of us feared earlier this week that what we would get in this discussion were competing proposals or bills that would be partisan, where each side would fall short of doing what they wanted, and the veterans would not receive the kind of relief they should get.

What we have seen, with Senator SANDERS and Senator MCCAIN putting this bill on the floor just now, is exactly how this should work for the veterans, but in the legislative process more generally. So I am pleased to congratulate my colleagues for taking two different approaches to this veterans challenge and working it out so a bipartisan bill can be offered. I think we owe it to the veterans, and especially in light of these recent challenges, to show a unified face in trying to fix these problems. I look forward to working with my colleagues to do so.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New York.

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, I too want to join my colleague from Virginia in adding accolades to our Senators from Vermont and Arizona in putting together this proposal. I would like to make a few points here. First, the veterans should come first. These are people whom we sent overseas to risk their lives for us. When they come back injured, nothing should stand in the way of us giving them the best medical care possible.

Senators MCCAIN and SANDERS, of different political philosophies—if they each had to write their own bill would write different bills—came together, not for their ideology's sake, not for political advantage, but for the good of these veterans. That is the highest duty we have here.

The second point I would make is this: In a body that has been wracked by partisanship, I was hoping and praying that that partisanship would not stand in the way of us helping our veterans. Because of this good work of Vermont and Arizona's Senators, that has happened. That has happened. We are not home yet. We hope no one will be so selfish that they feel their own amendment or amendments have to be voted on if they are extraneous, because that could blow up the deal. We all know how fragile, even for our veterans, bipartisan agreements are in this body. This is a higher calling.

I talked at length over the last several days with Senator SANDERS. I know how heartfelt this is for him. As he said: If he wrote his own bill, he would have done a lot more. But each of us writing a bill and giving a speech about it is not going to help a single veteran. The way this body works is, we have to come together. There is no one on the other side of the aisle, perhaps no one in this Chamber, who better respects what veterans have gone through than Senator MCCAIN after what he went through himself as a prisoner of war. He was just the right person for the chairman of our Veterans Committee, BERNIE SANDERS, to reach out to. Because they both cared so much about veterans, they came together. It is now up to the rest of us, the other 98, to do the same, to come together, to pass this bill quickly. This does not mean this will be the last thing we will do for veterans. This is an issue we are going to have to revisit, given the sickness we have in parts of the Veterans Administration, given the long waiting lists, given the fact that while most veterans get very good care in our VA, not every veteran does. Our goal is to have every veteran get good care in our VA.

Hopefully this bill will pass. Hopefully maybe this will set a precedent that we can work together on important issues; we can each submerge some of our heartfelt feelings that it has to be our way and reach compromise with the other side. That is

what Senator SANDERS has done. That is what Senator MCCAIN has done. I salute them for their patriotism, their good sense, and, frankly, their courage.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

EPA REGULATIONS

Ms. MURKOWSKI. Madam President, I come this afternoon to speak about the regulations proposed by the administration on Monday relating to the Environmental Protection Agency. This time the agency's target is a 30-percent reduction in greenhouse gas emissions from existing powerplants by the year 2030.

The regulation that has been announced, which has been the subject of a great deal of conversation this week, should not be confused with EPA rules for cooling water intake or for proposed powerplants or for cross-state air pollution or for boilers or for ozone or for incinerators or for regional haze or for fuel economy or for the waters of the United States or for renewable fuels or for cement kilns or for coal ash or for effluent limitations or for any other number of regulatory actions that the agency has taken or is expected to take.

This rule—and there have been so many of them, it almost feels like this should be EPA's rule of the week or rule of the month—is a unilateral effort to bypass Congress and to force into place policies that we in Congress have not approved. The goal is to push our electric supply away from coal and, I think, ultimately, away from natural gas as soon as possible.

As the ranking member on the energy committee, I can attest that energy is always the flip side of the environmental debate. If we have a discussion about energy, we always have a discussion about the environment.

I believe we should advance policies that make our energy abundant, affordable, clean, diverse, and secure. To that end, our environmental goals must be balanced with our energy needs.

Because of this, I have for years expressed concern that EPA's relentless onslaught will harm the affordability and the reliability of our electric supply. In fact, I even released a white paper on this matter earlier this year. We still do not have an accurate accounting of the cumulative costs associated with all of these EPA rules that I just gave in the laundry list, but we do know not to trust their math because EPA has dramatically underestimated the powerplant retirements in very recent past.

I will give you some examples. For the mercury and air toxic rules, EPA estimated only 4.7 gigawatts of coal-fired capacity retirements by the year 2015. But then we see the contrast. The labor unions forecast that MATS alone would result in 55 gigawatts of coal plant retirements and the loss of some 250,000 jobs. Government experts have determined that approximately 10 to 20 percent of existing coal capacity could be retired by the middle of the next decade. This is a calculation that really dwarfs EPA's number and one that doesn't include the potential impact of the latest proposal.

Now, I know that the EPA has an important job to do, and I appreciate that, but I also recognize that it does not and cannot regulate in a vacuum. Baseload coal and the ancillary services that it provides account for almost 40 percent of our power. In many instances the EPA's regulations will render generating units uneconomic, with compliance requiring retrofitting, the use of best available technology, and downtime for installation. So I am concerned—greatly concerned—that the EPA's rules, particularly when you combine them with one another, will result in a grid that is less stable and less reliable. The cumulative effect of federal regulations on baseload capacity resources, whether they are coal or nuclear, which produce electricity on demand has to be looked at. We have to examine and appreciate the cumulative effect of this loss of production and not discount or ignore it.

Many this past winter got a taste of what life in Alaska is like in the wintertime when we experienced the polar vortex here in the lower 48. The polar vortex caused 50,000 megawatts of powerplant outages. For one key system 89 percent of the coal capacity that is scheduled for retirement next year because of an EPA rule was called upon to meet the rising demand.

So again, just think about that.

We had a tough winter. We had coal-fueled facilities that were able to step up and provide for that increased demand—89 percent of that capacity was utilized during this polar vortex. That is fine. But what happens when those facilities are now offline, when they are in retirement, when you do not have that backup?

The question we really need to be asking is, What happens when that capacity is gone? Hoping for a mild winter isn't a viable strategy. You cannot have a hope-and-prayer energy policy, hoping that the weather is not going to be so bad. Our Nation relies on installed dispatchable power generation during extreme weather, which is why we need to ensure grid reliability through a diversity of baseload capacity.

Today it is unclear how many plants will retrofit to comply with various EPA regulations—including this most recent one—as opposed to making a decision to just shut down. It is uncertain if there will be enough time—to say nothing of sufficient capital available for investment—to build these new facilities or other forms of generation needed to ensure the continued reliability of the grid.

I have been talking about grid reliability for a long while now, and I think it speaks to our system that while we may have been pushed to the edge of getting nervous, we have been able to meet that reliability requirement Americans have just come to expect. They want to know that when they want to have the lights on or keep cool or keep warm, there is that availability. Reliability is key here. I am even more troubled that the EPA, which has conceded that a single rule may result in what they have called a ''localized effect,'' has not sought from our grid regulators, FERC and NERC, an analysis of the cumulative impact its rules may have. Understanding the impacts of these rules by checking in with our grid regulators, FERC and NERC, as part of a formal process is an important part of what needs to go on. Yet we are not seeing that follow-through. Instead, EPA appears to be morphing into an industrial planning agency for the energy sector. That is not what they are designed to do. This latest rulemaking makes it even more important for FERC and the Department of Energy to step up, to really go toe-to-toe here with EPA to protect the reliability and the affordability of our power supply.

The current chairwoman of FERC, while she has not called for a formal official role for the commission—as many of us would like—is certainly up to the task in my view. But with that situation at play right now within the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, it appears that the White House doesn't want to keep the acting chair in charge. Its nominee to serve as chairman is both short on energy experience and largely unaware of the electricity reliability implications of EPA's rules.

In response to a hearing question about grid reliability from Senator MANCHIN, the nominee conceded that he ''has not been following the decisional process at EPA closely enough to know.''

I find that response not only disturbing, but I think it raises the question of whether anyone within the administration is actually following the EPA process closely enough to know what will happen to our electric grid. I can tell you that I don't think the EPA knows the impact for my State of Alaska. The Agency readily admits that its proposal ''fails to account for the expected costs and benefits for areas outside of the contiguous United States.''

Alaska is one-fifth the size of the country, and we are part of the country. But the EPA, in advancing these proposed regulations, admits that ''we don't know.'' We don't know the cost-benefit for Alaska. We don't know the cost-benefit for Hawaii. That does not mean that my State is exempt from this rule as some reports have led Alaskans to believe. Instead, without the

benefit of any analysis, EPA has directed Alaska to reduce our emissions by 26 percent and this while EPA ignores—totally ignores—the likely inflationary costs and increases inherent in requiring the revamping of so much power production likely within a single decade.

The EPA has recommended that States work together, work together to figure out how we are going to make these cuts. But again, when you are not part of the contiguous United States, it is a little more difficult for us in Alaska and our neighbors to the south in Hawaii if we are not part of an interstate electricity grid. Alaska is really in many ways on its own. Because of our constant need for Federal approvals or at best Federal cooperation that is too often slow to come, we are not even able to develop our clean hydropower.

Some may ask: Well, I understand that you have about 25 percent of your power in the State of Alaska coming from hydro. That is correct. But because of other Federal policies—whether it is the roadless rule or other policies—we are truly hamstrung in our ability to build out more hydro. Based on more than 50 years of delay or broken Federal promises, there is no guarantee that we will be able to develop fully our abundant natural gas or even our vast renewable resource potential.

We have challenges and we acknowledge them. We are working on those challenges. We are working diligently because there is nobody who wants to get reliable, affordable, clean diverse energy supplies to our State more honestly and earnestly than myself. But it is challenging. So as we work towards that transition, we need that flexibility. We need that time.

Now the EPA has suggested a series of strategies for reducing greenhouse gas emissions. But of the five powerplants in Alaska that are directly impacted by this proposed rule, four are natural-gas-fired plants, and they are located near each other and Anchorage. So in the whole State of Alaska there are only five plants that are impacted by this regulation. Everything else is small enough or doesn't sell its power. So of the five, four of them are already natural gas. The fifth already has clean coal technology. The proposed strategies of switching to natural gas, dispatch changes or retiring plants are really just unworkable given the configuration we have in my State. Given that we live in this polar vortex every winter—everywhere is polar vortex in Alaska—many of our houses are well insulated to protect from the cold. So efficiency programs will provide comparatively small gains.

Having said that, I know that we can and must do more when it comes to efficiencies, and I will continue to push on that because that is an area where I think we can make a difference. But trying to get to this 26-percent reduction is a challenge. I am still canvassing my State, but it will be difficult for Alaska to reach our 26-percent emissions reduction without serious economic impact.

Electricity is already more expensive in Alaska than in most of the rest of the Nation. We have to reduce these prices, not engage in policies that will raise those prices even higher. In the lower 48 States, on average, an American family spends a little over 4 percent of their household budget towards their energy—keeping the lights on and keeping the house warm or cool—depending on the season. In many parts of my State of Alaska we have households that pay between 40 and 50 percent of their household budget to stay warm and to keep the lights on. So I am looking at this very, very critically. While I want to ensure that our air is clean, that we are working to reduce health risks, we don't have any room in Alaska to increase our energy costs. We have to be working aggressively with one another to reduce those costs.

So I look at the proposal that has come out from the EPA this week, and I am very concerned about how a State such as mine will achieve the level that the EPA has imposed on it without extraordinary increases to cost.

Some have labeled this recent EPA proposed regulation ObamaCare 2.0, and in many ways it is. The administration insists that there will be no cost increases associated with this rule. All we are missing here is an awful Web site and a pledge that if you like your current electricity bill, you can keep it. The President promises the electricity bills will shrink, but I am not buying that. The Wall Street Journal has rightly labeled this a huge tax on the poor and the middle class, and no one understands what will happen if States perhaps refuse to move forward with their own plans. Again, you have to ask the question: Does anybody really think that the EPA has the ability to impose its Federal will while simultaneously keeping the lights on and keeping power affordable to all 50 States?

Despite negative economic growth last quarter and despite far better approaches pending in Congress to promote energy efficiency and energy innovation, such as an energy efficiency bill that my colleague from Ohio has been working doggedly to try to advance—a measure that I think is smart and sound and built on good policy—to not only help States like mine but all across the country, we do have some good proposals out there. We have initiatives we can move forward. But instead the President has decided to push ahead and to propose sweeping new regulations on our still weak economy.

We must keep costs and reliability in mind as regulatory mandates push more and more baseload coal plants offline. FERC must be the unambiguous champion of reliability with a formal and a documented role with respect to EPA's rulemaking process. Powerful regulatory laws must be judicially administered, and only Congress—not the EPA—should decide such consequential changes for our energy supply, our economy, and our people. I think anything less is unacceptable and could very well yield significant negative consequences for a wide variety of American families and our businesses.

I thank the Presiding Officer for her attention and the opportunity to discuss a very important issue for our entire country.

With that, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. MARKEY). The Senator from Ohio.

Mr. PORTMAN. Mr. President, I commend my colleague from Alaska, who is the ranking member, and thank her for her hard work. She mentioned the energy efficiency bill. I know she strongly supports that bill, and I hope it will come back to the floor. It is a more logical way to get at some of these issues.

I come to the floor to follow up on the conversation I had earlier with Senator LANDRIEU. She and I announced earlier this afternoon that we were going to offer unanimous consent in the Senate on bipartisan and noncontroversial legislation. I had hoped Senator LANDRIEU would come back to the floor, but apparently she can't, so I will offer this on behalf of both of us.

DIRECTING THE SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR TO INSTALL A WORLD WAR II MEMORIAL PLAQUE

Mr. PORTMAN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent, as if in legislative session, that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of Calendar No. 339, S. 1044.

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

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 1044) to direct the Secretary of the Interior to install in the area of the World War II Memorial in the District of Columbia a suitable plaque or an inscription with the words that President Franklin D. Roosevelt prayed with the United States on D-day, June 6, 1944.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the bill.

Mr. PORTMAN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the bill be read a third time and passed and the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table.

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

The bill (S. 1044) was ordered to be engrossed for a third reading, was read the third time, and passed, as follows:

S. 1044

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 ''World War II Memorial Prayer Act of 2013''.

SEC. 2. PLACEMENT OF PLAQUE OR INSCRIPTION AT WORLD WAR II MEMORIAL.

The Secretary of the Interior—

(1) shall install in the area of the World War II Memorial in the District of Columbia a suitable plaque or an inscription with the words that President Franklin D. Roosevelt

prayed with the United States on June 6, 1944, the morning of D-Day;

(2) shall design, procure, prepare, and install the plaque or inscription referred to in paragraph (1); and

(3) may not use Federal funds to prepare or install the plaque or inscription referred to in paragraph (1), but may accept and expend private contributions for this purpose.

SEC. 3. COMMEMORATIVE WORKS ACT.

Chapter 89 of title 40, United States Code (commonly known as the ''Commemorative Works Act''), shall apply to the design and placement of the plaque within the area of the World War II Memorial.

D-DAY

Mr. PORTMAN. Mr. President, the clerk just read part of the description of this legislation, and I thank this body on both sides of the aisle for working with us.

Tomorrow we mark a momentous occasion. It is the 70th anniversary of D-day. It is a day, of course, that will go down in history as one of the greatest naval invasions in the history of our country but also a day when we lost many brave American soldiers and one where the country came together to pray for them and give them the strength they would need not just on that D-day but to go through Europe to ultimately vanquish the Nazis and liberate that continent.

On that day, 70 years ago tomorrow, Franklin D. Roosevelt decided not to give a speech at the White House but instead to give a prayer for the troops and for the Nation. This body has just passed legislation to make that prayer a part of the World War II Memorial. That prayer will help to give it some additional context and interpretation at a critical time. The prayer helps us look at our history and shows how our country came together at a critical time. It is a very powerful prayer. My dad was a World War II veteran, and I always found it to be one of the most moving prayers in our Nation's history.

I will mention a couple of aspects of this prayer. President Roosevelt explained—I thought in very powerful words—why America fought. When talking about the troops, he said:

> They will be sore tried, by night and by day, without rest—until the victory is won. The darkness will be rent by noise and flame. Men's souls will be shaken with the violences of war.
>
> For these men are lately drawn from the ways of peace. They fight not for the lust of conquest. They fight to end conquest. They fight to liberate. They fight to let justice arise, and tolerance and goodwill among all Thy people. They yearn but for the end of battle, for their return to the haven of home.

That is why we fight.

Again, I think that prayer is an important part of our history but also an important message for us even today.

The prayer also includes a number of other very powerful messages that brought the Nation together in a single day for prayer and thanksgiving. It asks for God's help in a number of ways, and one that I think is particularly poignant is where it asks God to give us the ability to deepen our faith. It says:

> And, O Lord, give us faith. Give us faith in Thee, faith in our sons; faith in each other . . .

Again, I appreciate the work of Senator LANDRIEU and, before her, Senator Lieberman, who was the original cosponsor with me on this legislation.

I thank my friends from Ohio, the Christian Alliance, and others who have brought this to my attention over the years.

I thank my colleagues in the House, who passed this legislation last year with a resounding vote. I hope they will take up this legislation and pass it again in the House this year so we can indeed move to have this inscription placed in the World War II Memorial in order to remind us of a day in our Nation's history where our country did come together and where we, as Americans—not as conquerors but as liberators—provided for the liberation of a continent and established this precedent for our country that with God so much is possible.

I yield back my time and note the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

VETERANS CARE

Mr. BROWN. Mr. President, there is good news for America's veterans this afternoon. Senator MCCAIN and Senator SANDERS, the chairman of the Veterans' Affairs Committee, have apparently come to a tentative agreement on what we should do to deal with some of the serious problems at the Veterans' Administration.

We know a couple of things. First of all, we know that health care in the veterans hospitals, in the VA system, in the community-based clinics in places such as Akron and Canton and Youngstown and Springfield and Mansfield and the care in the big hospitals, such as Wade Park and Dayton, is superb and there is overwhelming support among veterans for the care they have earned and deserve and are getting. The problem is getting access to that care in a number of cases. Too many veterans have waited too long, been forced to wait too long to get the medical care and the medical treatment they need.

That is a product, frankly, of a historically underfunded VA. We know a decade ago, when the President a decade ago—more than a decade ago—and the Senate and the House took the country to war the Veterans' Administration funding was put pretty flat. There was no real preparation by the Congress, by the President—then President Bush—and by the VA to scale up veterans' capacity, the VA capacity, veterans' health care—not enough nurses, not enough doctors, not enough health care personnel, not enough capacity at the VA health care system to take care of the surging numbers of soldiers coming home, sailors coming home, marines coming home, air men and women coming home.

We also know at the same time what happened with Agent Orange, and the Agent Orange presumptive eligibility. As Vietnam veterans were beginning to get sicker, were beginning to show more and more symptoms, the government made the right decision, Congress made the right decision, if a soldier had boots on the ground, they were eligible. If a soldier had an illness defined by the law that was connected to Agent Orange, then they were presumed to be eligible. They didn't have to go back and prove they were actually exposed at a certain place at a certain time in Vietnam. All of those were good things, as our country, our government, our VA, embraced war, men and women, to get the VA care they earned.

The bad news was Congress and the President didn't prepare for it a decade ago as this surge of new people, the veterans coming home, veterans living here for a number of years after doing their service, that they could get the health care they needed. That is the reason we have had these long delays.

There are certainly issues of leadership within the VA. There are issues of administrators not doing their jobs. They should be held accountable. They should pay a price for that—sometimes termination, certainly disciplinary action if shown to have failed to live up to their responsibilities ethically and efficiently and correctly and responsibly.

It is clear this new agreement will take us forward. It will mean a couple of things. One, it means those administrators, those VA officials who didn't do their jobs, will be held accountable. Secondly, and most importantly, it will mean veterans who have had long delays or who live in rural areas and simply can't get the coverage, can't get to the VA clinic, the community-based outpatient clinic or the VA hospital, the VA center, if they can't get that health care treatment today, or soon, they can go to a private hospital, they can go to a community-based health clinic and get the coverage, get the care they need at no cost to the veteran.

The third thing is, to make up for the neglect of a decade ago that we have tried to remedy by almost doubling the VA budget over the last 5 years to take care of all these people who are now in the system who have suffered much more serious illness and disability than the veterans of a generation ago who might have died on the battlefield from these same injuries, that we scale up the training of doctors and nurses in these VA facilities.

There has been an agreement reached among a group of us on the veterans committee and both parties that we will fund a number of new facilities around the country as we train more

doctors and nurses and other health care personnel—physical therapists, occupational therapists, and others.

At a time of not particularly good news for veterans over the last few weeks and really over the last few months, this is good news. This will make for a better VA. We know the VA is a huge health care system, with 85 million veteran visits, patient visits to the VA over the last year and 8 million different veterans have used the VA over the last 12 months. We have to make sure we do our jobs as Senators and Members of Congress and in the White House to take care of our veterans. For those who served us, it is time we served our veterans.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from South Dakota.

D-DAY ANNIVERSARY

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I rise today to honor the 70th anniversary of the heroic landings of D-day.

The incredible bravery exhibited on June 6 of 1944, in the first phase of Operation Overlord to liberate Western Europe from the clutches of Nazi Germany, is one of the defining moments of modern history.

The images of American GIs landing at Omaha Beach, Utah Beach, and Pointe du Hoc have come to represent not only the great sacrifices made during World War II, but the enduring cause of freedom for which the United States still stands.

I have had the humbling experience of visiting the American cemetery at Normandy that honors those who fell during the invasion. As I walked the peaceful fields of brilliant white headstones in perfect formation, it was hard to imagine the terrifying landscape that greeted those American and allied soldiers, many of them not yet 20 years old, when they lowered the ramps of their landing craft in the shallows off of Normandy. Yet they understood the importance of their mission, and they held fast against one of the greatest evils the world has ever faced, and they prevailed.

The men and women who answered the call to serve in World War II and those who supported them on the home front are often revered as the ''greatest generation,'' and deservedly so. They gave up their lives and their livelihoods and endured separation from their loved ones and fought in unspeakable conditions.

From the beaches of Normandy to the islands of the Pacific, where my father served as a Navy pilot, the United States and allied forces fought for freedom and for the dignity of mankind, and we owe them a tremendous debt of gratitude.

As we honor the memory of those who served before us, we honor their legacy by upholding the values for which they fought.

We are here today because of the immense burdens our men and women in uniform have carried on our behalf. May we never forget their sacrifices or the solemn responsibility we have to all of those who have answered the call to serve.

Mr. 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.

Mr. UDALL of New Mexico. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

TRIBUTE TO NAVAJO CODE TALKER CHESTER NEZ

Mr. UDALL of New Mexico. Mr. President, my State of New Mexico has a great tradition of military service. When the Nation has called, New Mexico has always answered. Today I wanted to say a few words to remember Chester Nez, the last of the original 29 Navajo code talkers of World War II.

Mr. Nez passed away Wednesday morning in Albuquerque, NM. We are forever indebted to him and his fellow warriors. They turned the Navajo language into an unbelievable code, using the language they were forbidden to speak in school, as a weapon to defend our freedoms in war, freedoms they themselves did not always enjoy. This is a great story of courage, of love of country, of tremendous sacrifice. In battle after battle in ferocious combat, the Navajo code saved countless lives and helped secure the allied victory. In 2001, the original code talkers received the Congressional Gold Medal, the highest honor the Congress can give.

Our former colleague, Senator Jeff Bingaman, fought hard for this. I was pleased to push for it in the House. It was richly deserved and long overdue. Mr. Nez was there for the ceremony, and the Presiding Officer, who was in the House with me, may remember we had that ceremony in the Capitol Rotunda. It was a great and uplifting day to finally see the Navajo code talkers receive their medals.

I said then what I continue to feel now: Their service can never be forgotten and can never be diminished. Chester Nez was modest in his own life but proud of the code talkers and proud of the Navajo traditions. In his later years, he visited schools and colleges all across the Nation to tell the story of those Navajo code talkers.

In his memoir, written with Judith Avila, he said:

> I recommended myself that my Navajo people had always been warriors, protectors. In that there was honor. I would concentrate on being a warrior, on protecting my homeland.

As we mark Chester's passing, we honor his memory with a renewed dedication to preserve our Native languages, to keep alive the story of our code talkers, the heroic story of the Navajo, and also of other Native American tribes, their codes and their commitment forever unbroken.

Today we say goodbye to this great hero, this humble man who served our country with such devotion. We say goodbye with sadness but also with appreciation for a debt that can never be fully repaid, for courage that will forever inspire, and for a life that truly made a difference.

Chester, you made a real difference in our lives. I would just say to Chester's family, we send them our heartfelt condolences.

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

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

FAREWELL TO PAGES

Mr. REID. As we leave for the week, I wanted to say something on the record regarding the pages. They are going to graduate tomorrow morning at 10 a.m. I look forward to these graduations every year. These are fine young men and women who come here and spend a semester of school with us.

This is a tradition we have been doing for a long time. Two of my grandchildren were pages, and even though my family has been involved in government through me for all these many years, they were never exposed to it like coming here and being pages. It really changed their lives, and I am sure some of these young men and women's lives have been changed also.

I can remember when I was about their age and I went to Boys State and the friends I made at that weeklong program—friends I still have. These young men and women—friends they make here, they will have for the rest of their lives.

These boys and girls are not the summer pages. We have two classes of summer pages, and they are here for a month, and that is it. These young men and women are here for a semester, and the school is hard. It is not some kind of a lark back in Washington. They studied hard. We look for good students, and that is what we get. They get up early in the morning, they go to school, and they come here and try to learn more about government. They really get to know us, personalities. Some of us are nicer to them than others. They recognize that.

I congratulate these pages because they are an integral part of what goes on around here. They really do things that are hard. We don't ask them to write dissertations, at least here in the Senate; for the school, they do that. But they run bills around the Capitol Complex, and they help us on some of the more mundane things we take for granted.

I really look forward to meeting them. I try to meet all the pages every year. Sometimes I don't get to meet all of the Republican pages, but I try. I want them to know that even though they won't hear from every one of us,

we all very much appreciate what they do.

Today is their last day here, as I mentioned. I thank them for their service, and I hope their slight glance into the government will be something that will cause them to be involved in government.

As for young men and women, the Presiding Officer in this body has had a great political career. She has held a number of statewide offices in the State of North Dakota. In all of what we do in life, there are disappointments that come. She would have been the Governor of the State of North Dakota, but she was stricken with breast cancer, which, I understand, messed up her campaign. But she came back and as a real underdog decided to run for the Senate, and she won. She has made a tremendous difference in this body. I hope each of you can look around here and see people, such as the Presiding Officer, whom you would like to be like someday.

When I first came to this body—I say to these young women especially—BARBARA MIKULSKI was a Senator from Maryland. I came with her to the Senate, and she was the woman. That was it. And now, I couldn't help but smile earlier this week because a number of women—seven or eight women—had congregated here, and one of the Senators said to me—a female Senator said: Look, many of us wore turquoise today. And it was so bright and the clothes looked so vibrant and added so much to this body.

So it used to be boys, that the Senators we had here, with rare exception, were men, but that is not the way it is anymore. And I can speak from experience—the Senate is a much better place because of the input of women. Men and women are different. They have different views and outlooks on life. As a result of that, this is a much better place.

I can remember a number of years ago when I looked here on the floor—I was whip at that time, taking care of the floor—it was stunning to me, on the military construction bill, appropriations bill, two women were running it. Kay Bailey Hutchison, a Republican from Texas, was the ranking member, and DIANNE FEINSTEIN from California was the chair of that committee, determining billions of dollars for construction of military facilities around the world. So things have changed a great deal. You have been part of watching this great change take place, young men and women. Thank you for your service here, and I hope someday some of you will be serving in this august body.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

Mr. REID. I now move to proceed to legislative session.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion.

The motion was agreed to.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

NOMINATION OF M. HANNAH LAUCK TO BE UNITED STATES DISTRICT JUDGE FOR THE EASTERN DISTRICT OF VIRGINIA

Mr. REID. I now move to proceed to executive session to consider Calendar No. 734.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion.

The motion was agreed to.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the nomination.

The assistant legislative clerk read the nomination of M. Hannah Lauck, of Virginia, to be United States District Judge for the Eastern District of Virginia.

CLOTURE MOTION

Mr. REID. I send a cloture motion to the desk.

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

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, hereby move to bring to a close debate on the nomination of M. Hannah Lauck, of Virginia, to be United States District Judge for the Eastern District of Virginia.

Harry Reid, Patrick J. Leahy, Christopher A. Coons, Sheldon Whitehouse, Christopher Murphy, Al Franken, Jon Tester, Richard Blumenthal, Jeff Merkley, Richard J. Durbin, Kirsten E. Gillibrand, Benjamin L. Cardin, Bill Nelson, Dianne Feinstein, Elizabeth Warren, Tom Harkin, Mazie K. Hirono.

Mr. REID. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the mandatory quorum under rule XXII be waived.

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

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

Mr. REID. I now move to proceed to legislative session.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion.

The motion was agreed to.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

NOMINATION OF LEO T. SOROKIN TO BE UNITED STATES DISTRICT JUDGE FOR THE DISTRICT OF MASSACHUSETTS

Mr. REID. Madam President, I move to proceed to executive session.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion.

The motion was agreed to.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the nomination.

The assistant legislative clerk read the nomination of Leo T. Sorokin, of Massachusetts, to be United States District Judge for the District of Massachusetts.

CLOTURE MOTION

Mr. REID. I send a cloture motion to the desk.

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

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, hereby move to bring to a close debate on the nomination of Leo T. Sorokin, of Massachusetts, to be United States District Judge for the District of Massachusetts.

Harry Reid, Patrick J. Leahy, Christopher A. Coons, Sheldon Whitehouse, Christopher Murphy, Al Franken, Jon Tester, Richard Blumenthal, Jeff Merkley, Richard J. Durbin, Kirsten E. Gillibrand, Benjamin L. Cardin, Bill Nelson, Dianne Feinstein, Elizabeth Warren, Tom Harkin, Mazie K. Hirono.

Mr. REID. I ask unanimous consent that the mandatory quorum under rule XXII be waived.

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

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

Mr. REID. I move to proceed to legislative session.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion.

The motion was agreed to.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

NOMINATION OF RICHARD FRANKLIN BOULWARE II, TO BE UNITED STATES DISTRICT JUDGE FOR THE DISTRICT OF NEVADA

Mr. REID. I now move to proceed to executive session to consider Calendar No. 739.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion.

The motion was agreed to.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the nomination.

The assistant legislative clerk read the nomination of Richard Franklin Boulware II, of Nevada, to be United States District Judge for the District of Nevada.

CLOTURE MOTION

Mr. REID. I send a cloture motion to the desk.

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

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, hereby move to bring to a close debate on the nomination of Richard Franklin Boulware II, of Nevada, to be United States District Judge for the District of Nevada.

Harry Reid, Patrick J. Leahy, Christopher A. Coons, Sheldon Whitehouse, Christopher Murphy, Al Franken, Jon Tester, Richard Blumenthal, Jeff Merkley, Richard J. Durbin, Kirsten E. Gillibrand, Benjamin L. Cardin, Bill Nelson, Dianne Feinstein, Elizabeth Warren, Tom Harkin, Mazie K. Hirono.

Mr. REID. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the mandatory quorum under rule XXII be waived.

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

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

Mr. REID. I now move to proceed to legislative session.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion.

The motion was agreed to.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

NOMINATION OF LAEL BRAINARD TO BE A MEMBER OF THE BOARD OF GOVERNORS OF THE FEDERAL RESERVE SYSTEM

Mr. REID. I now move to proceed to executive session to consider Calendar No. 769.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion.

The motion was agreed to.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the nomination.

The assistant legislative clerk read the nomination of Lael Brainard, of the District of Columbia, to be a Member of the Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System for a term of 14 years from February 1, 2012.

CLOTURE MOTION

Mr. REID. I send a cloture motion to the desk.

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

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, hereby move to bring to a close debate on the nomination of Lael Brainard, of the District of Columbia, to be a Member of the Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System.

Harry Reid, Tim Johnson, Christopher A. Coons, Tim Kaine, Brian Schatz, Ron Wyden, Richard Blumenthal, Benjamin L. Cardin, Jack Reed, Tom Harkin, Richard J. Durbin, Tom Udall, Sheldon Whitehouse, Christopher Murphy, Elizabeth Warren, Bill Nelson, Robert Menendez.

Mr. REID. I ask unanimous consent that the mandatory quorum under rule XXII be waived.

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

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

Mr. REID. I now move to proceed to legislative session.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion.

The motion was agreed to.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

NOMINATION OF JEROME H. POWELL TO BE A MEMBER OF THE BOARD OF GOVERNORS OF THE FEDERAL RESERVE SYSTEM

Mr. REID. I now move to proceed to executive session to consider Calendar No. 771.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion.

The motion was agreed to.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the nomination.

The assistant legislative clerk read the nomination of Jerome H. Powell, of Maryland, to be a Member of the Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System.

CLOTURE MOTION

Mr. REID. Madam President, there is a cloture motion I ask to be reported.

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

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, hereby move to bring to a close debate on the nomination of Jerome H. Powell, of Maryland, to be a Member of the Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System.

Harry Reid, Tim Johnson, Christopher A. Coons, Tim Kaine, Brian Schatz, Ron Wyden, Richard Blumenthal, Benjamin L. Cardin, Jack Reed, Tom Harkin, Richard J. Durbin, Tom Udall, Sheldon Whitehouse, Christopher Murphy, Elizabeth Warren, Bill Nelson, Robert Menendez.

Mr. REID. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the mandatory quorum call under rule XXII be waived.

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

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

Mr. REID. I move to proceed to legislative session.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion.

The motion is agreed to.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

NOMINATION OF STANLEY FISCHER TO BE VICE CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD OF GOVERNORS OF THE FEDERAL RESERVE SYSTEM

Mr. REID. Madam President, I move to proceed to executive session to consider Calendar No. 767.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion.

The motion was agreed to.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the nomination.

The assistant legislative clerk read the nomination of Stanley Fischer, of New York, to be Vice Chairman of the Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System.

CLOTURE MOTION

Mr. REID. Madam President, there is a cloture motion that I ask to be reported.

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

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, hereby move to bring to a close debate on the nomination of Stanley Fischer, of New York, to be Vice Chairman of the Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System.

Harry Reid, Tim Johnson, Christopher A. Coons, Tim Kaine, Brian Schatz, Ron Wyden, Richard Blumenthal, Benjamin L. Cardin, Jack Reed, Tom Harkin, Richard J. Durbin, Tom Udall, Sheldon Whitehouse, Christopher Murphy, Elizabeth Warren, Bill Nelson, Robert Menendez.

Mr. REID. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the mandatory quorum call under rule XXII be waived.

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

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

Mr. REID. Madam President, I move to proceed to legislative session.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion.

The motion was agreed to.

MORNING BUSINESS

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

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

70TH ANNIVERSARY OF D-DAY

Mr. CARDIN. Madam President, I wish to commemorate the 70th anniversary of the Normandy invasion by Allied Forces. On June 6, 1944, a date known ever since as D-day, a mighty armada crossed a narrow strip of sea from England to Normandy, France and broke the Nazi grip on Western Europe. The day before—June 5, 1944—a fleet of 3,000 landing craft, 500 naval vessels, and 2,500 miscellaneous ships left English ports bound for Normandy, France. The amphibious landing was the largest effort ever in the history of mankind with the simultaneous landings of U.S., British, and Canadian forces on five separate beachheads in

Normandy. An additional 13,000 aircraft supported Allied Forces on D-day.

General Dwight D. Eisenhower—the Supreme Allied Commander in Europe—addressed the troops immediately prior to the invasion, saying:

Soldiers, Sailors and Airmen of the Allied Expeditionary Force! You are about to embark upon a great crusade, toward which we have striven these many months. The eyes of the world are upon you. The hopes and prayers of liberty loving people everywhere march with you. In company with our brave Allies and brothers in arms on other fronts, you will bring about the destruction of the German war machine, the elimination of Nazi tyranny over the oppressed peoples of Europe, and security for ourselves in a free world.

And by the end of August 1944, all of northern France was liberated and the invading forces were reorganized for the drive into Germany where they would eventually meet up with Soviet forces advancing from the east to bring an end to the Third Reich and its tyranny of terror.

The aftermath of World War II saw much of Europe devastated in a way that is now difficult to imagine. Over 36 million Europeans died in the conflict; 19 million of them were civilians. Millions more were left homeless, the European economy had collapsed, and much of the European industrial infrastructure was destroyed.

But from these ashes of war came the beginning of a new era for international cooperation and diplomacy. In the wake of World War II, the United Nations agreed to outlaw wars of aggression in an attempt to prevent a third world war. With the creation of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, NATO, in 1949 and the institutionalization of the Helsinki Accords 25 years later, we committed ourselves to the work that began with the assault on those beachheads—Utah, Omaha, Juno, Sword, and Gold Beach—in June 1944.

The guiding principles of the Helsinki Final Act are the foundations of lasting peace. These principles are worth enumerating: sovereign equality, respect for the rights inherent in sovereignty, refraining from threat or use of force, inviolability of frontiers, territorial integrity of States, peaceful settlement of disputes, non-intervention in internal affairs, respect for human rights, self determination of peoples, co-operation among States, and fulfillment in good faith of obligations under international law. Additionally, the Helsinki Final Act reaffirmed mankind's fundamental freedoms, including the freedom of thought, conscience, and religion or belief.

Today, we remember the tremendous efforts of Allied Forces as they signaled to the world that unprovoked aggression and genocide have no place in our international order and will be met with our greatest resolve. I am reminded of the Maryland National Guard units who participated in the D-day landings. These brave Marylanders served with great distinction in the 29th Infantry Division, fighting their way across Western Europe and liberating France and Holland. The 29th Division suffered one of the highest casualty rates of any American division during World War II. We must honor those heroes by safeguarding all that they fought and sacrificed for.

Today, there are one million surviving World War II veterans in the U.S., and 17,346 of them are Marylanders. These same heroes who landed on those beaches in Normandy and parachuted behind enemy lines 70 years ago are joined by veterans who have served in conflicts spanning from the Korean war to the war in Afghanistan. Today, I call on each of my colleagues to commit themselves to the work of meeting our obligations to all of these veterans. The best way to honor their sacrifices is to ensure that we are unwavering in our support for them and their families.

NEVADA'S FRENCH LEGION OF HONOR RECIPIENTS

Mr. HELLER. Madam President, today I wish to congratulate two of Nevada's own, MSG Davis B. Leonard and Private Gaetano R. Benza, for being awarded the National Order of the French Legion of Honor in the rank of chevalier. Their service to our country and dedication to ensuring freedom beyond America's borders earn them a unique place among the outstanding men and women who have valiantly defended our Nation.

As we approach the anniversary of D-day, nearly 70 years after World War II, these heroes are being honored with the Legion of Honor, France's highest distinction. Veterans who risked their lives during World War II and fought on French territory have this award bestowed upon them as a token of gratitude from France for defending liberty on their soil. The sacrifices these brave soldiers made set America and the world on a path to peace, freedom, and liberty that we as Americans enjoy today. Master Sergeant Leonard and Private Benza are joining the ranks of other notable Americans, such as GEN Dwight D. Eisenhower and Douglas MacArthur and even, as an institution, the U.S. Military Academy at West Point, by receiving this honorable recognition.

A highly decorated veteran from Henderson, NV, MSG Davis Leonard served in the U.S. Army Air Force Reserve as part of the 8th Air Force. He was transferred to England, where he flew his first of 64 combat missions as a bombardier and navigator. Master Sergeant Leonard was active in the Battle of Northern France, Ardennes, Rhineland, and Central Europe. For his service, he earned several medals, including the Distinguished Flying Cross with two bronze and one silver oak leaf medal. Upon his return home, he worked to rebuild our country working for Pacific Telephone Company for 30 years. Now retired at the age of 91, Master Sergeant Leonard resides in Henderson with his wife.

Private Gaetano Benza from Las Vegas, NV, spent 4 months transporting supplies and ammunition to the men on Omaha Beach as a longshoreman for the Port Battalion 297th Port Company. During the invasion of Normandy, Private Benza worked tirelessly, while under heavy enemy fire, to ensure that the soldiers that landed were equipped for battle. After spending 4 months at Omaha Beach, he moved to La Havre, France, where he would remain until the end of the war. Awarded for his service to our country, Private Benza received the World War II Victory medal. Once he returned home, he continued his education and became a barber at Nellis Air Force Base. While retired from the Armed Forces, 89-year-old Private Benza refuses to retire from his active lifestyle and is still a barber in the Las Vegas area.

Their commitment to this country, as well as their dedication to their families and communities, exemplified why the legacy of all World War II veterans must be preserved for generations to come. These veterans truly are the ''greatest generation''—selflessly serving not for recognition but because it was the right thing to do. As a member of the Senate Veterans' Affairs Committee, I recognize that Congress has a responsibility not only to honor these brave individuals but to ensure they are cared for when they return home. I remain committed to upholding this promise for our veterans and servicemembers in Nevada and throughout the Nation.

Please join me in congratulating these men for their acts of heroism and valor that helped to defend France from the greatest enemy they or we have ever faced. May we never forget the brave actions by these heroes that allowed the Allied troops to begin a march across Europe and defeat tyranny. Today, I join the Clark County community and citizens of the Silver State to congratulate these courageous men and honorable Nevadans.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

TRIBUTE TO GORDON STEWART

• Mr. CRAPO. Madam President, I wish to honor Gordon Stewart, who is retiring from serving as the air traffic manager at Boise Airport.

Gordon channeled his early exposure to aviation, through family members who owned airplanes, into a distinguished career. Gordon got his start in aviation through his military service. He served for 3 years in the U.S. Army, through which he received his air traffic control training. He was a distinguished graduate at Fort Rucker, AL, in both basic and advanced individual training. He then went on to work at various helicopter training airports,

serve in Vietnam, and receive valuable experience working with a wide variety of aircraft at the joint use airfield at Fort Huachuca, AZ.

He utilized the experience and training obtained through his military service in his numerous Federal Aviation Administration assignments that built up his deep knowledge of air traffic control. After returning to his family farm in Montana and serving as acting manager at the Flight Service Station in Cut Bank, MT, he spent 3 years at Missoula International Airport, where he learned about nonradar approach. He went on to work for more than a year at Billings Logan International Airport and then at the Salt Lake City Terminal Radar Approach Control, TRACON, before returning to the Missoula International Airport, where he served as acting air traffic manager before obtaining a position at Boise Airport.

Gordon worked as a supervisor for 12 years at Boise Airport before becoming the air traffic manager for the past nearly 12 years. His leadership during his time there has been instrumental in making the airport successful. The numerous recognitions he received for his outstanding work include multiple facility of the year awards and a Fire Fighting Award for support of fire fighting in the Northwest Mountain Region.

Gordon's effort to remain true to his core values and manage the same way he has parented—fair but firm—has been exemplary. Integrity has been a central element of Gordon's work. He can always be counted on to do what is right. His principled approach to working through considerable challenges has been indispensible. This especially includes his work on the development of the new Boise Air Traffic Control Tower and the effort to locate the TRACON.

Thank you, Gordon, for your outstanding and dedicated service. As you retire, you deserve to reflect on your extraordinary career with pride in a job well done. I hope that retirement affords you more time with your friends and family, including your six children. I congratulate you on your retirement and wish you all the best.●

MINNESOTA POETRY CONTEST WINNERS

● Mr. FRANKEN. Madam President, today I am proud to enter into the RECORD the poems of the winners of the 3rd Annual Minnesota Military Children's Poetry Contest. The theme of this year's competition was ''Celebrating the Veteran in My Life.'' Each of the poems submitted by a Minnesota child paid tribute to the men and women who have honorably served and have had a profound impact on the lives of children and families in Minnesota and across our great Nation. Seventy students from kindergarten, middle and high school submitted entries for this year's contest. There were three age categories for the competition—Kindergarten through 6th grade, 7th through 9th grade, and 10th through 12th grade—and nine poems were chosen as the winning entries.

I want to thank all the students from across Minnesota who helped us honor our veterans for their commitment and service. I also want to recognize and thank the judges of this year's contest: the Adjutant General of the Minnesota National Guard, MG Richard Nash; Minnesota commissioner of veterans affairs Larry Shellito; Minnesota commissioner of education Brenda Cassellius; and Minnesota poet laureate Joyce Sutphen.

I ask that nine winning poems from the 3rd Annual Minnesota Military Children's Poetry Contest be printed in the RECORD.

''DELVIN MENZE''

(By Riley Menze)

1ST PLACE GRADES K–6

A little boy turned two,
The day Pearl Harbor went boom!
You could call him my grandpa,
You could call him my friend,
You could say his job wasn't that great,
I'd say it was more awesome than cake.
Without him, the crew might've starved,
But they lived through the night,
Have you guessed it yet?
Yep, he was an Army cook.
He might slice potatoes all day,
Or make soup to warm cold souls,
But he is the greatest,
The greatest beyond great.
Today he's a farmer,
A dairy farmer to be exact,
Lives with his wife in the countryside,
Of a little town called Ottertail.
He taught me to milk cows,
Or feed romping heifers,
To drive tractors, four-wheelers,
Plus snowmobiles too.
You could call him my grandpa,
You could call him my friend,
Either way, he's better than a king,
And worth more money than the world.

''THANK YOU TO THE GREAT VETERANS IN MY LIFE''

(By Sabastian Carlo Cerda)

2ND PLACE GRADES K–6

He is the oldest veteran I know
He is the oldest veteran I love
He is my Lolo, how Filipino grandpas are called
Philippines is where he was born
and where he served in World War II
He was with the U.S. Army
Lolo only has three toes on one foot
He said one morning during the war
He was shot many times from the sky, from a Japanese airplane
He lost some toes
My Lolo and Lola wanted to bring the family to a new country
Called the United States of America
He came to a Veterans Convention in Minneapolis 40 years ago
It was very cold with lots of snow
They had a parade or something like that
A friend let him borrow a thick coat to wear
He was very happy and proud to be in the parade
My Lolo is a strong and brave man
He is honest and wise

Lolo's sons, my three uncles are veterans too
They serve in the U.S. Navy
Lolo is proud of all my Uncles
I am proud of my Lolo and my Uncles
They are all good men
They work so hard in their lives
They make me want to learn and do good
They show me I can do many things too
They teach me to be strong
They teach me to never give up
They teach me to live a good life

''CELEBRATING MY VETERAN''

(By Ellie Wachenheim)

3RD PLACE GRADES K–6

I like to celebrate my mom
The veteran in the house
She isn't really bossy.

And she doesn't scream or shout.
I like to make her happy
I like to make her proud
And she can tell that I try
Because I show her how.

I tell her how to do it
I tell her what to say
I tell her that I love her
In every single way.

I know my mom is smart
So she must know a lot
One thing that she knows
Is that I love her a lot.

When me and my younger brother
Know that my mom's coming home
We get all excited
and call her on the phone.

She says that she loves us
And we tell her that we know
But one of the times she's happy
Is when we celebrate that she's home.

''GRANDPA THE VETERAN''

(By Chineng Vang)

1ST PLACE GRADES 7–9

This poem can be read forwards and backwards.

You are the best veteran I know
50 years from now, I'll still believe that
You are the greatest
There's no doubt
You're amazing
I'll never forget the fact that
You always try your best
Everyone knows
You're intelligent and smart
The whole military believes
You are gifted
With many talents
You've fought and won many battles
It's clear that
You are special
I wish I could be like you because
You're awesome
There's nothing bad about you because
You always do the right thing
I can always know that
You'll be there for me
Like you did for Grandma
Be the best veteran you can be

''NUMBERS''

(By Ezekiel Town)

2ND PLACE GRADES 7–9

Men in bitter rage of war
People scared and wounded
They bleed upon the ground
And I saw only numbers
Many lie forever crippled and wounded
Few will rise again
And I saw only numbers
Every dollar spent on war
A joy never felt by the fallen
Their futures are never told
And I saw only numbers
Their blood is spilt upon the ground
The guilty and the not
Children in their youth
Dead and shot
And I saw only numbers

On this free path I trod
What am I from them?
For I saw only numbers
Not the faces of the dead
These people die for me
And what do I do for them?
I forget their faces and their stories
Because I see only numbers
I cannot look at the setting sun
The horrors are too much
For I know their faces are there
Never to be touched
I look upon this barren land
Full of blood and hate
I don't understand their pain
For I can see only numbers on this slate
My tears they fall on burning sands
As blood comes from their wounds
I still cannot understand
For I see only numbers

These numbers do not tell the story
Of these woman and these men
For the only thing I can see is these heartless numbers
That burn inside my head
All these people crying
For their wounded and their dead
I cannot feel them
All I have is these numbers in my head

''DEEP DOWN''

(By Alarie Chu)

3RD PLACE GRADES 7–9

Friend
Dear and old
Veteran
Part of World War 2
Fragile
But hard willed
Herman Czeck
Greatest man to live
You only see a pale-old soul
But deep down there are acts of greatness;
Kindness, sweetness
Deep down hides a boy of twenty
A young draftee to fight in the army;
Soldier, military
Deep down suffers a man who's seen death
The deaths from a world's disaster;
The Second World War
It's hard to imagine,
People being scared
Of such a harmless chum
Since my birth in 2001
There was an extra family member;
Dad, Uncle
A selfless giver
A man of joy and love;
Admirable, marvelous
A Christian companion
One loved by all;
A stupendous gift from God
It's hard to see,
The deep down truth
Of a life long lived
Just last month
A stroke came along
To the strongest man I know
Who still is recovering
It just goes to show
We live life one day at a time
Not knowing which one will be the last.

''BROTHER''

(By Joseph Gabel)

1ST PLACE GRADES 10–12

He is a wind rider gliding above the clouds
He is a predator dominating the sky
He is homeland security aloft
He is America's ever present air wall
He is an eagle with piercing gaze
He is a guardian for the defenseless
He is talons snatching our defenders from danger
He is courage with wings
He is the American heart patrolling the skies
He is my Brother

''MEMORIES OF THE HOME FRONT''

(By Sarah Borntrager)

2ND PLACE GRADES 10–12

As a child of a veteran,
My youth was different than most.
I remember when my father would leave.
My mother would hand out his shirts to us children to sleep in.
At the age of six, I had seemingly come to terms with the chance,
that one day my mother would hold a folded flag instead of her husband.
I had asked my mother one day that,
''If daddy died, would we go and visit him at the cemetery?''
My mother immediately tried to reassure me
that daddy was ok, to which I replied,
''I said IF.''
I don't truly remember my father at home all that well,
But I can remember what I did when my father was gone.
Wake up,
Get dressed,
Good morning mommy,
Go to school,
Learn,
Go home,
Mommy, I'm home is daddy back?,
Eat supper,
Get daddy's shirt,
Pray for daddy to come home safe,
And sleep.
My father was never truly in danger,
He was just a loadmaster.
I never understood that,
so the joy of seeing him was not just that.
It was the joy of hugging a father,
not a flag.
But now I understand.
My father served in the US Air Force for 24 years,
As a weapons loader and then as a
C–130 Hercules loadmaster.
And I couldn't be any more proud of him.
I love my veteran,
I love my dad.

''LIFE SAVERS''

(By Taylor Van de Streek)

3RD PLACE GRADES 10–12

You see them on the street,
You see them in your school,
You see them at home.
They're the ones who take the risk for freedom.

They come home in hopes
That life will be the same.
But nothing can stop the memories
Of all the destruction they've seen.

I pray for all of them
When I can,
So they return safe and in peace
To sleep calm in their beds.

They could be a Physics Teacher,
A Family Friend,
A Father or Mother,
Or maybe even the man begging on the street.

They are our Veterans,
We have many in our lives.
So the next time you see one
Thank them; they might have saved your life.●

CERRO GORDO COUNTY, IOWA

● Mr. HARKIN. Madam President, the strength of my State of Iowa lies in its vibrant local communities, where citizens come together to foster economic development, make smart investments to expand opportunity, and take the initiative to improve the health and well-being of residents. Over the decades, I have witnessed the growth and revitalization of so many communities across my State, and it has been deeply gratifying to see how my work in Congress has supported these local efforts.

I have always believed in accountability for public officials, and this, my final year in the Senate, is an appropriate time to give an accounting of my work across four decades representing Iowa in Congress. I take pride in accomplishments that have been national in scope—for instance, passing the Americans with Disabilities Act and spearheading successful farm bills. But I take a very special pride in projects that have made a big difference in local communities across my State.

Today, I would like to give an accounting of my work with leaders and residents of Cerro Gordo County to build a legacy of a stronger local economy, better schools and educational opportunities, and a healthier, safer community.

Between 2001 and 2013, the creative leadership in your community has worked with me to secure funding in Cerro Gordo County worth over $13 million and successfully acquired financial assistance from programs I have fought hard to support, which have provided more than $182 million to the local economy.

Of course, one of my favorite memories of working together is working to help Northern Iowa Community College obtain over $2 million in Federal funds to support their programs, helping the city to improve the drinking water supply, and working to improve area lakes and waterways.

Among the highlights: investing in Iowa's economic development through targeted community projects: In northern Iowa, we have worked together to grow the economy by making targeted investments in important economic development projects including improved roads and bridges, modernized sewer and water systems, and better housing options for residents of Cerro Gordo County. In many cases, I have secured Federal funding that has leveraged local investments and served as a catalyst for a whole ripple effect of positive, creative changes. For example, working with mayors, city council members, and local economic development officials in Cerro Gordo County, I have fought for more than $8.4 million for water treatment facilities which have allowed major food processing entities to operate in the region, knowing that the water they need to use is clean and healthy, helping to create jobs and expand economic opportunities. I have also secured over $310,000 to clean up area lakes and waterways, over $393,000 to rehabilitate the City National Bank Building, and over $444,000 for repairs to the Delaware Street bridge.

Main Street Iowa: One of the greatest challenges we face—in Iowa and all

across America—is preserving the character and vitality of our small towns and rural communities. This isn't just about economics. It is also about maintaining our identity as Iowans. Main Street Iowa helps preserve Iowa's heart and soul by providing funds to revitalize downtown business districts. This program has allowed towns such as Mason City to use that money to leverage other investments to jumpstart change and renewal. I am so pleased that Cerro Gordo County has earned $150,000 through this program. These grants build much more than buildings. They build up the spirit and morale of people in our small towns and local communities.

School grants: Every child in Iowa deserves to be educated in a classroom that is safe, accessible, and modern. That is why, for the past decade and a half, I have secured funding for the innovative Iowa Demonstration Construction Grant Program—better known among educators in Iowa as Harkin grants for public schools construction and renovation. Across 15 years, Harkin grants worth more than $132 million have helped school districts to fund a range of renovation and repair efforts—everything from updating fire safety systems to building new schools. In many cases, these Federal dollars have served as the needed incentive to leverage local public and private dollars, so it often has a tremendous multiplier effect within a school district. Over the years, Cerro Gordo County has received $2.2 million in Harkin grants.

Disaster mitigation and prevention: In 1993, when historic floods ripped through Iowa, it became clear to me that the national emergency-response infrastructure was woefully inadequate to meet the needs of Iowans in flood-ravaged communities. I went to work dramatically expanding the Federal Emergency Management Agency's hazard mitigation program, which helps communities reduce the loss of life and property due to natural disasters and enables mitigation measures to be implemented during the immediate recovery period. Disaster relief means more than helping people and businesses get back on their feet after a disaster, it means doing our best to prevent the same predictable flood or other catastrophe from recurring in the future. The hazard mitigation program that I helped create in 1993 provided critical support to Iowa communities impacted by the devastating floods of 2008. Cerro Gordo County has received over $9 million to remediate and prevent widespread destruction from natural disasters.

Agricultural and rural development: Because I grew up in a small town in rural Iowa, I have always been a loyal friend and fierce advocate for family farmers and rural communities. I have been a member of the House or Senate Agriculture Committee for 40 years—including more than 10 years as chairman of the Senate Agriculture Committee. Across the decades, I have championed farm policies for Iowans that include effective farm income protection and commodity programs; strong, progressive conservation assistance for agricultural producers; renewable energy opportunities; and robust economic development in our rural communities. Since 1991, through various programs authorized through the farm bill, Cerro Gordo County has received more than $8.4 million from a variety of farm bill programs.

Keeping Iowa communities safe: I also firmly believe that our first responders need to be appropriately trained and equipped, able to respond to both local emergencies and to statewide challenges such as, for instance, the methamphetamine epidemic. Since 2001, Cerro Gordo County's fire departments have received over $1.19 million for firefighter safety and operations equipment and more than $879,000 in Byrne Justice Assistance Grants.

Wellness and health care: Improving the health and wellness of all Americans has been something I have been passionate about for decades. That is why I fought to dramatically increase funding for disease prevention, innovative medical research, and a whole range of initiatives to improve the health of individuals and families not only at the doctor's office but also in our communities, schools, and workplaces. I am so proud that Americans have better access to clinical preventive services, nutritious food, smoke-free environments, safe places to engage in physical activity, and information to make healthy decisions for themselves and their families. These efforts not only save lives, they will also save money for generations to come thanks to the prevention of costly chronic diseases, which account for a whopping 75 percent of annual health care costs. I am pleased that Cerro Gordo County has recognized this important issue by securing more than $460,000 for community wellness activities.

This is at least a partial accounting of my work on behalf of Iowa, and specifically Cerro Gordo County, during my time in Congress. In every case, this work has been about partnerships, cooperation, and empowering folks at the State and local level, including in Cerro Gordo County, to fulfill their own dreams and initiatives. And, of course, this work is never complete. Even after I retire from the Senate, I have no intention of retiring from the fight for a better, fairer, richer Iowa. I will always be profoundly grateful for the opportunity to serve the people of Iowa as their Senator.●

MUSCATINE COUNTY, IOWA

● Mr. HARKIN. Madam President, the strength of my State of Iowa lies in its vibrant local communities, where citizens come together to foster economic development, make smart investments to expand opportunity, and take the initiative to improve the health and well-being of residents. Over the decades, I have witnessed the growth and revitalization of so many communities across my State, and it has been deeply gratifying to see how my work in Congress has supported these local efforts.

I have always believed in accountability for public officials, and this, my final year in the Senate, is an appropriate time to give an accounting of my work across four decades representing Iowa in Congress. I take pride in accomplishments that have been national in scope for instance, passing the Americans with Disabilities Act and spearheading successful farm bills. But I take a very special pride in projects that have made a big difference in local communities across my State.

Today, I would like to give an accounting of my work with leaders and residents of Muscatine County to build a legacy of a stronger local economy, better schools and educational opportunities, and a healthier, safer community.

Between 2001 and 2013, the creative leadership in your community has worked with me to secure funding in Muscatine County worth over $4.8 million and successfully acquire financial assistance from programs I have fought hard to support, which have provided more than $10.2 million to the local economy.

Of course, one of my favorite memories of working together is the community's success in obtaining over $2.5 million for airport improvements since 2001. As a strong supporter of small community airports, I have long fought for funding from programs that support service to small communities and infrastructure support to keep these airports modern.

Among the highlights:

Investing in Iowa's economic development through targeted community projects: In Southeast Iowa, we have worked together to grow the economy by making targeted investments in important economic development projects, including improved roads and bridges, modernized sewer and water systems, and better housing options for residents of Muscatine County. In many cases, I have secured Federal funding that has leveraged local investments and served as a catalyst for a whole ripple effect of positive, creative changes. For example, working with mayors, city council members, and local economic development officials in Muscatine County, I have fought for $450,000 to improve the water system as well as more than $894,000 in funds for flood control, helping to create jobs and expand economic opportunities.

School grants: Every child in Iowa deserves to be educated in a classroom that is safe, accessible, and modern. That is why for the past decade and a half I have secured funding for the innovative Iowa Demonstration Construction Grant Program—better known among educators in Iowa as

Harkin grants for public schools construction and renovation. Across 15 years, Harkin grants worth more than $132 million have helped school districts to fund a range of renovation and repair efforts—everything from updating fire safety systems to building new schools. In many cases, these Federal dollars have served as the needed incentive to leverage local public and private dollars, so it often has a tremendous multiplier effect within a school district. Over the years, Muscatine County has received more than $3.5 million in Harkin grants. Similarly, schools in Muscatine County have received funds that I designated for Iowa Star Schools for technology totaling $32,500.

Agricultural and rural development: Because I grew up in a small town in rural Iowa, I have always been a loyal friend and fierce advocate for family farmers and rural communities. I have been a member of the House or Senate Agriculture Committee for 40 years, including more than 10 years as chairman of the Senate Agriculture Committee. Across the decades, I have championed farm policies for Iowans that include effective farm income protection and commodity programs; strong, progressive conservation assistance for agricultural producers; renewable energy opportunities; and robust economic development in our rural communities. Since 1991, through various programs authorized through the farm bill, Muscatine County has received more than $1.1 million from a variety of farm bill programs.

Keeping Iowa communities safe: I also firmly believe that our first responders need to be appropriately trained and equipped, able to respond to both local emergencies and to statewide challenges such as, for instance, the methamphetamine epidemic. Since 2001, Muscatine County's fire departments have received over $2.1 million for firefighter safety and operations equipment.

Disability rights: Growing up, I loved and admired my brother Frank, who was deaf. But I was deeply disturbed by the discrimination and obstacles he faced every day. That is why I have always been a passionate advocate for full equality for people with disabilities. As the primary author of the Americans with Disabilities Act, ADA, and the ADA Amendments Act, I have had four guiding goals for our fellow citizens with disabilities: equal opportunity, full participation, independent living and economic self-sufficiency. Nearly a quarter century since passage of the ADA, I see remarkable changes in communities everywhere I go in Iowa—not just in curb cuts or closed captioned television but in the full participation of people with disabilities in our society and economy, folks who at long last have the opportunity to contribute their talents and to be fully included. These changes have increased economic opportunities for all citizens of Muscatine County, both those with and without disabilities. And they make us proud to be a part of a community and country that respects the worth and civil rights of all of our citizens.

This is at least a partial accounting of my work on behalf of Iowa, and specifically Muscatine County, during my time in Congress. In every case, this work has been about partnerships, cooperation, and empowering folks at the State and local level, including in Muscatine County, to fulfill their own dreams and initiatives. And, of course, this work is never complete. Even after I retire from the Senate, I have no intention of retiring from the fight for a better, fairer, richer Iowa. I will always be profoundly grateful for the opportunity to serve the people of Iowa as their Senator.●

CONGRATULATING NICHOLAS CAROTHERS NIMMO

● Mr. HELLER. Madam President, today I wish to congratulate Nicholas ''Cole'' Carothers Nimmo, on obtaining one of the Boy Scouts of America's highest ranks of Eagle Scout.

Cole began his journey to the rank of Eagle Scout when he became a Boy Scout in 2008. Throughout his time in the Boy Scouts, he has tirelessly worked to achieve this next rank and honor. He completed his Eagle project this past fall by leading a team of friends, family, and leaders in raising money for the materials and building a large storage shed for a local girls summer camp. Becoming an Eagle Scout enabled Cole to develop an appreciation and love of the outdoors. Biking in the Acadia National Forest with Troop 388, canoeing on the Susquehanna River, and earning his favorite merit badge in camping were highlights of his tenure in the scouts thus far.

As one of tomorrow's leaders, Cole's dedication to his local community enhances my faith in our great Nation's future. His training has enabled him to develop skills and knowledge that will help him serve those around him his whole life. It is truly an honor for me to help in celebrating his advancement to Eagle Scout. Continuing at this level of accomplishment, with such a strong commitment to civic duty, Cole will become a strong, contributing citizen of this great Nation. He knows that achieving the rank of Eagle is just the beginning of a life filled with leadership and service opportunities.

I ask my colleagues to join me in congratulating Cole on his loyal service and contributions to his troop and community.●

ALZHEIMER'S AND BRAIN AWARENESS MONTH

● Mr. NELSON. Madam President, I recognize this June as the inaugural Alzheimer's and Brain Awareness Month. Alzheimer's remains one of our Nation's leading causes of death, and the number of diagnoses is expected to triple by 2050—resulting in 16 million Americans over the age of 65 living with Alzheimer's. Today, one in three seniors will die with Alzheimer's disease. Currently, in my home of State of Florida, 480,000 residents over the age of 65 are living with Alzheimer's, and the number is project to rise to 720,000 by 2050.

Given these staggering numbers, it is important we focus our resources to address this disease as outlined in the National Alzheimer's Plan, a roadmap for confronting Alzheimer's and dementia. The National Alzheimer's Plan is released annually and outlines steps the government should pursue in the fight against Alzheimer's. Last year, the Special Committee on Aging, for which I am privileged to serve as chairman, held a hearing to assess the progress made in combatting Alzheimer's disease and examined the first year of the National Alzheimer's Plan as it continues its ongoing efforts to find an effective treatment by 2025.

This June, the first Alzheimer's and Brain Awareness Month, we must initiate a global conversation about Alzheimer's disease and other dementias. Despite the prevalence of the disease, it is still widely misunderstood. The Alzheimer's Association, the world's leading voluntary health organization in Alzheimer's care, support, and research, is working to reduce stigma surrounding the illness, promote education on the realities of the disease, and help promote research to end Alzheimer's disease. The Alzheimer's Association is also encouraging Americans to ''Go Purple''—the color of the Alzheimer's movement to fight Alzheimer's disease and promote public awareness of this month's mission.

Recently, the Alzheimer's Foundation of America, AFA, released a cost analysis report of the caregiver provisions in the 2012 National Alzheimer's Plan. The AFA works to ensure the best care and services are available to improve quality of life for individuals confronting Alzheimer's disease. I believe that the work of the AFA and other Alzheimer's advocacy organizations is increasingly important as we continually work to improve the care and well-being for those living with Alzheimer's disease while also improving the quality of life for caregivers and family members as they care for their loved ones.

AFA's recent report, ''Cost of Care: Quantifying Care-Centered Provisions of the National Plan to Address Alzheimer's Disease,'' evaluates the costs and benefits associated with implementation of coordinated care delivery models, transitional care programs, and expanded caregiver supports in the 2012 National Alzheimer's Plan. AFA found that implementation of these caregiver provisions provide significant cost savings while promoting better health outcomes for those living with Alzheimer's disease by reducing hospital readmissions and emergency room visits and delaying nursing home

placement. The enactment of these provisions could result in Federal savings that exceed $110 billion over 10 years.

I am well aware of the hardships for those living with this disease and their loved ones. I hear frequently from my constituents about the importance of continuing to appropriate research dollars for Alzheimer's research and the necessity of making Alzheimer's a national priority. For example, Jeff from Palm Beach Gardens has been caring for his mother for the last 5 years as her disease slowly progresses. And Heather of Winter Park, who wrote to me last October, shared the heartbreaking ''loss and grief that comes slowly and constantly'' with her mother's illness and the mourning for the person her mother was before her diagnosis. The work to improve care services for those living with Alzheimer's as well as support services for their loved ones is a growing necessity as our Nation's population ages and the number of individuals confronting the disease dramatically increases over the coming decades.●

MESSAGES FROM THE PRESIDENT

Messages from the President of the United States were communicated to the Senate by Mr. Pate, one of his secretaries.

EXECUTIVE MESSAGES REFERRED

As in executive session the Presiding Officer laid before the Senate messages from the President of the United States submitting sundry nominations which were referred to the appropriate committees.

(The messages received today are printed at the end of the Senate proceedings.)

MESSAGE FROM THE HOUSE

At 3:58 p.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Mr. Novotny, one of its reading clerks, announced that the House has passed the following bill, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate:

H.R. 4435. An act to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2015 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes.

MEASURES PLACED ON THE CALENDAR

The following bill was read the second time, and placed on the calendar:

S. 2432. A bill to amend the Higher Education Act of 1965 to provide for the refinancing of certain Federal student loans, and for other purposes.

The following bills were read the first and second times by unanimous consent, and placed on the calendar:

H.R. 4435. An act to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2015 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes.

H.R. 4587. An act to impose targeted sanctions on individuals responsible for carrying out or ordering human rights abuses against the citizens of Venezuela, 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–5944. A communication from the Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Temporary Rule to Implement a 2014 Gray Triggerfish Recreational Sector Quota Reduction and Recreational Harvest Closure in the Gulf of Mexico'' (RIN0648–XD033) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on June 3, 2014; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–5945. A communication from the Associate Bureau Chief, Wireline Competition Bureau, Federal Communications Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Connect America Fund; Developing an Unified Intercarrier Compensation Regime'' ((RIN3060–AG49) (DA 14–434)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on June 3, 2014; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–5946. A communication from the Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Greenland Turbot in the Aleutian Island Subarea of the Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands'' (RIN0648–XD260) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on May 29, 2014; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–5947. A communication from the Assistant Secretary of Legislative Affairs, U.S. Department of State, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to certifications granted in relation to the incidental capture of sea turtles in commercial shrimping operations; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–5948. A communication from the Chief of Staff, Media Bureau, Federal Communications Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''2014 Quadrennial Regulatory Review—Review of the Commission's Broadcast Ownership Rules and Other Rules Adopted Pursuant to Section 202 of the Telecommunications Act of 1996'' ((MB Docket No. 14–50) (FCC 14–28)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on June 2, 2014; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–5949. A communication from the Deputy Assistant Administrator for Regulatory Programs, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Fisheries off West Coast States; West Coast Salmon Fisheries; 2014 Management Measures'' (RIN0648–XD072) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on May 29, 2014; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–5950. A communication from the Deputy Assistant Administrator for Operations, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Framework Adjustment 51 to the Northeast Multispecies Fishery Management Plan'' (RIN0648–BD88) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on May 29, 2014; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–5951. A communication from the Deputy Assistant Administrator for Regulatory Programs, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Sector Operations Plans and Allocations for Fishing Year 2014'' (RIN0648–XC995) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on May 29, 2014; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–5952. A communication from the Deputy Assistant Administrator for Operations, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Final Interim 2014 Pacific Sardine Harvest Specifications'' (RIN0648–XD020) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on May 29, 2014; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–5953. A communication from the Secretary of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Department's Annual Report of the Maritime Administration (MARAD) for fiscal year 2012; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–5954. A communication from the Acting Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Atlantic Highly Migratory Species; Atlantic Bluefin Tuna Fisheries; Temporary Rule; Inseason Angling Category Retention Limit Adjustment'' (RIN0648–XD251) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on May 29, 2014; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–5955. A communication from the Acting Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Closure of the Commercial Harvest of Gray Triggerfish in South Atlantic Waters'' (RIN0648–XD271) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on May 29, 2014; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–5956. A communication from the Acting Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''2014 Gulf of Mexico Greater Amberjack Recreational Sector Annual Catch Limit and Annual Catch Target Reduction'' (RIN0648–XD230) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on May 29, 2014; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–5957. A communication from the Deputy Assistant Administrator for Regulatory Programs, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Correction for Final Rule to Modify Bottom Trawl Rockfish Conservation Area Boundaries for Vessels in the Pacific Coast Groundfish Fishery'' (RIN0648–BD37) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on May 30, 2014; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–5958. A communication from the Assistant Administrator for Fisheries, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Final Rule to Implement an Accountability Measure for the

Small-Mesh Multispecies Fishery'' (RIN0648–BE08) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on May 29, 2014; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–5959. A communication from the Acting Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Temporary Rule to Implement a 2014 Red Grouper Recreational Sector Accountability Measures in the Gulf of Mexico'' (RIN0648–XD231) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on May 29, 2014; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–5960. A communication from the Attorney-Advisor, Office of the Secretary, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to a vacancy in the position of Deputy Secretary, Department of Transportation, received in the Office of the President of the Senate on June 4, 2014; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–5961. A communication from the Attorney-Advisor, Office of the Secretary, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to a vacancy in the position of Under Secretary of Transportation for Policy, received in the Office of the President of the Senate on June 4, 2014; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–5962. A communication from the Secretary of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled ''2014 Annual Report: U.S. Department of Transportation's Status of Actions Addressing the Safety Issue Areas on the NTSB's Most Wanted List''; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–5963. A communication from the Attorney-Advisor, U.S. Coast Guard, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Special Local Regulation; Jones Beach Air Show; Atlantic Ocean, Sloop Channel through East Bay, and Zach's Bay; Wantagh, NY'' ((RIN1625–AA08) (Docket No. USCG–2014–0250)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on June 4, 2014; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–5964. A communication from the Attorney-Advisor, U.S. Coast Guard, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Drawbridge Operation Regulation; Bush River, Perryman, MD'' ((RIN1625–AA09) (Docket No. USCG–2013–0972)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on June 4, 2014; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–5965. A communication from the Attorney-Advisor, U.S. Coast Guard, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Special Local Regulations and Safety Zones; Recurring Marine Events and Fireworks Displays within the Fifth Coast Guard District'' ((RIN1625–AA00 and RIN1625–AA08) (Docket No. USCG–2014–0095)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on June 4, 2014; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–5966. A communication from the Attorney-Advisor, U.S. Coast Guard, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Special Local Regulation; Stuart Sailfish Regatta, Indian River; Stuart, FL'' ((RIN1625–AA08) (Docket No. USCG–2014–0089)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on June 4, 2014; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–5967. A communication from the Attorney-Advisor, U.S. Coast Guard, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Safety Zone; Sabine River, Orange, TX'' ((RIN1625–AA00) (Docket No. USCG–2014–0134)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on June 4, 2014; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–5968. A communication from the Attorney-Advisor, U.S. Coast Guard, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Safety Zone; Captain of the Port Boston Fireworks display zones, Boston Harbor, Boston, Ma'' ((RIN1625–AA00) (Docket No. USCG–2013–0503)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on June 4, 2014; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–5969. A communication from the Attorney-Advisor, U.S. Coast Guard, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Safety Zone: Tiburon's 50th Anniversary Fireworks, San Francisco Bay, Tiburon, CA'' ((RIN1625–AA00) (Docket No. USCG–2014–0175)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on June 4, 2014; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–5970. A communication from the Attorney-Advisor, U.S. Coast Guard, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Drawbridge Operation Regulation; Atlantic Intracoastal Waterway, Titusville, FL'' ((RIN1625–AA09) (Docket No. USCG–2014–0279)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on June 4, 2014; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–5971. A communication from the Attorney-Advisor, U.S. Coast Guard, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Safety Zone; BMA Media Group Fireworks, Presque Isle Bay, Erie, PA'' ((RIN1625–AA00) (Docket No. USCG–2014–0258)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on June 4, 2014; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–5972. A communication from the Attorney-Advisor, U.S. Coast Guard, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Safety Zone, Atlantic Ocean; Virginia Beach, VA'' ((RIN1625–AA00) (Docket No. USCG–2014–0111)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on June 4, 2014; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–5973. A communication from the Attorney-Advisor, U.S. Coast Guard, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Safety Zone, Atlantic Ocean; Virginia Beach, VA'' ((RIN1625–AA00) (Docket No. USCG–2014–0007)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on June 4, 2014; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–5974. A communication from the Attorney-Advisor, U.S. Coast Guard, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Waiver of Citizenship Requirements for Crewmembers on Commerical Fishing Vessels'' ((RIN1625–AB50) (Docket No. USCG–2010–0625)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on June 4, 2014; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–5975. A communication from the Attorney-Advisor, U.S. Coast Guard, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Drawbridge Operation Regulation; Elizabeth River, Elizabeth, NJ'' ((RIN1625–AA09) (Docket No. USCG–2014–0285)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on June 4, 2014; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–5976. A communication from the Attorney-Advisor, U.S. Coast Guard, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Safety Zone; Belt Parkway Bridge Construction, Gerritsen Inlet, Brooklyn, NY'' ((RIN1625–AA00) (Docket No. USCG–2013–0471)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on June 4, 2014; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–5977. A communication from the Attorney-Advisor, U.S. Coast Guard, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Special Local Regulations for Marine Events, Atlantic Ocean; Ocean City, MD'' ((RIN1625–AA08) (Docket No. USCG–2014–0056)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on June 4, 2014; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–5978. A communication from the Attorney-Advisor, U.S. Coast Guard, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Safety Zone, Fifth Coast Guard District Fireworks Display Cape Fear River; Wilmington, NC'' ((RIN1625–AA00) (Docket No. USCG–2014–0148)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on June 4, 2014; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–5979. A message from the President of the United States, transmitting, pursuant to law, an Executive Order that terminates the prohibitions contained in section 1 of Executive Order 13303 of May 22, 2003, as amended by Executive Order 13364 of November 29, 2004; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC–5980. A communication from the Chairman and President of the Export-Import Bank, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to transactions involving U.S. exports to Thailand; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC–5981. A communication from the Assistant Secretary for Export Administration, Bureau of Industry and Security, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Amendments to Existing Validated End-User Authorizations in the People's Republic of China: Samsung China Semiconductor Co. Ltd and Semiconductor Manufacturing International Corporation'' (RIN0694–AG15) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on May 29, 2014; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC–5982. A communication from the Assistant Secretary for Export Administration, Bureau of Industry and Security, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Revisions to the Export Administration Regulations Based on the 2013 Missile Technology Control Regime Plenary Agreements'' (RIN0694–AG02) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on May 29, 2014; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC–5983. A communication from the Assistant Secretary, Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting, pursuant to law, a six-month periodic report relative to the national emergency that was originally declared in Executive Order 12938 of November 14, 1994; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC–5984. A communication from the Secretary of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, a six-month periodic report on

the national emergency that was declared in Executive Order 13617 of June 25, 2012, with respect to Russia; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC–5985. A communication from the Secretary of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, a six-month periodic report on the national emergency with respect to the Western Balkans that was declared in Executive Order 13219 of June 26, 2001; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC–5986. A communication from the Secretary of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, a six-month periodic report on the national emergency with respect to North Korea that was declared in Executive Order 13466 of June 26, 2008; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC–5987. A communication from the Assistant General Counsel for Legislation, Regulation and Energy Efficiency, Department of Energy, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Energy Conservation Program: Energy Conservation Standards for Walk-In Coolers and Freezers'' (RIN1904–AB86) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on June 3, 2014; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

EC–5988. A communication from the Director, Office of Surface Mining, Department of the Interior, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''North Dakota Regulatory Program'' ((SATS No. ND–053–FOR) (Docket No. OSM–2012–0006)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on June 3, 2014; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

EC–5989. A communication from the Director, Office of Surface Mining, Department of the Interior, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Utah Regulatory Program'' ((SATS No. UT–049–FOR) (Docket No. OSM–2012–0015)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on June 3, 2014; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

EC–5990. A communication from the Assistant Secretary, Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to the extension of waiver authority for Turkmenistan; to the Committee on Finance.

EC–5991. A communication from the Secretary of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled ''Medicare Gainsharing Demonstration: Final Report to Congress''; to the Committee on Finance.

EC–5992. A communication from the Deputy Director, Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act; Exchange and Insurance Market Standards for 2015 and Beyond'' ((RIN0938–AS02) (CMS–9949–F)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on May 27, 2014; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC–5993. A communication from the Deputy Director, Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act; Exchange and Insurance Market Standards for 2015 and Beyond'' ((RIN0938–AS02) (CMS–9949–F)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on May 20, 2014; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC–5994. A communication from the Assistant Secretary, Bureau of Political-Military Affairs, 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 (OSS–2014–0740); to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC–5995. A communication from the Assistant Secretary, Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report consistent with the Authorization for Use of Military Force Against Iraq Resolution of 1002 (P.L. 107–243) and the Authorization for the Use of Force Against Iraq Resolution (P.L. 102–1) for the February 15, 2014–April 15, 2014 reporting period; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC–5996. A communication from the Assistant Secretary, Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to section 36(c) of the Arms Export Control Act (DDTC 14–024); to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC–5997. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Review Group, Commodity Credit Corporation, Department of Agriculture, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Continuation of Certain Benefit and Loan Programs, Acreage Reporting, Average Adjusted Gross Income, and Payment Limit'' (7 CFR Chapter XIV) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on June 4, 2014; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC–5998. A communication from the Associate Administrator of the Fruit and Vegetable Programs, Agricultural Marketing Service, Department of Agriculture, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Oranges, Grapefruit, Tangerines, and Tangelos Grown in Florida; Relaxing Grade Requirements for Valencia and Other Late Type Oranges'' (Docket No. AMS–FV–14–0041; FV14–905–2 IR) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on June 4, 2014; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC–5999. A communication from the Director of Congressional Activities (Intelligence), Office of the Under Secretary of Defense, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to the results of a study of security measures on United States military installations by June 24, 2014; to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC–6000. A communication from the Acting Under Secretary of Defense (Personnel and Readiness), transmitting the report of an officer authorized to wear the insignia of the grade of major general in accordance with title 10, United States Code, section 777; to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC–6001. A communication from the Principal Deputy Assistant Attorney General, Office of Legislative Affairs, Department of Justice, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled ''Status of the Tribal Law and Order Act Pilot Program Report to Congress''; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

EC–6002. A communication from the Assistant Secretary, Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to section 36(d) of the Arms Export Control Act (DDTC 14–028); to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC–6003. A communication from the Associate Administrator of the Fruit and Vegetable Programs, Agricultural Marketing Service, Department of Agriculture, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Grapes Grown in a Designated Area of Southeastern California; Increased Assessment Rate'' (Docket No. AMS–FV–14–0010; FV14–925–1 FR) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on June 5, 2014; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC–6004. A communication from the Acting Commissioner of the Social Security Administration, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Semiannual Report of the Inspector General for the period from October 1, 2013 through March 31, 2014; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–6005. A communication from the Secretary of Education, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Semiannual Report of the Office of the Inspector General for the period from October 1, 2013 through March 31, 2014; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–6006. A communication from the Chairman of the National Credit Union Administration, transmitting, pursuant to law, the semi-annual report of the Inspector General for the period from October 1, 2013 through March 31, 2014; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–6007. A communication from the Chair of the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Commission's Semiannual Report of the Inspector General and the Semiannual Management Report for the period from October 1, 2013 through March 31, 2014; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–6008. A communication from the Assistant Secretary of Defense (Legislative Affairs), transmitting, legislative proposals relative to proposed legislation entitled the ''National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2015''; to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC–6009. A communication from the Secretary of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Department of Health and Human Service's Semiannual Report of the Inspector General for the period from October 1, 2013 through March 31, 2014; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–6010. A communication from the Executive Director, Interstate Commission on the Potomac River Basin, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Commission's Seventy-Third Financial Statement for the period of October 1, 2012 through September 30, 2013; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–6011. A communication from the Secretary of Education, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Department's Semiannual Report to Congress on Audit Follow-up for the period of October 1, 2013 through March 31, 2014; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–6012. A communication from the Chair of the Securities and Exchange Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Semiannual Report of the Inspector General and a Management Report for the period from October 1, 2013 through March 31, 2014; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–6013. A communication from the Principal Deputy Assistant Attorney General, Office of Legislative Affairs, Department of Justice, transmitting, pursuant to law, the fourth quarter of fiscal year 2013 quarterly report of the Department of Justice's Office of Privacy and Civil Liberties; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–6014. A communication from the Chairman of the Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report on D.C. Act 20–337, ''Transportation Infrastructure Improvements GARVEE Bond Financing Amendment Act of 2014''; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–6015. A communication from the Chairman of the Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report on D.C. Act 20–336, ''Better Prices, Better Quality, Better Choices for Health Coverage Amendment Act of 2014''; to the Committee

on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–6016. A communication from the Chairman of the Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report on D.C. Act 20–338, ''Shiloh Way Designation Act of 2014''; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–6017. A communication from the Secretary of Labor, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Department's fiscal year 2013 annual report relative to the Notification and Federal Employee Antidiscrimination and Retaliation Act (No FEAR Act) of 2002; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–6018. A communication from the Director, Office of Civil Rights, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Agency's fiscal year 2013 annual report relative to the Notification and Federal Employee Antidiscrimination and Retaliation Act of 2002 (No FEAR Act); to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–6019. A communication from the Director of the Diversity and Inclusion Division, Office of the Secretary, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Department's fiscal year 2013 annual report relative to the Notification and Federal Employee Antidiscrimination and Retaliation Act of 2002 (No FEAR Act); to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–6020. A communication from the Associate General Counsel for General Law, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to a vacancy in the position of Assistant Secretary, Policy, Department of Homeland Security, received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on May 29, 2014; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–6021. A communication from the District of Columbia Auditor, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled, ''District of Columbia Agencies' Compliance with Fiscal Year 2014 Small Business Enterprise Expenditure Goals through the 1st Quarter of the Fiscal Year 2014''; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

The following reports of committees were submitted:

By Ms. MIKULSKI, from the Committee on Appropriations, without amendment:

S. 2437. An original bill making appropriations for Departments of Commerce and Justice, and Science, and Related Agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2015, and for other purposes (Rept. No. 113–181).

By Mrs. MURRAY, from the Committee on Appropriations, without amendment:

S. 2438. An original bill making appropriations for the Departments of Transportation, and Housing and Urban Development, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2015, and for other purposes (Rept. No. 113–182).

By Mrs. BOXER, from the Committee on Environment and Public Works, without amendment:

S. 51. A bill to reauthorize and amend the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation Establishment Act (Rept. No. 113–183).

S. 212. A bill to approve the transfer of Yellow Creek Port properties in Iuka, Mississippi (Rept. No. 113–184).

S. 224. A bill to amend the Federal Water Pollution Control Act to establish a grant program to support the restoration of San Francisco Bay (Rept. No. 113–185).

By Mrs. BOXER, from the Committee on Environment and Public Works, with amendments:

S. 491. A bill to amend the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act of 1980 to modify provisions relating to grants, and for other purposes (Rept. No. 113–186).

By Mrs. BOXER, from the Committee on Environment and Public Works, with an amendment in the nature of a substitute:

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 (Rept. No. 113–187).

By Mrs. BOXER, from the Committee on Environment and Public Works, with amendments:

S. 969. A bill to amend the Neotropical Migratory Bird Conservation Act to reauthorize the Act (Rept. No. 113–188).

By Mrs. BOXER, from the Committee on Environment and Public Works, without amendment:

S. 1077. A bill to amend the Chesapeake Bay Initiative Act of 1998 to provide for the reauthorization of the Chesapeake Bay Gateways and Watertrails Network (Rept. No. 113–189).

S. 1080. A bill to amend and reauthorize certain provisions relating to Long Island Sound restoration and stewardship (Rept. No. 113–190).

S. 1451. A bill to provide for environmental restoration activities and forest management activities in the Lake Tahoe Basin, to amend title 18, United States Code, to prohibit the importation or shipment of quagga mussels, and for other purposes (Rept. No. 113–191).

S. 2080. A bill to conserve fish and aquatic communities in the United States through partnerships that foster fish habitat conservation, improve the quality of life for the people of the United States, enhance fish and wildlife-dependent recreation, and for other purposes (Rept. No. 113–192).

S. 898. A bill to authorize the Administrator of General Services to convey a parcel of real property in Albuquerque, New Mexico, to the Amy Biehl High School Foundation.

By Mrs. BOXER, from the Committee on Environment and Public Works, with an amendment in the nature of a substitute and an amendment to the title:

S. 1934. A bill to direct the Administrator of General Services to convey the Clifford P. Hansen Federal Courthouse back to Teton County, Wyoming.

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:

S. 2433. A bill to provide assistance to Ukraine to reduce the dependence of Ukraine on imports of natural gas from the Russian Federation, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

By Mr. FRANKEN (for himself, Mr. KAINE, Mrs. BOXER, Mr. BROWN, Mr. SANDERS, Mr. LEAHY, Ms. HEITKAMP, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mr. UDALL of Colorado, Mr. MERKLEY, Mr. BENNET, Mrs. HAGAN, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Mr. SCHATZ, Mrs. SHAHEEN, Mr. UDALL of New Mexico, Ms. BALDWIN, Mr. KING, Mr. HEINRICH, Mr. COONS, and Mr. BEGICH):

S. 2434. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to ensure that working families have access to affordable health insurance coverage; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. BEGICH:

S. 2435. A bill to amend section 5542 of title 5, United States Code, to provide that any hours worked by Federal firefighters under a qualified trade-of-time arrangement shall be excluded for purposes of determinations relating to overtime pay; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

By Mr. SCOTT:

S. 2436. A bill to amend title 5, United States Code, to provide that agencies may not deduct labor organization dues from the pay of Federal employees, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

By Ms. MIKULSKI:

S. 2437. An original bill making appropriations for Departments of Commerce and Justice, and Science, and Related Agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2015, and for other purposes; from the Committee on Appropriations; placed on the calendar.

By Mrs. MURRAY:

S. 2438. An original bill making appropriations for the Departments of Transportation, and Housing and Urban Development, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2015, and for other purposes; from the Committee on Appropriations; placed on the calendar.

By Mrs. MCCASKILL (for herself, Mr. COATS, Ms. MIKULSKI, Mr. TESTER, and Ms. COLLINS):

S. 2439. A bill to amend the Inspector General Act of 1978 to provide for the Inspector General of the National Security Agency to be appointed by the President, by and with the advice and consent of the Senate, and for other purposes; to the Select Committee on Intelligence.

By Mr. UDALL of New Mexico (for himself, Mr. BARRASSO, Mr. HEINRICH, Mr. HOEVEN, Mr. ENZI, Mr. UDALL of Colorado, Mr. HELLER, Mr. WALSH, Mr. INHOFE, and Ms. HEITKAMP):

S. 2440. A bill to expand and extend the program to improve permit coordination by the Bureau of Land Management, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

By Mr. REED (for himself, Ms. AYOTTE, Mr. LEAHY, Mr. MARKEY, and Mr. WHITEHOUSE):

S. 2441. A bill to extend the same Federal benefits to law enforcement officers serving private institutions of higher education and rail carriers that apply to law enforcement officers serving units of State and local government; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. WALSH (for himself and Mr. TESTER):

S. 2442. A bill to direct the Secretary of the Interior to take certain land and mineral rights on the reservation of the Northern Cheyenne Tribe of Montana and other culturally important land into trust for the benefit of the Northern Cheyenne Tribe, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Indian Affairs.

By Mr. BROWN (for himself, Ms. AYOTTE, Ms. LANDRIEU, Mrs. GILLIBRAND, Ms. BALDWIN, Mrs. SHAHEEN, and Mr. NELSON):

S. 2443. A bill to direct the Attorney General to make grants to States that have in place laws that terminate the parental rights of men who father children through rape; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. BEGICH (for himself, Mr. ROCKEFELLER, Mr. RUBIO, Mr. THUNE, and Ms. CANTWELL):

S. 2444. A bill to authorize appropriations for the Coast Guard for fiscal years 2015 through 2016, and for other purposes; to the

Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

By Mrs. BOXER (for herself and Mrs. FEINSTEIN):

S. 2445. A bill to provide family members and close associates of an individual who they fear is a danger to himself, herself, or others new tools to prevent gun violence; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. JOHNSON of Wisconsin:

S. 2446. A bill to require the Congressional Budget Office to annually report changes in direct spending and revenue associated with the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act; to the Committee on the Budget.

By Mr. PORTMAN:

S. 2447. A bill to amend title 31, United States Code, to clarify the use of credentials by enrolled agents; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mrs. HAGAN:

S. 2448. A bill to protect servicemembers in higher education, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

SUBMISSION OF CONCURRENT AND SENATE RESOLUTIONS

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

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

S. Res. 468. 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.

ADDITIONAL COSPONSORS

S. 635

At the request of Mr. BROWN, the name of the Senator from Illinois (Mr. DURBIN) 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. MORAN, the name of the Senator from Texas (Mr. CRUZ) was added as a cosponsor of S. 635, supra.

At the request of Mr. MCCONNELL, his name was added as a cosponsor of S. 635, supra.

S. 822

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

S. 887

At the request of Mr. PAUL, the name of the Senator from Mississippi (Mr. WICKER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 887, a bill to repeal the violation of sovereign nations' laws and privacy matters.

S. 1011

At the request of Mr. JOHANNS, the name of the Senator from South Carolina (Mr. SCOTT) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1011, a bill to require the Secretary of the Treasury to mint coins in commemoration of the centennial of Boys Town, and for other purposes.

S. 1040

At the request of Mr. PORTMAN, the names of the Senator from Mississippi (Mr. WICKER), the Senator from Arizona (Mr. MCCAIN), the Senator from Alaska (Ms. MURKOWSKI), the Senator from Wyoming (Mr. ENZI), the Senator from Florida (Mr. RUBIO), the Senator from Georgia (Mr. CHAMBLISS) and the Senator from Illinois (Mr. KIRK) were added as cosponsors of S. 1040, a bill to provide for the award of a gold medal on behalf of Congress to Jack Nicklaus, in recognition of his service to the Nation in promoting excellence, good sportsmanship, and philanthropy.

S. 1141

At the request of Mr. CARDIN, the name of the Senator from Massachusetts (Mr. MARKEY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1141, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to expand the rehabilitation credit, and for other purposes.

S. 1156

At the request of Mr. FRANKEN, the name of the Senator from Colorado (Mr. UDALL) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1156, a bill to amend the Higher Education Opportunity Act to add disclosure requirements to the institution financial aid offer form and to amend the Higher Education Act of 1965 to make such form mandatory.

S. 1431

At the request of Mr. THUNE, the name of the Senator from Idaho (Mr. CRAPO) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1431, a bill to permanently extend the Internet Tax Freedom Act.

S. 1799

At the request of Mr. COONS, the name of the Senator from North Dakota (Mr. HOEVEN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1799, a bill to reauthorize subtitle A of the Victims of Child Abuse Act of 1990.

S. 1803

At the request of Mr. DURBIN, the name of the Senator from West Virginia (Mr. ROCKEFELLER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1803, a bill to require certain protections for student loan borrowers, and for other purposes.

S. 1874

At the request of Mr. REED, the name of the Senator from Rhode Island (Mr. WHITEHOUSE) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1874, a bill to amend the Higher Education Act of 1965 to strengthen Federal-State partnerships in postsecondary education.

S. 1896

At the request of Mr. BROWN, the name of the Senator from Montana (Mr. WALSH) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1896, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to extend the new markets tax credit and provide designated allocations for areas impacted by a decline in manufacturing.

S. 1905

At the request of Mr. MANCHIN, the name of the Senator from Illinois (Mr. KIRK) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1905, a bill to provide direction to the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency regarding the establishment of standards for emissions of any greenhouse gas from fossil fuel-fired electric utility generating units, and for other purposes.

S. 2048

At the request of Ms. HIRONO, the name of the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. MURPHY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2048, a bill to include New Zealand in the list of foreign states whose nationals are eligible for admission into the United States as E–1 and E–2 nonimmigrants if United States nationals are treated similarly by the Government of New Zealand.

S. 2091

At the request of Mr. HELLER, the name of the Senator from North Carolina (Mrs. HAGAN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2091, a bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to improve the processing by the Department of Veterans Affairs of claims for benefits under laws administered by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs, and for other purposes.

S. 2095

At the request of Mr. MORAN, the name of the Senator from Montana (Mr. TESTER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2095, a bill to reauthorize and modify the pilot program of the Department of Veterans Affairs under which the Secretary of Veterans Affairs provides health services to veterans through qualifying non-Department of Veterans Affairs health care providers, and for other purposes.

S. 2103

At the request of Mr. TOOMEY, his name was added as a cosponsor of S. 2103, a bill to direct the Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration to issue or revise regulations with respect to the medical certification of certain small aircraft pilots, and for other purposes.

At the request of Mr. PRYOR, his name was added as a cosponsor of S. 2103, supra.

At the request of Mr. DONNELLY, his name was added as a cosponsor of S. 2103, supra.

S. 2107

At the request of Mrs. SHAHEEN, the name of the Senator from West Virginia (Mr. ROCKEFELLER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2107, a bill to increase students' and borrowers' access to student loan information within the National Student Loan Data System, and to encourage improved outreach to and communication with borrowers.

S. 2152

At the request of Ms. HEITKAMP, the name of the Senator from Montana (Mr. WALSH) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2152, a bill to direct Federal investment in carbon capture and storage and other clean coal technologies, and for other purposes.

S. 2171

At the request of Mr. FRANKEN, the name of the Senator from California (Mrs. FEINSTEIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2171, a bill to address voluntary location tracking of electronic communications devices, and for other purposes.

S. 2192

At the request of Mr. MARKEY, the name of the Senator from Maine (Mr. KING) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2192, a bill to amend the National Alzheimer's Project Act to require the Director of the National Institutes of Health to prepare and submit, directly to the President for review and transmittal to Congress, an annual budget estimate (including an estimate of the number and type of personnel needs for the Institutes) for the initiatives of the National Institutes of Health pursuant to such an Act.

S. 2238

At the request of Mr. COATS, the name of the Senator from Oklahoma (Mr. INHOFE) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2238, a bill to ensure that the United States Government in no way recognizes Russia's annexation of Crimea.

S. 2307

At the request of Mrs. BOXER, the name of the Senator from Minnesota (Mr. FRANKEN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2307, a bill to prevent international violence against women, and for other purposes.

S. 2338

At the request of Mr. THUNE, the name of the Senator from Missouri (Mr. BLUNT) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2338, a bill to reauthorize the United States Anti-Doping Agency, and for other purposes.

S. 2349

At the request of Mr. SANDERS, the name of the Senator from West Virginia (Mr. ROCKEFELLER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2349, a bill to establish a grant program to enable States to promote participation in dual enrollment programs, and for other purposes.

S. 2352

At the request of Mr. COATS, the name of the Senator from Maine (Ms. COLLINS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2352, a bill to re-impose sanctions on Russian arms exporter Rosoboronexport.

S. 2359

At the request of Mr. FRANKEN, the name of the Senator from New Mexico (Mr. UDALL) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2359, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to protect and preserve access of Medicare beneficiaries in rural areas to health care providers under the Medicare program, and for other purposes.

S. 2370

At the request of Mr. COBURN, the name of the Senator from Arizona (Mr. FLAKE) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2370, a bill to rescind unused earmarks provided for the Department of Transportation, and for other purposes.

S. 2374

At the request of Ms. LANDRIEU, the name of the Senator from West Virginia (Mr. ROCKEFELLER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2374, a bill to improve college affordability.

S. 2401

At the request of Mr. TESTER, the name of the Senator from California (Mrs. FEINSTEIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2401, a bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to establish the Office of the Medical Inspector within the Office of the Under Secretary for Health of the Department of Veterans Affairs.

S. 2414

At the request of Mr. MCCONNELL, the name of the Senator from Kansas (Mr. MORAN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2414, a bill to amend the Clean Air Act to prohibit the regulation of emissions of carbon dioxide from new or existing power plants under certain circumstances.

S. 2422

At the request of Mr. SANDERS, the names of the Senator from California (Mrs. FEINSTEIN), the Senator from Minnesota (Mr. FRANKEN) and the Senator from North Carolina (Mrs. HAGAN) were added as cosponsors of S. 2422, a bill to improve the access of veterans to medical services from the Department of Veterans Affairs, and for other purposes.

S. 2424

At the request of Mr. MCCAIN, the names of the Senator from Georgia (Mr. CHAMBLISS), the Senator from West Virginia (Mr. MANCHIN) and the Senator from Wisconsin (Mr. JOHNSON) were added as cosponsors of S. 2424, a bill to provide veterans with the choice of medical providers and to increase transparency and accountability of operations of the Veterans Health Administration of the Department of Veterans Affairs, and for other purposes.

S. 2432

At the request of Ms. WARREN, the names of the Senator from Maryland (Ms. MIKULSKI), the Senator from Vermont (Mr. LEAHY), the Senator from Washington (Ms. CANTWELL) and the Senator from Michigan (Mr. LEVIN) were added as cosponsors of S. 2432, a bill to amend the Higher Education Act of 1965 to provide for the refinancing of certain Federal student loans, and for other purposes.

S.J. RES. 19

At the request of Mr. UDALL of New Mexico, the name of the Senator from West Virginia (Mr. MANCHIN) was added as a cosponsor of S.J. Res. 19, a joint resolution proposing an amendment to the Constitution of the United States relating to contributions and expenditures intended to affect elections.

S.J. RES. 36

At the request of Mr. MENENDEZ, the name of the Senator from New Hampshire (Mrs. SHAHEEN) was added as a cosponsor of S.J. Res. 36, a joint resolution relating to the approval and implementation of the proposed agreement for nuclear cooperation between the United States and the Socialist Republic of Vietnam.

S. CON. RES. 32

At the request of Mr. DURBIN, the names of the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. BLUMENTHAL) and the Senator from New York (Mrs. GILLIBRAND) were added as cosponsors of S. Con. Res. 32, a concurrent resolution expressing the sense of Congress regarding the need for investigation and prosecution of war crimes, crimes against humanity, and genocide, whether committed by officials of the Government of Syria, or members of other groups involved in civil war in Syria, and calling on the President to direct the United States Permanent Representative to the United Nations to use the voice and vote of the United States to immediately promote the establishment of a Syrian war crimes tribunal, and for other purposes.

S. RES. 410

At the request of Mr. MENENDEZ, the name of the Senator from Colorado (Mr. BENNET) was added as a cosponsor of S. Res. 410, a resolution expressing the sense of the Senate regarding the anniversary of the Armenian Genocide.

STATEMENTS ON INTRODUCED BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

By Mr. SCOTT:

S. 2436. A bill to amend title 5, United States Code, to provide that agencies may not deduct labor organization dues from the pay of Federal employees, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

Mr. SCOTT. Mr. President, the Empower Employees Act prohibits Federal agencies from automatically deducting union dues from the pay of Federal employees. The current system provided for under title 5 of the United States Code permits taxpayer resources to be used for the collection of these dues, which in turn are often used for political purposes. This legislation takes an important step in eliminating this taxpayer subsidy to organized labor by shifting the administrative burden of funding public sector unions to labor organizations and away from the American taxpayer. Federal union employees enjoy benefits far greater than those in the private sector and the unions' power to bargain is supported by the dues they automatically collect from employees' paychecks. This bill in no way prohibits Federal workers

from joining a union or paying dues, but rather increases freedom and choice for American workers while decreasing the strong-hold that labor unions have on American politics and the Federal budget.

By Mr. REED (for himself, Ms. AYOTTE, Mr. LEAHY, Mr. MARKEY, and Mr. WHITEHOUSE):

S. 2441. A bill to extend the same Federal benefits to law enforcement officers serving private institutions of higher education and rail carriers that apply to law enforcement officers serving units of State and local government; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

Mr. REED. Mr. President, today I am reintroducing the Equity in Law Enforcement Act to extend Federal benefits to law enforcement officers who serve private institutions of higher education and rail carriers. This legislation would make these individuals eligible for the same benefits provided to public law enforcement officers, including line-of-duty death benefits under the Public Safety Officers' Benefits Program and bulletproof vest partnership grants through the Department of Justice.

The Public Safety Officers Benefits, PSOB, Act of 1976 was enacted to aid in the recruitment and retention of law enforcement officers and firefighters by providing a one-time financial benefit to the eligible survivors of public safety officers whose deaths are the direct result of traumatic injury sustained in the line of duty.

The same risks also apply to officers protecting our private universities and railways. However, the PSOB Act does not include these officers, even though they enforce the law. These brave individuals, who protect our college and university campuses and railways every day and receive similar training to their government counterparts, are thus excluded from receiving the line-of-duty federal death benefits available to law enforcement officers serving units of State and local governments.

Over the last 50 years, 35 college or university law enforcement officers have lost their lives in the line of duty, according to the National Law Enforcement Officers Memorial Fund. The names of these officers, including Patrol Officer Joseph Francis Doyle who was killed in the line of duty at Brown University in 1988, as well as the railway officers who have been killed in the line of duty are inscribed on the memorial.

A recent name on the memorial is Patrol Officer Sean Collier. We recently marked the first anniversary of the bombing at the Boston Marathon, an act of terror that tragically killed three and injured over 260 others. Three days later, during the manhunt for the attackers, the perpetrators shot and killed Officer Collier of the MIT Police Department on the university's campus. Officer Collier was not only bravely serving the students and faculty of MIT last April. He was also serving the city of Boston, working with others in the law enforcement community to keep the city and our Nation safe during an exceptionally tense and difficult time. However, since he was employed by a private university, Officer Collier was not eligible for line-of-duty death benefits. To honor Officer Collier's service and sacrifice, this bill would be retroactive to April 15, 2013, the day of the Boston bombings.

I am pleased that Senators AYOTTE, LEAHY, MARKEY, and WHITEHOUSE have joined me in introducing this legislation, which would ensure that officers who give their full measure and their families are eligible for the benefits associated with law enforcement work, and that they have access to the protective equipment they need.

The bill would only apply to officers who are sworn, licensed or certified to enforce the law within their jurisdiction, and is supported by the National Association of Police Organizations and the International Association of Campus Law Enforcement Administrators.

I urge our colleagues to join us in cosponsoring and passing the Equity in Law Enforcement Act.

SUBMITTED RESOLUTIONS

SENATE RESOLUTION 468—TO AUTHORIZE THE PRODUCTION OF RECORDS BY THE PERMANENT SUBCOMMITTEE ON INVESTIGATIONS OF THE COMMITTEE ON HOMELAND SECURITY AND GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS

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

S. RES. 468

Whereas, the Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations of the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs conducted an investigation into Caterpillar Inc.'s Offshore Tax Strategy;

Whereas, the Subcommittee has received a request from a federal 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 Caterpillar's Offshore Tax Strategy.

AUTHORITY FOR COMMITTEES TO MEET

COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE, SCIENCE, AND TRANSPORTATION

Mr. KAINE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on June 5, 2014, at 9:15 a.m. in room 253 of the Russell Senate Office Building to conduct a hearing entitled, ''Preserving Public Safety and Network Reliability in the IP Transition.''

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

COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS

Mr. KAINE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Foreign Relations be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on June 5, 2014, at 10 a.m., to conduct a hearing entitled, ''Developments in Ukraine.''

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

SELECT COMMITTEE ON INTELLIGENCE

Mr. KAINE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Select Committee on Intelligence be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on June 5, 2014, at 2:30 p.m.

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

SUBCOMMITTEE ON EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT, INTERGOVERNMENTAL RELATIONS, AND THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

Mr. KAINE. 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 June 5, 2014, at 2:30 p.m. to conduct a hearing entitled, ''Wildfires: Assessing First Responder Training and Capabilities.''

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

PRIVILEGES OF THE FLOOR

Mr. ENZI. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent for floor privileges for the day for Daniel Head of my staff.

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

Ms. MURKOWSKI. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that privileges of the floor be granted to Cathy Cahill for the remainder of the 113th Congress.

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

AUTHORIZING DOCUMENT PRODUCTION

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

to the consideration of S. Res. 468, which was submitted earlier today.

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

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 468) to authorize the production of records by the Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations of the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

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

Mr. REID. Madam President, the Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations of the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs has received a request from a Federal regulatory agency seeking access to records that the Subcommittee obtained during its recent investigation and hearing on Caterpillar Inc.'s offshore tax strategy.

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

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

The resolution (S. Res. 468) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

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

SIGNING AUTHORITY

Mr. REID. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that during the adjournment or recess of the Senate from Thursday, June 5, through Monday, June 9, the majority leader be authorized to sign duly enrolled bills or joint resolutions.

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

ORDERS FOR MONDAY, JUNE 9, 2014

Mr. REID. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that when the Senate completes its business today, it adjourn until 2 p.m. on Monday, June 9, 2014; that following the prayer and pledge, the morning hour be deemed expired, the Journal of proceedings be approved to date, and the time for the two leaders be reserved for their use until later in the day; that following any leader remarks, the Senate be in a period of morning business until 5:30 p.m., with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each; that at 5:30 p.m., the Senate proceed to consider Calendar Nos. 734, 736, and 739 and the Senate proceed to vote on the nominations in the order listed; further, that if cloture is invoked on the nominations, on Tuesday, June 10, at 10 a.m., all postcloture time be considered expired and the Senate proceed to vote on confirmation of the nominations in the order listed.

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

PROGRAM

Mr. REID. Madam President, for the benefit of all Senators, there will be three rollcall votes at 5:30 p.m. on Monday evening.

ADJOURNMENT UNTIL MONDAY, JUNE 9, 2014, AT 2 P.M.

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

There being no objection, the Senate, at 5:31 p.m., adjourned until Monday, June 9, 2014, at 2 p.m.

NOMINATIONS

Executive nominations received by the Senate:

DEFENSE NUCLEAR FACILITIES SAFETY BOARD

JESSIE HILL ROBERSON, OF ALABAMA, TO BE A MEMBER OF THE DEFENSE NUCLEAR FACILITIES SAFETY BOARD FOR A TERM EXPIRING OCTOBER 18, 2018. (REAPPOINTMENT)

DANIEL J. SANTOS, OF VIRGINIA, TO BE A MEMBER OF THE DEFENSE NUCLEAR FACILITIES SAFETY BOARD FOR A TERM EXPIRING OCTOBER 18, 2017, VICE JOSEPH F. BADER, TERM EXPIRED.

DEPARTMENT OF STATE

KEVIN F. O'MALLEY, OF MISSOURI, TO BE AMBASSADOR EXTRAORDINARY AND PLENIPOTENTIARY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO IRELAND.

IN THE ARMY

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES ARMY VETERINARY CORPS UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTIONS 624 AND 3064:

To be lieutenant colonel

JEREMY J. BEARSS
DALE R. BEEBE
TODD M. BELL
ROBIN L. BURKE
GWYNNE E. KINLEY
SHANNON H. LACY
AUDREY C. MCMILLANCOLE
JODI L. NICKLAS

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES ARMY MEDICAL SPECIALIST CORPS UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTIONS 624 AND 3064:

To be lieutenant colonel

NORMAN W. AYOTTE
DAVID J. BAUDER
THOMAS A. BRYANT
RENEE E. COLE
MICHAEL J. COOTE
DAVID N. FELTWELL
OWEN T. HILL
AMY L. JACKSON
CYNTHIA L. MCLEAN
ELIZABETH E. PAINTER
CHARLES D. QUICK
DEJUANA L. RIAT
SCOTT R. SCHMIDT
RONNA L. TRENT
BRENDA D. WHITE
D001875
D005191

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES ARMY AS CHAPLAINS UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTIONS 624 AND 3064:

To be lieutenant colonel

DAWUD A. A. AGBERE
CHARLES F. BARNA
JAMES W. BLOUNT
RICHARD E. BROWN
CHARLES M. BURGESS
DONALD S. CARROTHERS
DARREN K. COLEMAN
EDDIE W. COOK
RONALD E. COOPER, JR.
LANE J. CREAMER
LAWRENCE M. DABECK
KEVIN L. GUTHRIE
WARREN L. HAGGRAY
CHARLES E. HAMLIN
LADISLAO HERNANDEZ, JR.
DOUGLAS C. HOOVER
WILLIAM H. HORTON II
TERRELL L. JONES
MOON H. KIM
YOUNG D. KIM
EDDIE KINLEY, JR.
KENNETH M. LEBON
JAMES B. LEE
WILLIAM A. LOVELL
ROBERT A. MILLER
JOHN L. MORALES
STEVEN J. MOSER
LINDA D. NORLIEN
STEVE W. PROST
IBRAHEEM A. RAHEEM
CELESTENE ROBB
WILLIAM H. SCRITCHFIELD
MUHAMMAD K. SHABAZZ
SCOTT E. SIMPSON
DOUGLAS C. SWIFT, JR.
ROBERT R. THOMAS
DAVID K. TROGDON
ROBERT K. WALKER

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES ARMY NURSE CORPS UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTIONS 624 AND 3064:

To be lieutenant colonel

DENISE K. ASKEW
DANIEL A. BLAZ
KEVIN T. BOJAR
TAMEKA D. BOWSER
DAVID F. BOYD III
JAMEY L. BROACH
CRAIG S. BUDINICH
BRETT G. BUEHNER
SEAN W. BURKE
JENNIFER R. BUTERA
JACQUELINE A. CLEMENTS
MICHELLE M. COUNTOURIOTIS
SHANE A. CRASK
JOELLEN S. FIELDEN
MITZI A. FIELDS
JIMMIE C. FOSTER
BRAD E. FRANKLIN
STACEY S. FREEMAN
SUSAN K. FRISBIE
ANDREA J. FULLER
EDWIN S. FULLER
MATTHEW K. GARRISON
JAMES B. HACKER
JOSEPH J. HOFFERT
TELESHIA L. HORTONHARGROVE
GEORGE A. JOHNSON
DENAR D. JOYNER
JULIE H. JUDD
CHARLES S. KUHENS
GREGORY L. LARA
MARKUS D. LEE
THERESA L. LEWIS
LARRY J. LINVILLE, JR.
ROBERT P. LONG II
RANAE T. LOWE
ALICIA A. MADORE
DANIEL N. MOBIT
MICHAEL U. NNADOZIE
BIRGIT B. NOSALIK
RACHEL E. PARK
JOSHUA D. PAUL
LORNA D. PEAY
BARRY P. RAINWATER
ERNESTO A. RAYMUNDO
SAUNDRA C. RIVERS
THURMAN J. SAUNDERS
HOLLY L. SHENEFIEL
TIMOTHY M. SNAVELY
JENNIFER V. SNELSON
GUY G. STLOUIS
JERRY B. STOVER
ALICIA D. SURREY
JODI L. B. TERPENNING
JIMMIE J. TOLVERT
ANA M. UKACHUKWU
SARA I. VILLACORTA
KEVAN S. WEAVER
MATTHEW D. WELDER
GORDON F. WEST
HAROLD E. WILLIAMS
JOHN T. WILSON
BRET G. WITT

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES ARMY MEDICAL SERVICE CORPS UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTIONS 624 AND 3064:

To be lieutenant colonel

DOREENE R. AGUAYO
FELY O. ANDRADA
MIGUEL A. ARROYOCAZURRO
WERNER J. BARDEN

JASON C. BARNHILL
JOHN E. BEZOU, JR.
KYLE P. BOURQUE
DAVID W. BRINES
MICHAEL A. BUKOVITZ
KEITH M. BURNETTE
OSCAR A. CABRERA
CLAYTON A. CARR
ROBERT CARTER III
BRIAN CHAMPINE
JINJONG CHUNG
TRISHA A. COBB
TRACY A. COFFIN
JAMES F. COLE
DAVID B. COWGER
MATTHEW M. CURLEE
CHRISTOPHER L. DURK
DEBORAH A. ENGERRAN
STEFAN FERNANDEZ
NATHANAEL C. FORRESTER
CHARLA E. GADDY
ROBERT A. GEDDIE
JOHN D. GOETTE, JR.
JEREMY L. GOODIN
MARIO K. GOULD
PAUL C. GRAVES
JAMES H. HALL
JAMES T. HAMACHER
MICHELLE HARRIS
CHARLOTTE L. HILDEBRAND
JEFFERY S. HOGUE
MARCUS A. HURD
DOMINICK J. IVENER
RICHARD G. JARMAN III
THOMAS A. JARRETT
LAURA D. JOHNSON
NICHOLAS E. JOHNSON
BRADLEY D. LADD
ROBERT J. LANG
ROBIN W. LEA
DEIDRE B. LOCKHART
ELIASIB LOZANO
KEVIN J. MAHONEY
TRANG N. MALONE
MATTHEW J. MAPES
KURT N. MARTIN
RAYMOND MCCLENEN
DAVID M. MELTZER
JOHN A. MERKLEY
TRACY MICHAEL
DAVID R. MILLER
MATTHEW A. MOSER
JOHN G. NGUYEN
DAN F. OHAMA
BRIAN D. OLEARY
DENNIS J. OREILLY
ROBERT V. PARISH
ADAM J. PETERS
GORDON W. POMEROY
NATHAN C. RAUCH
COLLEEN M. REICHENBERG
KEVIN J. RIDDERHOFF
FRANK E. RIGGLE, JR.
EDWIN H. RODRIGUEZROSA
MICHAEL D. RONN
THOMAS M. ROUNTREE
WILLIAM H. RUDDER III
GINNETTE RUTH
JOY A. SCHMALZLE
THOMAS W. SHERBERT
KIMBERLEE J. SHORT
ANDREW G. SIMS, JR.
DAVID C. SLOAN
JACOB C. SMITH
KIRSTEN S. SMITH
KENNETH D. SPICER
JAMES G. STANLEY
HARRY M. STEWART, JR.
JENNIFER S. STOWE
STUART D. TYNER
JOHN A. URCIUOLI
GEORGE C. WALKER
BRIAN J. WALLACE, JR.
MICHAEL J. WATKINS
CHAN L. WEBSTER
ABDUL R. WILLIS
MAX WU
MATTHEW M. WYATT
GEORGE J. ZECKLER

CONFIRMATIONS

Executive nominations confirmed by the Senate June 5, 2014:

PEACE CORPS

CAROLYN HESSLER RADELET, OF VIRGINIA, TO BE DIRECTOR OF THE PEACE CORPS.

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

SYLVIA MATHEWS BURWELL, OF WEST VIRGINIA, TO BE SECRETARY OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES.