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Senate

The Senate met at 2 p.m. and was called to order by the President pro tempore (Mr. LEAHY).

PRAYER

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

Let us pray.

Eternal Master, You are too good to be true. Repeatedly throughout our history, You have been our anchor. Continue to bring stability and unity to our lawmakers as they strive to do Your will on Earth, even as it is done in Heaven.

May they trust Your promises, remembering that You are that rock-solid mountain on which they can always depend. Lord, encircle them with the shield of Your favor, doing for them more than they can ask or imagine. Renew their commitment to You as their guide and guardian and enable them to successfully meet the challenges of our time.

We pray in Your majestic Name. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

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

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

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. The majority leader is recognized.

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 5:30 p.m.

At 5:30 p.m., the Senate will proceed to two cloture votes on two Ambassador nominations to two very important countries, Argentina and Hungary; Noah Mamet to be Ambassador to the Argentine Republic and Colleen Bell to be our Ambassador to Hungary.

IMMIGRATION

Mr. REID. I, of course, welcome all Senators and our staff back from the Thanksgiving recess. I am sure that, like me, people spent time with their loved ones, some here and some at their homes around the country.

For many families across America, this Thanksgiving was particularly unique and special. Because of President Obama's recent Executive actions, many immigrant families celebrated their holiday together for the first time without the threat of someone knocking on their door in a police uniform.

These people now, instead of staying in the shadows, are having a good time. Their holiday is not threatened to be ruined. All over America they are openly giving thanks or blessings with family that they haven't been able to enjoy in the past. Instead of looking over their shoulder, they joyously revel in the time they spent with their loved ones.

What President Obama did needed to be done.

The chairman of the Judiciary Committee, the presiding President pro tempore, spent days and weeks coming up with a very difficult piece of legislation, comprehensive immigration reform. Amendments by the scores were heard and debated. Republican amendments were adopted, Democratic amendments were adopted, and that matter was brought to the Senate floor where there was a good, genuine, long debate. On the floor, amendments were offered, debated, and voted upon. We created a very good bill based upon the work of the Judiciary Committee. It was bipartisan, and it was one that had an overwhelming vote on the Senate floor.

This had to be done. It had to be done because we have all seen firsthand our Nation's failing immigration system was tearing families apart. Each day Senate offices all over America would receive pleas—I did in Nevada—from loved ones who have fallen victim to our Nation's flawed immigration system.

I met with these people personally. I have talked with them on the telephone, I have read their letters, I have seen their emails, and it is heartbreaking to listen and hear some of their stories, their experiences. So I always try to do everything within the law to help, and sometimes we can help. Other times they cannot be helped within the confines of the law, so they wind up very unhappy.

Early this year I was able to—for example, the experience that we have all had—unite Edith Fawkes, a mother from Las Vegas, with her 12-year-old son Brahyam. That was a festive occasion, it was touching, but it is all too rare. For every one family who is reunited, thousands and thousands of others have been decimated by deportations.

That is why the Executive action taken by the President is so very important. It helps mend our Nation's broken immigration system, gets criminals off the streets, strengthens our border security, and spurs our economy. It spurs our economy. Underline and underscore that.

President Obama's action keeps families together. That is the most important thing. It allows parents with children who are U.S. citizens or green card holders to temporarily stay in our country, this country they call their home. By acting, the President said mothers, fathers, sons, and daughters are no longer relegated to the shadows of American society.

The American community now knows there is a path forward. There really is a way. President Obama took the first step. It is a good first step, but it is only a temporary solution.

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

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If I had my way, the President would have signed a comprehensive immigration bill into law, one that came out of the Judiciary Committee, instead of announcing Executive actions. But we could not sit idly by waiting for the Republicans to act while homes are broken up all over our country—and, frankly, their actions hurt our economy. The President has taken the first step. I repeat, the first step. Now Congress must act to address all the issues in our broken immigration system.

The House Republicans can still and should pass the bipartisan immigration bill that the Senate passed 520 days ago. In the meantime, I will keep fighting in Congress to pass comprehensive immigration reform that brings permanent long-term relief to our Nation.

We have done all we can in the Senate. We need to do more. I am begging the House to do something. If they brought this bill to the floor, it would pass overwhelmingly.

AGENDA

Mr. REID. I will spend a minute and talk about what we have to do this next week, 1 week, 2 weeks—hopefully not 3 weeks, but we may have to be here through the weekend. I hope everyone understands that our most important task at hand is to pass bills to fund our government, keep it from shutting down.

We have a number of vitally important nominations that must be confirmed.

We need to consider an extension of tax cuts for working families and businesses and we are going to work hard. I had a conversation today with Senator WYDEN.

We need to work on reauthorizing Defense authorization legislation. We have a lot to do, and there isn't much time to accomplish it, so I urge all Senators to work hard and work in a timely and efficient fashion. We may have to be here the week before Christmas—and hopefully not into the Christmas holiday—but there are things we have to get done.

I talked to the Secretary of Energy today. He has seven nominations to fill. These are important positions in the Department of Energy—Chief Financial Officer, head of the science division, fossil fuels—all of these important issues that these people deal with. We need to confirm these Cabinet-level officers, so I hope people will cooperate and help us get these done.

Will the Presiding Officer announce the business of the day.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

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

MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will be in a period of morning business until 5:30 p.m., with Senators permitted to speak for up to 10 minutes each, with the time equally divided and controlled between the two leaders or their designees.

The Senator from Vermont.

IMMIGRATION

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, while the distinguished Senate leader is still on the floor, I thank him for his comments on the immigration bill. I would note he was kind to talk about hundreds of hours. I may not have spent that, but a whole lot of other Senators did—and that bill would not have been on the floor and would not have been voted on without the leadership of the Senator from Nevada. He made sure there was a calendar, that there was time, and that he would keep the Senate in session while we had rollcall after rollcall. We had 136 amendments that were adopted in committee, and more than a dozen were considered on the floor. But we passed that bill by a 2-to-1 margin. The Republicans and Democrats joined together, and I applaud the leader for what he did.

I would tell one short story. Not long after that I was in Oregon, north of Portland, and went to a farming area. I went to church on a Sunday. My brother-in-law was saying the mass. He is fluent in Spanish. There were hundreds and hundreds of workers—these are all taxpayers, hardworking people. They make the community and they make the economy of the area.

I was introduced at the end. They all stood, raised their hand, and asked blessings on me and on the Senate for what we had done because it gave them hope for themselves and their families.

As long as I live, I will remember that, and I would hope—knowing at that time that we had enough votes, or enough votes to pass it in the House, I would call on the House leadership to do the right thing, allow it to come to a vote. Let Republicans and Democrats, everybody who does speeches on immigration, let them do what Senator REID had us do in the Senate, actually vote yes or vote no. Let them do the same—vote yes or vote no, and let the blessing the people gave for us in the Senate also be a blessing for those in the House.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, through the Chair to the distinguished President pro tempore of the Senate, for me in Nevada it is very important in the State of Nevada because the State of Nevada is 10 or 15 years behind the State of California as far as demographic changes. We have the largest number of Hispanics and Asians in the State of Nevada now. But my friend, the senior Senator from Vermont, basically has very few minorities in the State of Vermont. He did this—led this bill—because it is the right thing to do.

The people of Vermont, I know, are very cognizant of their senior Senator. He has taken on issues during his time in the Senate not because necessarily they are important for the State of Vermont—which they are, because anything that is good for the country is good for Vermont—but he takes these issues on because it is certainly the right thing for the country. There is a long list of things he has done over the years that have very little bearing on the State of Vermont but have a tremendous bearing on this country. That is why he is the tremendous leader he is.

Mr. LEAHY. I thank the distinguished majority leader.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

FALSE CLAIMS ACT

Mr. GRASSLEY. Just before our August recess, this body passed S. Res. 525.

I thank Senator WYDEN, the vice chair of the Whistleblower Protection Caucus I am starting next year, for being an original cosponsor of the resolution.

S. Res. 525 recognized July 31 as National Whistleblower Appreciation Day. On that day way back in 1778, the Continental Congress passed the first whistleblower law in the United States. I would like to quote it:

> Resolved,
>
> That it is the duty of all persons in the service of the United States . . . to give the earliest information to Congress or other proper authority of any misconduct, frauds or misdemeanors committed by any officers or persons in the service of these states, which may come to their knowledge.

This resolution was passed by the Continental Congress in 1778 without a recorded dissent.

Then and now, Congress's control of the purse strings has given us an obligation to guard against wasteful and fraudulent spending.

On this past July 31, whistleblower groups met to honor some of our colleagues on the Hill for their support of whistleblowers who report waste or fraud. I was not able to be there because the House of Representatives Judiciary Committee held a hearing on oversight of the False Claims Act. I am always wary when I hear the biggest violators of a law hire people to talk about ''strengthening'' the False Claims Act. So at the House of Representatives, I had an opportunity to comment on a chamber of commerce release of a report on the False Claims Act. It claims the act ''plainly is not getting the job done'' since ''the government has recovered only $35 billion since 1987.'' The current number as of

today is actually $42 billion that has been recovered under the False Claims Act of 1986, and that surely is nothing to sneeze at—at least where I come from it is not.

The fact is that since 1986 no other law on the books has been more effective in battling fraud. Before the 1986 amendments, the False Claims Act only brought in about $40 million a year. At that rate it would have recovered only $1 billion in the past 25 years. So thanks to the 1986 amendments, it brought back 42 times as much.

Clearly, I say to the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, the False Claims Act is working, and it is working fantastically. The chamber's report says the law is ''ineffective at preventing fraud.'' Yet my staff have met with some of the authors of that chamber report, and I have to say to you that the chamber had no concrete proposals for preventing fraud more effectively than the False Claims Act.

Now, the chamber people meeting with my staff talked about ''a gold-standard compliance certification program,'' but to me and my staff it is just a pie-in-the-sky idea with no specifics. They told my staff, ''We deliberately left this vague.'' So that is the problem. They lack details on who would create the program, who would enforce the program. Basically, they lacked details about everything. But they want this Senate to believe that once this pipe dream is in place, it will magically increase the amount of taxpayer dollars the government recovers.

In exchange, the report proposes hefty concessions for its big corporate sponsors. For starters, they want to eliminate the use of exclusion or debarment. These happen to be some of the government's strongest tools in deterring fraud. The chamber report would require whistleblowers to report internally 180 days before any whistleblower can file a False Claims Act suit. Yet, in most corporations, reporting internally just puts a huge target on the back of the employee blowing the whistle, just as it does on the back of a Federal whistleblower within the Federal bureaucracy. We should trust whistleblowers to use their common sense to know the safest place to report. Internal reporting and a 6-month head start on retaliation before the whistleblower gets a chance to be heard in court is a recipe guaranteed to reduce disclosures of fraud.

I have long advocated companies developing strong internal compliance programs, so I see nothing wrong with having those compliance programs. However, having one of these programs is not a reason to get a ''get out of jail free'' pass. I am skeptical that companies will self-report violations. Certification of a compliance program will not turn up the cold hard facts on whether they do or do not self-report. Even when a corporation does come forward, the company line is never going to be the complete picture. That is why the False Claims Act incentivizes whistleblowers, and, in fact, it has worked.

Further, some corporations have actually been using compliance programs as a trap for muzzling whistleblowers. By making their compliance program an arm of their legal department, anything a whistleblower reports is protected as confidential information covered under the attorney-client privilege. Many corporations also require employees who provide tips to their compliance departments to then sign nondisclosure agreements. This has a major chilling effect on whistleblowers contemplating filing a False Claims Act suit. Whistleblowers brave enough to file then find themselves the subject of legal action claiming they have violated attorney-client privilege or nondisclosure agreements. Now, a very simple question: Is this how we ought to treat whistleblowers?

This report's recommendations contradict its assertion that the False Claims Act has failed by not recovering enough money. The report proposes to limit government recoveries across the board, regardless of participation in any compliance certification program. That makes no sense.

In the last 5 years the Federal Government has grown larger and larger and spending has gotten more and more out of control. The Federal Government now spends about $1 trillion in contracts and grants each year. Inspectors general, the Government Accountability Office, and congressional oversight committees simply have not been able to keep up. Whistleblowers using the False Claims Act have played a very key role in checking fraud and wasteful spending. Annual recoveries under the False Claims Act have increased dramatically in just the past 5 years. Last year the Justice Department recovered $2.6 billion in just health care fraud through the False Claims Act. The False Claims Act is clearly doing exactly what we intended it to do, and that is to recover taxpayers' money being lost to fraud.

State attorneys general around the country have used State false claims acts to successfully recover billions of dollars for their States. I will give some examples.

Last October—that is, October of 2013—then-Virginia attorney general Ken Cuccinelli recovered $37 million for the State of Virginia from a drug company that was inflating its prices to scam taxpayer dollars from Medicare. The next month, in 2013, Cuccinelli recovered $21 million in two health care fraud settlements with multinational pharmaceutical giant Johnson & Johnson, which was paying millions of dollars in kickbacks to the Nation's largest pharmacy. Yet, just days before Cuccinelli announced the settlements, Health and Human Services Secretary Kathleen Sebelius also made an announcement. She revealed that this administration did not intend to treat ObamaCare as a Federal health care program, exempting it from antikickback laws. Precisely because of the fraud opportunities under ObamaCare, one provision Congress added to the law made a violation of antikickback law an automatic violation of the False Claims Act. This administration has chosen to ignore that part of ObamaCare.

Congress must step forward and reiterate that ObamaCare is no less subject to the antikickback law and False Claims Act than other Federal health care programs. Congress should strongly consider strengthening the False Claims Act's connection with suspension and debarment. That would keep repeat offenders away from the taxpayer dollars they have defrauded in the first place.

This issue, then, is really one about law and order. If we really want to improve the False Claims Act—not go the direction of the U.S. Chamber of Commerce—we should make a judgment or settlement under the law result in an automatic review for suspension or debarment. That would capitalize on the success of the law while increasing its deterrent effect.

The False Claims Act has already provided a crucial check during a time of growing government and outofcontrol Federal spending. Whistleblowers have been the key to the government finding out about fraud when it happens. We have to do all we can to honor them for the patriotic service they provide to the taxpayers and protect them from those who resist the role they play.

COLORETTI NOMINATION

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, I continue my objection to consideration of the nomination of Nani Coloretti to be the Deputy Secretary of the Department of Housing and Urban Development.

In keeping with my efforts to end secret holds, I have been very open about the reason I put a hold on this nomination. The Obama administration isn't giving me the same consideration.

In May, I found out about questionable hiring practices at the Financial Crimes Enforcement Network, known as FinCEN. FinCEN is an agency within the Treasury Department that collects and analyzes financial reports for law enforcement agencies to use in their money laundering investigations.

FinCEN has been hiring additional personnel to beef up its enforcement division. The problem occurred when the agency posted the job requirements but then disqualified candidates for a criterion that was never in the original job posting: a law degree.

This is illegal under Federal hiring guidelines.

I also learned that FinCEN rejected qualified veterans who applied for the positions. Veterans' preference doesn't guarantee veterans a job but it does give them extra consideration for jobs for which they are qualified.

The unemployment rate for post-9/11 veterans is significantly higher than

the rate for the general population. These men and women are extremely capable. They have an array of job skills to offer in the workplace.

It is inexcusable for FinCEN, or any other Federal agency, to reject qualified veterans who faithfully served our country.

The Office of Personnel Management already determined that the FinCEN hiring practices were illegal and referred the case to both the U.S. Office of Special Counsel and the Treasury Department's Inspector General. The investigations need to cover whether Treasury Department officials knew about the hiring problems and did nothing until OPM forced their hand. And if FinCEN tried to game the system to shortchange our Nation's veterans Congress needs to know. In addition, whoever is responsible must be held accountable.

To find out what happened, I requested all emails sent between the Treasury Department and FinCEN on this matter.

As the Treasury Assistant Secretary for Management, Ms. Coloretti oversees the Treasury's human resources department and may have known about the illegal hiring practices, or was at least in a position to know. If she did, she certainly shouldn't be rewarded with a promotion. However, regardless of her involvement, the Treasury Department needs to come clean.

As I said earlier, I have requested emails from the Treasury Department to help me get to the bottom of this. So far, I have received four emails.

Instead of open transparency, the Obama administration is once again obstructing access to the information I need to conduct proper congressional oversight.

The Treasury Department tried to convince me that no other relevant emails exist but I am not convinced. Their search was limited to only the 8 months when the vacancy announcements were open. This excluded any email communications that took place in preparation for posting the announcements or during 2014 when problems with the announcements were found. That is unacceptable. So I will continue my objection to consideration of Ms. Coloretti's nomination.

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

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

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

EXECUTIVE SESSION

NOMINATION OF DAVID J. HALE TO BE UNITED STATES DISTRICT JUDGE FOR THE WESTERN DISTRICT OF KENTUCKY

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I move to proceed to executive session to consider Calendar No. 1036.

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 legislative clerk read the nomination of David J. Hale, of Kentucky, to be United States District Judge for the Western District of Kentucky.

CLOTURE MOTION

Mr. REID. Mr. President, there is a cloture motion at the desk.

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

The 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 David J. Hale, of Kentucky, to be United States District Judge for the Western District of Kentucky.

Harry Reid, Patrick J. Leahy, Richard Blumenthal, Sheldon Whitehouse, Mazie K. Hirono, Amy Klobuchar, Al Franken, Benjamin L. Cardin, Patty Murray, Robert P. Casey, Jr., Jeanne Shaheen, Claire McCaskill, Christopher A. Coons, Mark Begich, Jeff Merkley, Richard J. Durbin, Charles E. Schumer.

Mr. REID. Mr. 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. Mr. President, 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 MARK A. KEARNEY TO BE UNITED STATES DISTRICT JUDGE FOR THE EASTERN DISTRICT OF PENNSYLVANIA

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I move to proceed to executive session to consider Calendar No. 1037.

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 legislative clerk read the nomination of Mark A. Kearney, of Pennsylvania, to be United States District Judge for the Eastern District of Pennsylvania.

CLOTURE MOTION

Mr. REID. Mr. President, there is a cloture motion at the desk.

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

The 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 Mark A. Kearney, of Pennsylvania, to be United States District Judge for the Eastern District of Pennsylvania.

Harry Reid, Patrick J. Leahy, Barbara Boxer, Benjamin L. Cardin, Robert P. Casey, Jr., Bill Nelson, Barbara A. Mikulski, Amy Klobuchar, Al Franken, Jack Reed, Sheldon Whitehouse, Robert Menendez, Kirsten E. Gillibrand, Richard Blumenthal, Sherrod Brown, Dianne Feinstein.

Mr. REID. Mr. 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. Mr. President, 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 GERALD J. PAPPERT TO BE UNITED STATES DISTRICT JUDGE FOR THE EASTERN DISTRICT OF PENNSYLVANIA

Mr. REID. I now move to proceed to executive session to consider Calendar No. 1038.

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 legislative clerk read the nomination of Gerald J. Pappert, of Pennsylvania, to be United States District Judge for the Eastern District of Pennsylvania.

CLOTURE MOTION

Mr. REID. Mr. President, there is a cloture motion at the desk.

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

The 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 Gerald J. Pappert, of Pennsylvania, to be United States District Judge for the Eastern District of Pennsylvania.

Harry Reid, Richard J. Durbin, Patty Murray, Barbara Boxer, Patrick J. Leahy, Sheldon Whitehouse, Debbie

Stabenow, Michael F. Bennet, John D. Rockefeller IV, Jon Tester, Jack Reed, Mark R. Warner, Tim Kaine, Benjamin L. Cardin, Charles E. Schumer, Christopher A. Coons, Christopher Murphy.

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. Mr. President, 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 FRANKLIN M. ORR, JR., TO BE UNDER SECRETARY FOR SCIENCE, DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I move to proceed to executive session to consider Calendar No. 555.

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 legislative clerk read the nomination of Franklin M. Orr, Jr., of California, to be Under Secretary for Science, Department of Energy.

CLOTURE MOTION

Mr. REID. Mr. President, there is a cloture motion at the desk.

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

The 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 Franklin M. Orr, Jr., of California, to be Under Secretary for Science, Department of Energy.

Harry Reid, Mary Landrieu, Jon Tester, Barbara Boxer, Charles E. Schumer, Benjamin L. Cardin, Patrick J. Leahy, Richard J. Durbin, Robert P. Casey, Jr., Christopher A. Coons, John D. Rockefeller IV, Carl Levin, Bill Nelson, Ron Wyden, Sheldon Whitehouse, Christopher Murphy, Patty Murray, Tom Udall.

Mr. REID. Mr. 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. Mr. President, 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 JOSEPH S. HEZIR TO BE CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER, DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I move to proceed to executive session to consider Calendar No. 660.

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 legislative clerk read the nomination of Joseph S. Hezir, of Virginia, to be Chief Financial Officer, Department of Energy.

CLOTURE MOTION

Mr. REID. Mr. President, there is a cloture motion at the desk.

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

The 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 Joseph S. Hezir, of Virginia, to be Chief Financial Officer, Department of Energy.

Harry Reid, Mary Landrieu, Patrick J. Leahy, Elizabeth Warren, Robert Menendez, Barbara A. Mikulski, Jack Reed, Richard Blumenthal, Carl Levin, Christopher Murphy, Kirsten E. Gillibrand, Sheldon Whitehouse, Patty Murray, Thomas R. Carper, John D. Rockefeller IV, Jeff Merkley, Richard J. Durbin, Benjamin L. Cardin.

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

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

The motion was agreed to.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. WALSH). Without objection, it is so ordered.

CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Morning business is closed.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will proceed to executive session.

CLOTURE MOTION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Pursuant to rule XXII, the Chair lays before the Senate the pending cloture motion, which the clerk will state.

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 Noah Bryson Mamet, of California, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the Argentine Republic.

Harry Reid, Robert Menendez, Patrick J. Leahy, Patty Murray, Debbie Stabenow, Benjamin L. Cardin, Amy Klobuchar, Kirsten E. Gillibrand, Christopher Murphy, Brian Schatz, Richard J. Durbin, Richard Blumenthal, Tom Harkin, Angus S. King, Jr., Tom Udall, Mazie K. Hirono, Sheldon Whitehouse.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. By unanimous consent, the mandatory quorum call has been waived.

The question is, Is it the sense of the Senate that debate on the nomination of Noah Bryson Mamet, of California, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the Argentine Republic, shall be brought to a close?

The yeas and nays are mandatory under the rule.

The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Louisiana (Ms. LANDRIEU), the Senator from Maryland (Ms. MIKULSKI), the Senator from Vermont (Mr. SANDERS), the Senator from Michigan (Ms. STABENOW), and the Senator from Rhode Island (Mr. WHITEHOUSE) are necessarily absent.

Mr. CORNYN. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from Tennessee (Mr. ALEXANDER), the Senator from Oklahoma (Mr. COBURN), the Senator from Mississippi (Mr. COCHRAN), the Senator from Arizona (Mr. MCCAIN), the Senator from Kansas (Mr. MORAN), the Senator from Alaska (Ms. MURKOWSKI), the Senator from Kansas (Mr. ROBERTS), the Senator from Pennsylvania (Mr. TOOMEY), and the Senator from Louisiana (Mr. VITTER).

Further, if present and voting, the Senator from Tennessee (Mr. ALEXANDER) would have voted ''no.''

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

The yeas and nays resulted—yeas 50, nays 36, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 291 Ex.]

YEAS—50

Baldwin	Casey	Heitkamp
Begich	Coons	Hirono
Bennet	Donnelly	Johnson (SD)
Blumenthal	Durbin	Kaine
Booker	Feinstein	King
Boxer	Franken	Klobuchar
Brown	Gillibrand	Leahy
Cantwell	Hagan	Levin
Cardin	Harkin	Manchin
Carper	Heinrich	Markey

McCaskill	Reed	Udall (CO)
Menendez	Reid	Udall (NM)
Merkley	Rockefeller	Walsh
Murphy	Schatz	Warner
Murray	Schumer	Warren
Nelson	Shaheen	Wyden
Pryor	Tester	

NAYS—36

Ayotte	Enzi	Kirk
Barrasso	Fischer	Lee
Blunt	Flake	McConnell
Boozman	Graham	Paul
Burr	Grassley	Portman
Chambliss	Hatch	Risch
Coats	Heller	Rubio
Collins	Hoeven	Scott
Corker	Inhofe	Sessions
Cornyn	Isakson	Shelby
Crapo	Johanns	Thune
Cruz	Johnson (WI)	Wicker

NOT VOTING—14

Alexander	Mikulski	Stabenow
Coburn	Moran	Toomey
Cochran	Murkowski	Vitter
Landrieu	Roberts	Whitehouse
McCain	Sanders	

The PRESIDING OFFICER. On this vote, the yeas are 50, the nays are 36.

The motion is agreed to.

NOMINATION OF NOAH BRYSON MAMET TO BE AMBASSADOR EXTRAORDINARY AND PLENIPOTENTIARY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO THE ARGENTINE REPUBLIC

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the nomination.

The assistant legislative clerk read the nomination of Noah Bryson Mamet, of California, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the Argentine Republic.

CLOTURE MOTION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Pursuant to rule XXII, the Chair lays before the Senate the pending cloture motion, which the clerk will state.

The assistant bill 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 Colleen Bradley Bell, of California, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to Hungary.

Harry Reid, Robert Menendez, Bill Nelson, Patrick J. Leahy, Benjamin L. Cardin, Elizabeth Warren, Barbara Boxer, Tom Udall, Tammy Baldwin, Brian Schatz, Richard Blumenthal, Christopher A. Coons, Tom Harkin, Angus S. King, Jr., Carl Levin, Joe Manchin III, Bernard Sanders.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. By unanimous consent, the mandatory quorum call has been waived.

The question is, Is it the sense of the Senate that debate on the nomination of Colleen Bradley Bell, of California, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to Hungary, shall be brought to a close?

The yeas and nays are mandatory under the rule.

The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant bill clerk called the roll.

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Louisiana (Ms. LANDRIEU), the Senator from Maryland (Ms. MIKULSKI), the Senator from Vermont (Mr. SANDERS), the Senator from Michigan (Ms. STABENOW), and the Senator from Rhode Island (Mr. WHITEHOUSE) are necessarily absent.

Mr. CORNYN. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from Tennessee (Mr. ALEXANDER), the Senator from Oklahoma (Mr. COBURN), the Senator from Mississippi (Mr. COCHRAN), the Senator from Arizona (Mr. MCCAIN), the Senator from Kansas (Mr. MORAN), the Senator from Alaska (Ms. MURKOWSKI), the Senator from Kansas (Mr. ROBERTS), the Senator from Pennsylvania (Mr. TOOMEY), and the Senator from Louisiana (Mr. VITTER).

Further, if present and voting, the Senator from Tennessee (Mr. ALEXANDER) would have voted ''no.''

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

The yeas and nays resulted—yeas 50, nays 36, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 292 Ex.]

YEAS—50

Baldwin	Hagan	Murray
Begich	Harkin	Nelson
Bennet	Heinrich	Pryor
Blumenthal	Heitkamp	Reed
Booker	Hirono	Reid
Boxer	Johnson (SD)	Rockefeller
Brown	Kaine	Schatz
Cantwell	King	Schumer
Cardin	Klobuchar	Shaheen
Carper	Leahy	Tester
Casey	Levin	Udall (CO)
Coons	Manchin	Udall (NM)
Donnelly	Markey	Walsh
Durbin	McCaskill	Warner
Feinstein	Menendez	Warren
Franken	Merkley	Wyden
Gillibrand	Murphy	

NAYS—36

Ayotte	Enzi	Kirk
Barrasso	Fischer	Lee
Blunt	Flake	McConnell
Boozman	Graham	Paul
Burr	Grassley	Portman
Chambliss	Hatch	Risch
Coats	Heller	Rubio
Collins	Hoeven	Scott
Corker	Inhofe	Sessions
Cornyn	Isakson	Shelby
Crapo	Johanns	Thune
Cruz	Johnson (WI)	Wicker

NOT VOTING—14

Alexander	Mikulski	Stabenow
Coburn	Moran	Toomey
Cochran	Murkowski	Vitter
Landrieu	Roberts	Whitehouse
McCain	Sanders	

The PRESIDING OFFICER. On this vote, the yeas are 50, the nays are 36.

The motion is agreed to.

NOMINATION OF COLLEEN BRADLEY BELL TO BE AMBASSADOR EXTRAORDINARY AND PLENIPOTENTIARY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO HUNGARY

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the nomination.

The assistant bill clerk read the nomination of Colleen Bradley Bell, of California, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to Hungary.

VOTE EXPLANATION

● Ms. STABENOW. Mr. President, I was unable to attend today's cloture votes on the nominations of Noah Mamet to be U.S. Ambassador to Argentina and Colleen Bell to be U.S. Ambassador to Hungary. Had I been able to attend, I would have supported both cloture motions.●

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New York.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

UNANIMOUS CONSENT AGREEMENT—EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. REID. I ask unanimous consent that notwithstanding rule XXII, on Tuesday, December 2, following the vote on cloture on Calendar No. 772, the Senate proceed to vote on cloture on Calendar No. 918; further, that if cloture is invoked on either of these nominations—the Coloretti and Adler nominations—the time until 4 p.m. be equally divided in the usual form and that at 4 p.m. all postcloture time be considered expired and the Senate proceed to vote on confirmation of the nominations in the order upon which cloture was invoked; further, that there be 2 minutes for debate prior to each vote and all rollcall votes after the first vote be 10 minutes in length; further, with respect to the nominations in this agreement, that if any nomination is confirmed, the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table and the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action.

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

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate now proceed to a period of morning business and that Senators who wish to speak be allowed to speak for up to 10 minutes each.

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

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

TRIBUTE TO AUDREY EVANS

• Mr. PRYOR. Mr. President, I wish to pay tribute to Judge Audrey Evans, who will be retiring as United States Bankruptcy Judge for the Eastern and Western Districts of Arkansas.

Judge Evans graduated Cum Laude from the University of Texas at Austin in 1967 and taught in public schools before eventually settling in Little Rock in 1975. Judge Evans became active in her community, including serving as a volunteer in Little Rock public schools and representing the Little Rock School Board on the Pulaski County Board of Equalization.

In 1983, Judge Evans received her Juris Doctorate, with high honors, from the University of Arkansas at Little Rock School of Law where she was Associate Editor of the UALR Law Journal. Judge Evans began her legal career clerking for G. Thomas Eisele, then Chief Judge of the U.S. District Court, Eastern District of Arkansas. Prior to her appointment as bankruptcy judge, Judge Evans represented both debtors and creditors in private practice.

While in private practice, Judge Evans was an active member of the bar in many capacities. Notably, she was a member of the Arkansas Board of Law Examiners from 1995 until 2001, serving as Chairperson in 2001; and she was on the Board of the Volunteers' Organization for Central Arkansas Legal Services, VOCALS, for 8 years, serving as chair from 1993 to 1995.

Judge Evans was appointed to bankruptcy court in February of 2002 by President George W. Bush, and served as Chief Judge from 2003–2009. As a bankruptcy judge, Judge Evans is best known for her courtesy and patience as well as her respect for the law and pursuit of justice. Anyone appearing before Judge Evans felt they had a just, fair, and full opportunity to be heard.

Judge Evans continued her service to the bar regularly speaking at bankruptcy conferences in Arkansas, Memphis, and throughout the Eighth Circuit. She was the Education Chair for the Eighth Circuit Bankruptcy Judges Conference, and served as President of the Central Arkansas Debtor-Creditor Bar Association from 2006–2007. She is a Fellow of the American College of Bankruptcy and an active member in the William R. Overton Inn of Court.

Judge Evans has been supported in her work by her husband, Don, their two sons, and five grandchildren. It is with great pleasure today that I rise to recognize and honor her service to Arkansas and to the country.•

TRIBUTE TO DON BAKER

• Mr. BOOZMAN. Mr. President, I wish to honor Don Baker, who will retire as the Pike County Judge after 17 years of honorable service to the citizens of Arkansas in this elected position.

As Pike County Judge, Don can be credited with building 16 steel and concrete bridges in the county, adding to and upgrading the road and landfill equipment, paving and improving many miles of Pike County roads, and organizing the Intermodal Authority for Pike, Montgomery, Clark, and Dallas Counties. In addition to his county judge duties, Don also served as a member of the board of West Central Planning and Development District and president of the Upper Southwest Solid Waste Landfill District.

Public service has always been an important part of Don's life. After graduating from the University of Arkansas in 1963 and teaching school in Mt. Ida, Don worked to extend credit to local farmers, owned a Glenwood grocery business, and served as a member on the Glenwood Chamber of Commerce, was a charter member of the Glenwood Lion's Club and served for 9 years on the Glenwood School Board. In addition, he was active in the Glenwood industrial development and taught Sunday school at Bethel Missionary Baptist Church.

Don Baker has displayed dedication, commitment, and an eagerness to serve his community we can all admire. My staff and I have enjoyed working with Judge Baker on the projects important to Pike County. I am truly grateful for his years of honorable service and dedication to Pike County and the State of Arkansas.•

TRIBUTE TO DR. THOMAS TRUHE

• Mrs. BOXER. Mr. President, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing my friend, Dr. Thomas Truhe, a generous supporter of the arts who was recently honored with a Golden Palm Star on the Palm Springs Walk of Stars in recognition of his many contributions to the civic and cultural life of his hometown.

This prestigious honor is well deserved. For more than 6 years, Tom Truhe has served tirelessly as chair of the Palm Springs Museum's Annenberg Theater Council, ATC, which supports the museum through an innovative program of music and theatrical performances. The ATC's busy season includes an Opening Night Gala, a major fundraiser for the museum; the ''performance series,'' featuring outstanding Broadway artists; and the tremendously popular Cabaret 88, a series of nine sold-out shows with top musical talents. Tom introduced the Cabaret 88 concept and is responsible for every aspect of its production, from selecting the talent and overseeing promotion to securing sponsors for each show.

In addition to his involvement with the Palm Springs Museum, Tom gives generously of his time and energy to numerous other area organizations and charities. He is a volunteer for ''One Night Only,'' Michael Childers' annual gala concert benefitting Jewish Family Service of the Desert, and he served on the event committee for a recent luncheon honoring Mr. Childers for his contributions to JFS. As a dedicated patron of the arts, Tom also makes a point of attending theatrical productions, concerts, local performances, and other charitable events in the community.

On November 16, 2014, Tom Truhe's Gold Palm Star was dedicated and Mayor Stephen Pougnet officially proclaimed the date to be Dr. Thomas Truhe Day in the City of Palm Springs. As his friend and Coachella Valley neighbor, I am pleased to join in honoring Tom Truhe for his outstanding service to the community.•

RECOGNIZING THE CENTER FOR CLOSING THE HEALTH GAP

• Mr. BROWN. Mr. President, I attended a Martin Luther King, Jr. event in Cleveland on a cold, snowy day earlier this year. The keynote speaker said something that we have all heard, but so often do not think about. He said, ''Your life expectancy is connected to your zip code.''

Whether you grew up in a city like Cincinnati, a suburb like Kettering, or in rural Appalachia, your zip code often determines whether you have access to quality health care, great education, and the social support necessary to succeed.

Ohio is fortunate to have many organizations, like the Center for Closing the Health Gap in Cincinnati, working to create zip codes where every resident has the opportunity to succeed.

For the past 10 years, The Center for Closing the Health Gap under the leadership of Dwight Tillery has worked to address health disparities across Southwest Ohio through private-public partnerships. Their work is invaluable in the Queen City, as we know health disparities take both a moral and economic toll on our communities.

Today, more than 1.8 million Ohioans live in poverty and almost one in six families do not know where their next meal will come from. We also know that the end of the school year does not mean an end to hunger.

That is why the work of nonprofits like The Center for Closing the Health Gap and programs like the Summer Food Service Program are so important. They work together to ensure that Ohio families know about these programs and ensure our students have enough food to keep growing and learning long after the final school bell rings for summer vacation.

As we work together to address child hunger and nutrition, we are also working to eradicate infant mortality. Ohio ranks 48th in the nation for infant mortality, and we are the worst State for the survival of African American babies.

Each year, there are more than 4,600 sudden unexpected infant deaths, and there is no known cause for as many as half of the 25,000 stillbirths in this country.

No parent should ever have to grieve the loss of a child with no answers and no help.

My Sudden Unexpected Death Data Enhancement and Awareness Act would fill in the gap in how infant deaths are tracked by the Federal Government so that we can better understand and prevent these tragedies.

We can begin to address the disparities facing our communities—and our economies—by working together on the local, State, and federal levels. Ohio is fortunate to have organizations like The Center for Closing the Health Gap working to make sure that all Ohioans have a chance to lead healthy, successful lives.●

SA-TECH'S 25TH ANNIVERSARY

● Mr. CARDIN. Mr. President, I wish to congratulate Mr. Timothy J. Adams, the President and Chief Executive Officer of Systems Application & Technologies, Inc., SA-TECH, and all SA-TECH employees on the firm's 25th anniversary. Since 1994, SA-TECH has been based in Maryland and has grown to be one of the largest privately held, minority-owned businesses in the Nation. Mr. Adams and each of the more than 400 full-time employees at SA-TECH deserve recognition for their valuable contributions supporting Department of Defense missions and the Maryland community.

Twenty-five years ago, Mr. Adams founded SA-TECH in Oxnard, CA and then moved the headquarters to Largo, MD in 1994. SA-TECH's services originally focused on the high technology and technical support domain for the Department of Defense, but have since evolved into other areas including program management, operations & maintenance, security, and logistics support services. The company has grown from two employees at one California location to more than 400 full time employees in more than 20 domestic and international locations. SA-TECH is an example of a successful minority-owned business and has been rightfully recognized as one of Maryland's Top 50 Diversity Owned Businesses and a Top 100 Black Enterprise Industrial/Services Black Businesses in the Nation, and has received many other recognitions including the Prince George's Black Chamber of Commerce Exemplary Business Recognition Award.

Over the past few years, I have toured my home State on a ''Made in Maryland Tour'' to visit Maryland businesses and highlight the diverse products and services being produced in our great State. The tour is also designed to celebrate the hardworking Marylanders who make these products and provide the services, and the companies who provide those jobs in our local communities. One common thread running throughout all of these successful businesses has been the business and business leaders' willingness to give back to their local community. SA-TECH is no exception. Under Mr. Adam's leadership, SA-TECH has grown to be a true community partner, supporting Department of Defense facilities and the Maryland community at large. SA-TECH has worked with other partners to renovate the Maryland Room at Joint Base Andrews Malcolm Grow Medical Center for wounded servicemembers returning from deployment, build a Family Room at Joint Base Andrews' passenger terminal, and provide academic scholarships to the top graduates of the United States Air Force's Airman Leadership School for enlisted personnel. In Mr. Adams' personal life as the former Chairman of the Board of the Bowie State University Foundation, he worked with the board to increase the endowment of the student scholarship fund to surpass $5,000,000. These scholarships play a key role in retaining economically disadvantaged Bowie State students and ensuring that Bowie State maintains the highest retention rate among Maryland's Historically Black Colleges and Universities.

In closing, I am proud of this Maryland company, which provides good paying, full time work in service of our Nation's military mission and the Maryland community. I offer my best wishes for the continued success of SA-TECH, Mr. Adams, and all of SA-TECH's employees.●

TRIBUTE TO MAJOR LEWIS G. SORVILLO

● Mr. CHAMBLISS. Mr. President, I wish to pay tribute to Maj. Lewis Sorvillo for his exemplary dedication to duty and service to the U.S. Air Force and to the United States of America. Major Sorvillo spent the last year serving in my office as a congressional defense fellow, and it is my distinct pleasure to congratulate him as he concludes an exemplary tour of duty in the Senate.

Major Sorvillo was born in Youngstown, OH. He enlisted in the Air Force in 1994 as a motor vehicle operator, ultimately advancing as a noncommissioned officer and aide on the Vice President's military staff. After his White House service across two presidential administrations, Major Sorvillo earned his commission in 2002 as a distinguished graduate of the Air Force Officer Training School at Maxwell Air Force Base, AL. For his superior performance at OTS, Major Sorvillo was awarded the Top Hawk Award as his squadron's No. 1 graduate.

Major Sorvillo subsequently qualified as a communications officer and was assigned to Patrick Air Force Base, FL, in support of the 45th Space Wing's mission of delivering assured space launch for the Nation. While at Patrick AFB, Major Sorvillo again distinguished himself by leading the Air Force Space Command's top information assurance unit of the year. He subsequently served at Goodfellow Air Force Base, TX, where he was responsible for the critical communication infrastructure necessary to train the Air Force's next generation of intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance professionals.

From Goodfellow AFB Major Sorvillo joined the command staff of the U.S. Air Forces in Europe. As a senior officer in the USAFE communications directorate's plans and policy branch and subsequently force management branch, he played an instrumental role in the manpower, training, utilization, and readiness of 130 cyber operations officers at 42 locations throughout 10 countries.

Across his two decades of service, Major Sorvillo has deployed to Bosnia, Saudi Arabia, South Korea, and just concluded his second tour to Afghanistan in support of Operation Enduring Freedom prior to joining my Senate staff. From June 2012 to May 2013, Major Sorvillo served as the principal adviser to the Afghan Ministry of Interior, Deputy Director of Information, Communication, and Technology, and led a team of military, civilian, and contract advisers in the development of enduring, nationwide systems and processes critical to the long-term sustainment of communication capabilities for the Afghan National Police. For his meritorious service, Major Sorvillo was awarded a Bronze Star Medal.

Over the past year, Major Sorvillo has distinguished himself among his fellowship peers as a leader in the Senate. From his legislative contributions supporting my role on the Senate Armed Services Committee to his dedication to constituent services, Major Sorvillo deftly applied his military expertise to elevate the performance of my personal office. He exemplifies the Air Force core values of integrity, service, and excellence, and I am deeply grateful for his significant contributions this year.

It is my great pleasure to congratulate Major Sorvillo, his wife Amy, and their three children, Jessica, Brandon, and Ivy, as they leave the Senate and continue to serve our great Nation. I wish them the very best of luck.●

MESSAGE FROM THE HOUSE RECEIVED DURING ADJOURNMENT

ENROLLED BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTION SIGNED

Under the order of the Senate of January 3, 2013, the Secretary of the Senate, on November 21, 2014, during the adjournment of the Senate, received a message from the House of Representatives announcing that the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. THORNBERRY) had signed the following enrolled bills and joint resolution:

H.R. 4067. An act to provide for the extension of the enforcement instruction on supervision requirements for outpatient therapeutic services in critical access and small rural hospitals through 2014.

H.R. 5441. An act to amend the Federal charter of the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States to reflect the service of women in the Armed Forces of the United States.

H.R. 5728. An act to amend the Communications Act of 1934 and title 17, United States Code, to extend expiring provisions relating to the retransmission of signals of television broadcast stations, and for other purposes.

H.J. Res. 120. Joint resolution appointing the day for the convening of the first session of the One Hundred Fourteenth Congress.

Under the authority of the order of the Senate of January 3, 2013, the enrolled bills and joint resolution were signed on November 24, 2014, during the adjournment of the Senate, by the President pro tempore (Mr. LEAHY).

MESSAGE FROM THE HOUSE

At 2:02 p.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Mrs. Cole, 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. 4795. An act to promote new manufacturing in the United States by providing for greater transparency and timeliness in obtaining necessary permits, and for other purposes.

MEASURES REFERRED

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

H.R. 4795. An act to promote new manufacturing in the United States by providing for greater transparency and timeliness in obtaining necessary permits, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

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–7934. A communication from the Associate General Counsel, Department of Agriculture, transmitting, pursuant to law, three (3) reports relative to vacancies in the Department of Agriculture, received in the Office of the President of the Senate on November 19, 2014; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC–7935. A communication from the President of the Federal Financing Bank, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Bank's Annual Report for fiscal year 2014; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC–7936. A communication from the Chief of the Mobility Division, Wireless Telecommunications Bureau, Federal Communications Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Amendment of Parts 1, and 22 of the Commission's Rules with Regard to Cellular Service, Including Changes in Licensing of Unserved Area; Amendment to the Commission's Rules with Regard to Relocation of Part 24 to Part 27; Interim Restrictions and Procedures for Cellular Service Applications; Amendment of Parts 0, 1, and 22 of the Commission's Rules with Regard to Frequency Coordination for the Cellular Service; Amendment of the Commission's Rules Governing Radiated Power Limits for the Cellular Service'' ((WT Docket No. 12–40) (FCC 14–181)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on November 19, 2014; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–7937. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Approval and Promulgation of Air Quality Implementation Plans; Montana; Revisions to the Administrative Rules of Montana—Air Quality, Subchapter 7, Exclusion for Deminimis Changes; Final Rule'' (FRL No. 9918–35–Region 8) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on November 18, 2014; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–7938. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''National Emission Standards for Hazardous Air Pollutants; Coal- and Oil-Fired Electric Steam Generating Units'' (FRL No. 9918–21–OAR) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on November 18, 2014; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–7939. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Approval and Promulgation of Implementation Plans; North Carolina; Inspection and Maintenance Program Updates'' (FRL No. 9919–10–Region 4) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on November 18, 2014; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–7940. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Approval and Promulgation of Air Quality Implementation Plans; Maryland; Prevention of Significant Deterioration'' (FRL No. 9919–48–Region 3) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on November 18, 2014; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–7941. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Approval and Promulgation of Implementation Plans; State of Washington; Regional Haze State Implementation Plan; Federal Implementation Plan for Best Available Retrofit Technology for Alcoa Intalco Operations, Tesoro Refining and Marketing, and Alcoa Wenatchee'' (FRL No. 9919–38–Region 10) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on November 18, 2014; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–7942. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Findings of Failure to Submit a Complete State Implementation Plan for Section 110(a) Pertaining to the 2010 Nitrogen Oxide (NO2) Primary National Ambient Air Quality Standard'' (FRL No. 9919–67–OAR) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on November 18, 2014; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–7943. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Approval and Promulgation of Implementation Plans; Swinomish Indian Tribal Community; Tribal Implementation Plan'' (FRL No. 9917–07–Region 10) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on November 18, 2014; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–7944. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Reconsideration of Certain Startup/Shutdown Issues: National Emission Standards for Hazardous Air Pollutants from Coal- and Oil-Fired Electric Utility Steam Generating Units and Standards of Performance for Fossil-Fuel-Fired Electric Utility, Industrial-Commercial-Institutional, and Small Industrial-Commercial-Institutional Steam Generating Units'' (FRL No. 9919–29–OAR) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on November 18, 2014; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–7945. A communication from the Chief of the Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Treatment of Certain Amounts Paid to Section 170(c) Organizations Under Certain Employer Leave-Based Donation Programs to Aid Victims of the Ebola Virus Disease (EVD) Outbreak in Guinea, Liberia, and Sierra Leone'' (Notice 2014–68) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on November 17, 2014; to the Committee on Finance.

EC–7946. A communication from the Secretary of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled ''Medicare Home Health Study: An Investigation on Access to Care and Payment for Vulnerable Patient Populations''; to the Committee on Finance.

EC–7947. A communication from the Chief of the Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Arbitrage Rebate Overpayments on Tax-Exempt Bonds'' ((RIN1545–BK80)(TD9701)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on November 18, 2014; to the Committee on Finance.

EC–7948. A communication from the Chief of the Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Failure to File Gain Recognition Agreements or Satisfy Other Reporting Obligations'' ((RIN1545–BK65)(TD9704)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on November 18, 2014; to the Committee on Finance.

EC–7949. A communication from the Chief of the Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''2014 Base Period T–Bill Rate'' (Rev. Rul. 2014–27) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on November 18, 2014; to the Committee on Finance.

EC–7950. A communication from the Executive Secretary, U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), a report relative to a vacancy in the position of Assistant Administrator, Bureau for Africa, U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), received in the Office of the President of the Senate on November 19, 2014; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC–7951. A communication from the Under Secretary of Defense (Acquisition, Technology and Logistics), transmitting, pursuant to law, the quarterly exception Selected Acquisition Reports (SARs) as of September 30, 2014 (DCN OSS 2014–1862); to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC–7952. A communication from the Secretary of Defense, transmitting a report on the approved retirement of Lieutenant General James O. Barclay III, United States Army, and his advancement to the grade of lieutenant general on the retired list; to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC–7953. A communication from the Assistant Secretary, Employee Benefits Security Administration, Department of Labor, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Revisions to Annual Return/Report—Multiple-Employer Plans'' (RIN1210–AB66) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on November 19, 2014; to the

Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC–7954. A communication from the Director of Regulations and Policy Management Staff, Food and Drug Administration, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Division of Freedom of Information; Change of Office Name, and Removal of Address, Telephone Number, and Fax Number; Technical Amendment'' (Docket No. FDA–2011–N–0318) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on November 17, 2014; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC–7955. A communication from the Chairman, Farm Credit System Insurance Corporation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Corporation's consolidated report addressing the Federal Managers Financial Integrity Act (FMFIA or Integrity Act) and the Inspector General Act of 1978 (IG Act); to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–7956. A communication from the Board Chair and Chief Executive Officer, Farm Credit Administration, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Administration's Performance and Accountability Report for fiscal year 2014; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–7957. A communication from the Archivist of the United States, National Archives and Records Administration, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to the Administration's fiscal year 2014 Financial Report; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–7958. A communication from the Secretary of Veterans Affairs, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Department of Veterans Affairs' Semiannual Report of the Inspector General for the period from April 1, 2014 through September 30, 2014; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–7959. A communication from the Director, Office of Government Ethics, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Post-Employment Conflict of Interest Restrictions; Revision of Departmental Component Designations'' (RIN3209–AA14) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on November 17, 2014; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–7960. A communication from the Director, Office of Government Ethics, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Annual Financial Report for the Office of Government Ethics for fiscal year 2014; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–7961. A communication from the Chairman of the Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report on D.C. Act 20–462, ''License to Carry a Pistol Temporary Amendment Act of 2014''; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–7962. A communication from the Secretary of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Agency Financial Report for fiscal year 2014; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–7963. A communication from the Secretary of Education, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Department of Education Agency Financial Report for fiscal year 2014; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–7964. A communication from the Chief Financial Officer, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, the fiscal year 2014 Agency Financial Report; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–7965. A communication from the Senior Associate General Counsel, Office of the Director of National Intelligence, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to a vacancy in the position of Director of the National Counterterrorism Center, received in the Office of the President of the Senate on November 18, 2014; to the Select Committee on Intelligence.

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

The following reports of committees were submitted:

By Mr. CARPER, from the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs:

Report to accompany S. 1744, a bill to strengthen the accountability of individuals involved in misconduct affecting the integrity of background investigations, to update guidelines for security clearances, and for other purposes (Rept. No. 113–276).

By Mr. TESTER, from the Committee on Indian Affairs:

Report to accompany S. 2479, a bill to provide for a land conveyance in the State of Nevada (Rept. No. 113–277).

Report to accompany S. 2480, a bill to require the Secretary of the Interior to convey certain Federal land to Elko County, Nevada, and to take land into trust for certain Indian tribes, and for other purposes (Rept. No. 113–278).

By Mr. ROCKEFELLER, from the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation, with an amendment in the nature of a substitute:

S. 2030. A bill to reauthorize and amend the National Sea Grant College Program Act, and for other purposes (Rept. No. 113–279).

By Mr. ROCKEFELLER, from the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation:

Report to accompany S. 2583, a bill to promote the non-exclusive use of electronic labeling for devices licensed by the Federal Communications Commission (Rept. No. 113–280).

By Mr. ROCKEFELLER, from the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation, without amendment:

S. 2338. A bill to reauthorize the United States Anti-Doping Agency, and for other purposes (Rept. No. 113–281).

S. 2759. A bill to release the City of St. Clair, Missouri, from all restrictions, conditions, and limitations on the use, encumbrance, conveyance, and closure of the St. Clair Regional Airport (Rept. No. 113–282).

EXECUTIVE REPORT OF COMMITTEE

The following executive report of a nomination was submitted:

By Mrs. FEINSTEIN for the Select Committee on Intelligence.

*Nicholas J. Rasmussen, of Virginia, to be Director of the National Counterterrorism Center, Office of the Director of National Intelligence.

*Nomination was reported with recommendation that it be confirmed subject to the nominee's commitment to respond to requests to appear and testify before any duly constituted committee of the Senate.

SUBMISSION OF CONCURRENT AND SENATE RESOLUTIONS

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

By Mr. BURR:

S. Res. 592. A resolution recognizing the contributions of the Montagnard indigenous tribespeople of the Central Highlands of Vietnam to the United States Armed Forces during the Vietnam War, and condemning the ongoing violation of human rights by the Government of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

ADDITIONAL COSPONSORS

S. 864

At the request of Mr. WICKER, the name of the Senator from Missouri (Mr. BLUNT) was added as a cosponsor of S. 864, a bill to amend the Safe Drinking Water Act to reauthorize technical assistance to small public water systems, and for other purposes.

S. 1463

At the request of Mrs. BOXER, the name of the Senator from Colorado (Mr. BENNET) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1463, a bill to amend the Lacey Act Amendments of 1981 to prohibit importation, exportation, transportation, sale, receipt, acquisition, and purchase in interstate or foreign commerce, or in a manner substantially affecting interstate or foreign commerce, of any live animal of any prohibited wildlife species.

S. 1686

At the request of Mrs. FEINSTEIN, the name of the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. BLUMENTHAL) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1686, a bill to amend the Controlled Substances Act to provide enhanced penalties for marketing controlled substances to minors.

S. 1853

At the request of Mr. BOOZMAN, the name of the Senator from Oklahoma (Mr. INHOFE) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1853, a bill to amend the Environmental Research, Development, and Demonstration Authorization Act of 1978 to provide for Scientific Advisory Board member qualifications, public participation, and for other purposes.

S. 2549

At the request of Ms. KLOBUCHAR, the name of the Senator from Rhode Island (Mr. WHITEHOUSE) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2549, a bill to amend the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act to allow for the personal importation of safe and affordable drugs from approved pharmacies in Canada.

S. 2689

At the request of Mrs. SHAHEEN, the names of the Senator from North Carolina (Mrs. HAGAN) and the Senator from Minnesota (Ms. KLOBUCHAR) were added as cosponsors of S. 2689, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to specify coverage of continuous glucose monitoring devices, and for other purposes.

S. 2833

At the request of Mr. THUNE, the name of the Senator from Utah (Mr. LEE) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2833, a bill to improve the establishment of any lower ground-level ozone standards, and for other purposes.

S. 2876

At the request of Mrs. MURRAY, the name of the Senator from California (Mrs. FEINSTEIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2876, a bill to establish a public education and awareness and access program relating to emergency contraception.

S. 2924

At the request of Mr. BROWN, the name of the Senator from Missouri (Mr. BLUNT) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2924, a bill to amend title 46, United States Code, to exempt old vessels that only operate within inland waterways from the fire-retardant materials requirement if the owners of such vessels make annual structural alterations to at least 10 percent of the areas of the vessels that are not constructed of fire-retardant materials.

S. 2943

At the request of Mr. RUBIO, the name of the Senator from Arkansas (Mr. BOOZMAN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2943, a bill to amend Public Law 110–299 to extend the time period during which permits are not required for certain discharges incidental to the normal operation of vessels.

S. 2944

At the request of Mr. HATCH, the name of the Senator from Ohio (Mr. BROWN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2944, a bill to amend the Social Security Act to provide for the termination of social security benefits for individuals who participated in Nazi persecution, and for other purposes.

S. 2963

At the request of Mrs. BOXER, the name of the Senator from California (Mrs. FEINSTEIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2963, a bill to remove a limitation on a prohibition relating to permits for discharges incidental to normal operation of vessels.

S. RES. 578

At the request of Mr. MENENDEZ, the names of the Senator from California (Mrs. BOXER), the Senator from Oregon (Mr. WYDEN), the Senator from Maryland (Mr. CARDIN) and the Senator from Virginia (Mr. KAINE) were added as cosponsors of S. Res. 578, a resolution supporting the role of the United States in ensuring children in the world's poorest countries have access to vaccines and immunization through Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance.

SUBMITTED RESOLUTIONS

SENATE RESOLUTION 592—RECOGNIZING THE CONTRIBUTIONS OF THE MONTAGNARD INDIGENOUS TRIBESPEOPLE OF THE CENTRAL HIGHLANDS OF VIETNAM TO THE UNITED STATES ARMED FORCES DURING THE VIETNAM WAR, AND CONDEMNING THE ONGOING VIOLATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS BY THE GOVERNMENT OF THE SOCIALIST REPUBLIC OF VIETNAM

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

S. RES. 592

Whereas the Montagnards, sometimes referred to as ''Dega'', are the indigenous tribespeople living in Vietnam's Central Highlands region;

Whereas the Montagnards were driven into the mountains by invading Vietnamese and Cambodians in the 9th century;

Whereas French Roman Catholic missionaries converted many of the Montagnards in the 19th century and American Protestant missionaries subsequently converted many to various Protestant sects;

Whereas, during the 1960s, the United States Mission in Saigon, the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), and United States Army Special Forces, also known as the Green Berets, trained the Montagnards in unconventional warfare;

Whereas an estimated 61,000 Montagnards, out of an estimated population of 1,000,000, fought alongside the United States and the Army of the Republic of Vietnam (ARVN) forces against the North Vietnamese Army and the Viet Cong;

Whereas the Central Intelligence Agency, United States Special Forces, and the Montagnards cooperated on the Village Defense Program, a forerunner to the War's Strategic Hamlet Program and estimated 43,000 Montagnards were organized into ''Civilian Irregular Defense Groups'' (CIDGs) to provide protection for the areas around the CIDGs' operational bases;

Whereas, at its peak, the CIDGs had approximately 50 operational bases, with each base containing a contingent of two United States Army officers and ten enlisted men, and an ARVN unit of the same size, and each base trained 200 to 700 Montagnards, or ''strikers'';

Whereas another 18,000 Montagnards were reportedly enlisted into mobile strike forces, and various historical accounts describe a strong bond between the United States Special Forces and the Montagnards, in contrast to Vietnamese Special Forces and ARVN troops;

Whereas the lives of thousands of members of the United States Armed Forces were saved as a result of the heroic actions of the Montagnards, who fought loyally and bravely alongside United States Special Forces in the Vietnam War;

Whereas, after the fall of the Republic of Vietnam in 1975, thousands of Montagnards fled across the border into Cambodia to escape persecution;

Whereas the Government of the reunified Vietnamese nation, renamed the Socialist Republic of Vietnam, deeply distrusted the Montagnards who had sided with the United States and ARVN forces, and subjected them to imprisonment and various forms of discrimination and oppression after the Vietnam War ended;

Whereas, after the Vietnam War, the United States Government resettled large numbers of Montagnards, mostly in North Carolina, and an estimated several thousand Montagnards currently reside in North Carolina, which is the largest population of Montagnards residing outside of Vietnam;

Whereas the Socialist Republic of Vietnam currently remains a one-party state, ruled and controlled by the Communist Party of Vietnam (CPV), which continues to restrict freedom of religion, movement, land and property rights, and political expression;

Whereas officials of the Government of Vietnam have forced Montagnards to publicly denounce their religion, arrested and imprisoned Montagnards who organized public demonstrations, and mistreated Montagnards in detention;

Whereas the Government of Vietnam's restrictions on foreigners' access to the Central Highlands region complicate accurate reporting of human rights violations against the Montagnards, including the hundreds of Montagnards who have reportedly been imprisoned since 2001 and Montagnards who have fled to Thailand seeking asylum in a third country;

Whereas some Montagnard Americans have complained that Vietnamese authorities either have prevented them from visiting Vietnam or have subjected them to interrogation upon re-entering the country on visits;

Whereas the Department of State's 2013 Country Reports on Human Rights Practices and 2013 International Religious Freedom Report reference the mistreatment of Montagnards as an example of the detention of ethnic minorities in Vietnam and references reports from followers of the unsanctioned Church of Christ that local authorities in the Central Highlands provinces had harassed and persecuted them;

Whereas, in March 2014, the Unrepresented Nations and Peoples Organization (UNPO) submitted an alternative report to the United Nations Committee on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights summarizing the alleged violations of the economic, social, and cultural rights of Vietnam's Montagnard, Hmong, and Khmer Krom;

Whereas the Unrepresented Nations and Peoples Organization report states that the Government of Vietnam has denied Montagnards of their right of self-determination; imposed discriminatory policies; curtailed religious freedom; impeded access to an adequate standard of living; limited access to health care and education; infringed on the Montagnards' cultural rights; and, in two recent cases, arrested and imprisoned Montagnards purportedly for their religious beliefs;

Whereas the United States Commission on International Religious Freedom's 2014 Annual Report states that the Government of Vietnam controls all religious activities through law and administrative oversight, severely restricts independent religious practice, and represses individuals and religious groups it views as challenging its authority, including independent Protestant house churches in the Central and Northwest Highlands; and

Whereas the United States Commission on International Religious Freedom recommends that Vietnam be designated as a Country of Particular Concern (CPC) and that access to Priority 1 refugee resettlement authority should be increased for individuals from Vietnam facing a well-founded fear of persecution: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) recognizes the contributions of the Montagnards who fought loyally and bravely with United States Armed Forces during the

Vietnam War and who continue to suffer persecution in Vietnam as a result of this relationship;

(2) condemns actions taken by the Government of Vietnam to suppress basic human rights and civil liberties for all its citizens;

(3) urges the Government of Vietnam to allow human rights groups access to all regions of the country and to end restrictions of basic human rights, including the freedom of religion, land and property rights, freedom of movement, and access to an adequate standard of living; and

(4) urges the President and Congress to develop policies that support Montagnards and other marginalized ethnic minority and indigenous populations such as the Khmer Krom and the Hmong in Vietnam and reflect United States interests and commitment to upholding human rights and democracy abroad.

AMENDMENTS SUBMITTED AND PROPOSED

SA 3959. Mr. UDALL, of New Mexico submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 2410, 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; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3960. Mr. BOOKER submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 2410, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3961. Mr. SCHUMER submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 2410, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3962. Mr. SCHUMER submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 2410, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3963. Mr. SCHUMER submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 2410, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3964. Mr. CHAMBLISS submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 2410, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

TEXT OF AMENDMENTS

SA 3959. Mr. UDALL of New Mexico submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 2410, 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; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of subtitle H of title X, add the following:

SEC. 1087. EXPANSION OF ELIGIBILITY FOR POST-9/11 EDUCATIONAL ASSISTANCE TO INCLUDE SERVICE ON ACTIVE DUTY IN ENTRY LEVEL AND SKILL TRAINING UNDER CERTAIN CIRCUMSTANCES.

(a) FOR INDIVIDUALS WHO SERVE BETWEEN 18 AND 24 MONTHS.—Section 3311(b)(5)(A) of title 38, United States Code, is amended by striking ''excluding'' and inserting ''including''.

(b) FOR INDIVIDUALS WHO SERVED IN OPERATION ENDURING FREEDOM, OPERATION IRAQI FREEDOM, OR CERTAIN OTHER CONTINGENCY OPERATIONS.—Section 3311(b) of such title is amended in paragraphs (6)(A) and (7)(A) by striking ''excluding service on active duty in entry level and skill training'' and inserting ''including service on active duty in entry level and skill training for individuals who served on active duty in the Armed Forces in Operation Enduring Freedom, Operation Iraqi Freedom, Operation New Dawn, or any other contingency operation (as that term is defined in section 101 of title 10) and excluding service on active duty in entry level and skill training for all other individuals''.

SA 3960. Mr. BOOKER submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 2410, 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; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of subtitle H of title X, add the following:

SEC. 1087. IDENTIFICATION REQUIREMENT FOR MILITARY INSTALLATIONS.

(a) IDENTIFICATION REQUIREMENT FOR MILITARY INSTALLATIONS.—

(1) MINIMUM IDENTIFICATION REQUIRED.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—Beginning on the day that is 120 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary concerned may not permit a person who is 18 years old or older to enter a military installation in the United States unless such person presents, as determined by an authentication procedure that meets the minimum procedural requirements identified by the Secretary of Defense in paragraph (4), at a minimum—

(i) a valid Federal or State government issued photo identification card;

(ii) a valid Common Access Card; or

(iii) a valid uniformed services identification card.

(B) EXCEPTION FOR CERTAIN FOREIGN PASSPORTS.—The Secretary concerned may permit a person to enter a military installation in the United States if such person presents a valid foreign passport, as determined by an authentication procedure that meets the minimum procedural requirements identified by the Secretary of Defense in paragraph (4), if—

(i) such person is visiting such military installation on official business between the Armed Forces and the armed forces of a foreign country; or

(ii) such person is visiting a member of the uniformed services or a civilian employee of the Department of Defense on such military installation.

(2) EXPIRED OR FRAUDULENT IDENTIFICATION.—The Secretary concerned shall confiscate any form of identification that the Secretary determines, using an authentication procedure that meets the minimum procedural requirements identified by the Secretary of Defense in paragraph (4), to be expired or fraudulent.

(3) COORDINATION AMONG MILITARY INSTALLATIONS OF A STATE.—The Secretary concerned shall keep a list and shall inform the personnel at any other military installation in the State of such military installation of the name of any person—

(A) who attempts to help a person required to present a valid form of identification under paragraph (1) to enter a military installation in the United States without such required identification; or

(B) who attempts to enter a military installation in the United States with a form of identification that the Secretary concerned determines to be expired or fraudulent under paragraph (2).

(4) PROCEDURAL REQUIREMENTS FOR IDENTIFICATION VERIFICATION.—Not later than 90 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Defense shall identify the minimum procedural requirements for the Secretary concerned to authenticate the forms of identification in paragraph (1) for a person entering a military installation in the United States. In identifying such requirements, the Secretary of Defense shall identify minimum procedural requirements to ensure that individuals who need to enter a military installation in the United States to perform work under a contract awarded by the Department of Defense present a valid form of identification under paragraph (1).

(b) DEFINITIONS.—

(1) COMMON ACCESS CARD.—In this section, the term ''Common Access Card'' means the standard identification card issued by the Secretary of Defense to active-duty military personnel, Selected Reserve personnel, Department of Defense civilian employees, and certain persons awarded contracts by the Secretary of Defense.

(2) SECRETARY CONCERNED.—In this section, the term ''Secretary concerned'' has the meaning given the term in section 101(a) of title 10, United States Code.

(3) UNIFORMED SERVICES IDENTIFICATION CARD.—In this section, the term ''uniformed services identification card'' means the identification card issued by the Secretary of Defense to spouses and other eligible dependents of members of the uniformed services and other eligible persons, as determined by the Secretary of Defense.

SA 3961. Mr. SCHUMER submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 2410, 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; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of subtitle F of title V, add the following:

SEC. 562. AUTHORIZATION FOR AWARD OF THE MEDAL OF HONOR TO HENRY JOHNSON FOR ACTS OF VALOR DURING WORLD WAR I.

(a) WAIVER OF TIME LIMITATIONS.—Notwithstanding the time limitations specified in section 3744 of title 10, United States Code, or any other time limitation with respect to the awarding of certain medals to persons who served in the Armed Forces, the President may award the Medal of Honor under section 3741 of such title to Henry Johnson for the acts of valor during World War I described in subsection (b).

(b) ACTS OF VALOR DESCRIBED.—The acts of valor referred to in subsection (a) are the actions of Henry Johnson while serving as a member of Company C, 369th Infantry Regiment, 93rd Division, American Expeditionary Forces, during combat operations against the enemy on the front lines of the Western Front in France on May 15, 1918, during World War I for which he was previously awarded the Distinguished Service Cross.

SA 3962. Mr. SCHUMER submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 2410, 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; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of subtitle B of title XXVIII, add the following:

SEC. 2813. ARSENAL INSTALLATION REUTILIZATION AUTHORITY.

Section 2667 of title 10, United States Code, is amended—

(1) by redesignating subsections (h), (i), and (j) as subsections (i), (j), and (k), respectively; and

(2) by inserting after subsection (g) the following new subsection (h):

''(h) ARSENAL INSTALLATION REUTILIZATION AUTHORITY.—(1) In the case of a military manufacturing arsenal, the Secretary concerned shall delegate, subject to paragraph (2), the authority provided by this section to the commander of the military manufacturing arsenal or, if part of a larger military installation, the installation commander for the purpose of—

''(A) helping to maintain the viability of military manufacturing arsenals and any installations on which they are located;

''(B) eliminating, or at least reducing, the cost of Government ownership of military manufacturing arsenals, including the costs of operations and maintenance, the costs of environmental remediation, and other costs; and

''(C) leveraging private investment at military manufacturing arsenals through long-term facility use contracts, property management contracts, leases, or other agreements that support and advance the preceding purposes.

''(2) The authority delegated under paragraph (1) does not include the authority to enter into a lease or contract under this section to carry out any activity covered by section 4544(b) of this title related to sale of articles manufactured by a military manufacturing arsenal or services performed by a military manufacturing arsenal or the performance of manufacturing work at the military manufacturing arsenal.

''(3) Both leases and contracts are authorized under this section for a military manufacturing arsenal, and—

''(A) notwithstanding subsection (b)(1), the term of the lease or contract may be for up to 25 years if a lease or contract of that duration will promote the national defense or be in the public interest; and

''(B) the lease or contract may fully utilize the authorities under subsections (b)(5) and (c).

''(4) In this subsection, the term 'military manufacturing arsenal' means a Government-owned, Government-operated defense plant of the Department of the Defense that manufactures weapons, weapon components, or both.''.

SA 3963. Mr. SCHUMER submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 2410, 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; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of subtitle D of title I, add the following:

SEC. 141. SENSE OF CONGRESS ON THE AVAILABILITY OF CERTAIN RADAR TECHNOLOGIES FOR FLIGHT SAFETY.

It is the sense of Congress that—

(1) certain radar technologies developed in the United States and in use by the Department of Defense to perform air surveillance by detecting and tracking designated targets have variants which are being used by civilian airports to enhance the safety of flight operation for commercial air traffic;

(2) these technologies are being considered and reviewed by Federal agencies to provide additional air traffic control capabilities for the integration of Unmanned Aerial Systems into the national airspace of the United States; and

(3) the Department should ensure that the benefits to flight safety in the United States from the use of these technologies are fully and openly demonstrated, tested, and reviewed by the Armed Forces, civilian Federal agencies, and commercial airports.

SA 3964. Mr. CHAMBLISS submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 2410, 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; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of subtitle E of title XXVIII, add the following:

SEC. 2842. EXPANSION OF AUTHORITY FOR CERTAIN HOMEOWNERS ASSISTANCE TO MEMBERS OF THE ARMED FORCES AND RELATED FEDERAL GOVERNMENT CIVILIAN EMPLOYEES WHO INCUR DELAYED-ONSET WOUNDS, INJURIES, OR ILLNESSES IN SERVICE.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 1013(a)(2) of the Demonstration Cities and Metropolitan Development Act of 1966 (42 U.S.C. 3374(a)(2)) is amended in the matter preceding subparagraph (A) by inserting after ''illness,'' the following: ''or in the case of a wound, injury, or illness with delayed expression or delayed identification, was at the time of expression or identification,''.

(b) TAX TREATMENT OF BENEFITS.—Section 132(n)(1) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 is amended by inserting after ''2009'' the following: ''and amended by section 2842(a) of the Carl Levin National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2015''.

NOTICE OF HEARING

COMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND NATURAL RESOURCES

Ms. LANDRIEU. Mr. President, I would like to announce for the information of the Senate and the public that a hearing has been scheduled before the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources. The hearing will be held on Thursday, December 4, 2014, at 10:30 a.m. in room SD–366 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building in Washington, DC.

The purpose of this hearing is to consider the nomination of Collette D. Honorable to be a member of the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission.

Because of the limited time available for the hearing, witnesses may testify by invitation only. However, those wishing to submit written testimony for the hearing record may do so by sending it to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources, United States Senate, Washington, DC 20510–6150, or by e-mail to Sam_Fowler@energy.senate.gov.

For further information, please contact Sam Fowler at (202) 224–7571 or Sallie Derr at (202) 224–6836.

AUTHORITY FOR COMMITTEES TO MEET

SELECT COMMITTEE ON INTELLIGENCE

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Select Committee on Intelligence be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate immediately after the first roll call vote on December 1, 2014.

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

GOLD MEDAL AWARD TO JACK NICKLAUS IN RECOGNITION OF HIS SERVICE TO THE NATION

Mr. REID. I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Development be discharged from further consideration of H.R. 2203 and the Senate proceed to its immediate consideration.

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

The clerk will report the bill by title.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (H.R. 2203) 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.

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

Mr. REID. 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 (H.R. 2203) was ordered to a third reading, was read the third time, and passed.

ORDERS FOR TUESDAY, DECEMBER 2, 2014

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that when the Senate completes its business today, it adjourn until tomorrow morning at 10 a.m. on Tuesday, December 2, 2014; that following the prayer and pledge, the morning hour be deemed expired, the Journal of proceedings be approved to date and the time for the two leaders be reserved for their use later in the day; that the Senate then proceed to administering the oath of office to Senators SCHATZ and SCOTT; that following any leader remarks, the Senate resume executive session and consideration of the Mamet nomination; and that the Senate recess from 12:30 p.m. until 2:15 p.m., to allow for the weekly caucus meetings.

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

PROGRAM

Mr. REID. For the information of all Senators, there will be four rollcall

votes at 10:30 tomorrow morning on confirmation of the Mamet and Bell nominations and cloture on the Coloretti and Adler nominations. Another series of votes will occur at 4 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT UNTIL 10 A.M. TOMORROW

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

There being no objection, the Senate, at 7:17 p.m., adjourned until Tuesday, December 2, 2014, at 10 a.m.