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House of Representatives

The House met at 3 p.m. and was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. MESSER).

DESIGNATION OF THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

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

WASHINGTON, DC,
December 12, 2014.

I hereby appoint the Honorable LUKE MESSER to act as Speaker pro tempore on this day.

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

PRAYER

The Chaplain, the Reverend Patrick J. Conroy, offered the following prayer:

Dear God, we give You thanks for giving us another day.

Bless the Members of the people's House as they depart the Nation's Capital to return to their homes. May they find rest and renewal during their time with family and friends.

Bless our Nation as the holy days of the religious traditions for so many of our citizens approach, and as the year comes to a close. Help us to look to the future with hope, committed to a renewed effort to work together as citizens of a united America.

Help us all to be truly grateful for the blessings of this past year.

And, as always, we pray that whatever is done this day be for Your greater honor and glory.

Amen.

NOTICE

If the 113th Congress, 2nd Session, adjourns sine die on or before December 24, 2014, a final issue of the *Congressional Record* for the 113th Congress, 2nd Session, will be published on Wednesday, December 31, 2014, to permit Members to insert statements.

All material for insertion must be signed by the Member and delivered to the respective offices of the Official Reporters of Debates (Room HT–59 or S–123 of the Capitol), Monday through Friday, between the hours of 10:00 a.m. and 3:00 p.m. through Tuesday, December 30. The final issue will be dated Wednesday, December 31, 2014, and will be delivered on Monday, January 5, 2015.

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By order of the Joint Committee on Printing.

CHARLES E. SCHUMER, *Chairman.*

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THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 3(a) of House Resolution 775, the Journal of the last day's proceedings is approved.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

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

Mr. CULBERSON 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.

COMMUNICATION FROM THE CLERK OF THE HOUSE

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Clerk of the House of Representatives:

OFFICE OF THE CLERK,
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC, December 11, 2014.

Hon. JOHN A. BOEHNER,
The Speaker, U.S. Capitol, U.S. House of Representatives, Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. SPEAKER: Pursuant to the permission granted in Clause 2(h) of Rule II of the Rules of the U.S. House of Representatives, the Clerk received the following message from the Secretary of the Senate on December 11, 2014 at 11:07 p.m.:

That the Senate passed without amendment H.J. Res. 130.

With best wishes, I am

Sincerely,

KAREN L. HAAS.

COMMUNICATION FROM THE CLERK OF THE HOUSE

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Clerk of the House of Representatives:

OFFICE OF THE CLERK,
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC, December 12, 2014.

Hon. JOHN A. BOEHNER,
The Speaker, U.S. Capitol, U.S. House of Representatives, Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. SPEAKER: Pursuant to the permission granted in Clause 2(h) of Rule II of the Rules of the U.S. House of Representatives, the Clerk received the following message from the Secretary of the Senate on December 12, 2014 at 10:34 a.m.:

That the Senate passed without amendment H.R. 3096.

That the Senate passed without amendment H.R. 4771.

That the Senate passed without amendment H.R. 5057.

That the Senate passed S. 3008.

That the Senate passed S. 2338.

That the Senate passed S. 2983.

Appointments:

National Committee on Vital and Health Statistics.

Public Safety Officer Medal of Valor Review Board.

With best wishes, I am

Sincerely,

KAREN L. HAAS.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 4 of rule I, the following enrolled joint resolution was signed by the Speaker on Thursday, December 11, 2014:

H.J. Res. 130, making further continuing appropriations for fiscal year 2015, and for other purposes.

MAKING FURTHER CONTINUING APPROPRIATIONS FOR FISCAL YEAR 2015, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

Mr. CULBERSON. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Appropriations be discharged from further consideration of H.J. Res. 131, and ask for its immediate consideration in the House.

The Clerk read the title of the joint resolution.

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

There was no objection.

The text of the joint resolution is as follows:

H.J. RES. 131

Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That the Continuing Appropriations Resolution, 2015 (Public Law 113–164) is further amended by striking the date specified in section 106(3) and inserting ''December 17, 2014''.

The joint resolution was ordered to be engrossed and read a third time, was read the third time, and passed, and a motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

UNITED STATES ANTI-DOPING AGENCY REAUTHORIZATION ACT

Mr. FLORES. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to take from the Speaker's table the bill (S. 2338) to reauthorize the United States Anti-Doping Agency, and for other purposes, and ask for its immediate consideration in the House.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

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

There was no objection.

The text of the bill is as follows:

S. 2338

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

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the ''United States Anti-Doping Agency Reauthorization Act''.

SEC. 2. PROHIBIT PERFORMANCE-ENHANCING METHODS.

Section 701 of title VII of the Office of National Drug Control Policy Reauthorization Act of 2006 (21 U.S.C. 2001) is amended—

(1) in subsection (a), by striking paragraph (4); and

(2) in subsection (b)—

(A) in paragraph (1), by inserting ''and be recognized worldwide as the independent national anti-doping organization for the United States'' after ''Committee'';

(B) in paragraph (2), by striking '', or performance-enhancing genetic modifications accomplished through gene-doping'' and inserting ''or prohibited performance-enhancing methods adopted by the Agency'';

(C) in paragraph (3), by striking '', or performance-enhancing genetic modifications accomplished through gene-doping'' and inserting ''or prohibited performance-enhancing methods adopted by the Agency'';

(D) in paragraph (4), by striking ''and the prevention of use of performance-enhancing drugs, or performance-enhancing genetic modifications accomplished through gene-doping by United States amateur athletes; and'' and inserting '', and the prevention of use by United States amateur athletes of performance-enhancing drugs or prohibited performance-enhancing methods adopted by the Agency.''; and

(E) by striking paragraph (5).

SEC. 3. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.

Section 703 of title VII of the Office of National Drug Control Policy Reauthorization Act of 2006 (21 U.S.C. 2003) is amended to read as follows:

''SEC. 703. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.

''There are authorized to be appropriated to the United States Anti-Doping Agency—

''(1) for fiscal year 2014, $11,300,000;

''(2) for fiscal year 2015, $11,700,000;

''(3) for fiscal year 2016, $12,300,000;

''(4) for fiscal year 2017, $12,900,000;

''(5) for fiscal year 2018, $13,500,000;

''(6) for fiscal year 2019, $14,100,000; and

''(7) for fiscal year 2020, $14,800,000.''.

The bill was ordered to be read a third time, was read the third time, and passed, and a motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

FORECLOSURE RELIEF AND EXTENSION FOR SERVICEMEMBERS ACT OF 2014

Mr. FLORES. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to take from the Speaker's table the bill (S. 3008) to extend temporarily the extended period of protection for members of uniformed services relating to mortgages, mortgage foreclosure, and eviction, and for other purposes, and ask for its immediate consideration in the House.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

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

There was no objection.

The text of the bill is as follows:

S. 3008

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

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the ''Foreclosure Relief and Extension for Servicemembers Act of 2014''.

SEC. 2. TEMPORARY EXTENSION OF EXTENDED PERIOD OF PROTECTIONS FOR MEMBERS OF UNIFORMED SERVICES RELATING TO MORTGAGES, MORTGAGE FORECLOSURE, AND EVICTION.

Section 710(d) of the Honoring America's Veterans and Caring for Camp Lejeune Families Act of 2012 (Public Law 112–154; 126 Stat. 1208) is amended—

(1) in paragraph (1), by striking ''December 31, 2014'' and inserting ''December 31, 2015''; and

(2) in paragraph (3), by striking ''January 1, 2015'' and inserting ''January 1, 2016''.

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

and passed, and a motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

PROVIDING FOR THE SINE DIE ADJOURNMENT OF THE SECOND SESSION OF THE ONE HUNDRED THIRTEENTH CONGRESS

Mr. FLORES. Mr. Speaker, I send to the desk a privileged concurrent resolution and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the concurrent resolution, as follows:

H. CON. RES. 125

Resolved by the House of Representatives (the Senate concurring), That when the House adjourns on any legislative day from Friday, December 12, 2014, through Wednesday, December 31, 2014, on a motion offered pursuant to this concurrent resolution by its Majority Leader or his designee, it stand adjourned until 1 p.m. on Friday, January 2, 2015, or until the time of any reassembly pursuant to section 2 of this concurrent resolution, whichever occurs first; and that when the House adjourns on the legislative day of Friday, January 2, 2015, on a motion offered pursuant to this concurrent resolution by its Majority Leader or his designee, it stand adjourned sine die, or until the time of any reassembly pursuant to section 2 of this concurrent resolution, whichever occurs first; and that when the Senate recesses or adjourns on any day from Friday, December 12, 2014, through Friday, January 2, 2015, on a motion offered pursuant to this concurrent resolution by its Majority Leader or his designee, it stand adjourned sine die, or until the time of any reassembly pursuant to section 3 of this concurrent resolution, whichever occurs first.

SEC. 2. (a) The Speaker or his designee, after consultation with the Minority Leader of the House, shall notify Members of the House to reassemble at such place and time as he may designate if, in his opinion, the public interest shall warrant it.

(b) After reassembling pursuant to subsection (a), when the House adjourns on a motion offered pursuant to this subsection by its Majority Leader or his designee, the House shall again stand adjourned pursuant to the first section of this concurrent resolution.

SEC. 3. (a) The Majority Leader of the Senate or his designee, after concurrence with the Minority Leader of the Senate, shall notify the Members of the Senate to reassemble at such place and time as he may designate if, in his opinion, the public interest shall warrant it.

(b) After reassembling pursuant to subsection (a), when the Senate adjourns on a motion offered pursuant to this subsection by its Majority Leader or his designee, the Senate shall again stand adjourned pursuant to the first section of this concurrent resolution.

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

There was no objection.

The concurrent resolution was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

ADJOURNMENT TO TUESDAY, DECEMBER 16, 2014

Mr. FLORES. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that when the House adjourns today on a motion offered pursuant to this order, it adjourn to meet at noon on Tuesday, December 16, 2014, unless it sooner has received a message from the Senate transmitting its concurrence in H. Con. Res. 125, in which case the House shall stand adjourned pursuant to that concurrent resolution.

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

There was no objection.

COMMUNICATION FROM THE DEMOCRATIC LEADER

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Honorable NANCY PELOSI, Democratic Leader:

CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES,
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC, December 12, 2014.

Hon. JOHN BOEHNER,
Speaker of the House, U.S. Capitol, Washington, DC.

DEAR SPEAKER BOEHNER: Pursuant to section 1238(b)(3) of the Floyd D. Spence National Defense Authorization Act of Fiscal Year 2001 (22 U.S.C. 7002), amended by the Division P of the Consolidated Appropriations Resolution, 2003 (22 U.S.C. 6901), I am pleased to reappoint Mr. Michael Wessel of Falls Church, VA, to the United States-China Economic and Security Review Commission.

Thank you for your attention to this appointment.

Sincerely,

NANCY PELOSI,
Democratic Leader.

COMMUNICATION FROM THE DEMOCRATIC LEADER

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Honorable NANCY PELOSI, Democratic Leader:

CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES,
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC, December 12, 2014.

Hon. JOHN BOEHNER,
Speaker of the House, U.S. Capitol, Washington, DC.

DEAR SPEAKER BOEHNER: Pursuant to section 3(b) of the Public Safety Officer Medal of Valor Act of 2001 (42 U.S.C. 15202), I am pleased to appoint Mr. Brian Fengel, Chief of Police, Bartonville, IL, to the Medal of Valor Review Board.

Thank you for your attention to this appointment.

Sincerely,

NANCY PELOSI,
House Democratic Leader.

HOUSE BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS APPROVED BY THE PRESIDENT

The President notified the Clerk of the House that on the following dates he had approved and signed bills and joint resolutions of the following titles:

September 19, 2014:

H.J. Res. 124. A joint resolution making continuing appropriations for fiscal year 2015, and for other purposes.

September 26, 2014:

H.J. Res. 120. A joint resolution approving the location of a memorial to commemorate the more than 5,000 slaves and free Black persons who fought for independence in the American Revolution.

H.R. 594. An Act to amend the Public Health Service Act relating to Federal research on muscular dystrophy, and for other purposes.

H.R. 2600. An Act to amend the Interstate Land Sales Full Disclosure Act to clarify how the Act applies to condominiums.

H.R. 3043. An Act to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to clarify the treatment of general welfare benefits provided by Indian tribes.

H.R. 3716. An Act to ratify a water settlement agreement affecting the Pyramid Lake Paiute Tribe, and for other purposes.

H.R. 4197. An Act to amend title 5, United States Code, to extend the period of certain authority with respect to judicial review of Merit Systems Protection Board decisions relating to whistleblowers, and for other purposes.

H.R. 4751. An Act to make technical corrections to Public Law 110–229 to reflect the renaming of the Bainbridge Island Japanese American Exclusion Memorial, and for other purposes.

H.R. 4809. An Act to reauthorize the Defense Production Act, to improve the Defense Production Act Committee, and for other purposes.

H.R. 5062. An Act to amend the Consumer Financial Protection Act of 2010 to specify that privilege and confidentiality are maintained when information is shared by certain nondepository covered persons with Federal and State financial regulators, and for other purposes.

H.R. 5134. An Act to extend the National Advisory Committee on Institutional Quality and Integrity and the Advisory Committee on Student Financial Assistance for one year.

H.R. 5404. An Act to amend title 38, United States Code, to extend certain expiring provisions of law administered by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs, and for other purposes.

September 29, 2019:

H.R. 4323. An Act to reauthorize programs authorized under the Debbie Smith Act of 2004, and for other purposes.

H.R. 4980. An Act to prevent and address sex trafficking of children in foster care, to extend and improve adoption incentives, and to improve international child support recovery.

October 6, 2014:

H.R. 4994. An Act to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to provide for standardized post-acute care assessment data for quality, payment, and discharge planning and for other purposes.

November 26, 2014:

H.R. 1233. An Act to amend chapter 22 of title 94, United States Code, popularly known as the Presidential Records Act, to establish procedures for the consideration of claims of constitutionally based privilege against disclosure of Presidential records, and for other purposes.

H.R. 4194. An Act to provide for the elimination or modification of Federal reporting requirements.

December 4, 2014:

H.J. Res. 129. A joint resolution appointing the day for the convening of the first session of the One Hundred Fourteenth Congress.

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 1949 and title 17, United States Code, to extend expiring provisions relating to the retransmission of signals of television broadcast stations, and for other purposes.

December 12, 2014:

H.J. Res. 130. A joint resolution making further continuing appropriations for fiscal year 2015, and for other purposes.

SENATE BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS APPROVED BY THE PRESIDENT

The President notified the Clerk of the House that on the following dates he had approved and signed bills and joint resolutions of the Senate of the following titles:

September 19, 2014:

S. 231. An Act to reauthorize the Multinational Species Conservation Funds Semipostal Stamp.

September 26, 2014:

S. 276. An Act to reinstate and extend the deadline for commencement of construction of a hydroelectric project involving the American Falls Reservoir.

S. 476. An Act to amend the Chesapeake and Ohio Canal Development Act to extend to the Chesapeake and Ohio Canal National Historical Park Commission.

S. 1603. An Act to reaffirm that certain land has been taken into trust for the benefit of the Match-E-Be-Nash-She-Wish Band of Pottawatami Indians, and for other purposes.

S. 2154. An Act to amend the Public Health Service Act to reauthorize the Emergency Medical Services for Children Program.

S. 2258. An Act to provide for an increase, effective December 1, 2014, in the rates of compensation for veterans with service-connected disabilities and the rates of dependency and indemnity compensation for the survivors of certain disabled veterans, and for other purposes.

September 29, 2014:

S.J. Res. 40. A joint resolution providing for the appointment of Michael Lynton as a citizen regent of the Board of Regents of the Smithsonian Institution.

November 19, 2014:

S. 1086. An Act to reauthorize and improve the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 1990, and for other purposes.

November 26, 2014:

S. 885. An Act to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 35 Park Street in Danville, Vermont, as the ''Thaddeus Stevens Post Office''.

S. 898. An Act to authorize the Administrator of General Services to convey a parcel of real property in Albuquerque, New Mexico, to the Amy Biehl High School Foundation.

S. 1093. An Act to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 130 Caldwell Drive in Hazlehurst, Mississippi, as the ''First Lieutenant Alvin Chester Cockrell, Jr. Post Office Building''.

S. 1499. An Act to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 278 Main Street in Chadron, Nebraska, as the ''Sergeant Cory Mracek Memorial Post Office''.

S. 1512. An Act to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 1335 Jefferson Road in Rochester, New York, as the ''Specialist Theodore Matthew Glende Post Office''.

S. 1934. An Act to direct the Administrator of General Services to convey the Clifford P. Hansen Federal Courthouse to Teton County, Wyoming.

S. 2141. An Act to amend the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act to provide an alternative process for review of safety and effectiveness of nonprescription sunscreen active ingredients and for other purposes.

S. 2539. An Act to amend the Public Health Service Act to reauthorize certain programs relating to traumatic brain injury and to trauma research.

S. 2583. An Act to promote the non-exclusive use of electronic labeling for devices licensed by the Federal Communications Commission.

JOINT RESOLUTION SIGNED

Karen L. Haas, Clerk of the House, reported and found truly enrolled a joint resolution of the House of the following title, which was thereupon signed by the Speaker on December 11, 2014.

H.J. Res. 130. Joint resolution making further continuing appropriations for fiscal year 2015, and for other purposes.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. FLORES. Mr. Speaker, pursuant to the order of the House of today, I move that the House do now adjourn.

The motion was agreed to; accordingly (at 3 o'clock and 10 minutes p.m.), under its previous order, the House adjourned until Tuesday, December 16, 2014, at noon, unless it sooner has received a message from the Senate transmitting its adoption of H. Con. Res. 125, in which case the House shall stand adjourned pursuant to that concurrent resolution.

EXECUTIVE COMMUNICATIONS, ETC.

Under clause 2 of rule XIV, executive communications were taken from the Speaker's table and referred as follows:

8302. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Hexythiazox; Pesticide Tolerance for Emergency Exemptions [EPA-HQ-OPP-2014-0774; FRL-9919-69] received December 9, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Agriculture.

8303. A letter from the Under Secretary, Comptroller, Department of Defense, transmitting a letter reporting the views of the Department of Defense regarding the opinion of the Government Accountability Office, dated August 21, 2014, consistent with section 145.8 of OMB Circular A-11; to the Committee on Appropriations.

8304. A letter from the General Counsel, Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation, transmitting the Corporation's final rule — Benefits Payable in Terminated Single-Employer Plans; Interest Assumptions for Paying Benefits received December 8, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

8305. A letter from the Director, National Cancer Institute, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting the Professional Judgment Budget for fiscal year 2016, in accordance with the National Cancer Act of 1971; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

8306. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Greenhouse Gas Reporting Rule: 2014 Revisions and Confidentiality Determinations for Petroleum and Natural Gas Systems; Final Rule [EPA-HQ-OAR-2011-0512; FRL-9918-85-OAR] (RIN: 2060-AR96) received December 11, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

8307. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Alpha-cypermethrin; Pesticide Tolerances [EPA-HQ-OPP-2014-0601; FRL-9918-88] received December 9, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

8308. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Approval and Promulgation of Air Quality Implementation Plans; Indiana; Open Burning Rule [EPA-R05-OAR-2011-0968; FRL-9920-15-Region 5] received December 9, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

8309. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Approval and Promulgation of Implementation Plans and Designation of Areas for Air Quality Planning Purposes; Indiana; Redesignation of Lake and Porter Counties to Attainment of the 2008 Eight-Hour Ozone Standard [EPA-R05-OAR-2012-0989; FRL-9920-14-Region 5] received December 9, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

8310. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Approval and Promulgation of Implementation Plans; Wisconsin; Nitrogen Oxide Combustion Turbine Alternative Control Requirements for the Milwaukee-Racine Former Nonattainment Area [EPA-R05-OAR-2014-0206; FRL-9920-20-Region 5] received December 9, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

8311. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Approval and Promulgation of Air Quality Implementation Plans; Texas; Repeal of Lead Emission Rules for Stationary Sources in El Paso and Dallas County [EPA-R06-OAR-2005-TX-0002; FRL-9920-34-Region 6] received December 11, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

8312. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Approval and Promulgation of Air Quality Implementation Plans; Illinois; Withdrawal of Direct Final Rule [EPA-R05-OAR-2014-0123; FRL-9920-13-Region 5] received December 11, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

8313. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Approval and Promulgation of Air Quality Implementation Plans; Maryland; Redesignation Request and Associated Maintenance Plan for the Baltimore, Maryland, Nonattainment Area for the 1997 Annual Fine Particulate Matter Standard [EPA-R03-OAR-2014-0387; FRL-9920-41-Region 3] received December 11, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

8314. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — C.I. Pigment Yellow 1; Exemption from the Requirement of a Tolerance [EPA-HQ-OPP-2014-0122; FRL-9919-40]

received December 9, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

8315. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Approval and Promulgation of Air Quality Implementation Plans; Maryland; Redesignation Request and Associated Maintenance Plan for the Maryland Portion of the Martinsburg-Hagerstown, WV-MD Nonattainment Area for the 1997 Annual Fine Particulate Matter Standard [EPA-R03-OAR-2014-0281; FRL-9920-42-Region 3] received December 11, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

8316. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Diisopropanolamine; Exemption from the Requirement of a Tolerance [EPA-HQ-OPP-2013-0695; FRL-9919-34] received December 9, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

8317. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Fluopyram; Pesticide Tolerances [EPA-HQ-OPP-2013-0662; FRL-9918-99] received December 11, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

8318. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Ethylene Glycol Ethers; Significant New Use Rule [EPA-HQ-OPPT-2009-0767; FRL-9915-61] (RIN: 2070-AJ52) received December 11, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

8319. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Revisions to the California State Implementation Plan, Antelope Valley Air Quality Management District and South Coast Air Quality Management District [EPA-R09-OAR-2014-0480; FRL-9919-76-Region 9] received December 9, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

8320. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — National Priorities List [EPA-HQ-SFUND-2014-0318; FRL-9920-06-OSWER] received December 11, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

8321. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — EPAAR Clause for Work Assignments [EPA-HQ-OARM-2012-0476; FRL 9920-48-OARM] received December 11, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

8322. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Natamycin; Amendment to an Exemption from the Requirement of a Tolerance [EPA-HQ-OPP-2014-0352; FRL-9919-35] received December 11, 2013, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

8323. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Revisions to the California State Implementation Plan, Feather River Air Quality Management District [EPA-R09-OAR-2014-0703; FRL-9919-52-Region 9] received December 11, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

8324. A letter from the Director, Defense Security Cooperation Agency, transmitting Transmittal No. 14-59, Notice of Proposed Issuance of Letter of Offer and Acceptance, pursuant to Section 36(b)(1) of the Arms Export Control Act, as amended; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

8325. A letter from the Director, Bureau of Economic Analysis, Department of Commerce, transmitting the Department's final rule — Direct Investment Surveys: BE-13, Survey of New Foreign Direct Investment in the United States; Correction [Docket No.: 111201710-4701-01] (RIN: 0691-AA82] received October 7, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

8326. A letter from the Assistant Secretary, Homeland Defense and Global Security, Department of Defense, transmitting a Report on Proposed Obligations for Cooperative Threat Reduction, in accordance with Pub. L. 104-106, Sec. 1205; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

8327. A letter from the Departmental Freedom of Information and Privacy Act Officer, Office of the Secretary, Department of Commerce, transmitting the Department's final rule — Public Information, Freedom of Information Act and Privacy Act Regulations; Correction [Docket No.: 140127076-4935-03] (RIN: 0605-AA33) received December 11, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

8328. A letter from the Deputy Assistant Administrator for Regulatory Programs, NMFS, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, transmitting the Administration's final rule — International Fisheries; Western and Central Pacific Fisheries for Highly Migratory Species; Fishing Effort Limits in Purse Seine Fisheries for 2014 [Docket No.: 140131088-4913-02] (RIN: 0648-BD94) received December 8, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Natural Resources.

8329. A letter from the Deputy Assistant Administrator for Regulatory Programs, NMFS, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, transmitting the Administration's final rule — Fisheries of the Caribbean, Gulf of Mexico, and South Atlantic; Coastal Migratory Pelagic Resources in the Gulf of Mexico and Atlantic Region; Framework Amendment 1 [Docket No.: 140722613-4908-02] (RIN: 0648-BE31) received December 8, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Natural Resources.

8330. A letter from the Acting Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, transmitting the Administration's temporary rule — Fisheries of the Exclusive Economic Zone Off Alaska; Greenland Turbot in the Bering Sea Subarea of the Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands Management Area [Docket No.: 131021878-4158-02] (RIN: 0648-XD557) received December 8, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Natural Resources.

8331. A letter from the Federal Register Officer, Bureau of Ocean Energy Management, Department of the Interior, transmitting the Department's final rule — Consumer Price Index Adjustments of the Oil Pollution Act of 1990 Limit of Liability for Offshore Facilities [Docket ID: BOEM-2012-0076] (RIN: 1010-AD87) received December 9, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

8332. A letter from the Chief, Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, transmitting the Service's final rule — Update for Weighted Average Interest Rates, Yield Curves, and Segment Rates [Notice 2014-78] received December 11, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Ways and Means.

8333. A letter from the Chief, Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, transmitting the Service's final rule — 2014 Cumulative List of Changes in Plan Qualification Requirements [Notice 2014-77] received December 11, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Ways and Means.

8334. A letter from the Chief, Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, transmitting the Service's IRB only rule — Extension for Deadline to Submit Opinion and Advisory Letter Applications for Pre-approved Defined Benefit Plans [Announcement 2014-41] received December 11, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Ways and Means.

8335. A letter from the Chief, Border Security Regulations Branch, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's final rule — Technical Amendment: Boarding of Vessels at CBP Ports [CBP Dec. 14-11] received November 20, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Homeland Security.

8336. A letter from the Chairman and Vice Chairman, U.S.-China Economic and Security Review Commission, transmitting the Commission's 2014 Annual Report to the Congress, as required by Pub. L. 106-398, as amended; jointly to the Committees on Ways and Means, Foreign Affairs, and Armed Services.

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES ON PUBLIC BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

Under clause 2 of rule XIII, reports of committees were delivered to the Clerk for printing and reference to the proper calendar, as follows:

Mr. SMITH of Texas: Committee on Science, Space, and Technology. H.R. 875. A bill to provide for a comprehensive assessment of the scientific and technical research on the implications of the use of mid-level ethanol blends, and for other purposes; with an amendment (Rept. 113–667, Pt. 1). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

Mr. ISSA: Committee on Oversight and Government Reform. H.R. 2750. A bill to amend title 41, United States Code, to require the use of two-phase selection procedures when design-build contracts are suitable for award to small business concerns, and for other purposes; with an amendment (Rept. 113–668). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

Mr. ISSA: Committee on Oversight and Government Reform. H.R. 3345. A bill to amend title 31, United States Code, to consolidate suspension and debarment offices, and for other purposes; with amendments (Rept. 113–669). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

Mr. UPTON: Committee on Energy and Commerce. H.R. 3674. A bill to amend the National Telecommunications and Information Administration Organization Act to provide incentives for the reallocation of Federal Government spectrum for commercial use, and for other purposes (Rept. 113–670, Pt. 1). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington: Committee on Natural Resources. H.R. 4253. A bill to permanently withdraw, reserve, and transfer Bureau of Land Management lands used for military purposes in Alaska, Nevada, and New Mexico to the appropriate Secretary of the military department concerned (Rept. 113–671, Pt. 1). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

Mr. MILLER of Florida: Committee on Veterans' Affairs. H.R. 5094. A bill to amend

title 38, United States Code, to authorize the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to recoup certain bonuses or awards paid to employees of the Department of Veterans Affairs; with amendments (Rept. 113–672, Pt. 1). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

Mr. GOODLATTE: Committee on the Judiciary. H.R. 5401. A bill to impose limitations on the immigration status and immigration benefits for Libyan and third country nationals acting on behalf of Libyan entities (Rept. 113–673). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

Mr. GOODLATTE: Committee on the Judiciary. H.R. 1773. A bill to create a nonimmigrant H–2C work visa program for agricultural workers, and for other purposes; with an amendment (Rept. 113–674, Pt. 1). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

Mr. GOODLATTE: Committee on the Judiciary. H.R. 4874. A bill to provide for the establishment of a process for the review of rules and sets of rules, and for other purposes (Rept. 113–675, Pt. 1). Ordered to be printed.

DISCHARGE OF COMMITTEE

Pursuant to clause 2 of rule XIII the Committee on Energy and Commerce discharged from further consideration. H.R. 875 referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

Pursuant to clause 2 of rule XIII the Committees on Education and the Workforce and Ways and Means discharged from further consideration. H.R. 1773 referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

Pursuant to clause 2 of rule XIII the Committe on Armed Services discharged from further consideration. H.R. 3674 referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

Pursuant to clause 2 of rule XIII the Committee on Armed Services discharged from further consideration. H.R. 4253 referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

Pursuant to clause 2 of rule XIII the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform discharged from further consideration. H.R. 5094 referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

PUBLIC BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

Under clause 2 of rule XII, public bills and resolutions of the following titles were introduced and severally referred, as follows:

By Mr. ROGERS of Kentucky:

H.J. Res. 131. A joint resolution making further continuing appropriations for fiscal year 2015, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Appropriations. considered and passed.

By Mr. CULBERSON:

H. Con. Res. 125. A concurrent resolution providing for the sine die adjournment of the second session of the One Hundred Thirteenth Congress; considered and agreed to.

By Ms. WILSON of Florida:

H. Res. 782. A resolution honoring Steve Sauls on his retirement as Florida International University's Vice President of Governmental Relations; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

By Ms. WILSON of Florida:

H. Res. 783. A resolution recognizing the 30th anniversary of Reverend Jesse L. Jackson, Sr.'s 1984 presidential campaign and honoring his heroism and extraordinary service to the United States and the international community; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

CONSTITUTIONAL AUTHORITY STATEMENT

Pursuant to clause 7 of rule XII of the Rules of the House of Representatives, the following statements are submitted regarding the specific powers granted to Congress in the Constitution to enact the accompanying bill or joint resolution.

By Mr. ROGERS of Kentucky:

H.J. Res. 131.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

The principal constitutional authority for this legislation is clause 7 of section 9 of article I of the Constitution of the United States (the appropriation power), which states: ''No Money shall be drawn from the Treasury, but in Consequence of Appropriations made by Law . . . .'' In addition, clause 1 of section 8 of article I of the Constitution (the spending power) provides: ''The Congress shall have the Power. . . to pay the Debts and provide for the common Defence and general Welfare of the United States . . . .'' Together, these specific constitutional provisions establish the congressional power of the purse, granting Congress the authority to appropriate finds, to determine their purpose, amount, and period of availability, and to set forth terms and conditions governing their use.

ADDITIONAL SPONSORS

Under clause 7 of rule XII, sponsors were added to public bills and resolutions, as follows:

H.R. 1761: Mr. LARSON of Connecticut and Ms. Wilson of Florida.
H.R. 2847: Mr. PASCRELL.
H.R. 3116: Mr. BENISHEK.
H.R. 3662: Mr. SCHIFF.
H.R. 4237: Mr. ISRAEL.
H.R. 4468: Ms. HAHN and Mr. VARGAS.
H.R. 5159: Ms. BONAMICI.
H.R. 5182: Mr. PETERS of California and Mr. SERRANO.
H.R. 5281: Mr. BLUMENAUER.
H.R. 5481: Mr. BENISHEK.
H.R. 5520: Mr. FLEMING.
H.R. 5675: Mr. GRIFFITH of Virginia.
H.R. 5782: Ms. DELAURO.
H.R. 5807: Mr. TAKANO.
H.R. 5830: Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas.
H.R. 5831: Mr. RANGEL.
H.J. Res. 108: Mr. BRAT.
H. Res. 688: Mr. LARSON of Connecticut.
H. Res. 730: Ms. BONAMICI.
H. Res. 781: Ms. BORDALLO.

CONGRESSIONAL EARMARKS, LIMITED TAX BENEFITS, OR LIMITED TARIFF BENEFITS

Under clause 9 of rule XXI, lists or statements on congressional earmarks, limited tax benefits, or limited tariff benefits were submitted as follows:

OFFERED BY MR. ROGERS OF KENTUCKY

H.J. Res. 131, making further continuing appropriations for fiscal year 2015, and for other purposes, does not contain any congressional earmarks, limited tax benefits, or limited tariff benefits as defined in clause 9 of rule XXI.

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Congressional Record

PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES OF THE 113th CONGRESS, SECOND SESSION

Vol. 160 WASHINGTON, FRIDAY, DECEMBER 12, 2014 No. 152

Senate

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

PRAYER

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

Let us pray.

Lord of life beneath the dome of the universe, Your home, gather us who seek Your face to the fold of Your embrace, for You are near.

We see Your divine image in the people around us. Help us to honor You by respecting them. Guide our lawmakers to seek great things for others. Radiate Your hope through them to our Nation and world, providing them, O God, with Your wisdom to join their plans with Your will. Give them a compassion that will compel them to labor for the eradication of injustice.

We pray in Your merciful Name. Amen.

NOTICE

If the 113th Congress, 2nd Session, adjourns sine die on or before December 24, 2014, a final issue of the *Congressional Record* for the 113th Congress, 2nd Session, will be published on Wednesday, December 31, 2014, to permit Members to insert statements.

All material for insertion must be signed by the Member and delivered to the respective offices of the Official Reporters of Debates (Room HT–59 or S–123 of the Capitol), Monday through Friday, between the hours of 10:00 a.m. and 3:00 p.m. through Tuesday, December 30. The final issue will be dated Wednesday, December 31, 2014, and will be delivered on Monday, January 5, 2015.

None of the material printed in the final issue of the *Congressional Record* may contain subject matter, or relate to any event, that occurred after the sine die date.

Senators' statements should also be formatted according to the instructions at http://webster/secretary/cong__record.pdf, and submitted electronically, either on a disk to accompany the signed statement, or by e-mail to the Official Reporters of Debates at "Record@Sec.Senate.gov".

Members of the House of Representatives' statements may also be submitted electronically by e-mail, to accompany the signed statement, and formatted according to the instructions for the Extensions of Remarks template at https://housenet.house.gov/legislative/research-and-reference/transcripts-and-records/electronic-congressional-record-inserts. The Official Reporters will transmit to GPO the template formatted electronic file only after receipt of, and authentication with, the hard copy, and signed manuscript. Deliver statements to the Official Reporters in Room HT–59.

Members of Congress desiring to purchase reprints of material submitted for inclusion in the *Congressional Record* may do so by contacting the Office of Congressional Publishing Services, at the Government Printing Office, on 512–0224, between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m. daily.

By order of the Joint Committee on Printing.

CHARLES E. SCHUMER, *Chairman.*

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 resume consideration of the motion to concur in the House amendment to the Senate amendment to H.R. 3979, postcloture.

At noon today, the time will be controlled between Senators REID, 1 hour; COBURN, 1 hour; MURKOWSKI, 30 minutes; INHOFE, 30 minutes, or their designees.

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

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Upon the use or yielding back of that time, at approximately 3 p.m., the Senate will have rollcall votes in relation to the defense authorization bill and the Saperstein nomination.

(Mr. KING assumed the Chair.)

DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION BILL

Mr. REID. Mr. President, as I have indicated, we are going to take up this important government funding bill today. Senator MIKULSKI, the Chair of the Appropriations Committee, has performed an extraordinary service in negotiating this bill. And I think it is fair to give a nod to Senator SHELBY, of course, who has been involved in this. They get along extremely well and set a good standard for everyone in the Senate.

The bill achieves many of our important priorities. It gives the Affordable Care Act the secure financial footing it deserves, gives our military the tools it needs to combat ISIS, it addresses the rape kit backlog, helping police and prosecutors prevent sexual assault, it increases funding for students' loans, ensures that the President's Executive action in protecting families can move forward, and it provides funding to fight the Ebola epidemic.

There are lots of other things in it. I have just hit a few of the highlights from my perspective.

There are things in this bill that I wouldn't have included—the Democrats wouldn't have included had we written the bill alone. I don't support the weakening of Dodd-Frank and the restrictions on the District of Columbia and other things, but I didn't write this bill. Senate Democrats didn't write this bill alone. It is a compromise. That is what legislation is all about.

The Presiding Officer has been a Governor for the State of Maine. He is now a legislator and has been a legislator, and he knows that legislation is the art of compromise. Any chief executive who has to work with a legislature, as Presidents of the United States do, does not get everything he wants. Legislation is a compromise. And that is what this legislation is.

We are going to consider this legislation to keep our government open and funded, and we are going to do it today—I hope. There are Senators who are unhappy with this legislation, and they will have a chance to make their objections heard. I hope we can complete work on this bill as soon as we finish the Defense bill. That depends on everyone's cooperation here. But there isn't a lot of time. The government funding runs out at 12 o'clock midnight on Saturday.

When we started this Congress, the government was running on autopilot. Since 2011, we have lurched from crisis to crisis, with the country constantly under threat of a shutdown or financial catastrophe. It is a very bad habit, and one the American people are very, very tired of, as they should be.

This bill is, I repeat, far from perfect. But when we pass it, we will be able to end this Congress knowing we put our country on a more secure financial footing than when this Congress started. We can then go home to our States, tell our constituents we passed legislation that keeps America safe, makes college more affordable, spurs the economy, and keeps our government operating.

Talk about a CR for 3 months should scare everyone. So we are not there. We are going to have a bill that funds this government for the next fiscal year. We can be satisfied that we left our priorities better funded and more secure, and our government on a more sound foundation than when this Congress began.

TRIBUTE TO MARK PRYOR

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I am going to take just a minute, because time is running out, to talk about a couple of Senators.

I rise to honor Senator MARK PRYOR of Arkansas upon his departure from this institution. I have been in the Senate 28 years, and there has been a Pryor here for 22 of those years. I first worked with MARK's dad, David Pryor. David Pryor left this institution because he had quite a significant heart attack. What a fine Senator. I have said before, and I will say again, he was the best legislator I ever served with, whether during my experience in the State legislature of Nevada or here: David Pryor. He was very, very good.

Six years after David left, MARK came. What a good legislator he is. He is just such a fine person. But it is no surprise to me that he followed in his dad's footsteps. After all, the Pryor family has worked as public servants in Arkansas for five generations. MARK's great-great-grandfather was a sheriff. MARK's great-grandfather was a sheriff. MARK's grandfather Edgar was a county sheriff also in Arkansas. In fact, just last year, an Arkansan said to MARK: ''I'm for MARK PRYOR not because of his dad David but because of Edgar.'' That is how deep the Pryor roots run in Arkansas.

On MARK's desk is a plaque that reads: ''Arkansas Comes First.'' This was a plaque that was on his dad's desk and that MARK put on his desk. This has been MARK's mission since he has been here—to put Arkansas first. The Senate and the entire country have benefited from the influence of the Pryors in the United States Senate—David and MARK.

MARK was born in Fayetteville, grew up in Little Rock, and attended the University of Arkansas as an undergraduate and later to law school. While working as an attorney in private practice, he began his public service in 1990, when he ran for a seat in the House of Representatives. He was elected and served there for 4 years.

In 1996, MARK was faced with the fight of his life. He had a situation occur near his Achilles tendon on one of his legs. They tried physical therapy, but it didn't seem to get well, and they discovered he had a very rare form of cancer—clear-cell sarcoma—in his left leg. So it is an understatement to say it was a trying experience for MARK. He was faced with the prospect of dying or losing his leg.

MARK was buoyed in this difficult experience that he had by his family, his friends, and the people of Arkansas praying for him. It was quite a spiritual experience for MARK and his family. This experience deepened his compassion for those who suffer physically, financially, and emotionally, and he has translated that into his public service.

In 1998, he was elected attorney general of the State of Arkansas. In his 2002 Senatorial election he bucked the national trend to become the only Democrat to defeat a Republican incumbent. Bucking trends would quickly become one of his hallmarks here on Capitol Hill. As a Senator, he has shown courage in voting according to his conscience.

Key among his legislative accomplishments have been bills to extend tax benefits and improve medical services for men and women to make the products that people buy, especially children, safe. He has also been a strong advocate for honest and transparent business practices in order to preserve our American tradition of responsible free enterprise.

His respect for tradition extends to the Senate itself. I say this for a number of reasons, but once a reporter asked him what he would do if he had absolute power over Congress. In his characteristic fashion, he responded he would instill in his fellow Senators greater respect for each other and for the world's greatest deliberative body. That is what MARK PRYOR said.

While some may have disagreed with MARK, they never ever questioned his sincerity, his integrity. I admire his impeccable dedication to his conscience.

Mark Twain said:

> The proper office of a friend is to side with you when you are in the wrong. Nearly anybody will side with you when you are in the right.

With apologies to Mark Twain, if eternal agreement were the price of friendship, we would all have fewer friends. Friendship can transcend policy preferences, as MARK's and mine do. We agree on most everything. There are a few things we don't agree on politically, but that doesn't matter. It doesn't matter because he is my friend.

He is a friend to my wife and me. It is no secret there are many people—the Republican leader and his wife—who reached out to console me and Landra during her terrible accident, and then when the cancer was ravaging her body. But she pulled through that. And one reason she did, I am convinced, is MARK PRYOR. MARK PRYOR, who almost died from cancer, called my wife often—often—texted her often telling her: You are going to be OK; don't be afraid. So my wife loves MARK PRYOR.

We were talking about the elections not long ago, and I said: I have never prayed to win an election, and this election I didn't either. She said: Well, I did. That is how she feels about MARK PRYOR.

I am really honored to have served with MARK PRYOR, who is such a genuine person, so sincere. He has been an invaluable asset, his service here in the Senate. I congratulate MARK on his exemplary service here in the Senate.

MARK will always be my friend. There is a quote that bears directly on my feelings about Senator PRYOR: ''A good friend is hard to find, hard to lose, and impossible to forget.'' I will never ever forget MARK PRYOR. He is a unique, one of a kind, kind, thoughtful, considerate man.

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Republican leader is recognized.

TRIBUTE TO NANCY ERICKSON

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, this morning I would like to wish a fond farewell to a woman we are all going to miss: Nancy Erickson, the Secretary of the Senate.

It is her birthday today. Nancy is the kind of person you would expect to get cards from Democrats and Republicans on a day like this. And it is no secret why. She is fair, she is honest, she has always had a warm smile on her face. And that is no small matter, because Nancy has a really tough job. The title doesn't do it justice. Nancy admits she had to Google ''Secretary of the Senate'' when the position was offered to her.

Let me tell you a little more about what Nancy does. On the one hand, there is an administrative element to her position. That is true. We would run out of printer paper without her. But she is also the keeper of this institution.

Nancy respects the Senate. In fact, she loves the Senate. Her greatest joy is overseeing preservation of the Senate's storied art and history.

I am particularly grateful to her efforts to secure and repair an important painting of my personal hero, Henry Clay. I understand it was a painstaking process, but it was a credit to the Senate and to our common history as America.

Here is the point: Nancy may be a ''Secretary,'' but only in the way you would think of John Kerry or Condoleezza Rice being a ''Secretary.'' In other words, Nancy is pretty important.

She presides over the Chamber. She signs the bills we pass. And, importantly to the Senate staff, she signs the checks they receive. So, you see, Nancy is actually a minor celebrity around here on payday.

But she is something else entirely on game day. Nancy is one of the biggest Packers fans you will ever meet. There is no interrupting her when the green and gold take the field. Fortunately for Nancy, her home-State Senator JOHN THUNE feels the same way. So you often see the two South Dakotans—one a Democrat, the other a Republican—debating the finer points of last night's game.

There is a reason I say this. Nancy goes out of her way to build trust across the aisle, even in unconventional ways. The folks in my office who work closest with Nancy have nothing but kind words to say about her. Some call her a personal friend. In fact, the remarkable woman I nominated to replace Nancy, Julie Adams, is just such a person. I know Nancy couldn't be happier for Julie, and neither could I.

And while Nancy is going to miss the Senate, I know she is also looking forward to seeing more of her family. I know how important Nancy's parents are to her in particular. We are glad Nancy will be able to see more of them, even though we are going to miss her.

TRIBUTE TO SHEILA DWYER

The Senate is also going to miss Nancy's deputy. Sheila Dwyer is another Democrat my staff can't speak highly enough of. Sheila has had a long run here in the Senate. She has seen it from a lot of different angles. She has been a page, a scheduler, and now Assistant Secretary of the Senate. Along the way, she has worked for members such as Moynihan, Hollings, and Robb. It is an impressive career. It makes you understand why, as Leader REID mentioned earlier, Sheila is known around here as the ''Mayor of Capitol Hill.''

TRIBUTE TO ROBERT PAXTON AND MARK TRATOS

We also can't forget to wish a fond farewell to Robert Paxton and Mark Tratos.

Robert, Nancy's chief of staff, is a fellow Kentuckian who has worked in the Senate for more than a quarter century. And we understand that Mark, Robert's No. 2, is expecting his first child soon.

So we wish both Robert and Mark all the best, just as we offer Sheila well-deserved recognition for a job well done, just as we bid the fondest of farewells to Nancy—and a very happy birthday as well.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

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

PROTECTING VOLUNTEER FIREFIGHTERS AND EMERGENCY RESPONDERS ACT OF 2014

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will resume consideration of the message to accompany H.R. 3979, which the clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

Motion to concur in the House amendment to the Senate amendment to H.R. 3979, an act to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to ensure that emergency services volunteers are not taken into account as employees under the shared responsibility requirements contained in the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act.

Pending:

Reid motion to concur in the amendment of the House to the amendment of the Senate to the bill.

Reid motion to concur in the amendment of the House to the amendment of the Senate to the bill, with Reid amendment No. 3984 (to the amendment of the House to the amendment of the Senate to the bill), to change the enactment date.

Reid amendment No. 3985 (to amendment No. 3984), of a perfecting nature.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Michigan.

FAREWELL TO THE SENATE

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. President, after 36 years as a Member of the United States Senate, this is likely my last opportunity to address its Members as colleagues, and to address the people of my State as constituents, and to thank them for placing their trust in me.

The highest honor any citizen of a democracy can receive is to be elected to represent his or her fellow Americans to be their fiduciary.

To the Senate staff, including the floor staff, the Capitol Police, and those throughout the Capitol complex who work so hard to keep things here moving, thank you for your service and support for us through the long days and nights.

To my staff, thank you for your strong loyalty to the people of Michigan, to our Nation, and to me. And thank you for believing in public service. I am immensely proud of what the men and women who have worked on my staff for the last 36 years have helped to accomplish.

My staff back in Michigan has helped make communities across our State safer and more prosperous. Countless times they have helped individual constituents resolve an issue, making a real difference in thousands of lives.

The Armed Services Committee and Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations—PSI—staffs have worked tirelessly through long hours and complex issues, sacrificing nights and weekends and vacations to help address the pressing issues of our Nation.

My personal office staff has been instrumental in addressing a breathtaking range of issues—from preserving our American auto industry, to making our tax system fairer, to protecting our irreplaceable Great Lakes, to making medicine available to fight addiction, and much, much more.

As to my mentor, my big brother Sandy, Congress is keeping the better half of ''Team Levin,'' as I retire to Michigan while Sandy remains in Congress.

To Barbara, my wife of 53 years, to our three daughters Kate, Laura, and Erica; to their husbands Howard, Daniel, and Rick; and to our six grandchildren, Bess and Samantha, Mark,

Noa, and Ben Levin, and Beatrice and Olivia Fernandez—thank you for your love and support, which has meant so much to me.

I have been asked many times if I am leaving the Senate out of frustration with gridlock. The answer is: No. My family and friends, and those of you with whom I serve, know how much I love the Senate and that I will love my work until the last day here, and that I will leave here with unabashed confidence in the Senate's ability to weather storms and to meet the Nation's needs.

I know firsthand the challenges before this Senate. I believe one of the greatest is the need to meet the fundamental economic challenge of this era: the growing gap in our society between a fortunate few and the vast majority of Americans whose fortunes have stagnated or fallen.

While I believe that the economists who tell us this inequality is holding back economic growth are right, this isn't just about economic data. It is about our Nation's heart and soul. This growing gulf between a fortunate few and a struggling many is a threat to the dream that has animated this Nation since its founding, the dream that hard work leads to a better life for us and for our children.

To restore the connection between hard work and greater opportunity, I hope the next Congress will act on many fronts, strengthening education and worker training programs, making greater investments in infrastructure and research that foster growth. And as I have said here many times, it should pay for these needed investments by closing egregious tax loopholes that serve no economic purpose, but enrich some of the wealthiest among us and our most profitable corporations.

Many foresee a continuation of polarization and partisanship in the Senate and say it is naive to suggest that the next Congress might come together, break out of gridlock, and accomplish great things. But I know the Senate can do better because I have seen it happen with my own eyes.

The Senate has indeed demonstrated, even in our own era, that bipartisanship is not extinct. The Senate Armed Services Committee has upheld a more than 50-year tradition of bipartisan cooperation to produce an annual Defense Authorization Act that advances the security of our Nation. I am grateful to the members of the U.S. military and their families for their selfless sense of duty. But I am also grateful for the way they have inspired us, year after year, to come together across lines of party and ideology to support them. They not only protect us, they unite us. Congress has come together over the years to make improvements in pay, benefits, and health care for the men and women of the military; to reform the way in which we buy the weapons they use to carry out their missions; to adopt policies to protect them from sexual assault; and to provide improved education benefits through a modern GI bill, and reform the way in which we care for our wounded warriors. We are training and equipping the militaries of nations under assault by extremists and religious fanatics so that those nations can depend more on themselves for their own security and less on America's sons and daughters.

We have passed a defense authorization bill to accomplish these things each year for more than half a century by laying aside partisan differences for the common good. We have never allowed disagreements over policy to interfere with our duty to our troops and their families, and I am deeply grateful to the many ranking Republican partners I have been fortunate to work with in that endeavor: people such as JOHN MCCAIN and John Warner and JIM INHOFE.

JOHN MCCAIN, my great friend, who has demonstrated extraordinary courage in war and in this Senate, will take the gavel of the Armed Services Committee, and my trusted wingman and friend JACK REED will become ranking member. At a pivotal moment for the Senate and for this Nation, the Armed Services Committee will be in strong hands.

I have seen firsthand additional powerful evidence that the Senate can work together to meet the Nation's needs, and that is in the work of the Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations—PSI—which I have been privileged to chair for 10 years, working with Republican partners—and I use the word partners advisedly—such as TOM COBURN, JOHN MCCAIN, and SUSAN COLLINS. Our subcommittee has exposed the tax avoidance schemes of some of the most powerful corporations and wealthiest individuals. We have shined a light on abusive credit card practices. We have investigated wasteful and ineffective government programs. We have confronted market manipulators and exposed conflicts of interest, mortgage fraud, and reckless schemes by some of the most powerful banks, schemes aided by some of the largest accounting and law firms. We have demonstrated how those activities helped bring our economy to its knees, destroying jobs, reducing the value of our homes, and damaging our neighborhoods. The work of PSI has helped lead to reforms that have strengthened our financial system and reduced credit card abuses.

The power of PSI lies in the in-depth work of our staffs, and in the willingness to confront powerful and entrenched interests. Like the Senate Armed Services Committee, PSI is strengthened by a dedication to bipartisanship and a respect for the rights of the Senate minority. We have recognized the danger of using investigative power for partisan or political purposes, and we have ensured that our great staffs, majority and minority, participate together in every investigation.

Indeed it is protection of the minority that is the singular hallmark of the Senate. The majority cannot always have its way. The Senate is more than just a place where the hot tea is cooled in the deliberative saucer that President Washington famously spoke of. Protections for the minority make the Senate more than just a place to slow things down; those protections make it a place where we work things out. It is those protections that force compromise that is essential to unifying and governing our country. Making progress in the Senate requires solutions that while they may not provide everyone with everything they want, are broadly accepted as in the common interest. When compromise is thwarted by ideological rigidity or by abuse of the rights that our rules afford us, the Senate can become paralyzed, unable to achieve the lofty task that the Founders set forth before us.

Polarization is exacerbated by forces outside this Chamber. For instance, we seem to make news more often these days by our responses in the corridors outside this Chamber to reporters questioning us about the latest breaking story or rumor than we do by debating or legislating inside this Chamber. The viral nature of information and disinformation and the expectation that public officials will be immediately responsive to every news flash with but a few seconds to think through the implications or consequences or pros and cons has led too often to less thoughtful discourse, and that has helped drive rhetorical wedges between us.

The incoming Senate has an opportunity to restore a greater measure of bipartisan compromise by revisiting one of the most contentious issues we face, one that we struggled with at the beginning of this Congress; that is, the Senate rules.

I believe the excessive use of the filibuster to obstruct confirmation of President Obama's nominees was damaging to the Senate and to the Nation. Any President—Democratic or Republican—should have the ability to choose his or her team. But the Senate majority eliminated obstructions to Presidential nominations through the use of the nuclear option, effectively accomplishing a rules change outside the rules, a method I could not support. In doing so, a precedent was established that the majority could effectively change the rules as it wished by overruling the Chair and the Parliamentarian. That precedent will not serve the country well in the future because it leaves the minority with no protection, diminishing the unique role of the Senate.

I hope the Senate next year considers reversing that precedent while simultaneously—and I emphasize simultaneously—amending the rules so as to assure the President's ability to fulfill his or her constitutional duties. Put simply, I believe the Senate should do the right thing in the right way. It

should amend the Senate rules, as provided for in the rules, to adopt the substance of the changes we made last year. I know my good friend Senator LAMAR ALEXANDER, who was part of the bipartisan Group of 8 who worked closely and successfully together on this issue in 2012, has proposed something similar. Such action by the Senate next year would be a welcome victory for comity and for compromise, and it would I hope represent a step back from a precedent that leads to effective rules changes by simple majority. It would be a step toward a better functioning Senate.

No leader alone, no single Senator, neither party by itself, can determine the Senate's course, but together the Members of this body can move the Senate forward and in doing so help move forward the Nation we all love. I will enjoy reading about the Senate's progress in the years ahead as Barbara and I are sitting on a Lake Michigan beach or showing the world to our grandchildren.

I thank the Chair, I thank my dear friends, the leaders of this body, and I see my brother sitting here, and I am not allowed to refer to my family in the Gallery, so I will not do that.

(Applause, Senators rising.)

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Maine.

TRIBUTES TO CARL LEVIN

Ms. COLLINS. Mr. President, during his 36 years representing Michigan in the Senate, Senator CARL LEVIN's character and expertise have been described in many ways. He has been named by Time magazine as one of the 10 best Senators. He has been hailed by our military as a leader on national security. He is recognized by families in Michigan and throughout our country as a dedicated champion for economic opportunity and fairness.

But perhaps the best description of Senator LEVIN's philosophy of public service is a word he himself used in an interview for the George Mitchell Oral History Project at Bowdoin College in Maine. That word is ''fiduciary.''

It is the word that embraces the concepts of trust and confidence, of ethics and responsibility. In that interview Senator LEVIN elaborated on what the word means to him as a public servant. He said it meant to be accessible and open, to listen to other points of view, and to be well informed. Then when it is time to decide, to use his best judgment and vote for what is best for his State and his country, even though it may not be the popular choice at the time.

''Fiduciary'' may indeed be the best word to describe our colleague Senator LEVIN; but to me, based upon decades of firsthand experience, there is another phrase that also comes to mind. He is truly a Senator's Senator. My colleagues may be surprised to learn that I have known Senator LEVIN far longer than most of the Members of this Chamber. You see, when he was first elected to the Senate in 1978, the same year as Maine Senator Bill Cohen, for whom I was working at the time, both of them served on what was then known as a Senate Governmental Affairs Committee and also on the same subcommittee, Oversight of Government Management, for which I was first the minority staff director and then the majority staff director. So I have known and worked with Senator LEVIN for the entire time he has been a Member of this Chamber. From the very start, Senator LEVIN's diligence as a watchdog for the American people impressed me.

Ten years after I left the committee, I returned as Senator Cohen's successor and sought a seat on the Governmental Affairs Committee precisely because, thanks to the example of Senator LEVIN and Senator Cohen, I saw the importance of accountability in government and business practices. As the chairman of the Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations, it was my honor to begin my Senate service with Senator LEVIN as our ranking member, who was a far more experienced Senator than I was at the time.

So I have seen firsthand how deeply Senator LEVIN cares about the Senate as an institution and its unique place in our Constitution and in its role in our system of government. He is a person of extraordinary integrity and has a sense of purpose that sets a high standard for all of us in public service.

He works well with Senators across the aisle because he works hard. From the very first time I saw Senator LEVIN in action back in 1978, I saw the importance that he placed on extensive, exhaustive preparation for our committee investigations and hearings. As many evasive or ill-prepared witnesses learned to their chagrin, the eyes behind those trademark reading glasses focused like a laser because he has always done his homework.

If Senator LEVIN were to be remembered for his contributions to just one area of policy, it would be our Nation's defense. He has been a member of the Armed Services Committee throughout his time in the Senate, including 10 years as both the chairman and the ranking member. During our work together on that committee, I saw his mastery of such complex matters as emerging global threats and advanced weapons systems. Above all, his focus has always been on the men and women in uniform and their families, from improving their standard of living to better caring for our wounded warriors.

As a fiduciary of the principles that are our Nation's foundation, CARL LEVIN has been a faithful trustee and truly a Senator's Senator. I cannot imagine this body without him, without his wisdom, his integrity, his insight. So I thank him for his years of extraordinary service, and I wish him all the best in the years to come.

Thank you, Mr. President.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Michigan.

Ms. STABENOW. Mr. President, Senator CARL LEVIN has been my Senator for 36 years, and it has been one of the great honors of my life to serve for the last 14 years as his partner, as well as his friend, representing Michigan.

The year he was elected, ''Grease'' was the year's highest grossing movie and ''Staying Alive'' was music's biggest hit, and you should see Senator LEVIN dance. So Senator LEVIN has outlasted disco, the Soviet Union, and all six of the people who challenged him in elections, including an astronaut. That is because integrity never goes out of style.

Senator LEVIN has never wavered in his devotion to Michigan and to his country. As we heard today and as we each know, he has brought that patriotism to the Armed Services Committee. No one has done more to ensure that our men and women in uniform are battle-ready, with the supplies and technology they need to be the best military in the world, than Senator CARL LEVIN, or to make sure they receive fair pay and full health benefits. CARL LEVIN puts his coalition together year after year to make that happen.

He has never lost faith in government's capacity to be a force for good, and we heard that again in his comments today. This was passed down to him from his parents, who saw how the New Deal rescued families from desperate poverty.

A young CARL LEVIN admired President Harry Truman—especially Truman, the Senator who drove cross-country, stopping in cities where defense contractors were committing fraud and waste at the expense of America's wartime economy.

Truman himself would be very proud to see Senator LEVIN leading the Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations. As a former civil rights attorney, Senator LEVIN relished the chance to cross-examine those he suspected of dishonesty toward taxpayers and the American people. It is not literally a trial-by-fire, but that committee room has definitely become a sweat lodge for unscrupulous executives or anyone who has tried to get rich by getting one over on average Americans. They sweat because they know Senator LEVIN has done his homework—boy, has he done his homework. He digs so deep, he knows more about what they are going to say than they do.

David used a slingshot to bring down Goliath, but CARL LEVIN can topple a tycoon with nothing but a binder full of subpoenaed documents, and we have all seen him do it. In 2007 he shined a light on abusive practices of credit card companies, leading to laws that have brought about more transparency. Thanks to Senator CARL LEVIN, your credit card statement contains more disclosures so you know what is going on.

Those of us in Michigan also see a softer, gentler side. His heart is in Detroit, where he was born and raised and now lives with his wife Barbara. His soul is nourished by the tranquility he finds in northern Michigan in the

Upper Peninsula—Isle Royale, a place to which he has made many trips.

If you have been to Detroit recently, you know the city is in the midst of a spectacular comeback. I believe it is the most spectacular comeback in modern history. Everywhere you look, you see evidence of Senator CARL LEVIN's hard work. He led the way on getting Federal funding for Detroit's International Riverfront, which is spectacular. He worked with me and others in leading the effort to secure critical funding for the M–1 Rail project, championing that every step of the way—a streetcar that will inject even more vibrancy to the historic Woodward Avenue, which is already attracting scores of entrepreneurs and small businesses.

Five years ago I was proud to stand with Senator LEVIN as we passionately worked to rescue our American automobile industry and give them a chance to grow and move forward, and I saw his commitment and fiery passion for making sure we did not let them down, the men and women who worked so hard in Michigan and across the country. That revival has done so much to lift the economy of greater Detroit and all of Michigan.

Senator LEVIN knows that manufacturing is the backbone of our State's economy, but he also knows that the landscapes, the soil, and the water are all part of who we are, including our Great Lakes. It is in our DNA, and I know it is in his. That is why he has pushed for years to help Sleeping Bear Dunes be recognized as a national lakeshore, and we are seeing the outcome of his work as we look at this beautiful national resource. He fought for the Federal sanctuary at Thunder Bay and for the creation of the Keweenaw National Historic Park. It has been an honor for me to stand with him as he chaired our Great Lakes Task Force, our bipartisan task force, and fight for funding for the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative, which has had a miraculous effect on the quality of freshwater that is vital for Michigan and the Nation.

I could stand here for hours talking about his accomplishments, the footprints and handprints and marks he has made on Michigan and, most importantly, the people and communities of Michigan. But, as we heard this morning from colleagues and will continue to hear, they are small in comparison to the testament of his character, his compassion, his humor, and the unassailable strength of his convictions.

Senator LEVIN, you will be missed in Michigan and certainly by me and the Senate. I know you and Barbara and your daughters and grandchildren, including your one grandson—who is kind of outnumbered—will be grateful to have you so you can show them the world from your perspective and show them the continued beauty of Michigan. You have given so much, and we are grateful.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Missouri.

Mrs. MCCASKILL. Mr. President, I wish to talk about Senator LEVIN from a different perspective than my colleagues have. There is a seduction that goes on around here. You can get lulled into a false sense of security by excellent staff. CARL LEVIN is fortunate that he has excellent staff, but what many of us are tempted to do at times is to allow staff to do the arcane and tedious work of checking statutory language.

I have been blessed to have a front-row seat to watch CARL LEVIN work. From my seat on the Armed Services Committee and on the Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations, I have not only watched his excellent staff, I have watched CARL LEVIN. This is a man who understands every nook and cranny of statutory construction. He would never be lulled into a false sense of security that he understood the bill just because of what he was told.

I will think of CARL LEVIN fondly in one way: his shoulders slightly stooped, his hand grasping a piece of paper, not an electronic device, him walking quickly toward me with his head down, peering over those ubiquitous glasses, saying: CLAIRE, have you read the language? CLAIRE, have you read the language? Read the language. Read the language.

He understands the hazards of a misplaced comma. He understands the danger of using an ''and'' instead of an ''or.'' He understands that the essence of our work is to make sure we craft language that lives up to our purpose and ideals.

CARL LEVIN is a Senator's Senator. There are no sharp elbows, no heated rhetoric, and, frankly, there is no star power on cable TV. No one is dying to get CARL in front of a camera because he will say something incendiary or pick a fight, which all of our friends are anxious for us to do—if we would only pick a fight.

CARL is methodically doing the grind-it-out work of legislating. He has the tools of a great Senator: intellect, integrity, good manners, and an unsurpassed work ethic. I will always call him my most important mentor in the Senate. He has taught me more than I can ever say. I will try desperately to live up to the ideal he has set for all of us.

I thank the Presiding Officer.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Alabama.

Mr. SESSIONS. I thank Senator MCCASKILL for her comments. We are talking about a Senator's Senator, a man who reads the language of the legislation and knows how to legislate.

I came here 18 years ago and have served on the Armed Services Committee that entire time, and my admiration and respect for CARL LEVIN has grown every year. It has grown because it is deserved. He is a remarkable leader. He never showboats and always wants to do the right thing. He serves his country first, and he runs a committee that is, in my mind, the best-run committee—according to the ideals of the Republic of which we are a part—that exists in either House today. It just works the way it is supposed to.

His subcommittees work. We have amendments in subcommittees that are disputed. If you don't like the result, you bring it to the full committee, and the full committee meets, and if it takes 2 full days, it takes 2 full days; everybody gets to bring up their amendments.

Senator LEVIN is always brilliantly able to solve differences through proper wording of the committee's legislation. As Claire suggested, he has an extraordinary lawyer's ability to get the right words and make the bill say what the committee wants it to say. I think that is special, and I am pleased to have been a part of it.

The Armed Services Committee authorizes one-half of the discretionary budget of the United States. It impacts the lives of men and women in harm's way right now. We need to get it right. It involves a lot of money and a lot of responsibility. It is a well-run committee that sets an example for what we ought to see more of in the Senate.

There is a fairness about his work. Somehow we have always passed an authorization bill, and somehow it is almost always unanimous or very close to unanimous. There may be one or two issues that maybe should not have been tacked on to the bill that causes someone not to vote for it, but when it is over, normally every Member—Republican and Democrat—is satisfied with the ability to have their voice heard and their ideas put into the bill, if possible. But if you lose in subcommittee and you lose on the floor and you have had your say in both places, it kind of makes you feel like, what more can I do? If the rest of the bill is OK, I will try to support it. These markups take time because we are dealing with a large portion of federal funding.

Finally, I would like to say how much I appreciated his wisdom he shared with us as we dealt with the nuclear option—the so-called nuclear option that changed the rules of the Senate. Senator LEVIN, who is a lawyer's lawyer, said something that was very profound, and it was reflected again in his remarks today, and that is, if a majority can change the rules, there are no rules. If a majority can change the rules of the Senate at a given moment to overcome objections from the minority, then there are virtually no minority rights—you have a pure majoritarian body. I think that is what CARL was sharing with us in his brilliant speech that all of us ought to read.

I thank our chairman for the leadership he has given and for the courtesy he has shown to me and all our Members. I wish him great success in his future endeavors, and I hope he will continue to contribute his wisdom to the body politic.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Florida.

Mr. NELSON. Mr. President, it has been summed up here, and I want the Senator from Michigan to hear what has been summarized so meaningfully by all of our colleagues, because this is the best of this institution in terms of how it performs. It has been embodied here in the public service of CARL LEVIN for 36 years. What we have heard from testimonies on both sides of the aisle is that because of how he has conducted himself as an individual and how he has conducted himself as a public servant and how he has conducted himself as a leader in this Senate is an example of exactly how this institution is supposed to function.

Isn't it rather symbolic that on the last couple of days of the session, the bill that will be passed is the bill Senator LEVIN has ushered through the Senate? He never broke tradition. He made sure the defense authorization bill was going to be passed by hammering out the differences with the House and shepherding it through the parliamentary process. And it has happened every year because of his extraordinary leadership.

I will close simply by saying that because he is all of the things we have heard—the consummate gentleman, the humble public servant, his razor-sharp mind, and the best lawyer, by the way, in the entire Senate—because he is all of those things, he also is the embodiment of a Senator because when he gives someone his word, that is it. A person does not have to worry anymore.

The future Senate should take a lesson from the life and the leadership of CARL LEVIN from Michigan.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from West Virginia.

Mr. MANCHIN. Mr. President, I rise with honor and pleasure to be able to say thank you to my dear friend. I am the most junior Member, besides the Presiding Officer, in this body today. When I first came to the Senate, I asked to be on the Armed Services Committee. West Virginia has a proud heritage of an awful lot of people—percentage-wise probably more than most States—having served in all of the branches of the military. So that is very near and dear to me, and our National Guard is very near and dear to our State. So there were many reasons why I wanted to be on the Armed Services Committee.

When I got here, it was one of the most toxic times of the political arena, if you will. It was not what I expected, to say the least. And seeing the toxic atmosphere that I came into, people would say it didn't used to be this way; it used to work. The process worked. The whole aura of the Senate was there, and we are losing that. That was their excuse for telling me that is why it is not working today, but it used to work.

Then I became part of this committee called the Armed Services Committee with this unbelievable chairman whose name is CARL LEVIN. I watched and observed. I didn't say a whole lot at first because freshmen aren't supposed to, but I watched and I learned and I saw the system the way I imagined it probably was 20, 30, 40 years ago when it did work. I saw the Senate, and I was thinking, Why can't the rest of the Senate work the way the Armed Services Committee works? There is one reason. We don't have enough CARL LEVINS. We just don't have enough CARL LEVINS.

CARL LEVIN is practical, reasonable, and sensible. It made sense to me what he would say.

Just recently I have had difficulties on a piece of legislation that is very important. CARL spoke to me in terms that my father would have spoken to me, and I understood very well: State your opposition, record your opposition, and look at the whole situation as the betterment and the good of the bill, which is better than basically this piece that you oppose. He said I could explain my opposition.

CARL LEVIN would say this, too. He would say: Listen, I can't tell you what to do. I can't tell you what to do. Really, you have to do what you think is right, but let me give you some points to think about. He has been an unbelievable mentor who will give us the ability to kind of process this whole system we are in.

Let me say this, CARL. I am sorry that I didn't have the honor and the opportunity and the pleasure to serve with you for many more years. I really am. Or I am sorry I didn't get here soon enough, whatever the case may be. But the Senator from Michigan has left an impression on me as to how this place should work.

Robert C. Byrd, my predecessor, felt as passionately as you do. There is a process here and there is a reason for the process, which is to make us talk to each other, to make this place work. There should never be a situation we would get into that is important to the American citizen or this country where we can't work it out and can't get at least 60 votes. There should never be a time that we cannot get 60 votes. If we do that, then basically just changing a rule is not going to change the attitude and the atmosphere we create. I believe very strongly in that. And I appreciate the Senator's fight.

In the hills of West Virginia, we have a saying: They are good people. You meet somebody and someone says, They are good people.

CARL, you are good people. Thank you.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Maryland.

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. President, one of the great honors of serving in the U.S. Senate—and it is a great honor to serve in this body—is the fact that I have had the opportunity to serve with CARL LEVIN. I think Senator LEVIN represents the very best of our political system, the very best of the U.S. Senate, and why I am so proud to be a part of this institution.

I must tell my colleagues I came from the House of Representatives and I had the great pleasure to have as one of my closest friends in the House of Representatives CARL's brother, Sandy. Sandy is an incredibly talented person who believes in public service, as does his brother CARL, and the two of them have devoted their family reputation to public service and they have given so much back.

CARL, what you have done for our national security, for our national defense, the type of attention you have paid to make sure this country is as well prepared as it needs to be, you have done that in an exemplary way. I can tell you what you have done for the people in Michigan, the type of Senator you have been. You have been a great U.S. Senator for your State, as well as a great U.S. Senator for the United States. That is not always an easy balance, but you have been able to do it.

As so many colleagues have said, when we seek advice, when we need a Senator to help us understand something, we go to CARL LEVIN. Some of my constituents have a hard time believing that we read the bills around here. CARL LEVIN reads the bills around here. He has found typographical errors in some of my legislation. He has found ways to correct us when we didn't express ourselves the way we should have. He writes me notes all the time. I thank him for that dedication.

As several of our colleagues have pointed out, there is no one here who has a greater love for the traditions—the best traditions—of the U.S. Senate, a Senate that debates and respects each other. One of the great opportunities I had was to sit in a room with LAMAR ALEXANDER and CARL LEVIN and others and talk about that, and how we could restore the best traditions of the U.S. Senate.

So, Senator LEVIN, I want you to know, I will always be indebted to serving in this body with you and learning from you and recognizing just what one person can do to carry out the honor and dignity of public service. You really define public service. For that, I am very grateful, the people of Michigan are grateful, and the people of America are grateful. Congratulations on your great service.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Ohio.

Mr. BROWN. Mr. President, it is no surprise to any of us that the first thing CARL LEVIN did when he spoke today was thank his staff. He thanked them, and then he thanked the police force and the groundskeepers and the food service people and the people who too many in this world ignore. That was the first thing he did.

The second thing CARL did in his address was to talk about the gulf between the fortunate few and the struggling many. That has been what I most

admire about CARL LEVIN—that he is always aware of that and always fighting the fight for people who have a lot less privilege than those of us do who dress like this and get really great titles. And no one, frankly—no one in this body—has stood up against special interests for the most powerful interests in this town more effectively and more energetically than CARL LEVIN. For that, I am grateful, and I know so many in this country are grateful as well.

Thank you, Senator.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Oregon.

Mr. MERKLEY. Mr. President, when I came here in 2009, we were in the middle of an enormous meltdown due to high-risk trading inside our major banks. I wondered whether we as an institution were capable of undertaking this challenge of changing the circumstances around that in order to not have another 2007, 2008 meltdown that would do so much damage to families across this country. So I put out an email to everyone that said, Is anyone interested in taking on this issue for the future stability of our financial system? The next day I came to the floor and Senator LEVIN said, the email you sent out, I want to talk to you about that. I want to partner in taking this on. Immediately, he basically said: ''We will work together. I am not the senior Senator who wants to take over this effort,'' although I would have been glad for that to happen. There was not the ego in it; there was the intellect and the passion and the determination to fix a problem. To me, the Senate should be about people coming together to fix problems to make this Nation work better.

That event is deeply burned into my mind. The result, because of Senator LEVIN's efforts, was the Volcker rule that said high-risk trading should not be done on the banks' books, proprietary trading and high-risk instruments. It will make a significant difference in the years to come.

But what I want to thank my colleague for is the attitude of coming together to solve the important problems for America, even if that means taking on very powerful special interests. I hope we will see a lot more of that from this Senate in the years to come, but it will be a much bigger challenge without the Senator here. We will miss him greatly.

Thank you so much, Senator, for your service to our Nation.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Tennessee.

Mr. ALEXANDER. Mr. President, the Senate at its best has been said to be the one authentic piece of genius in the American political system. CARL LEVIN is the Senate at its best. I thank him for his courtesy, his decency, his scholarship, and his sense of public service. I thank him for his reminder that if we are going to have the trust of the American people to write rules for them, we should follow our own rules.

It has been a privilege to serve with Senator LEVIN.

Thank you, Mr. President.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Iowa.

Mr. HARKIN. Mr. President, I too want to spend a couple of moments reflecting upon my long friendship and association with Senator CARL LEVIN from Michigan.

Much has been said this morning about CARL the person and the Senator. Let me say this: I don't know of anyone in this body who has exhibited more of an intellectual honesty, a calm demeanor, and a sense of fierce loyalty and perseverance. I don't know who exhibits those qualities more than CARL LEVIN.

CARL embodies the best of what I think it means to be both a citizen and a U.S. Senator. Barbara and CARL, Ruth and I have enjoyed many meals together over the years, having great conversations about everything. I want to say to my friend CARL, I hope that Michigan and Iowa are not so far apart, and that we can continue to get together in the future.

I will say, CARL, right now I hope you don't hold it against me for all of the times the Hawkeyes will beat the Wolverines in the future. Don't let that be a stumbling block.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. BROWN). The Senator from Oklahoma.

Mr. INHOFE. Mr. President, I will be very brief because I know we have some other things coming up before going on to the NDAA, and I will be standing here with my good friend and brother CARL at that time. I recall when I was first elected to the House of Representatives—it is hard for me to believe that was 28 years ago—and I became good friends with a guy named Levin. It was not CARL. It was his brother. There was a real sincere, lovable attitude about him. I can remember talking over some of these sitting by him during some of the debate on very partisan things. I thought this guy is really neat. It is the kind of thing where you can't dislike him. Then I came over here 20 years ago, and there is another one. I have two major committees, Environment and Public Works and the Senate Armed Services Committee. I thought this is remarkable because while on occasion we will differ—I am talking about the chairman and me—and I am the ranking member of that committee—occasionally we will come up on an issue where we don't agree. On two occasions, last year and this year, we had to go into this process of the ''big four.'' That is where it gets contentious because at that point you have to come up with a bill. There was never a time that, yes, we have to give in. I don't know whether he gave in more than I gave in. But whatever it was, it all had to happen and it did happen and it happened because of CARL more than me.

Chairman LEVIN and I can both say the same thing, and people will hate me and they love him. I always wonder how you get by with doing that, but you do. He is a lovable guy whom I will sincerely miss and that relationship, and I hope you will be back often so you can be here to remind other people what a real statesman is.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Vermont.

Mr. SANDERS. I want to take a moment to thank CARL LEVIN for his friendship. It has been previously noted that CARL is recognized as having perhaps the greatest intellect in the Senate. CARL has been, for so many years, a forceful fighter against waste in the military, and in recent years he has led the Senate in telling us it is absurd that large multinational corporations are able to avoid hundreds of billions of dollars in taxes by storing their money in offshore tax savings.

He has been a leader on that and for those of us who are concerned about the needs of our kids and elderly and infrastructure, all of the terrible problems facing this country, this is an issue we have to focus on.

I think Senator CARL LEVIN has been a Senator's Senator. He has been a model of what a good Senator should be, and it is not surprising that people from all political persuasions will come to the floor to thank him for his service.

Senator LEVIN, thank you very much for your time.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Arizona.

Mr. FRANKEN. I want to echo what everyone has said. I had the honor of traveling on a codel with Chairman LEVIN to Pakistan, Afghanistan, when I had been here just a few weeks. So I was traveling with the chairman of the Armed Services Committee. The respect he got from everyone—from the generals down to the privates, especially in Afghanistan—was remarkable. CARL fought to increase the ratio of our troops to contractors. When we took the majority back in 2006, CARL started doing the kind of oversight of the contracting that had led to a lot of waste, fraud, and abuse in Iraq. He has used PSI in the way it was intended by Harry Truman. I thank him especially for the work he did on the credit rating agencies, Wall Street credit rating agencies. Right now Standard & Poor's is being prosecuted by—or sued by the DOJ for about $5 billion. Part of what they are using are emails the Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations obtained, in which basically the credit rating agencies internally were saying we better give this a AAA rating; otherwise, we are going to lose our business. That in no small way led to the meltdown we had because all this junk was getting AAAs and those were bets on bets on bets on bets and that is what led to the meltdown.

CARL always seems to go to where that kind of top-down fraud or malfeasance is going. When we talk about—as

he opened, as SHERROD mentioned when he talked about the disparities and how this is rigged very often from the top down, talking about the offshoring and the work they did in PSI, the Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations—that is, on tax havens on inversions—and I hope to take that up as CARL leaves.

CARL leaves a lot of unfinished business. Everything that has been said is who CARL is. Everyone should know that. One thing that has not been said is hamisha. CARL, you are one of the most hamish men I have ever known. Thank you.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Maine is recognized.

Mr. KING. I wanted to speak very briefly, because as Senator MANCHIN pointed out, I am the most junior person in the place.

I want to say a couple of things about CARL LEVIN. As has been said here repeatedly, CARL is a man of immense intellect and character, and I wanted to explain how that came to be. I thought that would be important to lay on the Record.

It came to be because CARL LEVIN and his brother spent their boyhood summers in the State of Maine. That imparts character to anyone who is lucky enough to have that experience.

Secondly, I want to mention—because it has been mentioned several times—about the travel. I had the great good fortune to travel after having been here about 6 months. CARL and I—as members of the Armed Services Committee—went to Turkey and Jordan to try to get some insight into the situation in Syria. My only advice to anyone in this body is if you are ever invited to travel with CARL LEVIN, spend the prior 2 or 3 months in the gym. I have never been so exhausted in my life, and we would be at 10 p.m., after all-day meetings and touring of refugee sites, and CARL would say: Can't we have another meeting? Isn't there someone else we can talk to? His absolute passion for information and data upon which to make decisions is I think exemplary.

The final thing I want to note is—and it has been talked about how he is a Senator's Senator, which is certainly true. My observation and in fact my experience this year in the markup of the National Defense Authorization Act is the highlight of my experience in this body. The reason it is, is cause it worked like it is supposed to work. We had 2/2 days of markup. They were about 10-hour days, as I recall. There were over 200 amendments. Through CARL's leadership, most of those amendments were compromised and worked out between the parties and between the individuals who were moving the amendments, but we ended up with about 20 we couldn't resolve in that way. I was so struck by this. I went back and looked at the record of that markup. Of the 20 amendments that were voted on in the committee, not a single one of those amendments was decided on a party-line vote. There were votes of 13 to 12 or 16 to 4 or whatever the vote was but not a single party-line vote. I think that in itself is an extraordinary achievement in a body that is often driven by partisan divisions. I think it is attributable in large measure to CARL LEVIN's leadership.

Everybody had their say. Everybody had their opportunity to put their thoughts forward. Everybody had an opportunity to get a vote if they felt that was necessary. Of course, in the end, the bill came out of the committee—I think it was 25 to 1—and that is what legislating is supposed to be all about. That is a lesson for us because people felt they got their amendments, they got their discussion, they got their ideas out. Even if they weren't successful, at the end, they voted for the bill because they were invested in the process. That is what I learned from this man who I think has been an inspiration for those of us who are coming along behind. Again, I am so honored. One of the great joys of my life has been to serve with you for 2 years. One of the great sadnesses of my life is it is only 2 years, but I deeply appreciate what you have done for this body and for the United States of America.

Mr. LEVIN. Thank you.

Mr. KING. Bless you.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The senior Senator from New York.

Mr. SCHUMER. My good friend from Iowa is waiting patiently, so I will curtail my remarks. I would like to say to my dear friend CARL—whom we will all miss—if we had to put a headline on what is happening today, it is: ''Mr. Integrity Retires from the Senate.''

There is no one in this body on either side of the aisle whose integrity is more respected than yours. At these times in America, where people have such distrust of government and elected officials, to have somebody who is so widely trusted by his constituency and by the Members of this body who have worked with him closely over the years on both sides of the aisle is a real tribute. You are Mr. Integrity. That is one of many reasons we will miss you.

Again, I have more to say, but in deference to my dear friend from Iowa, who I see is ready to roll, I will yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Ohio.

Mr. PORTMAN. I will be brief as well and say that I am going to miss my colleague, and I told him that personally. I want to share a couple of reasons. One, as a new Member on the other side of the aisle, when I first got here, CARL—whom I had gotten to know a little bit through his brother, who I see is on the floor today, who has fought many fights with him on the squash court, but they remain dear friends. He came to me and said: You ought to join the Auto Caucus. I am not a big caucus guy. Most caucuses don't do much in this place, and then I saw what he was doing with the Auto Caucus and he agreed to allow me come on as cochair. We had an than opportunity to help fight for the autoworkers in Michigan and Ohio and around the country make sure that the renaissance of the auto industry is sustained. As I am sure has been said by many here today, he went out of his way to make it not just by bipartisan but nonpartisan. He does his homework.

We share some committee assignments. We don't always agree. Sometimes we disagree on fundamental issues. He is always prepared and does his homework and has the best of intentions. That says a lot for him and the reason he is viewed as such a leader of the Senate. When I got here, I was honored to serve on the Armed Services Committee. There we were able to work together on a number of projects, including ones that frankly he may not have normally thought were priorities but because I was a new Member and interested in helping my State and on specific projects, he stood up for me. I will not forget that. We have done legislation together and had the opportunity to work together on important projects that have to do with the Great Lakes, including Great Lakes restoration, where he has been a nonpartisan partner. I join my colleagues on both sides of the aisle and say this is one of those giants of the Senate who will be missed.

Although I have only been here for 4 of his many years of service, I was privileged to serve with him.

I yield the floor.

Mr. HATCH. Mr. President, I wish to pay tribute to the senior Senator from Michigan, CARL LEVIN. I have known CARL for many years and am grateful for his friendship. Throughout his career, CARL has always put the needs of Michigan and this nation above his own.

Senator LEVIN was born in Detroit in 1934 and has called Michigan his home nearly his entire life. As a young man, he left only briefly to attend Swarthmore College and later Harvard Law School. After passing the Michigan Bar, CARL worked for five years in private practice in Detroit before beginning his career in public service. He first served as General Counsel for the Michigan Civil Rights Commission from 1964 to 1967. CARL then entered elected office, serving on the Detroit City Council from 1969 to 1977.

In 1978, Senator LEVIN successfully ran for a U.S. Senate seat and has never looked back. He has since won five more elections to become the longest-serving Senator in Michigan history. CARL chaired the Armed Services Committee from 2001 to 2003 and again from 2007 to the present. Whether it was pushing for higher pay or ensuring that our veterans received proper medical treatment, CARL has always made sure that our soldiers and their families were well taken care of.

Senator LEVIN has also served as chairman of the Senate Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations. He has never had any patience for corruption or abuse, and so has been perfectly suited for this job. As chairman, CARL launched numerous investigations into high-profile issues, including the Enron scandal and abusive credit card practices. The findings of these investigations were crucial in helping us draft legislation to prevent future abuses.

Mr. President, Senator LEVIN has dedicated his life to public service, and his retirement is well deserved. He is an honest man who has served his country well. I wish him, his wife Barbara, and their family the very best.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. KING). The Senator from Michigan.

Mr. LEVIN. I know that Senator HARKIN is waiting to speak. Senator HARKIN is truly one of the greatest Senators I have ever served with and Senator HARKIN is one of the greatest people I have ever known. He, Ruth, Barb, and I have spent quality time, which is not always true for many of us in the Senate to have that opportunity.

I thank everyone. The words have meant so much to me and my family today.

I am going to join my family now. I know TOM will forgive me for not listening, but I will be reading what you say. You, Ruth, Barb, and I will have some more quality time together—perhaps not as much fun as being in the Senate, but we will make the best of it.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Iowa.

FAREWELL TO THE SENATE

Mr. HARKIN. Mr. President, almost 2 years ago I announced I was not going to seek a sixth term in the Senate. That decision and that announcement didn't seem all that difficult or hard at that time. After all, 2 years was a long time off. Since then, I have been busy with hearings, meeting constituents, getting legislation through the HELP Committee, and working on appropriations.

But now, knowing this will be my final formal speech on the floor of the Senate; knowing that in a few days a semitruck is going to pull up to the Hart Senate Office Building and load hundreds of boxes of my records of 40 years—30 in the Senate and 10 in the House—and haul all of that off to Drake University and the Harkin Institute on Public Policy and Civic Engagement in Des Moines, IA; seeing my office at 731 Hart Senate Office Building stripped almost bare and the shelves cleaned; when I will soon cast my last vote; when I will no longer be engaged in legislative battle; when I will no longer be summoned by the Senate bells; and when I will soon just be No. 1,763 of all of the Senators who have ever served in the Senate—now the leaving becomes hard and wrenching and emotional. That is because I love the Senate. I love my work here.

It has been said by a lot of pundits that the Senate is broken. No, it is not. The Senate is not broken. Oh, maybe there are a few dents, a couple of scrapes here and there—banged up a little bit—but there is still no other place in America where one person can do big things—for good or for ill—for our people and our nation.

I love the people with whom I work. This is a deaf sign. ''I-L-Y'' means ''I love you.''

To the Senators, staff, clerks, Congressional Research Service, doorkeepers, cloakroom, police, restaurant employees, and, yes, the pages—and especially to those who labor outside the lights, the cameras, and the news stories—who make this Senate function on a daily basis, I thank you.

I particularly thank my wonderful, dedicated, hard-working staff, both present and past, both personal and committee staff. When I say committee staff, I mean the Appropriations Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services, Education, and Related Agencies, which I have been privileged to chair or be ranking member of since 1989; also the Committee on Agriculture, on which I have served since 1985 and which I chaired twice for two farm bills, once in 2001 and 2002 and the second one in 2007 and 2009; and the Committee on Health, Education, Labor and Pensions, which I have chaired since the untimely death of Senator Ted Kennedy in 2009.

I first heard PAT LEAHY say this, so I always attribute it to him: We Senators are just a constitutional impediment to the smooth functioning of staff. This is truer than most of us would probably like to admit.

Also in thanking my staff, I don't just mean those who work in Washington. I would never have been reelected four times without the hands-on, day in, day out constituent service of my Iowa staff. The casework they have done in helping people with problems is every bit as important as any legislative work done in Washington.

In 2012 our office marked a real milestone—100,000 constituent service cases that we processed since 1985. I cannot count the number of times Iowans have personally thanked me for something my staff has done to help me.

There is a story out our way that I have heard for a long time. It is a little story. If you are driving down a country road and see a turtle—see that image of a turtle—sitting on a fence post, you can be sure of one thing: It didn't get there by itself.

I can relate to that turtle. I didn't get here by myself. My staff helped. I thank my staff, both past and present, who so strongly supported me when I was right and so diplomatically corrected me when I was wrong and who all labored in a shared commitment to provide a hand up, a ladder of opportunity to those who had been dealt a bad hand in the lottery of life.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to have printed in the RECORD a list of the names of my staff so they will be forever enshrined in the history of the Senate.

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

My Personal Office Staff: Brian Ahlberg, Elizabeth Stein, Lindsay Jones, Lilly Hunt, Sonja Hoover, Mandy McClure, Kate Waters, Susannah Cernojevich, Jim Whitmire, Richard Vickers, Katharine Jones, Jayme Wiebold, Joseph Petrzelka, Eric Jones, Elizabeth Messerly, Lauren Scott, Mark Halverson, Eldon Boes, Tom Buttry, Michele Reilly Hall, and Richard Bender. Those staffers serving me in Iowa: Robert Barron, Amy Beller, Alexander Lynch, Pamela Ringleb, John Moreland, Jule Reynolds, Omar Padilla, Robert Hamill, Ryan Helling, Kimberly Taylor, Tamara Milton, Tom Larkin, Alison Hart, Jessica Gordon, Suellen Flynn, and Sandi O'Brien. My LHHS Sub Committee on Appropriations staff: Adrienne Hallett, Kelly Brown, Lisa Bernhardt, Mark Laisch, Mike Gentile, Robin Juliano, and Teri Curtin. Lastly my HELP Committee Staff: Derek Miller, Lauren McFerran, Molly Click, Abraham White, Jenelle Krishnamoorthy, Wade Ackerman, Andi Fristedt, Brian Massa, Colin Goldfinch, Caitlin Boon, Mildred Otero, Aissa Canchola, Amanda Beaumont, Brit Moller, Leanne Hotek, Libby Masiuk, Mario Cardona, Liz Weiss, Michael Kreps, Sarah Cupp, Zachary Schechter Steinberg, Kia Hamadanchy, and Lee Perselay.

Mr. HARKIN. Most of all, I thank my wife, Ruth, the love of my life, my wife of 46 years. You have been my constant companion, my soul mate, my strongest supporter, and my most honest critic. You have been my joy in happy times and my solace when things just didn't go right. So I am looking forward to more adventures, love, and excitement with her in the years ahead.

To our two beautiful, smart, caring, and compassionate daughters, Amy and Jenny, I thank you for always being there for your dad, for giving me such wondrous joy in being a part of your growing up. I am so proud of both of you.

To my son-in-law Steve and to my grand kids, McQuaid, Daisy, and Luke: Look out, because here comes grandpa.

There is so much I want to say, but I want to be respectful of those who have come to share this moment with me—my staff, here and there, my family, friends, and fellow Senators.

But I want to state as briefly as I can why I am here, what has propelled me, and what has been my guiding philosophy for all these years.

It has to do with that ladder of opportunity I just mentioned. You see, there is nothing wrong in America with being a success. There is nothing wrong with having more money, a nicer home, a nicer car, sending your kids to good schools, having nice vacations, and a great retirement. That is a big part of the American dream.

But I believe when you make it to the top, and you make it to the top, and you make it to the top, and I make it to the top, one of the primary responsibilities of our free government is to make sure we leave the ladder down for others to climb. Now, mind you, I said a ladder. I didn't say an escalator. An escalator is a free ride. Don't believe in that.

If you follow my analogy a little bit more, with a ladder you still have to

exert energy, effort, and initiative to get up. But, in order to do that, there must be rungs on that ladder. That is where government comes in, to put some rungs there—the bottom rungs—everything from maternal and child health care programs, Head Start, the best public schools, the best teachers, affordable and accessible college, job training.

Sometimes people fall off that ladder. Sometimes, through no fault of their own, they have an illness, they have an accident. That is why we have a safety net, to catch them—programs like disability insurance, workers' compensation, and job retraining programs to get them back up on that ladder once again.

Thirty-five years ago we looked around America and we saw millions of people who, no matter how hard they tried, could never climb that ladder of success. No matter how hard they tried, they could never do it.

These were our fellow Americans, our brothers and sisters with disabilities. So what did government do? We built them a ramp and we called it the Americans with Disabilities Act.

Again, we didn't build a moving walkway, did we? See, with a ramp, people still had to show energy and initiative to get up. I have often said there is not one dime, not one nickel in the Americans with Disabilities Act given to a person with a disability.

What we did is we broke down the barriers. We opened the doors of accessibility and accommodation, and we said to people with disabilities: Now, go on, follow your dreams, and in the words of the Army motto, be all you can be.

I can remember standing on the floor and leading the charge on the Americans with Disabilities Act. Once again, I felt a lot like that turtle, with a lot of people helping. When I think of the Americans with Disabilities Act, I think of people in the Senate such as Senator Lowell Weicker, Senator Bob Dole, and Senator Ted Kennedy; in the House, Tony Coelho, Steve Bartlett, and STENY HOYER; and in the executive branch, at the head of it all, President George Herbert Walker Bush, Attorney General Dick Thornburgh, and Boyden Gray. On the outside, there are people like Ed Roberts, Marca Bristo, Bob Kafka, and the indomitable Justin Dart.

Here the one person who worked his heart out to bring it together—it is that staff again I tell you about—is Bobby Silverstein. It would have never happened without him.

So I believe government must not be just an observant bystander to life. It must be a force for good, for lifting people up, for giving hope to the hopeless.

I have never had an ''I love me'' wall in the office. What I did have were two items by my door when I walk out to vote or go to a committee meeting or whatever. One is a drawing of a house in which my mother was born and lived in until she was 25 years of age when she immigrated to America. That little house was in Suha, Yugoslavia, and is now Suha, Slovenia. That little house had a dirt floor and no running water. That was my mother's house.

The second item on my wall is my father's WPA card. It says: Notice to Report for Work on Project, WPA Form 402, to Patrick F. Harkin, Cumming, IA. You are asked to report for work at once on a project as a laborer for $40.30 per month. There is a signature by a supervisor. It is dated 7/1939, 4 months to the day before I was born.

My father was then 53 years old. He had worked most of the time in a coal mine in southern Iowa, was not in the best of health. There were no jobs—no jobs. Life looked pretty bleak. Things looked hopeless. And then my father, who only had a sixth-grade education—as he told me later—got a letter from Franklin Roosevelt. He always thought Franklin Roosevelt sent this to him personally. He always said: I got that letter from Franklin Roosevelt, and I got a job.

That was important for a lot of reasons, not only for the money and the dignity of work, but it gave my father hope—hope that tomorrow would be better than today and that our family would stay together. You see, there were five kids and a sixth one on the way—me. It gave him hope that his kids would have a better future.

The project he worked on is called Lake Ahquabi. My friend Senator GRASSLEY knows about Lake Ahquabi. It is right south of Des Moines. It is a State park now, with a lake and recreation, and people still use it today.

Every Federal judge who is sworn in takes an oath to ''do equal right to the poor and to the rich.'' Let me repeat that: to ''do equal right to the poor and to the rich.'' Can we here in Congress say we do that, that we provide equal right to the poor and the rich alike? Our growing inequality proves we are not. Maybe we should be taking that oath.

There are four overriding issues I hope this Senate will address in this coming session and in the years ahead:

No. 1, as I mentioned, the growing economic inequality in America. It is destructive of lives, it slows our progress as a nation, and it will doom broad support for representative government. When people at the bottom of the economic ladder feel the government is not helping them and, in fact, may be stacked against them, they will cease to vote or they will turn to the siren song of extreme elements in our society. History proves this to be true.

I don't have a cookie-cutter answer or a solution, but it must include more fair tax laws and trade laws, more job training and retraining, rebuilding our physical infrastructure, and manufacturing. I believe it must include some things seemingly unrelated, such as quality, free early education for every child in America.

The answer to closing the inequality gap must include rebuilding labor unions and collective bargaining. If you traced the line over the last 40 years of the growing economic inequality in America and also put that over another line showing the loss in the number of union workers, they are almost identical. I do not believe it is a stretch to say that organized labor—unions—built the middle class in America, and they are a part of the answer in strengthening and rebuilding our middle class.

I believe another part of the answer is raising the minimum wage to above the poverty line and indexing it for inflation in the future.

We need more flex-time laws, especially for women in our workforce.

We need to strengthen Social Security, as in Senator BROWN's bill—not cutting, not raising the retirement age, but strengthening Social Security.

We need a new retirement system for all workers in America—not another 401(k) but a system in which employers and employees contribute and which can only be withdrawn as an annuity for life after one retires. I ask you to look at what the Netherlands has, that type of retirement system. Lack of a reliable retirement is one of the most underreported, unexamined crises on our national horizon, and it is a big part of our growing inequality.

Finally, we must continue to build on the Affordable Care Act. The cost and availability of good health care has in the past widened that inequality gap, and we are now starting to close that element of the inequality. I believe we need to add a public option to the exchange as another choice for people. We must continue support for prevention and public health, moving us more and more from sick care to real health care.

I believe that the second overriding issue confronting us is the destruction of the family of man's only home—our planet Earth—through the continued use of fossil fuels. We know what is happening. The science is irrefutable, the data is clear, and the warning signs are flashing in neon bright red: Stop what you are doing with fossil fuels. We must shift massively and quickly to renewable energy, a new smart electric grid, retrofitting our buildings for energy efficiency, and moving rapidly to a hydrogen-based energy cycle.

The third issue I commend to the Senate for further development and changes in existing laws is the underemployment of people with disabilities. As you all know, ensuring the equal rights and opportunities for people with disabilities has been a major part of my work in the Senate for the past 30 years.

We have made significant strides forward in changing America to fulfill two of the four goals of the American with Disabilities Act; those two are full participation and equal opportunity. We have done all right on those. The other two goals—independent living and economic self-sufficiency—need more development.

I ask you all in the next Congress to do two things to advance these two

goals of independent living and economic self-sufficiency: First, help States implement the Supreme Court's decision in the Olmstead case to more rapidly deinstitutionalize people with disabilities and provide true independent living with support services. This will save money, and the lives of people with disabilities will be better and more truly independent. Second, we must do more on employment of people with disabilities in competitive integrated employment.

We all get the monthly unemployment figures every month. Last month unemployment held steady at 5.8 percent officially. My friend Leo Hindery has better calculations to show the real rate is probably about twice that figure. Also, we know the unemployment rate among African Americans is about twice that—11.1 percent. How many of us know, though, that the unemployment rate among adult Americans with disabilities who can work and want to work is over 60 percent? Yes, you heard me right, almost two out of every three Americans with a disability who want to work and who can work cannot find a job. That is a blot on our national character.

Thankfully, some enlightened employers have affirmative action plans to hire more people with disabilities. Employers are finding many times that these become their best employees; they are more productive, and they are the hardest working, most reliable workers.

I ask you to meet with Greg Wasson, the CEO of Walgreens, and Randy Lewis, who was the senior vice president there and is now retired. Walgreens has hired many people with disabilities in their distribution centers, and now Mr. Wasson has set a goal of 10 percent of all of their store employees will be people with disabilities. This needs to be emulated by businesses all over America. There are others making strides in this area. I will mention a few: Best Buy, Lowe's, Home Depot, IBM, Marriott. These are some of the other large companies that are moving forward, hiring people with disabilities. We need to learn from them what we, the Federal and, yes, maybe the State government can do to help in this area. We also need to implement policies to help small businesses employ more people with disabilities.

I dwell on this perhaps because I feel I haven't done enough on this issue of employment for people with disabilities, and we have to do better. I will say, however, that our HELP Committee passed this year and President Obama signed into law a new reauthorization of the old Workforce Investment Act, now named the Workforce Investment and Opportunity Act. In this law there is a new provision I worked on with others to get more intervention in high school for kids with disabilities to prepare them for the workplace through things such as summer jobs, job coaching, internships. However, this is just starting and funding is tight, but it will do much for young people with disabilities to enter competitive integrated employment. I thank all members of the HELP Committee for their support of this bill but especially Senator MURRAY and Senator ISAKSON for taking the lead to get this bill done, along with Senator ENZI, Senator ALEXANDER, and me.

While I am mentioning the HELP Committee, let me thank all members of the HELP Committee for a very productive last 2 years, during which we passed 24 bills signed into law by the President. These are important bills dealing with things such as drug track and tracing, compounding drugs, the Workforce Investment Act that I just mentioned, the Child Care and Development Block Grant Newborn Screening Act, and many more.

I would like to publicly again thank Senator LAMAR ALEXANDER for being such a great partner in all these efforts. Senator ALEXANDER will be taking the helm of this great committee in the next Congress. Senator ALEXANDER certainly has the background to lead this committee, but he also combines that background with a keen mind and a good heart, and I wish him continued success as the new chairman of the HELP Committee.

The fourth issue I hope future Senates will take care of concerns the U.N. Convention on the Rights of Persons With Disabilities. I don't think anything has saddened me more in my 30 years here in the Senate than the failure of this body to ratify the Convention on the Rights of Persons With Disabilities, or the CRPD, as it is known. It has been ratified by 150 nations. It is modeled after our own Americans with Disabilities Act. It has broad and deep support throughout our country—supported by the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, the Business Roundtable, veterans groups, every disability organization, every former living President, every former Republican leader of this Senate: Senator Dole, Senator Lott, Senator Frist. In November we received a letter from the National Association of Evangelicals supporting it.

I would also point out that Senator Dole has worked his heart out on this. If you remember, he was here on the floor 2 years ago this month, right before we brought it up. I thought we had the votes for it. Under our Constitution it takes two-thirds, and we failed by six votes. But Bob Dole has never given up on this—never.

Well, I hope the next Senate will take this up and join with the rest of the world in helping to make changes globally for people with disabilities.

I came to Congress—the House—in 1974 as one of the Watergate babies. But with my retirement and the retirement in the House of Congressman GEORGE MILLER and Congressman HENRY WAXMAN, we are the last of the so-called Watergate babies, with two exceptions. Among all of the Democrats elected in that landslide year of 1974, there were a few Republicans, and one is left—my senior colleague from the State of Iowa, Senator CHUCK GRASSLEY.

I have the greatest respect for and friendship with CHUCK. Several weeks ago, here on the floor, he said some very gracious things about me, and I thank him for that. I especially appreciated his observation that even though he and I are like night and day when it comes to political views, there is no light between us when it comes to Iowa. We have collaborated on so many important initiatives for the people of Iowa, and I think we made a heck of a good tag team on behalf of our State. So, again, I salute and thank my friend and colleague of nearly 40 years, CHUCK GRASSLEY. Carry on, CHUCK.

The other exception I mentioned is again my lifelong dear friend, RICK NOLAN, who was in the 1974 class who voluntarily left Congress after three terms, returned to the House in 2012, and was recently reelected.

So 40 years later, this Watergate baby has grown up, gray.

I came to the Senate 30 years ago as a proud progressive, determined to get things done. As I depart the Senate, I can say in good conscience that I have remained true to my progressiveness.

I have worked faithfully to leave behind a more vibrant Iowa, a more just and inclusive America, and a stronger ladder and ramp of opportunity for the disadvantaged in our communities.

You might say that my career in Congress is the story of a poor kid from Cumming, IA—population 150—trying his best to pay it forward, saying thank you for the opportunities I was given by leaving that ladder and ramp of opportunity stronger for those who follow.

If I have accomplished this in any small way—if any Americans are able to lead better lives because of my work, I leave office a satisfied person.

So I am retiring from the Senate, but I am not retiring from the fight. I will never retire from the fight to ensure equal opportunity, full participation, independent living, and economic self-sufficiency for every disabled person in America. I will never retire from the fight to give a hand up and hope to those who have experienced disadvantage and adversity. And I will never retire from the fight to make this a land of social and economic justice for all Americans.

Let me close with a single word from American sign language.

On July 13 of 1990, I stood here and gave an entire speech in sign language. It confused Senator Kerry who was sitting in the Chair. He didn't know what to do. And the recording clerks didn't know what to do, either. But then I had to give it verbally. Well, I didn't want to do that today.

But there is one sign I want to leave with you. It says something powerful—powerful. One of the most beautiful signs in American Sign Language. And might I teach it to you?

Take your hands and put them together like this, put your fingers together, put your hands together like

that. You kind of close them, and it looks like an A when you do that. Now move it in a circle in front of your body.

That is it, pages, you have got it.

This is the sign for America.

Think about it. Think about it. All of us interconnected, bound together in a single circle of inclusion—no one left out. This is the ideal America toward which we must always aspire.

With that, Mr. President, for the last time, I yield the floor.

(Applause, Senators rising.)

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. KAINE). The Senator from Iowa.

TRIBUTES TO TOM HARKIN

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, my colleagues who are waiting to speak to honor Senator HARKIN, I am not going to take the amount of time I did on his birthday. I want to tell my colleagues that what I said on his birthday, on November 19, I probably should have waited and said today.

But I want to speak about our working relationship, and I want Senator HARKIN to know that I have enjoyed my working relationship with him, together working for Iowa. I compliment him on the many accomplishments he has made. I consider him a friend. And as he goes back to Iowa, we will maintain that friendship, I am sure.

I would ask my colleagues if they would think about looking at what I said before on his birthday, because I am not going to repeat that here. But I think we ought to recognize that Senator HARKIN worked hard up to his last day in the United States Senate, because one of his works over the last 25 years was on inhumane labor issues around the world, and he traveled to Oslo very recently to honor a person who received the Nobel Peace Prize for that crusade, as well as all the good work that Senator HARKIN has done on it. And probably that person received the award because of Senator HARKIN so long suggesting that the individual deserved that attention.

I am going to be very brief today, since my prior remarks outlined our friendship and his record in some detail. It is in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD for posterity.

Senator HARKIN and I have been a duo from our home State of Iowa for a long period of time. His voice is familiar. So is his point of view, so is his work ethic for the people of Iowa.

He has been a champion for individuals with disability, for the elderly, for early childhood education, nutrition, and wellness; for conservation, renewable energy, and the environment. We could go on and on about his passion for these causes, and many others.

Senator HARKIN's legislative accomplishments are numerous. He leaves a lasting body of work that improves the quality of life for people who don't always have a high profile in the Halls of Congress.

One of Senator HARKIN's greatest legacies is his ability to translate his drive and passion into legislative accomplishments. As the saying goes: He doesn't just talk the talk, he walks the walk.

Senator TOM HARKIN lives and breathes the causes important to him, and the United States and Americans have a better quality of life because of it.

It will be a new era when the Senate doesn't see him rising to speak in his characteristic fiery delivery. And it may not have been so fiery today, but he did speak with emotion about the things he believes in.

I am grateful for his friendship and his long service to the people of Iowa and the Nation. While I will miss him around the Capitol, I am confident I will see him at home in Iowa. Senator HARKIN is not one to turn off his enthusiasm for important issues, and I feel sure—and he has already told us today—he will continue his contribution to public service wherever and whenever the spirit moves him. And we know by his statement today it is already moving him. He has plans for the future to continue these crusades.

With that in mind, I will say so long rather than goodbye. Thank you.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Michigan.

Ms. STABENOW. Mr. President, I start by saying that as Senator HARKIN was so eloquently speaking today, it reminded me of a story of those going by the casket of President Roosevelt.

A reporter stopped someone and said: Did you know President Roosevelt?

And he said: No, but he knew me.

There are people across this country—people with disabilities, workers, folks trying hard to get up that ladder—who want to know there are rungs on it, or want to be able to stay in the middle class, who may not be able to say they know Senator TOM HARKIN personally, but he knows them.

We are so grateful, and I am personally grateful, for your friendship and your leadership and mentorship.

I want to speak for a moment as Chair of the Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry Committee, where I had to follow the tough act of Senator TOM HARKIN writing the previous two farm bills.

He has shaped agriculture and food and nutrition policy in the House and Senate for 40 years, having a tremendous impact, more than we can even imagine, in terms of not only advocating for Iowa farmers—and I knew every day what Iowa needed; that is for sure—and having both Senator HARKIN and Senator GRASSLEY on the committee gave the one-two punch for Iowa. But I have to remind all of my colleagues that Senator HARKIN really is the father of modern conservation, of protecting our water and our soil and our air, our wildlife habitat, our forests.

Senator HARKIN is the father of modern conservation. He wrote the conservation stewardship program that he created in 2002 and expanded on in 2008, and we protected it in the last farm bill.

Mr. HARKIN. Thank you.

Ms. STABENOW. And he gave new strength to the farm safety net for all of our growers. He has been at the forefront of an energy future that he talked about today, driven by renewable energy and moving forward to get us to cleaner sources of energy. That creates jobs, as I know has happened in Iowa because of his leadership. So we thank you.

There are so many things—the fresh fruit and vegetable program in schools where children in low-income schools have an opportunity to eat an apple rather than something out of the vending machine that isn't good for them, the opportunities for children to have healthier choices. Senator HARKIN has led over and over and over again. I can go over every part of our agriculture and food policy improvements that have been made that have been led by Senator TOM HARKIN, and we are so grateful.

Senator TOM HARKIN has been a personal mentor for me. In the toughest times of getting this last farm bill done, Senator HARKIN gave me words of advice and wisdom—and many times encouragement—and for that I am very grateful, and have learned so much.

I secondly want to thank Senator HARKIN for being a hero for generations of people with disabilities, including people in my own family, who have had doors opened because of what he has done. The Americans with Disabilities Act revolutionized the possibilities and the opportunities for people. And it is about opportunity; it is not about giving people something for free, but opening doors which they still have to walk through. Senator HARKIN has done that in a way that will be with us forever, when we look at building structures and opportunities in workplaces for people who want to work but just need a little different kind of opportunity and now have that available.

It was clear when Senator HARKIN spoke about his family how it shaped his sensibilities and passions. I remember his speaking about growing up in a two-bedroom house in Cumming, IA, that he shared with his parents and five siblings. That is pretty challenging. Growing up with his brother Frank who was born deaf gave him an understanding of the obstacles to those with disabilities and a commitment came from his heart and soul about making life better—and he has. You have.

I recall also when he talked about his father losing his 40-acre farm, and the New Deal giving him a chance to support you and to support your family despite the fact that he had a sixth grade education. He had the opportunity to move ahead and work hard because somebody out there, who didn't know his name, gave him an opportunity to do so, which is what is our job to do.

I know Senator HARKIN's crusades to protect workers on the job was influenced by witnessing his father struggle with black lung disease, looking at him as a coal miner and what he went through.

I believe Senator HARKIN is the definition of a self-made man. He grew up taking advantage of opportunities as well as enduring the challenges and the circumstances of his life, transforming and using that experience to create better opportunities for everyone across the country.

He is a patriot, having served in the Navy. He gained his education through the GI bill and understands that is an important part of creating opportunity and giving back to people who serve for us and lay their lives on the line for us.

I know you are totally committed in your heart and soul to education starting at birth right on through for the rest of our lives.

So I want to thank you, finally, for your leadership on the HELP Committee, your hard work and your passion in health care, your support working with me on mental health care, your efforts on education, your efforts in pensions—which, by the way, are promises we need to keep. All of the things you have done through the HELP Committee are things that will last for a long time to come.

I know in Iowa, thanks to you, there are 8 times more community health centers then there were 25 years ago—wow—so somebody can see a doctor and they can take their children to a doctor, which will live on in their lives.

I want to thank you for being someone who knows how to make laws, somebody who wants to solve problems, who in his heart and soul is passionately, lovingly concerned about our country. I know that you and Ruth and your daughters and your grandchildren will have many more opportunities to enjoy each other's lives but know there are people in this country who are enjoying opportunities because of you, and we salute you.

Thank you, Mr. President.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Tennessee.

Mr. ALEXANDER. Senator HARKIN's legacy is he stands as a champion of Americans with disabilities. It will be a long time before there is a greater champion of Americans with disabilities in this body and I salute him for that.

I salute him secondly for his leadership and style of leadership. I had the privilege of the last 2 years as ranking member of the HELP Committee. Senator Kennedy used to say that we have 30 percent of the jurisdiction of the Senate, and it seems like it sometimes. If you know our committee, down one row is the murderers' row of liberals or progressives who are of the Democratic persuasion; and down the other side is a pretty good row of conservatives of the Republican persuasion—12 on this side, 10 on this side. So we have plenty of differences of opinions and we don't hesitate to express them. Yet during these 2 years, Senator HARKIN and his leadership style have found a way for there to be 24 pieces of legislation, signed by the President of the United States, many of them very significant, some of which took several years to do, whether it was the compounding pharmacy, which was so important in our State, the tragedy of meningitis from unsterile products; whether it was the track-and-trace legislation or the changes in workforce development that gave more discretion to Governors and the citizens in their communities. His style of leadership permitted that to happen and I am grateful to him for that. I would suggest to the Senate as we look forward to a time when the Senate might be more functional and more productive that one way to earn the respect of the people of this country for this body, which is supposed to be the one authentic piece of genius of the American political system, is to look at the way the Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions Committee has operated over the last 3 years under the leadership of Senator HARKIN. I salute him for his service and I thank him for that.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Minnesota.

Mr. FRANKEN. I rise to talk about Senator HARKIN. As the soon-to-be Chairman of the HELP Committee, Senator ALEXANDER is right about the HELP Committee, it is an important committee. Sometimes I say it is not that important unless you care about your health, your kids' health, your parents' health, your kids' education or your education, if you want to work sometime in your life, and you plan to retire. Other than that, it is not very important.

But I want to talk a little bit about TOM HARKIN, not as a Senator but as a staffer. We have seen today when the Senators give their final speeches, they talk about their staff. TOM came in 1969 as a staffer for Neal Smith from Iowa. The staffers, as much as we treasure our staffers, they love this work for their Member and they love working in this institution, and they love working in Congress—at that point he was in the House. So at this point he is, I believe, 29 or 30 years old. This was during the Vietnam war, and there was something called Vietnamization. President Nixon asked a congressional delegation to go to Vietnam to look at how Vietnamization was working and what was going on. While TOM HARKIN was there as a staffer, a couple of Congressmen were told about some conditions on an island called Con Son where there were prisoners that the South Vietnamese Government was abusing very badly. The Congressmen requisitioned a plane to go to Con Son, about 100 miles off the coast of the mainland of Vietnam, and I believe the supervisor of the group who was there to talk about the Vietnam prison system said this was sort of like a Boy Scout recreational camp—that is exactly what he said.

So when they landed there, TOM took a couple staffers and Members, got a map from someone who had told him about this secret prison, and found it, where there were people being horribly abused. TOM took pictures. TOM was told to turn over the film. TOM didn't turn over the film. TOM was then told that his employment in the Congress depended on him turning over that film—a 30-year-old staffer at the beginning of what most staffers hope is a career. That film showed up in ''Life'' magazine and had a profound effect, and TOM's career was over.

That takes a lot of guts. That takes courage. That takes the courage of your convictions, and that is what I have seen in TOM HARKIN. I learned about this when Franni and I went with Ruth and TOM on a codel to Vietnam. I just spoke about CARL LEVIN and talked about a codel with him, and I talked about this codel with TOM. I have got to go on more codels, I just figured out.

This is what I observed, because this was the Chairman of the HELP Committee, and I got to watch that courage and that courage of his convictions, as well as what LAMAR talked about, working well across party lines.

I hold the seat that Paul Wellstone formerly held. I would say that TOM was Paul's best friend. TOM every once in a while talks about his brother and the experiences behind TOM's signature achievement, the Americans with Disabilities Act. Paul Wellstone led on mental health and mental health parity, and that was because of his brother. And that is the legacy I want to carry on. I have not had Paul here to be a role model, but I have had TOM HARKIN, and it has been a privilege.

I thank the Senator.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Minnesota.

Ms. KLOBUCHAR. Mr. President, we are going to continue with the Minnesota theme, and I think Senator HARKIN knows that our two States, Minnesota and Iowa, share more than just a border. We share a lot of people with relatives on either side of the border. I cannot tell you how many of my friends have their roots in Iowa and how many people in Iowa have their kids in Minnesota.

We also share citizens who have a strong sense of involvement. We have some of the highest voter turnouts in the country. We both have notorious caucus systems where people like to turn out and make their views known, and our States have produced politicians such as TOM HARKIN and Hubert Humphrey, who came up through that tradition and understand that you are there to represent the people of your State because when you go home, they actually come up to you in grocery stores, on the street, call you by your first name, and understand that you are there to represent them.

We also share farming and we share this enormous belief in science. We actually share Norman Borlaug. There is

a new statute—the Presiding Officer must go see it—of Norman Borlaug in Statutory Hall. He was born in Iowa and studied in Iowa, but also studied at the University of Minnesota. He created the Green Revolution, which has helped so many impoverished people in countries all over the world by reducing hunger.

TOM HARKIN has followed in that tradition. He believes in science, believes in investing in agriculture research, and believes in investing NIH.

The other thing about TOM and me that I knew no other Senator would address is our Slovenian heritage. When TOM leaves—and I see Senator BROWN is here—and with the former Senator from Ohio, Senator Voinovich, no longer here, I will remain, I think, as the only Slovenian Senator here. I am hoping someone will come forward and tell me they have Slovenian blood. For a while 3 percent of the U.S. Senate had roots in Slovenia, which is very interesting given how infinitesimal the population of the country is compared to the rest of the world.

TOM loves his Slovenian roots. Like TOM, my ancestors came from Slovenia to America to work in the mines. It is a big part of our lives and what we believe in.

One time TOM came to my Minnesota Morning breakfast and saw that every Thursday I serve potica to my constituents, and that is unique to Slovenians. It is a rolled dough with either apples or walnuts in it. My grandma used to make it. She would literally borrow card tables and roll the dough throughout her entire kitchen.

I found a number of places on the Iron Range of northern Minnesota, where my dad grew up, that make this potica, and we bring it in.

TOM came and tried it and decided that for Christmas he would send a potica to every Member of the Senate for Christmas. He called my office and said they don't make it in Iowa. I said, let me give you the name of a baker on the Iron Range. He personally called this woman and said: This is TOM Harkin. I am the Senator from Iowa. I am calling to order 100 poticas from you, one for every Member of the Senate for Christmas. And in very gruff Slovenian fashion, she said: I am sorry, it is Christmas, and we are booked. We do not have the poticas to send to Washington, DC. Then he said: I don't know if you know who I am. I chair the Agriculture and Forestry Committee—big forestry area—of the Senate. And she said: I know exactly who you are, but we do not have the poticas to send to Washington.

So at that moment, he called me. I gave him the names of a number of other bakers, he found one, and every Senator got a potica for Christmas.

The last thing I will say about TOM that we share in common—we both represent States that believe in helping people who are the most vulnerable. He did that with his support for small farmers with the farm bill, and he did that in his support for the disability community.

I was at the House this week talking about the ABLE Act with some of the Members, and to a tee, every Republican brought up—because TOM could not be there—TOM's work on the ABLE Act. They knew we would not have the bill that Senator CASEY worked on without TOM Harkin, and, as you know, this is just the next step for the disability community. It will allow parents and grandparents and friends and neighbors to set up funds so that if they are not there when this young person grows up, there will be money set aside for them.

TOM Harkin was Paul Wellstone's best friend in the Senate. Paul would say: Politics is about improving people's lives. That is what TOM has done every day in the Senate.

Thank you, TOM.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Connecticut.

Mr. MURPHY. Mr. President, in January of last year, I walked onto the Senate floor for the second time in my life. The first time that I got to be on the Senate floor was in 1995 when I was an intern for my Senator, Chris Dodd. Back then it was a little bit easier for interns to come here, and he brought me down to the Senate floor one afternoon.

I knew what I wanted to do. I had a small handful of people I wanted to meet. I don't know if I ever told this to TOM, but I wanted to meet TOM HARKIN, and I got to do that. Twenty years ago he was a giant in the Senate. The one point I wish to make is this—I had the chance to serve with TOM on the HELP Committee and I have seen his legislative ability and the respect he commands here, but I have only known him for 2 years.

Anyway, the point I want to make is that the effect he has had on the legislative process stands as an achievement in and of itself. I would argue that I am one of tens of thousands of public servants who decided to go into this line of work, decided to care about the kind of things I care about because I watched TOM HARKIN on TV growing up.

I came from a family that was nonpolitical. My parents were both registered Republicans. There is no genetic reason why I do this other than seeing people like TOM fight on behalf of the disabled and the disenfranchised and the dispossessed. He gave me the idea that there was some worth to being in this line of work. If you grew up after Vietnam, you were taught this was crooked or not worth being a part of, and then there was a handful of people like TOM HARKIN who told you it was worth being a part of.

The legacy that Senator HARKIN will have—whether it is the farm bill, the Americans with Disabilities Act, or the Workforce and Investment Act, that is all you need to leave this place fulfilled. But to think there are tens of thousands of people who, like me, are doing this kind of work and trying to keep up the legacy you are going to leave is something to be proud of as well. I feel lucky to be a Member of this body in part because I got to meet TOM HARKIN 20 years ago, I was able to follow his lead, and I was able to be inspired by him.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Ohio.

Mr. BROWN. TOM HARKIN is my hero. TOM HARKIN has never shied away from a fight when it comes to workers rights not only for Iowa but for workers all across the country and workers around the world.

He has come to many of us repeatedly and said: Don't forget what our obligation is to the community of men and women around the world who labor with their hands, who fight challenges every day, who are abused in the workplace, who are abused as children in the workplace, and TOM HARKIN has been the single strongest voice for as long as I can remember for those workers.

TOM comes from a right-to-work State. It is not always easy to stand up for labor unions and organized labor. We have a press and media in this country which is consistently anti-labor.

We have a political class in this country at every opportunity that tries to undermine organized labor and undermine the rights of human beings to organize and bargain collectively, and TOM recognized that is one of most important rights that human beings have.

TOM HARKIN, being from a right-to-work State, knows he will face a difficult election darn near every 6 years. One of the little-noted historical facts about TOM HARKIN—and I have not heard anyone else mention—is that Senator HARKIN has defeated more incumbent Members of Congress than any elected official in United States history, and that is not because of the luck of the draw or some lottery in Des Moines or Iowa City or Davenport. It is because TOM HARKIN doesn't shy away from his strong beliefs in the rights of humanity—organizing and collective bargaining rights. When you are willing to stand up day after day—not just in quiet groups in the Democratic Caucus—on this floor and you are willing to stand up in Dubuque and the more conservative parts of southwest Iowa and argue for labor rights, you are saying to the other side: Bring them on. Bring on big money, bring on anti-labor forces. He expected to have tough elections, and that is why TOM HARKIN is my hero and always will be.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Oregon.

Mr. MERKLEY. Mr. President, I too rise to share a few comments about my friend TOM HARKIN who has contributed so much to this fight and to put rungs on the ladder so ordinary people across America have a fair shot to thrive.

When I first came out here as an intern in 1976, you were already over on

the House side—no, not yet. It was about 1974, and I was working away, so I didn't get to meet you then. But there were a series of speeches by Senators when I was an intern here on the Senate side, and one of them was by Hubert Humphrey.

Hubert Humphrey was well known for saying that a society should be judged by how they treat those in the dawn of their lives, children, the twilight of their lives, seniors, and those who are in the shadow, the sick and disabled. When I think of that vision, I see TOM HARKIN. I see TOM HARKIN fighting for children who are oppressively working around the world under unacceptable circumstances. TOM HARKIN carries out the fight for those children and for children's health care.

I have seen him fight for our seniors, and just this week he was speaking passionately about the obligations we have to honor the retirement strategy so people can serve their senior years in dignity. He fights for those who are disabled, which we have heard about so much today.

I thank TOM HARKIN for taking his years on this planet and dedicating them to this battle for those in the dawn of their life, for those in the twilight of their life, and for those in the shadows. No one has done a better job.

I also wish to thank TOM for the recent battles I have had a chance to be a part of—the fight to end discrimination in the workplace for our LGBT community, which you shepherded through your committee and got to the floor for the first time in which this bill has been enforced since 1996, and proceeded to pass by a 2-to-1 bipartisan majority because of that firm foundation laid out in the committee.

I wish to thank you for your minimum wage bill and for saying to America: Here is a vision: No one who works full time should live in poverty. That is absolutely right. We didn't win the battle over minimum wage, but we advanced the conversation—you advanced the conversation. I thank you for doing so, and for carrying out battle after battle, and in so many cases, succeeding. And in those cases when the circumstances weren't yet all lined up, you continued the fight, carried the voice so we would find that moment in the future when we could secure a victory for ordinary working people, for those who are disabled, for our children, and for our seniors.

I thank you for your service in the Senate. Well done.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Delaware.

Mr. CARPER. The Senator from Oregon has thanked TOM for his service in the Senate. I wish to thank him for his service before he was in the Senate when he and I were kids—well, not exactly—but when we served in the United States services. We spent some time in airplanes—not in the same airplane, but roughly at the same time. A lot of times people come up to me and thank me for my service in the Navy—and I am sure they do that with you—and I tell them that I loved it. I loved the men and women I served with, I loved the missions, and it was an honor to do that. I wanted to start off by thanking you for that, and to say that is one of the bonds which has drawn us together as friends right from the start.

The Senator from Oregon mentioned your strong effort to raise the minimum wage, which ultimately was not successful. I want to mention a couple of issues I have had the privilege of working on with you that I think have been very successful. There is a battle that needs to continue to be fought, and I plan to continue to do that, and my hope is that you and others will do it too.

As veterans, I know how important the GI bill was for me and for you as well. I think we got about $250 a month on the GI bill, and I was happy to have every dime of it. I moved from California to the University of Delaware when I got out of the Navy, got an MBA, and I still flew for the Navy and the Reserves, and it was a huge help for me.

The folks who get the GI bill today come back from Afghanistan and Iraq or wherever, and if they have served for 3 years they get the GI bill, as you know, and that means they get full tuition. If they go to the University of Iowa, Delaware State, Iowa State, they get free tuition. They get free books, fees, tutoring. In my State they get a $1,500-a-month housing allowance. That is the GI bill today.

There are a bunch of colleges around the country that—just as they did when my dad came back from World War II or when my Uncle Ed came back from the Korean war, others have come back from Vietnam and so forth—there are scam artists involved with postsecondary training schools, sometimes colleges, and they see the GI with that benefit, and they see it as if it were a dollar sign on their back, and they want to go after the dollar sign and separate the value from the benefit.

The Senator from Iowa has worked on this so hard, trying to make sure—there are plenty of for-profit postsecondary schools and such that do a good job, and there are some that don't. Nobody has been as active in trying to make sure that we clean this up as you have been, my friend, and my friend from Illinois, DICK DURBIN, and I am pleased to be the wingman on this. I promise that Senator DURBIN and I aren't going away. The folks who do this job right, the for-profits that are doing a good job by veterans and taxpayers, we salute them; and those who do not, we are going after them. So I thank you and your staff for standing up for veterans consistently.

The other thing I wanted to mention is that many people are having lunch right now across the eastern part of our country, maybe getting ready, over in Iowa, to have some lunch. If people go into a chain restaurant where there are 15 or more restaurants in that chain across the country—I think it is 15 or 20—they look at the menu to order, and right there they see the calories. If they want more information about the fats, trans fats, the amount of sodium in the food—all kinds of information—they get it.

We are a nation where obesity is a huge problem, a huge cost driver in health care. I thank the Senator for leading the charge on menu labeling, which is the reality in our country, and you should feel good about that. I feel very good about that.

It has been a blessing knowing you and serving with you, TOM. There is an old saying: Flattery won't hurt you if you don't inhale. You are having a lot of flattery thrown at you here today, so don't breathe too deeply and you should be OK.

We thank and salute you and your wife Ruth and your family. In the Navy, when people have done a really good job, we say words like ''bravo zulu,'' and I say bravo zulu to you. When people are ready to weigh anchor and sail off into the sunrise, we say things like ''fair winds and following seas,'' and I say that to you as well. God bless you.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Illinois.

Mr. DURBIN. I will speak briefly because I put a statement in the RECORD, but I just want to say, TOM, that next to the State of Illinois, I spend more time campaigning in your State of Iowa than any other State. Obviously the Presidential caucus brought me over there, and I have come to know your home State of Iowa and to appreciate that even though there is an extraordinary Iowa-Illinois democratic organization, it is a tough State and there are elections that are hotly contested.

I recall that when I was running for the Senate in 1996, you called into our headquarters and spoke to my campaign manager, who said: How is it going, Senator HARKIN?

And you said: I am besieged.

It was a tough campaign, but you survived it and many others. I think it is because of two things: No. 1 is your dogged determination, and No. 2 is your commitment to values that you have never given up on.

I think there is an authenticity to TOM HARKIN that has saved him in tough years. People who disagreed with you respected you because you stood up for what you believed in. Some of the ideals you and I believe in may not be as fashionable politically as they once were. There was once a time when I worked for a man named Paul Douglas who called himself in the Senate ''a good liberal.'' You don't hear that word much anymore, do you? But the fact is, those of us who believe there are moments in our Nation's history and in the lives of ordinary people where the American family, through our government, needs to step in and help—and you have done it. You have done it so

many times. I won't repeat all that has been said, but whether you were fighting for working families, fighting for the poor, fighting for the disabled, fighting to make sure every family had peace of mind when it came to food safety—I am not sure that has been mentioned, but the Senator from Iowa worked on that, and I thank him for that leadership and inspiration.

Finally, let me say I have been happy to team up with you on this issue involving for-profit schools.

I will tell my colleagues that the Senator's hearings set a standard in terms of asking the right questions and hard questions of an industry that by and large exploits young people and their families, sinking these kids deep in debt at the expense of American taxpayers and doing it many times with the promise of nothing but a worthless diploma when it is all over.

I know, because I have tried, that the industry—the for-profit colleges have friends in high places in Washington, DC. I can promise you this: As long as I can do it physically, I will continue to wage this battle in your name and in your memory because of all your leadership in this area.

Thank you for being a friend. Thank you for being a neighbor. And thank you for really standing up for the right causes over the course of your public service.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Vermont.

Mr. SANDERS. Mr. President, I am going to be brief. The truth is that the Senator we are honoring right now, TOM HARKIN, will go down in history as one of the great Senators of this particular period in American history. Not many Senators, if any, have a list of enormous accomplishments anywhere close to what Senator HARKIN has accomplished.

I would like to tell my colleagues a little story. It turns out that coincidentally, really, I have traveled with Senator HARKIN to a number of places around the world as part of congressional delegations. Like most congressional delegations, we meet with the leadership of the country, the President and so forth. But what was interesting in traveling with Senator HARKIN is wherever you go, he gets honored by ordinary people in those countries.

We went to Vietnam a number of years ago. Many people will not remember, but the truth is that one of the very first people ever to expose the terrible prison conditions that the South Vietnam Government had established was TOM HARKIN. So we go there and we meet people who had been imprisoned in tiger cages, and they said: Senator HARKIN, thank you very much for exposing those conditions and improving our lives.

There was a very emotional response.

Then I go with him to Ghana, and it turns out that in Ghana and in countries in Africa, TOM HARKIN had been a leader in fighting against child labor. There were kids 8 or 9 years of age who should be in school who were out picking crops. And TOM HARKIN, working with people all over the world, had a real impact on getting those kids into school.

We went to a school, a beautiful school which is partially funded by the U.S. Government. We have bright kids who are in school, and they were so proud of the assistance we had given them, where they were in school and not working in fields.

Then we go to Chile. We go to Chile and we meet with the President of Chile, all the dignitaries of Chile. Who knew this? We go to Chile, and TOM HARKIN gets an award from the government.

In the very dark days of the Pinochet government, when the democratically elected President of Chile, Salvador Allende, was overthrown in a violent coup by Pinochet—with, unfortunately, the assistance of the U.S. Government—and people were rounded up and put into prison camps and tortured and killed, TOM HARKIN goes knocking on the door to one of the prison camps. He goes knocking on the door—pretty crazy, but that is what he did. He was met with soldiers with guns. But he exposed that particular prison camp and played a role in facilitating the ending of some of the more barbaric actions of the Pinochet government.

Those are three trips I made with him. That is about all. I am sure he has gone on other trips. That is a pretty good record, internationally.

Then, back home, in terms of disability issues, I can remember and others can remember that 30, 40, 50 years ago, families had kids born with disabilities, and often those kids were institutionalized, they were hidden, they were an embarrassment to the family. Something bad happened; there was a child with a disability—Down syndrome, whatever it may be. Think about the revolution that has taken place, the mainstreaming of those kids. I know in Vermont and all over this country, kids with disabilities who are sitting in classrooms right now, loved and respected by their fellow students, educating their fellow students, making them more human, more compassionate. I think many of us have been to high school graduations where people with disabilities get their diploma and people stand up and applaud those kids.

There has been a transformation of the culture in terms of how we deal with people with disabilities through the Americans with Disabilities Act. That didn't happen by accident. TOM HARKIN wasn't the only person who did it, but he helped lead the effort here in the U.S. Congress to say that people with disabilities are part of the human community and we are going to treat them with the dignity they deserve.

Then we have all the other issues that people have talked about. Probably nobody in the Congress has been a stronger fighter for working people and organized labor than TOM HARKIN.

I think people come here, regardless of political persuasion, to try to make a difference and do what they think is right. We disagree about what is right, but I think when we look at the list of accomplishments and the enormously hard work that has gone into those accomplishments, this man, TOM HARKIN, will go down as one of the great Senators of our period.

TOM, thank you so much for all you have done.

Mr. HATCH. Mr. President, I wish to recognize a dear friend, Senator TOM HARKIN. Senator HARKIN will be retiring at the end of the month, but his influence will be felt long after he leaves this Chamber. I speak for all of my colleagues when I say he will be sorely missed.

I consider myself lucky to have worked with TOM, and even luckier to call him a friend. TOM has devoted his life to public service.

Like any good statesman, TOM is humble about his achievements. Humility is a trait so often lacking in accomplished men, but TOM is an exception. The allure and glamor of Beltway life never held sway over TOM, and his years spent in the Nation's capital have only shown that he is an Iowa man through and through.

The only thing that runs deeper than TOM's Iowa roots is the corn that grows there. TOM still lives in the very same house in the very same town where he was born—Cumming, IA, population: 383—a far cry from this bustling metropolis. His family still keeps a farm in Cumming, and I am sure he looks forward to spending many peaceful days there in his retirement.

TOM grew up in a family of modest means. His father was a coal miner and his mother a Slovenian immigrant who passed away when TOM was just 10 years old. From an early age, TOM developed his signature work ethic by taking various odd jobs on farms, at construction sites, and even in a bottling plant.

TOM's service to our Nation began long before he came to Congress. He attended Iowa State University on a Navy ROTC scholarship and served as an active-duty Navy pilot for 5 years after graduation. Even after his full-time military service, he continued to serve as a pilot in the Naval Reserve. TOM is a man who always has and always will put our country first. Even though he and I often disagreed on matters of policy, I always knew that TOM had the best interests of our Nation and those of his constituents in mind.

TOM and I first became good friends when I joined him in sponsoring the Americans with Disabilities Act in 1989. At the time, TOM was a first-term Senator approaching reelection, and to support the ADA was politically risky. But true to form, TOM bucked political expediency to champion a law that the

late Senator Ted Kennedy would describe as the ''emancipation proclamation'' for those with disabilities. Although the ADA faced serious opposition, passing this legislation was personal for TOM, whose brother, Frank, grew up deaf, and whose nephew was quadriplegic. In the lives of these loved ones, TOM saw how lack of opportunities for persons with disabilities could make their lives all the more challenging.

My friendship with TOM was forged in the battles we fought to move the ADA through both chambers of Congress. I will never forget the day the Senate passed the bill in 1989. After the vote, TOM and I left the floor and walked into the anteroom, where there were hundreds of persons with disabilities in wheelchairs, on crutches, and with various other disabilities waiting to receive us. Overcome with emotion, both of us broke down and cried. It was a moment I will never forget.

I am not exaggerating when I say that TOM's work on this hallmark legislation will have resounding effects for generations to come. Because of the ADA, millions of Americans with disabilities can now pursue the American Dream.

Throughout his Senate career, TOM has always been there to help those who could not help themselves. His work has affected the lives of millions. Senator HARKIN deserves not only our recognition, but also our gratitude. I want to wish him, his wife Ruth, and their family all the best.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Oklahoma.

Mr. INHOFE. Mr. President, I have a parliamentary inquiry. It is my understanding that we were to begin at 12 o'clock for 3 hours until the first motion on the NDAA, and that would begin now, it looks like, about an hour late; is that correct?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, there will now be 3 hours of debate, with 1 hour each for the Senator from Oklahoma, Mr. COBURN, and the Senator from Nevada, Mr. REID, and with 30 minutes each for the Senator from Alaska, Ms. MURKOWSKI, and the Senator from Oklahoma, Mr. INHOFE, or their designees.

Mr. INHOFE. Thank you, Mr. President. Before the Senator from Iowa leaves, let me make one comment. I look at him and all of those who are saying nice things about the Senator from Iowa—and I am from Iowa, so I can say this. My colleagues need to remember that even conservatives can love TOM HARKIN. I think it is important for people to understand that.

I have to say that I have been to I think at least 10 of the airshows, and spending 90 percent of my time—my wife and his wife, the four of us together, because we are both pilots—sitting around and lying about airplanes, we got real close to each other.

I can say the same thing about my good friend Senator SANDERS, and I have said this on the floor before: The two of you are two of my favorite in-the-heart liberals because you are not ashamed of it. You stand up—exactly what the Senator from Vermont just said. The things that I have seen you do, you have a big heart. You have your own philosophy. You are not a demagogue. You live your philosophy.

So I just want you to know there are a lot of Republicans who love Senator HARKIN just as much as the liberals do. All right. Thank you.

We should have started with Senator LEVIN and myself kicking this off. I think we were a little bit late in starting, so Senator LEVIN is not here now. He will be here in about 30 minutes.

Let me make one comment about Senator LEVIN. I did so this morning. This person chairing these committees—and he has been through 16 of the NDAAs in the past, and no one else can say that. No other Member has ever done that. Over his 36 years of service, he has concentrated on his concern for the defense of America. This is interesting because as the ranking member on the Senate Armed Services Committee, he and I have worked together. We even participated in two of the events called the Big 4.

The Chair knows this, but some of my colleagues may not. When it comes time and the committees are unable to pass a bill, then the ranking member and the chairman of the House and the ranking member and the chairman of the Senate—the Big 4—get together and they draft a bill. That is what happened this year and last year.

Last year I was getting panicky because we didn't pass that bill until December 26. What would happen if we didn't, then it would be a crisis on December 31. So I want to say, Senator LEVIN, I have enjoyed—I regret we won't be able to have the same positions because, of course, Senator LEVIN is—such as our friend from Iowa—retiring after this term.

Let me mention the NDAA bill is the most important bill we do every year. I don't think anyone is ever going to debate that. We had the 52 consecutive years—and this is going to be the 53rd consecutive year we have been able to pass it. It seems as though each year it is always hard to do, because at the last minute there are other people who want to get things in the bill that were not there. But we have to keep in mind, in defense of the big-four approach to this, we passed this bill. We passed it out of the Senate Armed Services Committee on May 23. We have been wanting to get it on floor since May 23.

Senator LEVIN and I have come down countless times and begged our colleagues on the Democratic side and the Republican side to get their amendments down so we could consider their amendments. We had a lot of amendments that did come down. Of the amendments that came down, I am very proud to say that we incorporated almost all of them. Forty-seven of those amendments are a part of this bill. So it is not as if the amendments were considered.

I know some people who are opposed to this bill may come along later and say we didn't consider all the amendments. We considered almost all of them but adopted 47 of the amendments which is a record. In spite of the pushing for months on the NDAA—I don't know what the reasons were and I am not going to point the fingers, but we didn't get it on the floor—we have to do it at the last minute. I want to just say, in my heart I believe—I know the House wound up most of their business—but if we don't pass this bill, there is no other train leaving this station. There is no other way to do it, because in this bill, when people stop and think about it, there are some things I don't like about the bill. I have to admit that, but there are so many good things. If we go through December 31, and this is the reminder we have to have in our own minds, we have right now 1,779,343 enlisted personnel who are in service right now. They will lose their benefits if we don't pass this bill. I am talking about reenlistment bonuses.

I asked the chair, do you realize—I think he does but not many people do—just flight pay. There is a huge pilot shortage right now because the private sector is hiring them up and we are having a hard time keeping them. We have a flight pay incentive. That incentive would go way.

Does it mean anything? Yes. It is a $25,000 incentive, and it lasts for—it goes for 10 years each year. But if they wake up on January 1 and find out they don't have their flight pay incentive, how many of these existing warriors in the sky are going to drop out and go to work for one of the airlines? I don't know. But a lot of them will, I can assure you of that.

I think we need to remind people how much it costs to train a new one. Instead of a $25,000 bonus to reach the standards of the level of an F–22 pilot, it costs $17 million. Stop and think about the millions and millions of dollars that would be lost just from the flight pay. These things are happening.

A lot of good things are in this bill and some are controversial. The housing starts are in this bill—none of the housing starts. I am talking about military construction for our kids that are out there. One of the controversial areas is in Gitmo. This is one of the very few areas where Chairman LEVIN and I disagreed with each other. Gitmo is a resource that can't be replaced. He would be for closing it.

We are now keeping the restrictions we have right now and keeping it open for another year so we can look at it next year and spend more time on it.

We have the counterterrorism partnership funds, and so many of these things are in this bill that I think are very significant. We are supporting the needed Aircraft Modernization Program. You hear a lot about the F–35. The F–22 was terminated by the President and terminated 6 years ago. So

what we have in the fifth-generation aircraft, that is it, the F–35.

What we are doing is continuing with that modernization program, a controversial area. The support for ground support is the A–10. The A–10 is probably the ugliest airplane in the sky, but you ask any of our troops on the ground what they want to see coming when they are in danger, it is the A–10. That is going to continue. There is not going to be one reduction in that.

I know the Armed Services Committee next year will look at that freshly and maybe make changes. AWACS, the President wanted to take seven of the AWACS planes out, and that would be 25 percent of the AWACS fleets. That is a great big plane that has a circle on the top that goes out and brings back information to save lives. That is there.

The authorizing the military construction of family housing projects that has been started, they would come to a stop without this bill. That means we would have paid the contractors. There are going to be breach-of-contract lawsuits and everything else.

I will only mention one other thing—the Russian-made rocket engines. A lot of people hear about that and they say: Why in the world, with all the problems with Putin, with what is going on in the Ukraine, around the world—I just got back from Lithuania, and I also went over to Ukraine. I am seeing things with our allies over there that they would ask the question: Why are you buying Russian-made rocket engines? We are, but those are being fazed out. We have directed the Secretary of Defense to develop a U.S. rocket to replace that rocket. That is going on right now.

By the way, I have to say this. I mentioned Ukraine. I can't tell you, when we look and see what is happening over there—I had a great experience. I was over there just 3 days before our elections. It happened to be 3 days after their elections. In the Ukraine, President Poroshenko was so proud, and he sat there and told me: In Ukraine, we have to get 5 percent of the vote to have a seat in Parliament. The Communists, for the first time in 96 years, didn't get 5 percent. So there will not be one Communist in Parliament in Ukraine. That is incredible. Those are our friends over there. They are the ones we need to keep our defense strong, and we directly address that in this bill.

I will only say one thing about the lands package. It is the most controversial part of this bill because it is something which has nothing to do with Defense. On the other hand, when we are in negotiations and there are some things that should not perhaps come in, in this forum, and I thought—I even characterized it as outrageous at the time that that was made part of this bill. I have to say this—any changes in the bill, by the way, are going to result in not having a bill, and all the things I just mentioned would happen. But I started reading some of these provisions from a conservative Republican's perspective, getting in and being able to produce and drill in some of the public lands, let some of our public lands rejoice in this revolution that we are having out there with shale. The ranchers in Oklahoma tell me the grazing rights issues that are in these land packages are good. I hear some people saying, well, there is something to do with a women's committee starting or something like that.

Let's keep in mind, I say to my fellow conservatives, that if MARSHA BLACKBURN's bill that became a part of this bill—now, it shouldn't have happened, but nonetheless it did. It is so overriding we pass a bill and not allow something like that to actually kill the bill.

I would say we are still a nation at war right now. We will be back to discuss this further, and I do want to have an opportunity to respond to some of the critics of this bill. Keep in mind. This is the last opportunity we have before December 31—before January when we come back in—and on December 31 it would be a crisis. I say to my good friends on the left and on the right, we have to have the bill. This is the last bill we can pass.

I would like to recognize Senator AYOTTE, the very courageous Senator who has been a major part of the provisions to this bill, and I will go so far as to say as the most active member of the Senate Armed Services Committee.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New Hampshire.

Ms. AYOTTE. Mr. President, I want to thank the senior Senator from Oklahoma, Mr. INHOFE, for his leadership, along with Senator LEVIN, working hand in hand to get the Defense authorization done this year. This is so important. I know all of us would like to have a process where we can have an open amendment process here, but I know that Senator LEVIN and Senator INHOFE worked very hard. We had this ready to go a long time ago. I thank you for your work and your commitment on this, and I thank you for the way you and Senator LEVIN have run this committee in a respectful bipartisan manner.

As we look at the importance of the Defense authorization, making sure that we get this done before we go home, we have to understand with the threats we are facing around the world right now, now would not be the time for the first time in over 50-plus years not to pass the Defense authorization, given what it means to support for our men and women in uniform, their readiness, their equipment, the training, the support for their families, military construction, investment in technology that they need to keep us safe.

So I want to thank Senator INHOFE for his work on this. I also want to take the opportunity to thank Senator LEVIN, who is retiring this year, for being an incredible chairman of this committee. I have to say this has been one of the best experiences I have had since I have gotten to the Senate. I have been here for 4 years, and Senator LEVIN has conducted this committee and treated everyone with respect. He has gotten us all to work together, where almost every year we passed out the Defense authorization almost unanimously—how often does that happen—and most times unanimously in a divided Congress.

I wish Senator LEVIN the best, because he has been so knowledgeable and so committed to ensuring that our Nation is safe and committed to our men and women in uniform.

On a personal note, he has been so respectful to me and someone who I think has run the committee so very well and has served our country with such dignity and such dedication. I wish he and his wife Barbara the best in the future.

He is someone whom this body will miss. Certainly as the chairman of the Armed Services Committee, he has treated everyone on both sides of the aisle with incredible respect and given us opportunities to raise issues that are important to us. I think he is a model of how we should conduct ourselves. We can disagree with each other but still find ways in common ground where we can work together to get things done for the American people.

I come to the floor to discuss the Defense authorization and the provisions in it that are so important to not only my home State of New Hampshire but to the country and also to address some of the provisions I want us to keep an eye on as we go forward. With skill and courage, our men and women in uniform are doing their job. It is essential we do our job as well. In a time of war, we cannot neglect our constitutional duty to provide for the common defense.

As a member of the Armed Services Committee I have been privy to many briefings, as the Presiding Officer has, as a member of the committee about the threats facing our country and the needs of our men and women in uniform, the concerns we have of ensuring our troops are ready and that we are prepared to address potential threats to the country.

In this bill, my home State of New Hampshire, we are a State that is very dedicated to serving, just as the Presiding Officer's State of Virginia is very dedicated to serving. There are many provisions in this bill that I have introduced and supported that I am proud of that will make a difference to our national security and to our men and women in uniform.

I would like to talk about some of those provisions. In terms of supporting our troops and our families, it is very important that we pass this bill every year because it authorizes expiring benefits for our troops that if we don't reauthorize, they would expire, including dozens of specific special incentive pays for our troops and their

families, particularly those who are serving us overseas and facing great danger as we stand here today.

The Defense bill also authorizes more than one dozen provisions to enhance protections for victims of sexual assault and extends to the Secretary of the VA the authority to provide rehabilitation and vocational benefits to servicemembers with severe illnesses and injuries.

It also strengthens the Department of Defense's suicide prevention efforts. Unfortunately, suicide is happening to too many of those who have served our Nation and is an issue that we are so concerned about on a bipartisan basis.

The bill also authorizes $6.3 billion for needed military construction and family housing projects. Included among that authorization are military construction projects at Pease Air National Guard Base in New Hampshire to prepare for the arrival of the KC–46A, not to mention a very important energy conservation project at the Portsmouth Naval Shipyard. The shipyard has continued to invest in energy conservation and to save taxpayer dollars while doing so, and I am pleased it is included in this bill.

The Defense bill also maintains critical close air support capability in the Air Force, which our troops need, in that it ensures that the Air Force cannot prematurely retire the A–10 aircraft in fiscal year 2015.

Having traveled to Afghanistan and hearing directly from the men on the ground, I know how important it is they have the very best air support to keep them safe.

The bill also authorizes continued funding for the *Virginia* Class 10-boat multiyear procurement program, including two in fiscal year 2015, which is very important because keeping the 10 boat multi-year production and procurement program on track—and I know the President shares this concern—will help achieve savings in excess of 15 percent, compared to purchasing only one per year. It makes cost sense, and we need to continue to invest in our attack submarine program.

With the help of the skilled workers at the Portsmouth Naval Shipyard, these submarines will protect vital shipping lanes and U.S. national security interests around the world for decades to come. With the administration's discussion of a shift to the Asia-Pacific and the importance of that area of the world to our economy and our interests, our attack submarine fleet is so critical in meeting our needs around the world.

These measures, which are included in this bill, will help ensure that Portsmouth and Pease will remain valuable national security assets. I am so proud of the members of our National Guard, everyone who serves at the Portsmouth Naval Shipyard, and the incredible workers there who do the maintenance of our attack submarine fleet.

The bill also includes provisions of ''never contracting with the enemy'' legislation. This is legislation which I have previously introduced which has allowed our military to ensure that dollars don't flow to our enemies. So when we are contracting in places such as Afghanistan, we have given them tools to cut off contracts sooner to make sure the contracts aren't going to the wrong people.

This legislation will extend those authorities across the Federal Government, to USAID, and to the State Department to ensure that our taxpayer dollars don't go to people who are acting against our interests. So I appreciate USAID and the State Department working with me on this legislation, and I am very pleased it is included in these provisions.

These are a few of the positive examples of the importance of this Defense authorization bill. There are many other important provisions in this bill. That is why it is important that we get this done today or tomorrow.

There are two areas of issues that I want to address briefly which I am a little concerned about on this bill. As a Member of the Senate Armed Services Committee—and I am also married to a veteran—I plan to vote for this bill because of the positive components. But one of the areas with which I am concerned is that we are again looking at compensation and we are looking at housing allowances of our men and women in uniform. It reminds me a little bit—it is not an exact analogy—of when we had the budget agreement over 1 year ago. There was an adjustment made to the cost-of-living increases. It was a cut, really, in the military retirement of some of those who have served our country.

I was someone who came to the floor to reverse this reduction to the cost-of-living increases, which for some of our men and women in uniform, who had served so admirably, would have cost them up to $80,000 a year in their retirement. We are talking about enlisted people who worked so hard, and it would make such a big difference for them.

One of the reasons I came in that regard to fight against what was included in the budget agreement was because there seemed to be a disconnect.

That budget agreement made changes to civilian retirement but only prospectively to those who were just joining the retirement program. When it came to making the cuts to the military retirement and to their cost of living, it was affecting current recipients. So there seemed to be a disconnect. How could we ask those who have given the most—have sacrificed so much to defend us—to make a sacrifice when we were treating other civilian employees differently. I am pleased Congress reversed that.

What came out of that is that we need to have a greater understanding of the unique sacrifices our men and women in uniform make. The sacrifices they make are different than that of other workers—the traveling they do, the danger they face. Often their spouses can't have second careers because they are constantly moving.

Since 2000, collectively as a Congress, we worked hard to correct the pay-and-benefit structure for those who wear the uniform to close what was a 13.5-percent gap between the private sector and what our men and women in uniform were getting. We eliminated out-of-pocket housing expenses—that used to be 20 percent—and expanded health care for retired military personnel over the age of 65.

But as I look at the provisions of this bill, I don't want us to erode the work we have done to recognize our men and women in uniform and the positions and the danger they face. In this bill, generally, the dollar amounts associated with the provisions about which I am concerned are much smaller than those involved with the COLA debate earlier this year. Again, we are back looking toward our men and women in uniform in several areas.

These problematic provisions relate to the compensation and health benefits for our servicemembers and their families. More specifically, they relate to the basic allowance for housing or BAH, TRICARE pharmacy copays, and basic pay for our servicemembers.

BAH is currently designed to cover 100 percent of servicemembers' monthly housing costs. The BAH provision in this NDAA will allow the Secretary of Defense to reduce BAH payments so they only cover 99 percent of a servicemember's monthly housing costs.

Obviously, that is a small reduction. But it is the significance of the reduction I am concerned about. We can't keep going down this road, where we are trying to choose between military readiness and making sure our men and women in uniform have the compensation they need in terms of compensation and support for their families. That is why I am concerned about this provision.

In terms of pharmacy copays, while the Pentagon's budget request is important to understand, they requested a much greater increase in future years in copays than this body would accept—than the Armed Services committees would accept. The negotiated NDAA would still permit a $3 pharmacy copay increase for non-Active-Duty TRICARE beneficiaries who fill prescriptions outside of military treatment facilities.

Congress has worked hard to close the military-civilian pay gap, but this year's NDAA is once again only set to give our military a 1-percent pay raise for the second straight year.

I believe our military servicemembers deserve a higher pay raise. I will continue to push for that in the future, and I hope it is something we can work together on because we have to keep up with inflation for our men and women in uniform. It is very important.

One of the reasons it is important is that they are our greatest treasure. The reason we have such a wonderful

military—we can have the very best equipment, we can have the greatest technology—but the reason we have the best military in the world is because of our great men and women in uniform.

We can never lose sight of that. We can never lose sight of the importance of our all-volunteer force. As we look at where we are with defense spending, one thing that very much concerns me is the incoming impact of sequester again in 2016 and 2017. It is my hope this body will understand and work together in addressing sequester for our defense because I see us continuing to be in a situation where our military leaders come to us and ask us to take from the men and women in a way that is unacceptable because they are worried about sequester, they are worried about the readiness of our troops, and they are concerned they won't be able to provide the training and equipment our troops need to meet and face the threats around the world and to ensure that our men and women in uniform never become part of a hollow force.

The Presiding Officer serves on the Armed Services Committee with me. It is my hope as we look at this NDAA that we don't set a precedent where we are continuing to take from our military, that we continue to look to how we can work together to address sequester in the coming years, because there is a big disconnect of where we are now. If we impose the sequester in 2016 and 2017 with the threats we face around the world, with what our men and women need to address those threats to keep this country safe, what they deserve in terms of our support, given what we are asking them to do—they are the very best, and they go out and do it on our behalf every single day. It is my hope we can work together.

I have addressed these issues in my additional views to the 2015 Defense authorization, and it is my hope we will recognize the treasure that is our men and women in uniform going forward, that we will cut through the partisan politics, that we will address sequester, and that our men and women in uniform will know that we will continue to stand by them.

This Defense authorization is important, but it also prefaces the challenges we face coming forward in 2016 and 2017, which I believe we will not be able to fully meet unless we come together and address sequester.

We do need to get the Defense authorization done today. There are provisions that are very important for our national security. The issues I have addressed as concerns today I hope we aren't addressing them again next year. I hope we can correct them and make sure that we are giving the men and women in uniform a pay raise that is better than this year. I hope that together we can continue to work on a bipartisan basis in the Armed Services Committee, as Chairman LEVIN has championed, as Senator INHOFE, as the ranking member has done as well, and I look forward to doing that in the future.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Vermont.

OMNIBUS SPENDING BILL

Mr. SANDERS. Later today or tomorrow, we are going to be dealing with the $1 trillion omnibus bill, and I will explain why I will be firmly voting against that bill.

But before I do, I think it is important to put the budget in the broader context of what is happening in America. We can't look at a budget in the abstract; we have to see it in the context. The context is that right now most Americans understand the middle class of this country is disappearing.

Median family income has gone down by $5,000 since 1999. Today the median male worker is making $700 less in inflation-adjusted dollars than he made 41 years ago. The median female worker is making $1,300 less than she made 7 years ago. Meanwhile, while the middle class disappears and we have more people living in poverty than at almost any time in modern American history, the gap between the very rich and everybody else is growing wider. We have massive wealth inequality in America. One family, the Walton family, owns more wealth than the bottom 40 percent of the American people. The top one-tenth of 1 percent owns more wealth than the bottom 90 percent of the American people. Today, unbelievably, 95 percent of all new income is going to the top 1 percent and corporate profits are at an all-time high. That is the overall reality of what is going on with the American economy today. And in the midst of that, we have the budget. So let's talk a little about this $1 trillion budget and how it addresses or doesn't address the problems facing our country.

Are there good things in this budget? The answer is: Absolutely. I am chairman of the Senate Veterans' Affairs Committee, and I want to thank Chairman MIKULSKI and others for making sure that our VA gets the kind of budget they need. Included in that budget, by the way, is also a provision called advanced appropriations for the VA, which will mean that in the event of a government shutdown, veterans will still be able to get the disability benefits they desperately need. And there are other provisions in there that are very good.

But overall, if you look at the budget in the context of contemporary American society, this is simply not a good budget. Let me pick up three points where I have strong disagreements.

I think the vast majority of the American people understand that we have huge unmet needs in this country. I expect in the Chair's State of Virginia, in Vermont, and all over this country we all know our infrastructure is crumbling—our roads, bridges, water systems, wastewater plants. Our rail system is falling behind Europe, Japan, China. We have enormous work to be done. The American Society of Civil Engineers tells us we have to invest $3 trillion into rebuilding our infrastructure.

In terms of college, we know there are hundreds of thousands of bright young people who can't afford to go to college. Others are graduating school saddled forever with these terrible debts from college or graduate school.

This budget doesn't address those problems. It doesn't address the crisis of childcare, and the fact that in Vermont and around the country it is very hard for working-class families to get quality, affordable childcare.

But what this budget does do—people don't know it—roughly 60 percent of the budget goes to defense spending. It goes to defense spending. Sixty percent of the discretionary budget goes not to our kids, not to our elderly, not to students, not to working people, not to the infrastructure, not to all of the huge unmet needs we face as a country, but it goes to the military.

Does anyone here deny we need a strong military, a strong National Guard? I don't. We do. But sometimes, in tough times, you have to make tough decisions. And I think spending $554 billion on the military is too much.

I would point out, Mr. President, what I am sure you know; that it is clear—it has been admitted—that the military can't even audit itself. We don't even know effectively and appropriately how the military is spending its money. They do not even have the computer technology to tell us where they are spending.

What we also know is that cost overruns in the military are extraordinary. Time after time after time an agreement is reached about how much a weapons system will cost, and it turns out the contractor was just joking because there is a huge overrun. And then we have fraud. Fraud. Virtually every major military contractor has been involved in fraud resulting in either convictions or settlements with the government.

So we have folks here who last year were talking about cuts in nutrition programs, education, health care—you name it, programs that are life and death for working families—yet when it comes to the military, we can spend $554 billion. I think that is too much.

Second of all, when you look at the global economy and you look at our international partners, I find it interesting that every other major country on Earth provides health care for all of their people as a right except the United States; yet in terms of their defense spending, they are spending a heck of a lot less than we are. We are spending now almost—almost—as much as the entire rest of the world combined.

So I object in this bill to the significant amount of money being spent on the military, and I would have hoped

there would be more opposition to this large military expenditure.

The second point I want to make, and it has not gotten a whole lot of attention, is the impact this legislation will have on working people in terms of cuts in pensions. There are provisions in this bill, written in secret, which allow significant cuts in benefits for retirees who are members of multiemployer pension plans.

Let me quote from a recent Washington Post article regarding the change in this bill:

> The change would alter 40 years of federal law and could affect millions of workers, many of them part of a shrinking corps of middle-income employees in businesses such as trucking, construction and supermarkets.

Reuters mentions this:

> The centerpiece is a provision that would open the door to cutting current beneficiaries' benefits, a retirement policy taboo and a potential disaster for retirees on fixed incomes.

What does that mean? When you go to work for a company, you get wages, you get benefits, but you also, in some cases, get a promise in terms of a pension—what you will get when you retire after 20 years, 30 years, 40 years of work. What this bill does is allow companies to renege on that promise. It is my understanding that, in some cases, the cuts in pensions could be draconian. I am talking about a 50-percent cut.

Imagine somebody who has worked his or her entire life, expects to retire with a certain level of income, and suddenly, after 20, 30, 40 years of work, wakes up in the morning and finds out that promise has been cut in half. Wow. That is awful. That is totally awful.

I remember back, as the American people do, that Wall Street—the CEOs of Wall Street—engaged in illegal and reckless behavior, which drove this economy into the worst recession in modern history, impacting millions and millions of people's lives. And what happened to Wall Street? Well, Congress bailed them out. Congress bailed out the folks on Wall Street whose criminal action caused the recession. Yet now we have working people who have done nothing wrong except work their entire lives—10, 20, 30 years—and through no fault of their own, they are not getting bailed out. They are going to see a 50-percent reduction in their pensions.

That is unacceptable and that opens—it just opens up a future in terms of pensions which I think is very frightening for the American people. So I can't support that provision as well.

The last point I want to make is getting back to Wall Street. In my very strong opinion, we have reached the stage with Wall Street where the major financial institutions are just too big, they are just too powerful. Anyone who thinks that Congress regulates Wall Street has got it backwards. The reality is that Wall Street, with their incredible wealth and lobbying capabilities and campaign contributions, regulates the United States Congress. You cannot see a better example of that than what is in this legislation.

This is the headline from a recent article in the New York Times: ''Banks' Lobbyists Help in Drafting Financial Bills.''

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to have printed in the RECORD this article.

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

[From the New York Times, May 23, 2013]

BANK'S LOBBYISTS HELP IN DRAFTING FINANCIAL BILLS

(By Eric Lipton and Ben Protess)

WASHINGTON.—Bank lobbyists are not leaving it to lawmakers to draft legislation that softens financial regulations. Instead, the lobbyists are helping to write it themselves.

One bill that sailed through the House Financial Services Committee this month—over the objections of the Treasury Department—was essentially Citigroup's, according to e-mails reviewed by The New York Times. The bill would exempt broad swathes of trades from new regulation.

In a sign of Wall Street's resurgent influence in Washington, Citigroup's recommendations were reflected in more than 70 lines of the House committee's 85-line bill. Two crucial paragraphs, prepared by Citigroup in conjunction with other Wall Street banks, were copied nearly word for word. (Lawmakers changed two words to make them plural.)

The lobbying campaign shows how, three years after Congress passed the most comprehensive overhaul of regulation since the Depression, Wall Street is finding Washington a friendlier place.

The cordial relations now include a growing number of Democrats in both the House and the Senate, whose support the banks need if they want to roll back parts of the 2010 financial overhaul, known as Dodd-Frank.

This legislative push is a second front, with Wall Street's other battle being waged against regulators who are drafting detailed rules allowing them to enforce the law.

And as its lobbying campaign steps up, the financial industry has doubled its already considerable giving to political causes. The lawmakers who this month supported the bills championed by Wall Street received twice as much in contributions from financial institutions compared with those who opposed them, according to an analysis of campaign finance records performed by MapLight, a nonprofit group.

In recent weeks, Wall Street groups also held fund-raisers for lawmakers who co-sponsored the bills. At one dinner Wednesday night, corporate executives and lobbyists paid up to $2,500 to dine in a private room of a Greek restaurant just blocks from the Capitol with Representative Sean Patrick Maloney, Democrat of New York, a co-sponsor of the bill championed by Citigroup.

Industry officials acknowledged that they played a role in drafting the legislation, but argued that the practice was common in Washington. Some of the changes, they say, have gained wide support, including from Ben S. Bernanke, the Federal Reserve chairman. The changes, they added, were in an effort to reach a compromise over the bills, not to undermine Dodd-Frank.

''We will provide input if we see a bill and it is something we have interest in,'' said Kenneth E. Bentsen Jr., a former lawmaker turned Wall Street lobbyist, who now serves as president of the Securities Industry and Financial Markets Association, or Sifma.

The close ties hardly surprise Wall Street critics, who have long warned that the banks—whose small armies of lobbyists include dozens of former Capitol Hill aides—possess outsize influence in Washington.

''The huge machinery of Wall Street information and analysis skews the thinking of Congress,'' said Jeff Connaughton, who has been both a lobbyist and Congressional staff member.

Lawmakers who supported the industry-backed bills said they did so because the effort was in the public interest. Yet some agreed that the relationship with corporate groups was at times uncomfortable.

''I won't dispute for one second the problems of a system that demands immense amount of fund-raisers by its legislators,'' said Representative Jim Himes, a third-term Democrat of Connecticut, who supported the recent industry-backed bills and leads the party's fund-raising effort in the House. A member of the Financial Services Committee and a former banker at Goldman Sachs, he is one of the top recipients of Wall Street donations. ''It's appalling, it's disgusting, it's wasteful and it opens the possibility of conflicts of interest and corruption. It's unfortunately the world we live in.''

The passage of the Dodd-Frank Act, which took aim at culprits of the financial crisis like lax mortgage lending and the $700 trillion derivatives market, ushered in a new phase of Wall Street lobbying. Over the last three years, bank lobbyists have blitzed the regulatory agencies writing rules under Dodd-Frank, chipping away at some regulations.

But the industry lobbyists also realized that Congress can play a critical role in the campaign to mute Dodd-Frank.

The House Financial Services Committee has been a natural target. Not only is it controlled by Republicans, who had opposed Dodd-Frank, but freshmen lawmakers are often appointed to the unusually large committee because it is seen as a helpful base from which they can raise campaign funds.

For Wall Street, the committee is a place to push back against Dodd-Frank. When banks and other corporations, for example, feared that regulators would demand new scrutiny of derivatives trades, they appealed to the committee. At the time, regulators were completing Dodd-Frank's overhaul of derivatives, contracts that allow companies to either speculate in the markets or protect against risk. Derivatives had pushed the insurance giant American International Group to the brink of collapse in 2008. The question was whether regulators would exempt certain in-house derivatives trades between affiliates of big banks.

As the House committee was drafting a bill that would force regulators to exempt many such trades, corporate lawyers like Michael Bopp weighed in with their suggested changes, according to e-mails reviewed by The Times. At one point, when a House aide sent a potential compromise to Mr. Bopp, he replied with additional tweaks.

In an interview, Mr. Bopp explained that he drafted the proposal at the request of Congressional aides, who expressed broad support for the change. The proposal, he explained, was a ''compromise'' that was actually designed to ''limit the scope'' of the exemption.

''Everyone on the Hill wanted this bill, but they wanted to make sure it wasn't subject to abuse,'' said Mr. Bopp, a partner at the law firm Gibson, Dunn who was representing a coalition of nonfinancial corporations that use derivatives to hedge their risk.

Ultimately, the committee inserted every word of Mr. Bopp's suggestion into a 2012

version of the bill that passed the House, save for a slight change in phrasing. A later iteration of the bill, passed by the House committee earlier this month, also included some of the same wording.

And when federal regulators in April released a rule governing such trades, it was significantly less demanding than the industry had feared, a decision that the industry partly attributed to pressure stemming from Capitol Hill.

Citigroup and other major banks used a similar approach on another derivatives bill. Under Dodd-Frank, banks must push some derivatives trading into separate units that are not backed by the government's insurance fund. The goal was to isolate this risky trading.

The provision exempted many derivatives from the requirement, but some Republicans proposed striking the so-called push out provision altogether. After objections were raised about the Republican plan, Citigroup lobbyists sent around the bank's own compromise proposal that simply exempted a wider array of derivatives. That recommendation, put forth in late 2011, was largely part of the bill approved by the House committee on May 7 and is now pending before both the Senate and the House.

Citigroup executives said the change they advocated was good for the financial system, not just the bank.

''This view is shared not just by the industry but from leaders such as Federal Reserve Chairman Ben Bernanke,'' said Molly Millerwise Meiners, a Citigroup spokeswoman.

Industry executives said that the changes—which were drafted in consultation with other major industry banks—will make the financial system more secure, as the derivatives trading that takes place inside the bank is subject to much greater scrutiny.

Representative Maxine Waters, the ranking Democrat on the Financial Services Committee, was among the few Democrats opposing the change, echoing the concerns of consumer groups.

''The bill restores the public subsidy to exotic Wall Street activities,'' said Marcus Stanley, the policy director of Americans for Financial Reform, a nonprofit group.

But most of the Democrats on the committee, along with 31 Republicans, came to the industry's defense, including the seven freshmen Democrats—most of whom have started to receive donations this year from political action committees of Goldman Sachs, Wells Fargo and other financial institutions, records show.

Six days after the vote, several freshmen Democrats were in New York to meet with bank executives, a tour organized by Representative Joe Crowley, who helps lead the House Democrats' fund-raising committee. The trip was planned before the votes, and was not a fund-raiser, but it gave the lawmakers a chance to meet with Wall Street's elite.

In addition to a tour of Goldman's Lower Manhattan headquarters, and a meeting with Lloyd C. Blankfein, the bank's chief executive, the lawmakers went to JPMorgan's Park Avenue office. There, they chatted with Jamie Dimon, the bank's chief, about Dodd-Frank and immigration reform.

The bank chief also delivered something of a pep talk.

America has the widest, deepest and most transparent capital markets in the world,'' he said. ''Washington has been dealt a good hand.''

Mr. SANDERS. And let me quote from that article:

In a sign of Wall Street's resurgent influence in Washington, Citigroup's recommendations were reflected in more than 70 lines of the House committee's 85-line bill. Two crucial paragraphs, prepared by Citigroup in conjunction with other Wall Street banks, were copied nearly word for word.

In other words, it is not even Members of Congress writing these bills, it is Wall Street writing the bills and getting them into this legislation.

Now what does this legislation do? Well, we suffered the worst economic crisis since the 1930s because of the greed, recklessness, and illegal behavior on Wall Street. What Wall Street did is engage in absolutely reckless speculation, and then the chickens came home to roost. People could not pay back the debts they incurred on subprime mortgages, and the entire financial system of the United States of America and the world was on the verge of collapse. So Congress, a few years ago, passed Dodd-Frank. It didn't go anywhere near as far as I would go. I believe we should break up these major financial institutions. I don't believe you can control them. I don't believe you can regulate them. They regulate the Congress. But Dodd-Frank took some steps toward that, and there was one provision I will quote—section 716.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to have printed in the RECORD this section I am going to quote from.

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

SEC. 716. PROHIBITION AGAINST FEDERAL GOVERNMENT BAILOUTS OF SWAPS ENTITIES.

(a) PROHIBITION ON FEDERAL ASSISTANCE.—Notwithstanding any other provision of law (including regulations), no Federal assistance may be provided to any swaps entity with respect to any swap, security-based swap, or other activity of the swaps entity.

(b) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

(1) FEDERAL ASSISTANCE.—The term ''Federal assistance'' means the use of any advances from any Federal Reserve credit facility or discount window that is not part of a program or facility with broad-based eligibility under section 13(3)(A) of the Federal Reserve Act, Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation insurance or guarantees for the purpose of—

(A) making any loan to, or purchasing any stock, equity interest, or debt obligation of, any swaps entity;

(B) purchasing the assets of any swaps entity;

(C) guaranteeing any loan or debt issuance of any swaps entity; or

(D) entering into any assistance arrangement (including tax breaks), loss sharing, or profit sharing with any swaps entity.

(2) SWAPS ENTITY.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—The term ''swaps entity'' means any swap dealer, security-based swap dealer, major swap participant, major security-based swap participant, that is registered under—

(i) the Commodity Exchange Act (7 U.S.C. 1 et seq.); or

(ii) the Securities Exchange Act of 1934 (15 U.S.C. 78a et seq.).

(B) EXCLUSION.—The term ''swaps entity'' does not include any major swap participant or major security-based swap participant that is an insured depository institution.

(c) AFFILIATES OF INSURED DEPOSITORY INSTITUTIONS.—The prohibition on Federal assistance contained in subsection (a) does not apply to and shall not prevent an insured depository institution from having or establishing an affiliate which is a swaps entity, as long as such insured depository institution is part of a bank holding company, or savings and loan holding company, that is supervised by the Federal Reserve and such swaps entity affiliate complies with sections 23A and 23B of the Federal Reserve Act and such other requirements as the Commodity Futures Trading Commission or the Securities Exchange Commission, as appropriate, and the Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System, may determine to be necessary and appropriate.

(d) ONLY BONA FIDE HEDGING AND TRADITIONAL BANK ACTIVITIES PERMITTED.—The prohibition in subsection (a) shall apply to any insured depository institution unless the insured depository institution limits its swap or security-based swap activities to:

(1) Hedging and other similar risk mitigating activities directly related to the insured depository institution's activities.

(2) Acting as a swaps entity for swaps or security-based swaps involving rates or reference assets that are permissible for investment by a national bank under the paragraph designated as ''Seventh.'' of section 5136 of the Revised Statutes of the United States (12 U.S.C. 24), other than as described in paragraph (3).

(3) LIMITATION ON CREDIT DEFAULT SWAPS.—Acting as a swaps entity for credit default swaps, including swaps or security-based swaps referencing the credit risk of asset-backed securities as defined in section 3(a)(77) of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934 (15 U.S.C. 78c(a)(77)) (as amended by this Act) shall not be considered a bank permissible activity for purposes of subsection (d)(2) unless such swaps or security-based swaps are cleared by a derivatives clearing organization (as such term is defined in section la of the Commodity Exchange Act (7 U.S.C. la)) or a clearing agency (as such term is defined in section 3 of the Securities Exchange Act (15 U.S.C. 78c)) that is registered, or exempt from registration, as a derivatives clearing organization under the Commodity Exchange Act or as a clearing agency under the Securities Exchange Act, respectively.

(e) EXISTING SWAPS AND SECURITY-BASED SWAPS.—The prohibition in subsection (a) shall only apply to swaps or security-based swaps entered into by an insured depository institution after the end of the transition period described in subsection (f).

(f) TRANSITION PERIOD.—To the extent an insured depository institution qualifies as a ''swaps entity'' and would be subject to the Federal assistance prohibition in subsection (a), the appropriate Federal banking agency, after consulting with and considering the views of the Commodity Futures Trading Commission or the Securities Exchange Commission, as appropriate, shall permit the insured depository institution up to 24 months to divest the swaps entity or cease the activities that require registration as a swaps entity. In establishing the appropriate transition period to effect such divestiture or cessation of activities, which may include making the swaps entity an affiliate of the insured depository institution, the appropriate Federal banking agency shall take into account and make written findings regarding the potential impact of such divestiture or cessation of activities on the insured depository institution's (1) mortgage lending, (2) small business lending, (3) job creation, and (4) capital formation versus the potential negative impact on insured depositors and the Deposit Insurance Fund of the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation. The

appropriate Federal banking agency may consider such other factors as may be appropriate. The appropriate Federal banking agency may place such conditions on the insured depository institution's divestiture or ceasing of activities of the swaps entity as it deems necessary and appropriate. The transition period under this subsection may be extended by the appropriate Federal banking agency, after consultation with the Commodity Futures Trading Commission and the Securities and Exchange Commission, for a period of up to 1 additional year.

(g) EXCLUDED ENTITIES.—For purposes of this section, the term ''swaps entity'' shall not include any insured depository institution under the Federal Deposit Insurance Act or a covered financial company under title II which is in a conservatorship, receivership, or a bridge bank operated by the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation.

(h) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The prohibition in subsection (a) shall be effective 2 years following the date on which this Act is effective.

(i) LIQUIDATION REQUIRED.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—

(A) FDIC INSURED INSTITUTIONS.—All swaps entities that are FDIC insured institutions that are put into receivership or declared insolvent as a result of swap or security-based swap activity of the swaps entities shall be subject to the termination or transfer of that swap or security-based swap activity in accordance with applicable law prescribing the treatment of those contracts. No taxpayer funds shall be used to prevent the receivership of any swap entity resulting from swap or security-based swap activity of the swaps entity.

(B) INSTITUTIONS THAT POSE A SYSTEMIC RISK AND ARE SUBJECT TO HEIGHTENED PRUDENTIAL SUPERVISION AS REGULATED UNDER SECTION 113.—All swaps entities that are institutions that pose a systemic risk and are subject to heightened prudential supervision as regulated under section 113, that are put into receivership or declared insolvent as a result of swap or security-based swap activity of the swaps entities shall be subject to the termination or transfer of that swap or security-based swap activity in accordance with applicable law prescribing the treatment of those contracts. No taxpayer funds shall be used to prevent the receivership of any swap entity resulting from swap or security-based swap activity of the swaps entity.

(C) NON-FDIC INSURED, NON-SYSTEMICALLY SIGNIFICANT INSTITUTIONS NOT SUBJECT TO HEIGHTENED PRUDENTIAL SUPERVISION AS REGULATED UNDER SECTION 113.—No taxpayer resources shall be used for the orderly liquidation of any swaps entities that are non-FDIC insured, non-systemically significant institutions not subject to heightened prudential supervision as regulated under section 113.

(2) RECOVERY OF FUNDS.—All funds expended on the termination or transfer of the swap or security-based swap activity of the swaps entity shall be recovered in accordance with applicable law from the disposition of assets of such swap entity or through assessments, including on the financial sector as provided under applicable law.

(3) NO LOSSES TO TAXPAYERS.—Taxpayers shall bear no losses from the exercise of any authority under this title.

(j) PROHIBITION ON UNREGULATED COMBINATION OF SWAPS ENTITIES AND BANKING.—At no time following adoption of the rules in subsection (k) may a bank or bank holding company be permitted to be or become a swap entity unless it conducts its swap or security-based swap activity in compliance with such minimum standards set by its prudential regulator as are reasonably calculated to permit the swaps entity to conduct its swap or security-based swap activities in a safe and sound manner and mitigate systemic risk.

(k) RULES.—In prescribing rules, the prudential regulator for a swaps entity shall consider the following factors:

(1) The expertise and managerial strength of the swaps entity, including systems for effective oversight.

(2) The financial strength of the swaps entity.

(3) Systems for identifying, measuring and controlling risks arising from the swaps entity's operations.

(4) Systems for identifying, measuring and controlling the swaps entity's participation in existing markets.

(5) Systems for controlling the swaps entity's participation or entry into in new markets and products.

(l) AUTHORITY OF THE FINANCIAL STABILITY OVERSIGHT COUNCIL.—The Financial Stability Oversight Council may determine that, when other provisions established by this Act are insufficient to effectively mitigate systemic risk and protect taxpayers, that swaps entities may no longer access Federal assistance with respect to any swap, security-based swap, or other activity of the swaps entity. Any such determination by the Financial Stability Oversight Council of a prohibition of federal assistance shall be made on an institution-by-institution basis, and shall require the vote of not fewer than two-thirds of the members of the Financial Stability Oversight Council, which must include the vote by the Chairman of the Council, the Chairman of the Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System, and the Chairperson of the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation. Notice and hearing requirements for such determinations shall be consistent with the standards provided in title I.

(m) BAN ON PROPRIETARY TRADING IN DERIVATIVES.—An insured depository institution shall comply with the prohibition on proprietary trading in derivatives as required by section 619 of the Dodd-Frank Wall Street Reform and Consumer Protection Act.

SEC. 717. NEW PRODUCT APPROVAL CFTC—SEC PROCESS.

(a) AMENDMENTS TO THE COMMODITY EXCHANGE ACT.—Section 2(a)(1)(C) of the Commodity Exchange Act (7 U.S.C. 2(a)(1)(C)) is amended—

(1) in clause (i) by striking ''This'' and inserting ''(I) Except as provided in subclause (II), this''; and

(2) by adding at the end of clause (i) the following:

''(II) This Act shall apply to and the Commission shall have jurisdiction with respect to accounts, agreements, and transactions involving, and may permit the listing for trading pursuant to section 5c(c) of, a put, call, or other option on 1 or more securities (as defined in section 2(a)(1) of the Securities Act of 1933 or section 3(a)(10) of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934 on the date of enactment of the Futures Trading Act of 1982), including any group or index of such securities, or any interest therein or based on the value thereof, that is exempted by the Securities and Exchange Commission pursuant to section 36(a)(1) of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934 with the condition that the Commission exercise concurrent jurisdiction over such put, call, or other option; provided, however, that nothing in this paragraph shall be construed to affect the jurisdiction and authority of the Securities and Exchange Commission over such put, call, or other option.''.

(b) AMENDMENTS TO THE SECURITIES EXCHANGE ACT OF 1934.—The Securities Exchange Act of 1934 is amended by adding the following section after section 3A (15 U.S.C. 78c–1):

''SEC. 3B. SECURITIES-RELATED DERIVATIVES.

''(a) Any agreement, contract, or transaction (or class thereof) that is exempted by the Commodity Futures Trading Commission. . .

Mr. SANDERS. This is the title of the provision, 716, that this bill repeals: ''Prohibition Against Federal Government Bailouts of Swaps Entities.''

Now to quote from that section:

(A) Prohibition on Federal Assistance—notwithstanding any other provision of law (including regulations), no Federal assistance may be provided to any swaps entity with respect to any swap, security-based swap, or other activity of the swaps entity.

That is what is being repealed. So Wall Street, as a result of the work of Citigroup and the other Wall Street companies, can now continue to engage in reckless derivatives speculation. And when they make a whole lot of money, they get richer. But when they lose money, because of the repeal of this provision, it is the taxpayers of this country who have to bail them out.

Does anybody—anybody—think that makes any sense at all? That is in this bill.

So for those reasons and more, I would hope very much that the Senate rejects this agreement and that we renegotiate. No one wants to see the government shut down, but we must negotiate an agreement that is much fairer to the American people and to the working families of our country.

With that, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Oklahoma.

Mr. COBURN. Mr. President, I inquire of the Senator from Wisconsin how much time she is going to need to take.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Wisconsin.

Ms. BALDWIN. Senator, less than 10 minutes.

Mr. COBURN. I would prefer she go ahead and I will do all mine in consequence, if I may.

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

The Senator from Wisconsin.

Ms. BALDWIN. Mr. President, I thank the Senator from Oklahoma for his courtesy, and I am delighted to rise today to mark the passage of the Fiscal Year 2015 National Defense Authorization Act. This bill is a product of bipartisan negotiations between the House and Senate Armed Services Committees, and I thank Chairman LEVIN and Ranking Member INHOFE, Chairman MCKEON and Ranking Member ADAM SMITH in the House for their hard work.

This critical bill establishes our national security policy and supports our dedicated men and women in uniform and their families. I am particularly pleased that the legislation supports Wisconsin manufacturers and workers who build ships and engines and military vehicles that help our Nation meet its national security needs.

On the eve of his retirement from the Senate, I want to offer a special thank

you to Senator CARL LEVIN for his magnificent work as chairman of the committee on this bill and for working with me to include a military land transfer in Wisconsin at the site of the former Badger Army Ammunition Plant. I have been working on this project since my election to the House of Representatives 16 years ago, and I am extremely grateful to Chairman LEVIN and his staff for helping me push this legislation across the finish line.

The extraordinary piece of land I am talking about consists of some 7,500 acres. It is bordered by the rolling Baraboo Hills, which hosts the largest flock of upland forest of oak and maple and basswood still standing in southern Wisconsin. It is bounded also by Wisconsin's beautiful Devils Lake State Park and a segment of the Ice Age Trail, which is part of the National Trails System. To its east it is skirted by the mighty Wisconsin River that flows toward the Mississippi.

For the better part of the past century, it has been the site of a bustling manufacturing plant, once the largest munitions plant in the world which produced munitions for American troops that they used from World War II through Vietnam. We can see a historic aerial photograph to my left of what that property looked like with the Baraboo Bluffs and the Wisconsin River. Before that, the site was home to 90 landowners who farmed the land, and well before that, the land was cherished ground for the Ho-Chunk Nation, whose people grew traditional crops and gathered medicinal plants from the land. This land is revered by the Ho-Chunk Nation and is connected to their ancestral history, with oral history of the land dating back hundreds of years.

In 1997 discussions began on the future of this land after the Army closed the plant, declaring it to be surplus to its needs, and began the process of remediation of the contaminated soil at the site. Some thought it should be sold for commercial development, but the local community opposed that option, understanding that the land's unique attributes needed to be preserved and wishing to see it restored to its natural beauty.

I always felt that the community—and not bureaucrats in Washington—should be empowered to make decisions about the future of this site. I regarded this as a once-in-a-generation and maybe a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity for this community. So as a freshman Member of Congress, I secured a Federal grant to establish a community consensus process to recommend a reuse plan. This process brought every stakeholder to the table.

In 2001, after nearly 2 years of hard work, the Badger Reuse Committee issued a report supported by all the participating parties—including State and Federal and tribal entities—outlining agreement on future uses. Some said that consensus would be nearly impossible, but we proved that local stakeholders, working together, could achieve a visionary future for this incredible property. What was that consensus? The consensus was that the property should be comanaged in perpetuity as one property for agricultural, recreational, educational, and conservation purposes.

The photo to my left shows a stark contrast to the photo you just saw of the Badger Army Ammunition Plant, as the property has been gradually restored over time. Since that time, most of the parcels at this site have been transferred—one parcel to the U.S. Department of Agriculture for dairy forage research, another to the State of Wisconsin to provide opportunities for low-impact recreation. But one major parcel essential to the community's vision at this site has been caught in bureaucratic disagreement for nearly a decade.

This legislation will finally allow that parcel to be transferred from the Army to the Department of the Interior, which will hold the land in trust for the Ho-Chunk Nation. This transfer has been stalled by an interagency dispute over which Federal agency would have responsibility for future environmental cleanup at the site. The legislative intent of this provision follows the legislative intent of our environmental superfund laws: The polluter must pay for contamination they caused.

As to future uses, the Ho-Chunk Nation participated in the consensus process that culminated in the Badger Reuse Plan, where they expressed interest in holding the lands in trust in order to preserve native prairie habitat and graze bison. Since that time, the Ho-Chunk Nation has reaffirmed their interest in receiving this land for prairie restoration—a reuse that reaffirms the vision of the Badger Reuse Committee that all the new holders of these lands—the U.S. Department of Agriculture, the State of Wisconsin, and the Ho-Chunk Nation—would manage the property in coordination with one another, reflecting the site as a whole.

In October of this year the tribe updated its land use plan for the parcel in this transfer. I ask unanimous consent to have that document and a technical description of this transfer printed in the RECORD.

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

[From Ho-Chunk Nation, Oct. 2014]

LAND MANAGEMENT PLAN FOR FORMER BADGER ARMY AMMUNITION PLANT PARCELS

1.0 MASTER PLAN

1.1 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Ho-Chunk Nation (HCN) has requested the transfer of an estimated 1552.71 acres of the Badger Army Ammunition Plant (BAAP) declared as surplus pursuant to 25 U.S.C. § 450j(f)(3). This transfer would be for the use and benefit of the Ho-Chunk Nation and their people. The BAAP land has very important historic and cultural significance to the Ho-Chunk people, as it lies within their aboriginal territory and includes a number of historic and pre-historic sites of significance to the tribe.

The transfer of a portion of the BAAP land to the Nation would allow for the restoration of the natural habitats including prairie, wetlands and oak savanna. Habitat restoration activities would complement the reintroduction of a bison herd onto the BAAP property. The bison program will be vital to combating diabetes and other health problems which are common among the Ho-Chunk People. Lastly, the transfer would allow for an increased level of protection and preservation of the historical and cultural elements found on the property.

The purpose of acquiring the BAAP parcel is, as reflected in the mission statement of the United States Department of the Interior, Bureau of Indian Affairs ''to enhance the quality of life, to promote economic opportunity, and to carry out the responsibility to protect and improve the trust assets of American Indians, Indian Tribes and Alaska Natives.'' In accord with those objectives and the Indian Self-Determination Act, acquisition of this property for the benefit of the Ho-Chunk Nation would provide, promote and enhance the Ho-Chunk Nation programs for historic and cultural resource protection, natural resource enhancement, education, employment and economic development. The property would be used to strengthen and expand these programs that are supported, in significant part, by contracts between the Nation and the Department pursuant to the Self-Determination Act, and will primarily benefit the Nation's 7,415 enrolled tribal members.

1.2 INTRODUCTION

The Badger Army Ammunition Plant occupies 7,354 acres in the predominantly rural countryside of Sauk County, Wisconsin. The Badger Plant was constructed in 1942 following the United States entry into World War II. The Plant provided ammunition propellant for the duration of the war effort, and was again operative during the Korean and Vietnam Wars. In late 1997 the U.S. Army determined that the BAAP facility was no longer needed to meet the United States defense needs.

Subsequent efforts to define a future for the Badger property have proved challenging due to the site's unusually rich natural and cultural history, the wide range of potential reuse options, and the complexity of local, state, national, and tribal interests involved. The current scenario would result in the Ho-Chunk Nation acquiring 1552.71 acres with the remaining acreage being divided amongst several landowners including the WI Dept. of Natural Resources, U.S. Dept. of Agriculture-Dairy Forage Research Center, Bluffview Sanitary District, WI Dept. of Transportation and the Town of Sumpter.

1.3 GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

The resources of BAAP will be managed by the Ho-Chunk Nation to promote, preserve, and enhance its unique natural, scenic, and cultural features. Management activities are intended to:

Protect the aesthetic, cultural, scenic, and wild qualities as well as the native wildlife and plant communities. Special emphasis will be placed on designated federal and state-listed species, species of special concern, and other unique biotic features.

Protect, conserve, and maintain all significant cultural sites.

Provide for and manage the use and enjoyment by visitors and maintain a diversity of low-impact recreational opportunities for people of all abilities.

Utilize sound natural resource and agriculture management practices to improve water quality, maintain soil productivity, and protect wildlife habitat.

Develop a bison program to support HCN nutritional programs and provide educational opportunities.

Strive to operate a self-supporting project through grants, donations, bequests, and possibly fee-based recreation that is consistent

with the overriding commitment to preserve Badger's natural, historical and cultural features.

Ultimately establish and maintain a visitor's center that includes information and exhibits on Badger's geologic and natural uniqueness, bison management, cultural significance and history of the ammunition plant. The center would also provide information and exhibits on the history of Native Americans and Euro-American habitation of the Sauk Prairie, as well as an educational classroom.

2.0 LAND MANAGEMENT PLAN

2.1 OVERALL ECOSYSTEM MANAGEMENT

Ecosystem is a term that has crept into the nation's collective vocabulary and is commonly used in regard to environmental issues; but what does it really mean, and how is it relevant to the management of the Badger Army Ammunition Plant? Ecosystem is derived from ecology, the branch of biology that studies the relationships between living organisms and their environment, and their dependency upon each other for survival. When the organisms and the environment interact, an ecosystem is formed. The exploitation or neglect of any organism can upset the delicate balance such that the system is forever changed.

An ecosystem not only encompasses water, land, air and wildlife, it also includes people. Of all the organisms in an ecosystem, Homo sapiens have the most impact and the greatest influence in preventing the loss and exploitation of other species. The demise of species and their habitat is all too often the unfortunate consequence of humans trying to conquer their environment for the sake of development and economic gain. Natural and cultural resources, and the environmental processes that affect them, are fundamentally influenced by society and vice versa.

Understanding the complex interrelationships within an ecosystem and a commitment to their maintenance are essential in ensuring a vital ecosystem—a high quality of life, healthy environment, and a productive, sustainable economy. The National Park Service states that ''The long-term sustainability of the environmental, societal, and economic systems on which public lands and their surrounding human communities depend, requires a collaborative approach that integrates scientific knowledge and maintains flexibility in order to make adjustments over time.'' (Sustainability can be defined as a contract among the people, the land, and future generations which maintains and renews resources for the long-term.) Therefore, the knowledge and skills of natural resource professionals will be used to preserve the Badger Army Ammunition Plant as a distinct resource, rather than relying on nostalgia and politics to make management-related decisions.

The primary goals of ecosystem management are to conserve, restore, and maintain the ecological integrity, productivity, and biological diversity of natural landscapes. The overriding objective is to ensure the ecological sustainability of the land. The Ho-Chunk Nation will adapt an ecosystem management approach that will encompass the natural environment, society, and economy—the entire system. This vision is based on the awareness that the resources protected within Badger are not isolated from the surrounding communities and environment but are inextricably linked to them. Any upcoming strategies that the Ho-Chunk Nation embarks upon to preserve and protect the property will work towards providing a balance between human needs and long-term environmental protection.

Ecosystem management will strive to restore and sustain the health, productivity, and biological diversity of ecosystems and the overall quality of life through a natural resource management approach that is fully integrated with social and economic goals. Although the ecosystem management approach is more effective than species-by-species management, the needs of certain key species must receive priority attention as part of ecosystem management.

For every action there is an equal or greater reaction. The activities of the visitors, though they may be low-impact, will inevitably affect the ecosystems of Badger, adjacent land, and local communities. It will be the Ho-Chunk Nation's primary responsibility to balance the repercussions of all activities with the health of the ecosystems while contributing to the local economy. Education and information are the keys to the preservation and protection of the Badger property and its resources. In addition to providing ecosystem management, the Ho-Chunk Nation will strive to include education in all management activities. The more visitors and the local community understand the dynamics of the ecosystem of which they are a part, the greater their respect will be for the many elements comprising the system. Providing a deeper understanding of the web of life will be beneficial to the visitors of today, as well as to the future generations who will be the ultimate caretakers of the land.

2.2 LAND MANAGEMENT

2.2.1 MISSION

Land Management will ensure protection of the soils, waters, flora, and fauna that comprise the Badger property through sound management techniques and consideration of the human influence.

2.2.2 MANAGEMENT GOALS

Provide resource-based research opportunities for educational purposes.

Explore both traditional and innovative land and water management practices.

Improve and maintain wildlife habitat.

Preserve and protect biological diversity.

Restore and develop the native ecosystems.

Improve aesthetic views.

Improve and maintain the health of the natural ecosystems, especially where recreation activities are likely to be most intense.

Develop monitoring programs for wildlife, vegetation, and water quality.

Control and eradicate invasive species, such as garlic mustard, buckthorn, reed canary grass, olives and honeysuckle.

Monitor management and visitor impacts on the natural features of the Badger property and use gathered information to modify management actions when necessary.

STATEMENT FOR THE RECORD

[Senator Tammy Baldwin, Dec. 11, 2014]

TECHNICAL DESCRIPTION OF SECTION 3078 OF H.R. 3979, THE CARL LEVIN AND HOWARD P. ''BUCK'' MCKEON NATIONAL DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION ACT FOR FISCAL YEAR 2015

I am offering this statement to clarify the legislative intent of Section 3078 of H.R. 3979 and to detail the intended use of the land which will be transferred as a result of Section 3078.

Earlier this year, when Congress first began its consideration of the National Defense Authorization Act for FY 2015, I drafted this provision for inclusion as an amendment to S. 2410, the Senate Armed Services Committee-reported version of the bill. I then successfully worked with numerous Congressional committees of jurisdiction to ensure that my amendment—numbered 3393 and filed on June 26, 2014—would be considered in scope for an eventual conference committee between the Senate and House. That amendment text served as the framework for the ultimate transfer language included as Section 3078 in H.R. 3979, the final conference committee reported defense bill.

Section 3078 of H.R. 3979 transfers approximately 1,553 acres of land located within the former Badger Army Ammunition Plant to the Department of Interior in trust for the Ho-Chunk Nation.

The transfer has been stalled by an interagency dispute over the federal government's responsibility for environmental cleanup at the site. The legislative intent of this provision follows the legislative intent of our environmental superfund laws—the polluter must pay for contamination they caused. For many decades, the Department of Defense operated the Badger Army Ammunition Plant on this property. Among other things, this legislation makes clear that the Army retains responsibility for environmental contamination from Department of Defense conduct or activities prior to transfer and is responsible for taking any necessary remedial actions related to environmental contamination in the future.

This responsibility for environmental remediation applies to activities of the Department of Defense, which includes activities conducted by contractors on behalf of the Department of Defense. Most of the activities conducted on the 1553 acres of land to be transferred to the Ho-Chunk Nation were performed by independent contractors or other contractors for the U.S. Army, the Department of Defense, or both. Section 3078(c)(2) of H.R. 3979 is intended to ensure that the Secretary of the Army remains responsible for remediating hazardous substances resulting from the activities of the Department of Defense, and that the ''activities of the Department of Defense'' includes activities undertaken by the officers and agents employed or contracted by the Department of Defense; but nothing in this section is intended to diminish or increase the liability of any third party or otherwise affect the liability of any third party as established under any other provision of law.

While this legislation transfers the land to Interior in trust for the Nation, it also makes clear that Interior does not take on liability or responsibility for certain conduct or activities that took place on the land before the transfer. The Department of Interior's Indian Affairs budget should not, now or in the future, be tapped to remediate environmental contamination on the property that was caused by the Department of Defense. Those funds are intended for the benefit of all federally recognized Indian tribes. Therefore, this legislation seeks to clarify that the Department of Defense, not the Department of Interior, is responsible or liable for any environmental contamination that occurred from the activities of the Department of Defense prior to the transfer.

This legislation will quickly transfer the lands and allow the Ho-Chunk Nation to quickly make use of them. This acquisition will be expedited by a number of things, including that the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) is not required to conduct any additional processing before the land is placed in trust. Instead, the acquisition of the land in trust by the Bureau of Indian Affairs is effectuated by this legislation. The structures on the property will be transferred to the Ho-Chunk Nation in fee as soon as the Nation provides the Secretary of Interior with a tribal resolution authorizing the transfer.

I would also like to explain the intended use of the land following the transfer. In 1997, the Army declared they would no longer use this site and stakeholders gathered together to recommend future uses for the property. The Ho-Chunk Nation was one of multiple stakeholders, including representatives of local governments, the State, the

federal government, and citizen groups that participated in this process. In 2001, these stakeholders issued their recommendations in the Badger Reuse Plan, which set forth a vision that the land would be co-managed by three main property owners, and that those property owners would manage them in coordination that reflects the site as a whole. During the reuse process, the Ho-Chunk expressed interest in holding lands at the site in trust in order to preserve native prairie habitat and graze bison, and the Badger Reuse Plan recommended they receive the land accordingly. Since that time, the Ho-Chunk Nation has reaffirmed their interest in receiving the land for prairie restoration. In October of this year, the tribe updated its Land Use Plan for the parcel in this transfer, further affirming their prairie restoration goals for the site—goals that will be able to turn to actions now that this long-stalled transfer is finally resolved.

Ms. BALDWIN. These 1,553 acres represent the last major parcel at the Badger Army Ammunition Plant site to leave Army management. The resolution this transfer will bring is long overdue, and I am proud to have played a role in defining the community's vision and bringing it to a reality.

The action we take this week—hopefully later today—will benefit many generations to come.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Oklahoma.

Mr. COBURN. Mr. President, I first congratulate my colleague from Wisconsin. There is a lot of controversy over lands packages, and her very pleasant example is what isn't controversial.

The reason we have a discussion about what is going on is the very mundane—the very things we can get done have never been brought forward on the floor without being brought forward with a very controversial land project. So I agree with her 100 percent that what is happening for her and the people of Wisconsin and her tribal nation is absolutely appropriate.

The question we ought to ask and the question that causes all the trouble is, Why in the world does the Federal Government own 640 million acres of our land and have all sorts of rules—of our land—that say we can't utilize it in a way that is best for our citizens, best for our States, best for our region, best for the ecology, and best for preservation of history? Until Congress solves that problem, we are going to continue to have these battles.

What is disappointing to me is we spent 1½ years looking at the National Park Service—which nobody in this body read. It is quality scholarship. It is scholarship that the Park Service agrees with. It is scholarship that the historians of the Park Service agree with. It is scholarship that the people who write about the parks agree with.

So today we have before us a bill that has 68 separate land items in it, of which 40 are totally noncontroversial, which could have been run across the floor 2 years ago, I would tell my colleague from Wisconsin, but they were chosen not to because the desire is to get recognition at home and expand the National Park Service.

If we were to happen to just take the couple hours to read this, we would see right now why expanding the National Park Service is a disastrous idea. The reason it is a disastrous idea is our parks are falling apart—a $12 billion backlog on our most pristine, greatest national monuments and parks with which we have set the pace for the rest of the world in terms of recognizing and valuing such wonderful natural landscape and creation. But we have ignored that because the desire to please a parochial benefit at the expense of harming these most precious resources cannot be resisted by most of our colleagues.

So I find myself on the floor today. I know I won't win this battle, but I won't quit fighting. We should fight for what we have already invested in. We should preserve what we have already invested in. We are falling behind $250 million a year.

It is ludicrous to say this bill doesn't cost anything. It costs $320 million a year, the ''no cost park program'' that we are putting out and saying it doesn't cost anything.

I was born in Wyoming. I love Yellowstone. I love the Great Rocky Mountains national forest. I love our wonderful programs. But the vast majority of the parks we have created in the last 20 years are nothing but drains on the National Park Service. We have the data—this has the data to show that. We are going to do the largest expansion of national parks since 1978 in this bill, and we don't have the money for it.

So what will happen as this goes through? And I say to my colleague from Wisconsin, you are absolutely right—yours should fly through here. It is not a significant cost. You are absolutely right. But fixing the real problem is restoring the right to the States to the lands that are there, taking it out of the hands of the Federal Government, and letting the States make the decisions about what happens to the land within their confines.

So it is disappointing to me that when great scholarship is done and is recognized, parochialism trumps even the reading of the information with which to make good decisions. And it is a blight on the Senate. We don't have to agree with everything in this, but we can't deny the facts that are totally documented in this. We can't deny the statements of the National Park Service. We can't deny the people we are actually charging to do this—we can't deny their concerns about what we are getting ready to do.

Let me read for a moment what Harry Butowski, a historian who recently retired from the National Park Service, said about this bill. He summed up how Congress is out of touch with National Park Service needs and priorities when he was expressing his opposition to the lands package in the national defense authorization bill, of all places.

He said:

I think it is irresponsible for Congress to create so many new parks, heritage areas and expansions of existing units and not provide the funding and manpower necessary to manage what we now have.

I think the National Park System should not be added to or expanded until we can fund and staff all of our parks and programs. To add more units at this time is just not responsible. It is the opposite of good management.

Here is the historian for the Park Service telling us as Members of the Senate: You are irresponsible in what you are doing.

I know we will blow that off. That doesn't mean anything. But this is somebody who has had his eye on the Park Service for years.

. . . Perhaps what Congress should do is an analysis of the entire National Park System and start getting rid of marginal units that cost many dollars and have few visitors.

That is exactly what this report recommends. But nobody read it, studied it, considered it, to try to solve the problem. And it doesn't mean we cannot have new national parks—we can—but we ought to have a plan to take care of the ones we have now before we add additional national parks and put at risk the most fantastic National Park System in the world.

Here is what the first National Park Director stated—the first one—and we ought to pay attention to him.

The national park system as now constituted should not be allowed to be lowered in standard, dignity, and prestige by the inclusion of areas which express in less than the highest terms the particular class or kind of exhibit which they represent.

Let me tell you, this is exactly what he is talking about.

Hinchcliff Stadium in Patterson, NJ, is going to add $100,000 to the Park System. Does it have historical significance? Yes. Should it be part of the Park System? Absolutely not. Does it look good for those who sponsored it back home? Yes. Get the attaboys back home. But what damage do you do to Yellowstone, Yosemite, Rocky Mountain National Park, Grand Mesa, Grand Canyon? What pain, what lack of maintenance, comes across from that?

I have stated before, I have no problem with land swaps and conveyances. I think we ought to make them easy, and the best way to make them easy is to get the Federal Government out of them, and return the land that is in Wisconsin that the Federal Government owns to the people of Wisconsin. They will be the best stewards of that land. Same thing in Oklahoma, in Colorado, in California, in Washington State, and Arizona, and in Nevada, where it has the largest percentage ownership by the Federal Government. We have to kowtow to a bunch of bureaucrats in Washington for the people in the State of Nevada to do what is in the best interests in the State of Nevada of the land that is there? That makes no sense.

I have mentioned the bill is not deficit neutral—$310 million, including

more than $200 million in cost to the National Park System, is going to come through with this bill, and unless you assume that nothing is going to happen that is authorized in this, there is no way you can deny this doesn't cost another half a billion dollars a year. As a matter of fact, I found it interesting listening to the chairwoman of the energy committee this past week when she was excited about this land package because we are clearing all the old land pieces of legislation.

So we are taking care of the politicians, but are we taking care of the parks? Are we doing what is in the best long-term interest of preserving the pristine, unique aspects of our country as we add ballfields or the old Colt manufacturing facility in Connecticut? Really, a national park? Does it meet the requirements as set out in parks? No, it doesn't come close to meeting requirements for a national park, but it is in there, because it is going to look good to a politician back home.

I kind of used the commonsense test. The country is broke. We had a $460 billion deficit last year. We are going to add a half a billion dollars on to a park system that has a $12 billion deficit in terms of backlog of repairs of what we already have. Most people with any semblance of common sense would say that is really stupid. It is really destructive of the whole goal of the National Park System in the first place.

The final point I would make is the NDAA. Even though it is a necessary bill, I want it to pass, I want us to have what we need for our military, this bill represents the worst of Washington; because what we have added to a must-pass bill are measures that are very low priority in terms of the long-term priorities of the country and fiscal soundness of the country, but are really high priorities for the politicians in this body. It is amazing how we can take something as important as the Defense authorization bill—the measure that is going to give our military leaders what they need to make the decisions to defend this country in this very dangerous world today, and lard it up with things that don't need to be happening right now—shouldn't be happening right now, and can be happening in other ways.

The reason I will assuredly lose this vote is because it has already been bought and paid for, because 35 States have something in title XXX, and most politicians up here don't have the courage to vote against their State interests when it harms the national interest. It is just not there.

Alaska: Two provisions, $3 million; backlog on Alaska parks, $121 million. Arizona: Two provisions worth $2 million; backlog, $592 million in terms of their national parks. California: Four provisions that reduce the deficit by $225,000, but a backlog of $1.6 billion at Yosemite and other parks throughout California. Colorado: A provision worth $500,000, backlog, a quarter of a billion dollars. Connecticut: One provision, $9 million, backlog, $6.2 million. This is the Coltsville National Historic Park.

But none of that—none of that—meets the requirements as set out by the National Park Service of meeting the requirements for a park. So we just violate the rules—to heck with the rules—because we are going to do it.

Georgia: $400,000—they have a $100 million backlog. Idaho: $17 million backlog. Kentucky: $112 million backlog. Maryland: One provision worth $12 million, and a $363 million backlog on our parks in Maryland. Massachusetts: Quarter of a billion dollars in backlog. Maine: $72 million in backlogs. Mississippi: A $26 million provision—a quarter of a billion dollars in backlog in our battlefield parks in Mississippi. Montana: Five provisions—great parks out there—$348.8 million in backlogs. But we are going to spend this money. North Carolina: One little small provision—6 million bucks, but a backlog of a half a billion dollars in our pristine parks.

I won't continue.

I understand the frustration of my colleagues in terms of trying to get land conveyances. We can do them, but not if we always hijack them with something that is of better parochial and political benefit for the Member, and that is why they don't go through. The land conveyances aren't hard to get through. We always add them with something that is controversial that shouldn't be there, to the benefit of a politician.

MOTION TO REFER

Mr. President, I send a motion to the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. HIRONO). The clerk will report the motion.

The assistant bill clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Oklahoma [Mr. COBURN] moves to refer the House message to accompany H.R. 3979 to the Committee on Armed Services with instructions to report back forthwith with changes to strike title XXX, the nondefense related lands portion of the bill.

Mr. COBURN. Madam President, I will be asking for a vote on this motion. I am sure it will be tabled, and I understand that, but I hope the American public has gotten a flavor of what we are doing.

Here in the end of December, we are trying to get one of the most important pieces of legislation out, which is the Defense authorization bill. We are trying to get the appropriations bill through December 30 of next year, and what we do is put the politicians' interests first.

Maybe that is too harsh. Let me take that back. Maybe we put the Park Service's best interests last, which is even worse.

I have asked direction from the Chair. I have three other areas that I need to speak on today. I will hold those or follow the direction of the Chair in terms of bringing forth both motions and discussions.

I would also ask unanimous consent to have an article by Kurt Repanshek, dated December 9, 2014, entered into the RECORD, the ''Traveler's View.''

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

[From the National Parks Traveler, Dec. 9, 2014]

TRAVELER'S VIEW: SENATE SHOULD EITHER FUND NEW PARKS IN DEFENSE BILL, OR STRIP THEM OUT

(By Kurt Repanshek)

There are at least 75 million reasons why the U.S. Senate should either fully fund the national park projects contained within the defense authorization bill, or strip them out.

For the National Park Service, already billions of dollars in the red with its maintenance and operations budget, and cutting staff in crucial areas such as cultural resources, to be asked to add seven new national park units, adjust the boundaries of nine units, and redesignate two of those units, without any new funding, is incredibly poor legislating by Congress and will not enhance, but rather degrade the overall system.

This is not to judge the worthiness of the prospective units as part of the National Park System, but rather to point out the fiscal absurdity in play. Congressional Budget Office figures show it would cost the Park Service at least $75 million over a five-year period to get these units up and running, and millions more to operate them on an annual basis. At the same time, the Park Service's maintenance backlog has crept up to $11.3 billion, and some of those needs are critical.

According to the Park Service, 90 percent of the roads in the system are considered to be in ''fair'' or ''poor'' condition; ''28 publicly accessible bridges within the parks' transportation system are ''structurally deficient'' and in need of rehabilitation or reconstruction;'' ''approximately 36 percent of all trails throughout the National Park Service (6,700 miles out of a total of 18,600) are in a ''poor'' or ''seriously deficient'' condition'' and; ''since 2005, the number of national parks in regional air quality non-attainment areas has more than doubled; 128 parks now are in non-attainment areas, where air pollution levels regularly exceed the national ambient air quality standards.''

We like to view the national parks as ''America's best idea,'' and members of Congress certainly like to point to a unit in their home districts. But if we can't afford the 401–unit park system we have today, how can we possibly justify new units?

There's no urgent need to add the sites listed in the defense bill at this time. The Blackstone River Valley has been part of the park system as a heritage corridor since 1986; Valles Caldera National Preserve currently is under the U.S. Forest Service; the Coltsville Historic District in Connecticut is under the aegis of the Hartford Preservation District; the proposed Lower East Side Tenement National Historic Site is currently a museum; the Harriet Tubman Underground Railroad National Historical Park actually exists today as a national monument President Obama designated in 2013; the Atomic Heritage Foundation currently is preserving sites that would fall into a Manhattan Project National Historical Park, and; public and private efforts currently are at work to protect the fossil-rich landscape of Tule Springs near Las Vegas.

Congress would be much wiser, and the National Park Service much better off, if it simply added $100 million to the agency's budget in an effort to chip away at the maintenance backlog. While $100 million would

barely dent that staggering sum, it'd be money better spent at this time than forcing the Park Service to decide where to further cut its existing budget to manage these additions.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Oklahoma.

Mr. COBURN. I thank Senator REID for coming to the floor. Since we last asked this unanimous consent on the Taxpayers Right to Know, I have had a conversation with the administration and Shaun Donovan, the head of OMB. When Shaun came to see me in our committee of jurisdiction over his nomination, one of the things he assured me is that he would try with all due haste to move forward on the things for transparency for the Federal Government, one of President Obama's key projects. He assured me he had the capability to lead that organization, even when things are hard and difficult.

So I would like to describe for a minute what the Taxpayers Right to Know is. President Obama, myself, JOHN MCCAIN, and TOM CARPER passed a bill when President Obama was in the Senate, which was the Federal Transparency and Accountability Act. It made it so that Americans could start seeing where their money was spent. We have since then passed the DATA Act which would be an improvement on that, and the third and final step in that is the Taxpayers Right to Know.

Now what does that mean? That means the taxpayer has the right to know where their money is being spent. The taxpayer has the right to know what programs are out there. The taxpayer has the right to know what is working and what isn't.

So we hear from the administration in a long conversation that this is too hard. You know, we didn't tell that to our troops in Afghanistan or Iraq, that this is too hard. And their real complaint is under the definition of a program. Well, most of us know what a program is. We know it when we see it. But the fact is, we will never control spending nor will we accentuate what is working well until the Taxpayers Right to Know Act is implemented.

What I told the Director of OMB is there is one agency already totally compliant with this. It is called the Department of Education. If they can do it, why can't everybody else? They know what the definition of a program is. They figured it out. I see this as an excuse not to be transparent with the American public. This has 38 bipartisan cosponsors in the Senate, and it passed the House unanimously. There is only one objection in the Senate, and that is from the OMB. Everybody else recognizes this is commonsense, good-government transparency.

I recognize the important role the majority leader has in terms of representing the administration's views. I just happen to say he ought to tell them to take a hike this time because the American people will benefit greatly, and it really is not that much more work.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUEST—S. 2113

I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of Calendar No. 531, S. 2113. I ask that the committee-reported substitute be agreed to, the bill, as amended, be read a third time and passed, and the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table.

I wish to also note that this bill is going to pass next year. The President is going to get it anyway. Either he is going to veto it or he is going to make Shaun Donovan implement it. Why don't we get after good government now rather than wait 3 or 4 months?

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Mr. REID. I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

Mr. COBURN. I reserve the remainder of my time and suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

Ms. MURKOWSKI. Madam President, earlier there was a lot of discussion about the NDAA—the Defense authorization bill—and the very important provisions which are contained in that which will provide for our men and women who serve us so honorably. I concur with all who have spoken today about the importance and significance of this bill and why we should pass it and why we should pass it today.

An area of controversy that has certainly come up—and my colleague from Oklahoma has pointed it out very clearly—is the public lands package that has been attached to the NDAA. I will speak a little bit about where we are today and why we are dealing with this issue and why it is important that the Senate and Congress advance these public lands provisions for our country.

I had an opportunity to speak in greater detail yesterday, but I felt it was important to let colleagues know why we deal with public lands bills traditionally in a package.

The Presiding Officer comes from a Western State, but Hawaii does not have large portions of land held by the Federal Government.

In the 12 Western States, which includes Alaska—93 percent of the Federal lands that are held by this country are contained in these 12 Western States. What does it mean when you are a State like Alaska where some 68 percent of your lands are Federally held? What does it mean when you are a State like Nevada, where our majority leader is from, where 85 percent of your State is held in public lands? It means that when you want to do a conveyance, a conveyance doesn't come about just because you are able to get a real estate attorney and you have a transaction; it literally requires an act of Congress.

We are dealing with one provision in this public lands bill that Senator FRANKEN, from Minnesota, has been working on. It is a conveyance of one acre of land that is currently held by USGS, and it is a conveyance to a school district. Most people around this country—or certainly on this end of the country—would say: Wow, that really requires congressional action? That really requires a vote? That really requires the President to sign it into law? The answer is in the affirmative.

We have been processing, as a committee—on the Energy Committee and committees on the House side—public lands bills throughout this Congress. We have been working on some of these public lands measures not for months, not for years, but in several instances a decade. It has taken a decade to bring about some of these conveyances and these exchanges.

I believe it is important to set the record straight—for those who are suggesting that somehow or other this was conjured up in the dark of the night or that there has been no process for these bills—and let colleagues know about the procedural process that has led to its inclusion in the NDAA.

For the record, I will note that the process included not only the committees of jurisdiction for the lands bills but the committees who crafted the NDAA bill, leadership from both sides, and individual Members who all agreed to cobble together a package that was fair and balanced, bipartisan, bicameral, revenue neutral—which is exceptionally important—and also addresses the need for conservation on one end and economic development and jobs and prosperity on the other end. With this package of bills, one can see that compromise come together.

It has been noted that these public lands bills have nothing to do with defense authorization, but I will say that this is not without precedent. Adding lands to an NDAA bill has been done in the past. We have seen it in the past several NDAAs. What we did here was to amend the existing lands package within the House-passed NDAA—which is hardly out of balance or unusual.

As I said before, I would much rather have us move individual bills through the floor as we process them, but many Members have said to me: Well, your small lands transaction is important, but does it really rise to the level of occupying floor time? It is tough to win the undivided attention of the Senate on some of these measures.

Just because this issue doesn't rise to a level of keen interest in this body doesn't mean these issues are not critically important for individuals, communities, and States around our country, and so it is hard to put that together. But just because it is small or more localized or perhaps more parochial—like this one acre of land we are

trying to convey to this school district—doesn't mean we should disregard it or overlook it or not try to enact it because somehow or other it is not as important as the other things we do around here.

So knowing how valuable and precious floor time is around here, we worked together. We have been working together for months—again, in a bicameral and bipartisan way—to combine many of the bills that are in the package. The result of what we have in front of us is provisions that will help boost natural resources and community development while we are also advancing conservation. We are moving toward economic development in certain areas, creating jobs. We have opportunities in both Nevada and Arizona to create thousands of good-paying jobs and will increase our resources and our minerals security.

Other aspects of the bill focus on conservation. There are additional wilderness provisions that are in there, but again, as we attempt to achieve that balance, what we have in front of us is a good structure.

I want to make sure colleagues recognize that when we are discussing the concern my colleague from Oklahoma has raised, the concern he has so well articulated that within our National Park System we have a maintenance backlog that is awful—and in many cases it is overwhelming. To his credit, he has given keen attention to this maintenance backlog we have and has pressed us to do more to improve that situation. He put together a very considerable report that we are using in the energy committee to help build a series of necessary reforms that will be required to deal with our issues within the National Park Service. Thanks to Senator COBURN's good work on this issue, we will be able to see some true reforms.

I met yesterday afternoon with Director Jarvis in my office, and I made it clear to him as the head of Park Service that this is going to be an area on which we must be focused. Our national parks are a national treasure, but when we can't attend to their needs and ensure that they are maintained to the level that, as Americans, we all want, then we are failing on that.

He has a very good point when he says we need to be doing something about maintenance and backlog. I agree. We actually have a couple of provisions in this public lands bill that will help us with that, and one of them is the bill Senator COBURN has sponsored which will allow for donors to have discreet recognition within our parks. So if you want to give a private donation, there is a way for recognition. We also have a provision in here that will allow for minting of a coin, which again will help with private dollars. Those private pieces are very important, but we need to do more, we will do more, and my commitment is to help do that.

One of the things that I think are important to recognize with the park provisions that are included in title XXX is that it is critically important to recognize the local support these park provisions have that will encourage economic development, tourism, and recreation. The agreement includes five new national historic parks, and it transfers management of two existing Federal areas to the Park Service. All of the new historical parks have been formally studied and have been recommended for inclusion in the National Park System. They focus on specific historic sites of national significance.

Studies have also been done—and my colleague has referenced that—on potential additions to the National Park System. These study authorizations have previously passed the House under suspension or gone through the Senate by unanimous consent. Again, we are not trying to go through the backdoor. The study that has been conducted and the process that has taken place in both the House and Senate is to ensure that there is that local support and that this is not just something a Member wants to attach his or her name to, that this has local support, and that in turn will help us with some of the funding issues we are going to need to address for our park systems.

I wish to conclude my remarks quickly because Senator FLAKE was asked for a few minutes and I would like to defer to him. First, the issue has also come up about existing national heritage areas. I think it is important for colleagues to know that we do provide for limited extensions for existing heritage areas, but there are no new heritage areas that are created. I think it is important to recognize that when we talk about extensions, it is extensions of existing heritage sites.

So with that, if I may, I wish to yield to my colleague from Arizona, Senator FLAKE. We have been working not only with Senator FLAKE but with Senator MCCAIN on a provision that will certainly not only benefit his State, but it will benefit the United States in terms of jobs, economic opportunity, and a mineral resource; namely, copper, that is extraordinarily important to us.

With that, I turn to Senator FLAKE.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Arizona.

Mr. FLAKE. Madam President, I thank the Senator from Alaska for yielding, and I wish to thank her also for her hard work on this lands package. These are difficult pieces of legislation to put together. It is particularly living the West, when we have States such as Arizona that are about 87 percent publicly owned by either the Federal Government, State government or tribal governments. To have access and to have rural communities have access to economic development when we are dealing with resources that are often on these lands, and when land exchanges need to be done, it is extremely difficult to do that because it is often seen as a parochial interest, and it is difficult to get support from around the country for something that is needed in Arizona without putting a package together that has other items that are needed in other States, particularly in the West. So I wish to compliment the Senator from Alaska and others who worked so hard to put this complex package together that has many beneficiaries and also to put it together in a way where we are not contributing or increasing the size of the Federal or State, that we are promoting economic development in States such as Arizona.

As the Senator mentioned with regard to Arizona and what this does, it allows land exchange to happen that will allow a copper mine to be developed that will ultimately produce, likely—or can produce—about 25 percent of the copper needed for manufacturing, for use in this country. That is not just an economic development issue; that is a national security issue as well, to make sure we are more independent with regard to our source minerals.

In terms of economic development of the State, it is huge. We are talking about thousands of jobs over the next several decades that will be produced and will continue economic development for rural communities in Superior, Globe, and Miami, that have had a tough time and that will be good for those communities and for the entire State.

So I commend again those who have put this together. It is never good to see a big package with so many things in it; that is what we want to get away from, and hopefully we can in the new Congress. But it has been very difficult to move individual pieces of legislation over the past couple of years. So unfortunately we are often saddled with trying to put together a package and attaching it to a larger bill, which is the case here. But again, kudos to those who worked so hard to put it together. I appreciate the indulgence of this body to have a package such as this in the NDAA bill. I plan to vote for it and I encourage my colleagues to do the same.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Alaska.

Ms. MURKOWSKI. I thank my colleague from Arizona. As he has pointed out, not only is this measure important to the State of Arizona, but the State of Nevada will also gain the benefit of being able to access copper resources in that region as well, bringing jobs and bringing a resource.

So contained in this package—and again a balanced package—we are talking about the Federal land conveyances for economic and community development. We have mentioned the opportunity for mineral production with two copper mines, one in Arizona, one in Nevada; an opportunity for increased timber production in my State. We will finally realize the obligation to settle the land claims with the Native people of the southeastern part of the State in

the Sealaska region, 40-some years after the promise for their lands conveyance. They are still awaiting their conveyance. This measure we have in front of us will not only fulfill that decades-old promise, but it will allow for a continuation of timber within their region, albeit very, very, very reduced.

But in order to move to that second growth transition the Forest Service is always talking about, we have to have an industry that is just staying alive, and this Sealaska lands provision will help with that. But it was also crafted in a way that took into account the concerns of the fisheries, the stewardship for other lands, placing additional lands in a conservation area—so again a key balance.

The other provisions that relate to our Federal lands and our ability to access them I think are important, making them productive. The provision allows for land management agencies with the needed authority to renew and process grazing permits and leases. This is a measure that my colleague from Wyoming and my colleague from New Mexico have been working on, and in terms of something that provides certainty to America's ranching community, this is so key, this is so important.

We also worked to expand the successful BLM permit streamlining program to boost oil and gas production from the Federal lands. So it is kind of the economic development piece, but the conservation piece I think is equally important. It does designate wilderness. It designates approximately 245,000 acres of wilderness in total. But I think what is important for colleagues to recognize is that just about half of those acres are already managed as if it were wilderness. In other words, they are in wilderness study areas or roadless areas. So again we looked at those measures where there was support at the local level, at the State level, represented by the Members of Congress who had worked over the years to gain the level of support for these provisions. There is no cramdown. There is no designation from the executive as to monument status. This is how the process is designed to work.

We also returned 26,000 total wilderness study areas to multiple use, again for greater activity on those lands.

We protect private property rights in all of our special land designations. There is no private property that can be condemned or acquisitions through eminent domain. Private activities taking place outside of the special land designation are not going to be precluded by such designations, and we have insured that there are no buffer zones or protective perimeters that would encroach on personal and public rights.

I have been asked about the impact on hunting and fishing on our public lands, because that is something that particularly those of us in the West care a great deal about. I have heard some concerns that there may be negative impacts. But I want to be clear that the wilderness bills in this agreement actually affirm the responsibility and the authority of the States for the management of fish and wildlife.

In the wilderness bills that we have in New Mexico and in Nevada, they have incorporated restating the law—this is section 302 of FLPMA—to provide assurances that the wilderness designations do not give the Secretaries any new authorities to close Federal lands to hunting, fishing or trapping that they don't already have.

So we have put in place protections again trying to find the balance between the conservation and the development, providing for access, ensuring that private rights are respected, ensuring that our opportunities for use and enjoyment as well as economic activity are preserved; trying to find a package that is balanced from the bicameral, bipartisan perspective, making sure we are not imposing costs; again, a revenue-neutral proposal. I think that is also worth stressing.

I have seen something out there that suggests there is an impact on direct spending from title XXX. The fact is it is revenue neutral over these next 10 years. We do not take anything from the Defense authorization perspective within this bill with this lands package. That was never the intent. It was not the design, and it will not impact that.

With that, I yield the floor and reserve the remainder of my time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New Jersey.

Mr. MENENDEZ. Madam President, I rise in strong support of the lands package. I wish to congratulate the Senator from Alaska as well as the Senator from Louisiana for their work, and particularly in support of adding Hinchliffe Stadium to Great Falls National Park in Paterson, NJ. It has a special place in the hearts of many New Jerseyans, and it has played a vital role in the story of America's fight against institutionalized segregation.

Critics of this legislation are using a mixture of the stadium showing overgrown shrubs and graffiti on the walls—asking, What does a stadium such as this have to do with this and should it be in with our national park system?

Unfortunately, the picture being circulated only shows a side of the story at a different time. What it fails to show is the dedicated work of the surrounding community to clean up Hinchliffe Stadium. So I brought three photographs that I think illustrate the work being done in Patterson and to put to rest this notion that the stadium is an abandoned place that the community doesn't care about.

The first is a picture of dozens of local residents working together to clean up the stands, paint the walls, and begin the process of restoring this vital community center. The second is a closeup picture of just a handful of these volunteers. These are young people taking the time to improve their community and honor the history that was behind the stadium. The third shows the final product—much different than what my colleague showed—of their hard work. These pictures were taken earlier this year at an event where 700 volunteers worked to clean up Hinchliffe Stadium.

The argument that we are dumping this land on the National Park Service is simply false. The legislation specifically prohibits the Park Service from directly purchasing this land, meaning that the community of Paterson will continue to be intricately involved in the management and preservation of the stadium.

I think these photographs illustrate the dedication of the residents that Paterson and the surrounding area have to protecting Hinchliffe Stadium. There is a reason for this dedication. Hinchliffe Stadium has the designation of being one of the few remaining sites that hosted the Negro League Baseball. In the 1930s and 1940s, Hinchliffe was the home of the Black Yankees, and in 1933 the stadium hosted what was called the Colored Championship. In 1936, the field was home to the New York Cubans, a team made up of players from Cuba, the Dominican Republic, Mexico, and Puerto Rico.

Some of baseball's greatest stars, including Satchel Paige, Josh Gibson, and Larry Doby all took the field at Hinchliffe Stadium. Doby went on to become the first African-American player joining the American League, helping Jackie Robinson break down the color barrier.

Contrary to the negativism and misrepresentations we are hearing today, Hinchliffe Stadium should be part of the Paterson Great Falls National Park. I know it, everyone who knows about its history knows it, and America should know it as well.

I am proud to be a sponsor of the legislation adding Hinchliffe boundaries to the national park. This bill has been championed by Congressman PASCRELL in the House of Representatives, where it was passed by a House vote earlier this year.

I want to read briefly from a guest columnist editorial Congressman PASCRELL wrote with another individual. He said that Hinchliffe Stadium in Paterson is one of the last remaining stadiums associated with the Negro League Baseball.

> It is where sports and racial history coalesce. Hinchliffe Stadium is the only National Historic Landmark in baseball and only one of two professional Negro League venues considered nationally significant.

Cal Ripken, 2007 Hall of Famer, when he talked about Hinchliffe, said:

> Not only does it deserve recognition for its place in history, but it deserves the opportunity to be restored into a place where tomorrow's youth will be able to walk in the footsteps of yesterday's legends and experience the history of this community firsthand.

I am also pleased with this legislation that is cosponsored by Senator BOOKER and formerly by Senator Jeff Chiesa, a Republican who served in the Senate for a period of time after the passing of Senator Lautenberg. And speaking of Senator Lautenberg, he was one of Hinchliffe's greatest champions, and he was proud to count Paterson as his hometown.

The version of the legislation that we consider today includes amendments suggested both by the Parks Service and by House Republicans. That is why it passed by voice.

Some critics cited the previous National Park Service study opposing the inclusion of the stadium in the national park. The study was discredited by 25 distinguished scholars at the time. Since then, the Park Service has completed an additional study and designated the stadium as a national historic landmark.

I believe strongly that the story of our fight against institutionalized segregation is a story worth telling.

Critics of this legislation may look at Hinchliffe Stadium and see a rundown sports field. Not me. When I look at Hinchliffe Stadium, I see a field of dreams, an enduring reminder of how far we have come since the days of separate but equal, when institutional segregation marginalized the works, the dreams, and the achievements of African Americans. I see a community coming together decades after Hinchliffe first earned a place in the canon of American history to preserve the legacy it represents. I urge my colleagues to join me in standing up for this legacy and supporting the inclusion of Hinchliffe Stadium in the Great Falls National Park as part of the national lands package.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Maryland.

Mr. CARDIN. Madam President, first, let me thank Senators LANDRIEU and MURKOWSKI for their work on this legislation. I was listening to Senator MURKOWSKI go through how this process came together. I also listened to Senator COBURN's concerns about the process that has been used.

Let me share with my colleagues why I strongly support the inclusion of the lands package in the National Defense Authorize Act and encourage my colleagues to support the vote later today. I reference specifically the Harriet Tubman National Historic Park. Talk about frustration. This park, although approved through studies and it went through all the appropriate ways for its designation, was held by one Senator on a hold for 3½ years, and that is despite the fact that since 2012 there was an offset to make sure it did not cost any additional resources—a requirement that I was told I needed to satisfy to remove the hold.

There is a lot of frustration here. I appreciate what Senator MURKOWSKI did and the history she went through. She is absolutely right. If we tried to bring these bills to the floor on an individual basis, we would never get done the work of the Senate. These land issues have been vetted, and I can tell you in regard to the Harriet Tubman National Historic Park, it is very much needed.

This Senate did pass this particular designation earlier this year, so this has already been passed by the Senate. In the House, I worked with Congressman HARRIS and Congressman Moffett dealing with some of the same issues that Senator MURKOWSKI mentioned a few moments ago, and that is to make sure we have the right balance between the lands that are designated as part of the historic park and the landowners' rights in the community. The balance that Senator MURKOWSKI said generally in regard to the provisions applies in regard to the Harriet Tubman park. I thank Congressman HARRIS and Congressman Moffett for their help.

I also want to acknowledge the work of my colleagues—Senator MIKULSKI, Senator GILLIBRAND, and Senator SCHUMER—and thank them for their help in bringing about this package and bringing about the ability today to finally pass the designation of the Harriet Tubman National Historic Park. This will be the first woman, the first African-American woman to have such a recognition under our National Park System. This is an appropriate person for this historic moment. I think most people know that Harriet Tubman was considered the Moses of her people. She was born into slavery in Dorchester County, MD, the Eastern Shore of Maryland. For the first 30 years of her life, she lived in slavery, and then on her own, by herself, she escaped slavery and made her way to liberty in 1849. She did this alone. The courage of this woman—she didn't stop there; she then came back and rescued others slaves and brought them to freedom through the Underground Railroad, which took slaves from slavery to freedom.

I am proud of the historic significance of the State of Maryland in that regard, with the birthplace of Harriet Tubman and where the Underground Railroad operated.

The Eastern Shore is on the eastern part of our State. I could take you to the western part of the State, Cumberland, where you can see the church in which the slaves on their way to freedom were sheltered before they went through a tunnel to the railroad and literally went to Pennsylvania and freedom.

This is an incredible opportunity. We have the landscape, we have the property on the Eastern Shore of Maryland.

In Auburn, NY, we have where Harriet Tubman lived the later years of her life. After escaping and becoming free, she was a spy for the North, for the Union during the Civil War. She then went on to help with women's suffrage. She set up a home for the aged African Americans in New York. A lot of those properties still exist today up in New York and will be part of the Harriet Tubman National Historic Park.

This is an appropriate way to honor a real hero of our country but also to provide a way for young people and all the people in this country to learn more about Harriet Tubman. It will help the local economies of New York and Pennsylvania. It is part of the National Park System's dedication to African-American history. I think it is very appropriate to at long last be able to get this done.

For those who express frustration, we had this paid for a long time ago, we worked out all the balances a long time ago, and we thought this would be done a long time ago. But today we have a chance to get it done, and I urge my colleagues to support the package and support the NDAA bill.

With that, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New Mexico.

Mr. HEINRICH. Madam President, I rise in strong opposition to the motion to refer, which would remove the public lands title from the Defense authorization bill.

Like some of my colleagues, I think an appropriate place to start today is to thank Chair LANDRIEU and Ranking Member MURKOWSKI for their efforts on the Energy and Natural Resources Committee. They worked so hard to come up with a package that could actually move in this divided Congress.

The bills in this package have been the subject of incredibly long debate. Many of them, such as the bill we just heard about from my colleague in Maryland, have been under consideration for years. Almost all the bills included in the public lands package have received hearings in either the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee or the House Natural Resources Committee, and almost all of the bills were favorably reported by these committees. For example, every provision in the lands package relating to a national park designation or expansion and every provision designating Federal land as wilderness in this package was closely considered by the Energy and Natural Resources Committee and cleared the committee with bipartisan support.

I should note that many of these provisions were not only the subject of committee hearings in this Congress and markups in this Congress but in previous years as well.

The public lands title is the product of lengthy negotiations with the House, with both Republican and Democratic priorities included. Some Senate provisions were modified to address concerns raised by the House of Representatives, and other House provisions were modified to address Senate concerns. This package is a compromise. There is a lot in it that I love but a few things that I absolutely don't support. There are also things that I had hoped would be in this package that will not be in this package. But that is the nature of compromise and

governance. Frankly, that is something we need a lot more of around here.

This package conserves our Nation's resources, our water resources, and our wildlife habitat. It preserves our Nation's culture and history and allows for the smart and responsible development of our public lands as well. We have a responsibility to future generations to be good stewards of our shared culture and the natural world.

Madam President, it will come as no surprise to you or to many of my colleagues that as I travel across New Mexico, what I hear time and again from people is that they are frustrated with Washington, that Congress can't get anything done, and that ''compromise'' sounds like a dirty word to some of our colleagues. We have an opportunity to change that today. Let's work together and be willing to compromise in order to get things done for our constituents and for the American people. Our constituents across this great Nation deserve no less.

I would urge my colleagues' support of the package and opposition to the motion to refer.

I yield back the remainder of my time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Who yields time?

The Senator from Alaska.

Ms. MURKOWSKI. Madam President, I understand there is still 5 or 6 minutes remaining of my time. If there are other colleagues who would care to speak on the significance of title XXX of NDAA, natural resources, and the related provisions, I am certainly happy to yield to them.

I thank my colleagues who have come to the floor on both sides of the aisle to speak to some of the specifics that are contained within this bill because I think it helps to understand why we are at this late point in the calendar with a package of different bills focusing in different areas, whether it is a small land conveyance, whether it is the creation of a wilderness area that has come about through a great deal of compromise and collaboration, or whether it is a collaboration that will allow for economic opportunity through mineral development, timber harvest, or grazing opportunities. I think it does speak to the diversity of what we are dealing with, with so many of our public lands and the reality that they are different all over. It is very different in Alaska from what my friend in New Mexico experiences. The similarity we have is that we don't have the ability to do it on our own; we have to come to the Federal Government.

What will happen is, whether you are in New Mexico or whether you are in Alaska or points in between, you have local consensus emerge around an issue. They bring it to the State, and the State works with us at the Federal level, Members of the House and Members of the Senate. We continue to work this process. It usually is a very collaborative process.

Just because it is collaborative does not mean we agree on every issue. There is a great deal of give and take that goes on, because when you are talking about your public lands, every acre is precious to somebody. I know that full well in the legislation we have been working on, the See Alaska bill, for almost a decade now.

The fishermen have certain interests, those who harvest timber have certain interests, the conservationists have certain interests, the school district has certain interests. So how we build this takes time. But it seems as though the only place we do not get time is here on the Senate floor. We do not have the time allocated to us, nor do—I would be happy to spend hours and perhaps days discussing issues such as we have raised in this public lands bill. But I do not think most of my colleagues are interested in debating a reversionary clause for a parcel of land in downtown Anchorage that can be sold so they can have an opportunity, in Anchorage, to build something new there. It just does not rise to that level of immediacy and concern.

So, again, we do the best we can to try to be balanced, to try to put together something that works for all. It is a balancing act. It requires a level of finesse. If we were to have put together a package that was overly weighted towards new wilderness or new parks, not only would my constituents back home not support it, I could not support it. We have to work together on bill packages of this nature.

I want to recognize the good work of those on the energy committee who have worked with us to construct something that is good, balanced and fair. I will acknowledge my chairman of the energy committee, Senator LANDRIEU, who has worked with us to find that level of balance.

I do hope that as we look at a new Congress, we will be working together as colleagues to try to figure out a better path for the endgame for these smaller bills. I have been part of way too many lands packages now where we have the same debate: Why is it attached to this? Why are we doing this now? I would like to get us to a place where there was a more certain process so that Members knew their small conveyance bill, their small study, did not get caught up in end-of-session kind of madness, or caught up in things that distract from what it is that delegation has been attempting to do for that State, for that part of the country.

I would ask my colleagues—I have spoken with many on this side of the aisle as well as the Democratic side of the aisle—let's be working together to figure out how we can relieve this bottleneck, because I sincerely want to do that. But what we have in front of us today is our opportunity to bring some finality, to bring some conclusion, to bring some resolve to issues that have been outstanding for a considerable amount of time, as I mentioned, in several instances almost a full decade.

Let's clear the deck. Let's move this lands package on this NDAA bill so that next Congress we can begin with the many public lands bills that are still in the queue, that are still waiting for a process. But you can count on me to be working with my colleagues to ensure that we have a way forward that will be more expeditious than we have seen historically.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

Mr. COBURN. Madam President, later today I will be offering a motion to attempt to undo a precedent set in 2011 that took away the right of all Senators, a right that was provided by Senate rules for Senators to suspend the rules in a postcloture environment to offer an amendment.

It is a very high bar. It requires 67 votes to ever pass an amendment under that. This right allowed the minority or individual Senators to circumvent parliamentary obstacles, namely the filling of the tree to receive votes. History now shows us that the filling of the tree has occurred two times more under the leadership of Senator REID than all of the leaders in the past—91 times.

The question will essentially be, Do we want to keep the Reid motion to suspend the precedent prohibiting motions to suspend the rules postcloture by sustaining that precedent? This is not a nuclear option, does not have anything to do with that.

As I thought about bringing this forward, I thought about how important it is for the new minority. I am not going to be with you. But it is my valid opinion, I believe, that you are not going to see the limitations on your amendments that we have seen in the last 6 years under the new leadership of the Senate. But if we were to see that, this is a particularly good way to have the Senate vote on a topic of interest to the American public.

So when this is offered, voting yes keeps the Reid precedent which says even postcloture you cannot offer to suspend the rules, even with a 67-vote margin and have a vote. Voting no will reverse the Reid precedent. If the precedent is overturned by a majority of Senators voting against the ruling of the Chair, the rights of all Senators, as written in the Senate rules to suspend the rules postcloture, would be returned—Democrats, Republicans, all.

If I am successful in overturning this precedent, I am not planning on following up with another motion allowing me to offer an amendment at this time. The whole goal is to try to restore the Senate. So I have no ulterior motive with another amendment if I were to win this attempt.

The distinguishing characteristics of the Senate are the right to offer amendments and the right to debate. That is what makes it unique. That is what forces consensus. Throughout his tenure, my colleague, the Senator from Nevada, has aggressively deployed a tactic to block other Senators from offering amendments to legislation. This tactic is known as filling the tree. It fills all available slots for all amendments with shell legislation, preventing all other Senators from offering amendments, both of his party and the opposition party.

He has done this 91 times during his tenure as the majority leader. From 1985 to 2006, it only occurred 40 times. What this tactic effectively does is shut down every other individual Member of the Senate from even input into legislation and carrying on the responsibility they were granted by the citizens of their State to offer amendments to pieces of legislation coming through the Senate.

Starting in 2010, as Senator REID continued to use the filling-of-the-tree maneuver, Senators in both parties resorted to other procedural options to assert their rights as Senators. Under rule V of the Standing Rules of the Senate, the other rules may be suspended, including blocking amendments by filling the tree.

From 2010 until October 6, 2011, Senators filed more than 30 notices and the Senate held 15 separate votes to suspend the rules and allow amendments to be offered during postcloture debate, as was the history of the Senate for its entire history.

On October 6, the majority leader interpreted Senate rules with a simple majority, ending the right of Senators to suspend the rules postcloture. He called up a motion to suspend the rules that had been filed on the previous day by myself. He made a point of order that a single motion to suspend the rules was dilatory. A single motion to suspend the rules was dilatory under rule XXII.

Never before had the Senate ruled that a single motion to suspend the rules was dilatory. In fact, the Senate Parliamentarian had previously upheld the maneuver. As such, the Presiding Officer correctly ruled that the postcloture amendment was not dilatory under rule XXII. A single motion to suspend the rules cannot be considered a delaying tactic.

Senator REID's point of order was, therefore, not sustained. He then appealed the ruling of the Chair and held a vote to overturn it by a simple majority of 51 to 48. The Chair's decision was overturned. Every Republican and one Democrat voted against this appeal, instead voting to uphold the Presiding Officer's decision which reflected the written rules of the Senate.

This vote established a new precedent to interpret the meaning of the word ''dilatory.'' Only it did so in the most heavyhanded way, fully intended to block the ability of Senators to offer amendments. From that point forward, it was considered out of order to offer postcloture motions to suspend the rules, despite such right being explicitly provided for under Senate rules.

In order to overturn this precedent, a Senator must offer another postcloture motion to suspend the rules for the purpose of considering an amendment.

The Presiding Officer most likely will rule that the motion is not in order based on the 2011 precedent.

At that point, the Senator offering the motion will appeal the ruling of the Chair on the basis that a single motion to suspend the rules postcloture is not dilatory. The Senator would then ask for the yeas and nays.

If a simple majority of Senators vote to overturn the decision of the Chair, the precedent will be reversed, restoring the right explicitly provided in the rules that allows Senators to offer motions to suspend the rules postcloture as before.

This issue is unrelated to the nuclear option and will have no impact on the outcome of that debate.

Senators who support or oppose changing that issue can both support this effort.

At the appropriate time, I will be offering that motion. I came to the floor today to put my colleagues on notice of my intent.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

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

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

Mr. LEE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to temporarily set aside the pending amendment so that I may call up my amendment, amendment No. 3996, which is at the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Mr. LEVIN. Reserving the right to object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Michigan.

Mr. LEVIN. I will not support the unanimous consent proposal of Senator LEE for several reasons. He may want to state his motion first before I give the reasons for objecting to it, but I will object and, if necessary at this point, I do object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

Mr. LEVIN. I have no objection to the Senator stating his purpose.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Utah.

Mr. LEE. I thank my distinguished colleague, the senior Senator from Michigan, whose presence we will miss and whose leadership we have appreciated over the years.

Madam President, I have offered this amendment today, which is an amendment that was crafted several years ago by me and Senator FEINSTEIN. We created this as a document that we originally called the Due Process Guarantee Act. Senator FEINSTEIN and I had one objective with the Due Process Guarantee Act, which was to guarantee the right of the American people that while they exist, while they live from day to day on U.S. soil, they will be free from indefinite detention without trial, without their rights that are protected by our Constitution, without the rights we have come to associate with our habeas corpus guarantees and our other constitutional protections.

These are rights that we understand are inseparably connected with liberty and they long predated the existence of our Constitution and our Republic. They were so fundamental, in fact, that not only were they incorporated into our Constitution—this right to be free from a chance of being locked up by government indefinitely in prison, without trial, without counsel and so forth—they were discussed at length at our Constitutional Convention. They were discussed at length by members of our founding generation as they debated and discussed the merits of our Constitution.

Notably, in Federalist No. 84, James Madison referred to these rights, and he quoted a great luminary of that time—a luminary who is still a legal force to this day—Judge William Blackstone. He quoted a very meaningful excerpt from volume 1 of William Blackstone's ''Commentaries on the Laws of England,'' published in 1765.

I want to read briefly some of what he said there that is relevant to this day. He says these rights are very important; they are the right to be free from detention, from arbitrary indefinite detention. He says:

> To bereave a man of life, or by violence to confiscate his estate, without accusation or trial, would be so gross and notorious an act of despotism, as must at once convey the alarm of tyranny throughout the whole kingdom. But confinement of the person, by secretly hurrying him to gaol, where his sufferings are unknown or forgotten; is a less public, a less striking, and therefore a more dangerous engine of arbitrary government. And yet sometimes, when the state is in real danger, even this may be a necessary measure. But the happiness of our constitution is——

And here he is referring, of course, to the British constitution at the time

> —that it is not left to the executive power to determine when the danger of the state is so great, as to render this measure expedient. For the parliament only, or legislative power, whenever it sees proper, can authorize the crown, by suspending the habeas corpus act for a short and limited time, to imprison suspected persons without giving any reason for so doing.

So in other words, he was referring to something contemplated and built into our constitutional structure as well, which is that, sure, there may be times of invasion, there may be times of national emergency, of an exigency so great, so threatening to the safety of the people that this kind of action might be warranted. But where that does happen, it has to happen by an express declaration by the legislative

body—that the right to habeas corpus is, in fact, being suspended.

I will conclude with this quote, where he says:

> . . . this experiment ought only to be tried in cases of extreme emergency; and in these the nation parts with its liberty for a while, in order to preserve it for ever.

What was true in William Blackstone's time remains true today. What was true during the founding era, remains true today. What was true at the time of the drafting and the ratification of our other constitutional protections, including those in the Fourth, Fifth and Sixth Amendments to the Constitution, remain true today. That is that we are a free people, and as a free people, we have come to expect certain rights that we have. By virtue of being Americans—Americans living on U.S. soil—we have the right to be free and to be free from this risk of indefinite detention without trial.

When those very rare circumstances might arise, as arose, for example, during the Civil War, where they cannot be allowed to stand, they may be suspended only by an act of Congress expressly suspending the habeas corpus protections we have come to rely on.

For this reason, Senator FEINSTEIN and I put this bill together. I offer it up now as an amendment. I understand this motion has already been objected to, and I state my concerns with the objection.

I thank the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Michigan.

Mr. LEVIN. Madam President, the reasons that I object to the offering of the amendment at this time are several.

First, the amendment which Senator LEE asks consent to offer is not germane to the bill, it is not in order postcloture, and it would amend a statute of jurisdiction of the Judiciary Committee relative to a subject not addressed in this bill.

Second, when we included a similar provision in our bill several years ago, the House objected and insisted the provision be dropped. So the inclusion of this provision would require, at the least, difficult discussions with the House when there is no time for such discussions.

When I voted for a similar provision which was offered several years ago, the language was somewhat different than it is now.

The bottom line is there is simply not enough time left before we adjourn to debate even a single amendment, and surely not a single amendment of this complexity, to vote on it, and to reconcile the provision, if it were adopted, with the House of Representatives and to pass the bill again in both Houses.

And those are the reasons for my objection.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUEST—H.R. 4329

Ms. HIRONO. Mr. President, I intend to call up H.R. 4329, the Native American Housing and Self-Determination Reauthorization Act, but I would like to say a few words about the bill before I do. This bill reauthorizes programs that support housing for Native Hawaiians, Alaska Natives, and American Indians.

Earlier this week, the senior Senator from Montana asked unanimous consent that the Senate take up and pass S. 1352, the Native American Housing and Self-Determination Reauthorization Act of 2013. The bill would reauthorize programs that promote and support affordable housing for Native Americans, Alaska Natives, and Native Hawaiians. My good friend, Mr. LEE, the Senator from Utah, who is on the floor this afternoon, objected to passing this important Senate bill, noting his objections to the Hawaiian Homes Commission Act.

I am here on the floor today to offer an alternative—H.R. 4329. Like the Senate bill which was objected to earlier this week, this bill is a bipartisan bill. H.R. 4329 reauthorizes the Native Hawaiian Housing Block Grant, the Section 184 Indian Home Loan Guarantee Program, and programs that provide support for housing funding for Native American veterans.

Let me note here that we know that Native Americans enlist in the military at a higher rate than other segments of this country. Of course, the House bill I am referring to supports many other good programs and, yes, including the Native Hawaiian Housing Block Grant and the Section 184A Native Hawaiian Home Loan Guarantee Program.

We know the housing need in Indian country is staggering. Congress knew and recognized this fact when it created the broader Indian housing programs earlier to help address those needs and when it reauthorized these programs again and again.

Is the House bill perfect? I would say no. But I must applaud my good friend, Congressman DON YOUNG of Alaska, my colleagues, Congresswomen COLLEEN HANABUSA and TULSI GABBARD, and of course the bill's sponsor, Congressman STEVE PEARCE, for their work in crafting a bill that passed the House by voice vote. There were no Republican objections. There were no Democratic objections. To rely on an old adage, let us not allow perfection to be the enemy of the good. And this is a good bill.

Should we forget our promises and responsibilities to our indigenous population? I freely admit that we have not always been good stewards of our responsibilities, and we have not always been good friends with Indian Country. But we try, and with this bill we again are trying.

Let me now turn to address Senator LEE's specific early objections to the Senate bill. The Senator stated that he believes the blood quantum requirement in the Hawaiian Homes Commission Act is unconstitutional. I would say to my friend from Utah that in the context of Federal Indian law, which is applicable here, blood quantum requirements are not viewed as unconstitutional racial classifications. Instead, they demonstrate connectivity to an indigenous political entity which Congress can treat under the Indian commerce clause. It is why Congress set a blood quantum requirement of 50 percent or more for the Hawaiian Homes Commission Act, a blood quantum requirement of 50 percent or more for the Indian Reorganization Act, and 25 percent or more for the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act. Native Hawaiians, Native Americans, and Alaska Natives are indigenous people all, which my colleague Senator LEE acknowledges.

My colleague might argue that in the Supreme Court's decision in Rice v. Cayetano, the Court held that ''ancestry . . . is a proxy for race.'' I would respond to my colleague by saying that I was the Lieutenant Governor of Hawaii at the time, serving under Ben Cayetano, who is named in the Rice v. Cayetano suit, and I had the opportunity to sit in the Supreme Court while the Rice case was being argued. That case is broadly, but often incorrectly, cited because it was quite narrow in its applicability. The Supreme Court in that case held that a State—a State—could not restrict who could vote for members of a quasi-State agency. In contrast to such State action, Congress has given wide latitude and broad deference in dealing with America's indigenous people.

So Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Indian Affairs Committee be discharged from further consideration of H.R. 4329 and that the Senate proceed to its immediate consideration; that the bill be read a third time and passed; and that the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

The Senator from Utah.

Mr. LEE. Mr. President, reserving the right to object, I ask unanimous consent that the request be modified and that the Lee amendment to strike section 801 of this legislation be agreed to.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Does the Senator so modify her request?

Ms. HIRONO. I object to the request for a modification.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection to the original request?

Mr. LEE. In that case, I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Who seeks time?

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

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

Mr. DURBIN. Madam President, I want to express my appreciation to Chairman LEVIN and Ranking Member INHOFE for their work on the defense authorization bill being considered in the Senate this week. It is officially titled the CARL LEVIN and HOWARD P. 'BUCK' MCKEON National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2015. It couldn't be more appropriate.

This will be the 54th year in a row that Congress has passed the Defense Authorization. It has never been an easy task. Senator LEVIN has had a great deal to do with that annual labor of love. He has served as the highest ranking Democratic member on the committee since January 1997, and he has served as its Chairman for eleven of the last 14 years. Every year, he has kept the needs of our service members and their families front and center.

It isn't an easy job. The Committee provides congressional oversight for more than half of all domestic discretionary spending . . . it analyzes every program line by line . . . and in this case worked with Members of both parties and both chambers to craft a consensus product. But the result is that our service members who are on the front lines will have what they need to protect our national security.

In that spirit, this bill sustains in responsible ways the active duty, National Guard, and reserve forces our nation relies on every day. Even in this tough fiscal environment, the bill authorizes a 1 percent pay raise for military personnel below the general officer level. It increases access to mental health care in a number of ways, including lifting the limits on inpatient mental health services, and requiring annual person-to-person mental health assessments. Finally, it reauthorizes the family support programs our military families so richly deserve.

The agreement also deals with a topic I have cared passionately about for many years: tobacco. This is a serious subject. Smoking rates among service members are 20 percent higher than the rest of America and the use of chewing tobacco is 450 percent higher. Tobacco-related medical treatment and lost work time costs the Pentagon $1.6 billion every. Yet, military stores have been selling tobacco products at steep discounts for years. On paper the discount is 5 percent. But an independent review found discounts as high as 25 percent because of lax enforcement and ill-defined community comparisons.

So I appreciate that this defense authorization carries a provision similar to one I authored earlier this year in the Defense Appropriations Subcommittee to end this harmful subsidy. This is a commonsense reform that will protect the health of our Nation's troops. It will literally save lives. I look forward to continuing to work with the Department to tackle this culture of tobacco use head on.

This bill also contains several provisions to reform the way the military prevents and responds to sexual assault in the military. The Department's most recent report outlines how pervasive and insidious this problem continues to be. The prevalence of sexual assault has decreased slightly, and we see more victims coming forward. But it remains one of the most complex and damaging threats to our armed services today. More than 6 in 10 female service members continue to report that they have been retaliated against for reporting the perpetrators of these criminal acts.

Congress has instituted many reforms, including Special Victims Counsels. This year's defense bill contains several additional policy changes. But we must continue to hold the Department's leadership accountable for significant progress on this issue.

In addition to these national priorities, the Defense authorization bill includes several provisions that will strengthen military assets in Illinois. Rock Island Arsenal on the border of Illinois and Iowa is a remarkable place. For example, at the height of the Iraq war, the Arsenal was the single largest source of Humvee armor kits to protect our troops against IED blasts. Its factory is one of the few places in the country where our military, on short notice, can quite literally turn raw metal into critical equipment for our troops.

The Armed Services Committee has worked with me each year to ensure that the Arsenal can compete for workload and partner with the private sector. This year's bill builds on this history by updating the Civil War-era Arsenal Act to ensure that the Army manages arsenals with wartime needs in mind.

The bill also extends the joint pilot program in North Chicago at the Lovell Federal Health Care Facility. This is the first national effort to integrate health care across the Defense Department and the Department of Veterans Affairs. It is the future of health care for service members and veterans. The Lovell Health Care Facility is working to advance integration of everything from electronic medical records to pharmacy programs.

Finally, the bill also authorizes $26 million for an Army Reserve Center in Arlington Heights, IL, and $19.5 million for Family Housing at Rock Island, IL.

Chairman LEVIN and Senator INHOFE have brought to the floor a thoughtful and balanced bill for our men and women in uniform, and I urge members to support this compromise.

Mr. WYDEN. Madam President, I want to take a few minutes today to speak on the National Defense Authorization Act, the annual policy bill for the Department of Defense. Let me start by noting that Senator CARL LEVIN, who is Chairman of the committee that put this agreement together, will be retiring after this year. This bill carries Senator LEVIN's name on it in what I think will be a fitting tribute to his legacy here. I have appreciated his wisdom on so many issues over the years, and I know I am in good company when I say to Senator LEVIN that his leadership will be missed in the United States Senate.

Passing a defense authorization bill is one of Congress' most important annual tasks, and it has been for decades. I have supported some of these bills throughout my time here and given the number of security concerns facing this country—the continued presence of ISIL in Iraq and Syria, Russia's ongoing efforts to destabilize Ukraine, the Ebola outbreak in West Africa—I hoped to be able to support this bill as well. Regrettably, however, I am forced to vote against this defense bill.

Most Americans may not know this, but the United States is still spending as much on defense as it spent at the height of the Cold War. This bill before us today would authorize nearly $600 billion in total defense spending—including more than $60 billion in war funding. That really ought to raise more questions about how that money is being spent and whether the American people are getting their money's worth for each dollar they spend on defense. But what I find most concerning is that my Senate colleagues and I are being asked to approve this mammoth bill without being given the opportunity to vote on any substantive amendments. I am sure that if Senators were given that chance, we could consider amendments regarding sexual assault in the military or greater transparency within the intelligence community, for example.

One issue in particular that would have benefitted from more debate is the Guantanamo Bay detention center. When the Senate Armed Services Committee passed its version of this defense bill in June, it included provisions allowing the Department of Defense to transfer detainees from Guantanamo Bay to the United States ''for detention, trial and incarceration.'' My position on the Guantanamo Bay detention center has long been to shut it down and prosecute as many detainees as possible in the federal court system—where the United States has a strong record of winning convictions. I felt that the earlier Armed Services Committee language would have made progress toward these goals, and I am disappointed that the agreement before us today maintains the prohibition on transferring any detainees to the United States to stand trial.

I also want to take a few minutes to express my deep concerns about the lands package included in this defense authorization agreement. This package contains some laudable bills for our Nation's environment like wilderness and new parks supported by many

members of Congress. This lands package also includes, however, a number of extraordinarily controversial provisions that will do serious and long-lasting environmental damage.

Take the provision that represents an unprecedented giveaway of public lands to benefit a foreign corporation. It will destroy a recreational oasis, disturb a sacred Indian site, and cast aside recreational, environmental, and cultural concerns in favor of big mining and big money. Neither the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee nor the House of Representatives has approved that provision this Congress, yet it is being jammed into this defense bill today without debate.

In addition several important pieces of legislation with bipartisan support were simply left out of this lands package. I am disappointed that this package does not include legislation to modernize and increase forest management on the Oregon and California Grant Lands, better known as the O&C Lands, for example. This lands package also does not include legislation that would resolve long-standing issues regarding water resources in the Klamath Basin.

Additionally, I am disappointed that the lands package does virtually nothing to help rural counties: it fails to renew the bipartisan Secure Rural Schools program that funds critical services in more than 700 counties in over forty States. The assistance it provides to fund the another significant rural aid program known as Payments in Lieu of Taxes is not enough to fully fund the program in the absence of Secure Rural Schools funding. These programs are lifelines for cash-strapped rural counties that struggle to fund basic law enforcement, infrastructure improvements, and other public services.

Finally, I am extremely disappointed that the lands package did not include reauthorization of the Land and Water Conservation Fund, a program that opens up our Nation's public lands and wilderness areas for recreation and enjoyment, while providing tremendous economic benefits to rural communities.

This lands package is unbalanced. It does not reflect bipartisan compromises reached in the committees of jurisdiction. Lastly, in the crucial days, when decisions were being made about the public lands bills that did not make it into this package, most Senators were kept in the dark about issues of great importance to their constituents.

So, I return to the notion that Senators and the people they represent must be heard on legislation this consequential. It is unfortunate that after a full Congress of hard work, a number of good proposals will simply be left on the cutting room floor.

I want to repeat that this bill before us today authorizes more than half of the discretionary budget for the U.S. Government, almost $600 billion in defense spending, including more than $60 billion in war funding.

Because of that, I regret that I must oppose this defense authorization bill.

Ms. COLLINS. Madam President, today I rise in support of the Fiscal Year 2015 National Defense Authorization Act.

First, let me express my sincere thanks to both Chairman LEVIN and Ranking Member INHOFE for their hard work in putting together a bipartisan bill that addresses the needs of our military and contains provisions that are important to Maine and to our national security.

This legislation fully funds both the vital DDG–1000 and DDG–51 Programs. These ships must be part of the fleet to maintain the robust forward presence our Nation requires. The U.S. Navy protects trade routes, projects power, acts as a stabilizing force, and assists when tragedy strikes. These missions are especially important in the increasingly dangerous and unpredictable world in which we live.

When tensions flared in Syria, it was Navy destroyers that were positioned off the coast. Following the devastation of Typhoon Haiyan in the Philippines, two U.S. Navy destroyers were among the first ships to respond.

This bill also provides the resources necessary to help our allies and partners around the globe. When Hamas, a designated foreign terrorist organization, launched more than 3,000 rockets into Israel this summer, it was the Iron Dome missile defense system—developed with assistance from the United States—that saved countless civilian lives.

I am also pleased that this bill takes further steps to address the problem of sexual assault in the military, which remains a significant challenge facing the Department of Defense. While progress has been made, we must remain focused on our goal of ensuring that the military has a zero tolerance culture when it comes to sexual assault.

I first raised my concern about sexual assaults in the military with Gen George Casey in 2004. To say his response was disappointing would be an understatement. I am convinced that if the military had heeded the concerns I raised then, this terrible problem would have been addressed much sooner, saving many individuals the trauma, pain, and injustice they endured.

I am encouraged that as a result of an amendment I offered to the Senate version of this bill, DOD is already taking formal steps to modify the rules of evidence to ensure confidentiality between the users and the personnel manning its Safe Helpline and HelpRoom systems. The bill includes a provision which mandates a study by DOD's Judicial Proceedings Board on how best to effectuate the rule change.

I also support eliminating the so-called good soldier defense, which this bill does. This defense has allowed the general military character of an individual to be used as evidence of their innocence.

To further support our men and women in uniform, this bill includes necessary provisions to take care of our troops and rejects many of the administration's proposed changes to compensation and benefits.

The bill wisely rejects the President's proposal to authorize a new base realignment and closure round in 2015.

This is the right way to proceed because the GAO has found that the previous BRAC round never produced the amount of savings that were promised when it was originally sold to Congress.

Finally, I would like to thank the chairman and ranking member for including in the bill a provision I authored that reauthorizes the authority for Federal agencies to hire Federal retirees to come back to work part time and still retain their annuitant status. This means that individuals with years of accumulated experience in their jobs can help train and transition in their replacement or fill staffing gaps.

Let me close on a less optimistic note. As we look ahead to next year, the specter of sequestration looms increasingly large. DOD has already made significant reductions, and unless we act soon, the effects of these indiscriminate, senseless cuts will be devastating to our national security and defense industrial base.

Further cuts will compromise the size, readiness, and technical superiority of our military. I stand ready to work closely with all of my colleagues in the next Congress on a sensible solution.

Mr. VITTER. Madam President, I speak today about an important provision in the defense bill. As you know, the maritime and shipbuilding industries are significant contributors to the economy in Louisiana and are important to our national security. In Louisiana alone, these industries employ thousands of hard-working Americans. I am pleased that the managers of this bill were able to include section 3502, dealing with floating drydocks that are owned or contracted for purchase by eligible United States shipyards or their affiliates prior to this bill's enactment. The term ''shipyard'' in section 3502 will apply to any facility owned by an eligible company in the United States that constructs or repairs commercial or government vessels, including, but not limited to, facilities that undertake alterations, conversions, installations, cleaning, painting, or maintenance work to such vessels. This provision will clear confusion regarding drydocks and will benefit American shipbuilders. I commend the managers for including this provision in the bill.

Mr. TESTER. Madam President, it has come to my attention that a provision of the Northern Cheyenne Lands Act, which was included in the recently passed NDAA and public lands package, contains a ministerial error. Section 3077(c)(1)(A) of the NDAA describes a

mineral estate transfer between the United States and a private landowner. Both subparagraphs of that section should reference the same map, titled ''Northern Cheyenne Land Act—Coal Tracts'' and dated April 22, 2014. However, subparagraph (ii) as just passed contains an error by indicating a map with an incorrect title. Section 3077(c)(1)(A)(ii) should therefore be read to reference the ''Northern Cheyenne Land Act—Coal Tracts'' map dated April 22, 2014, which is the same map correctly referenced in subparagraph (i) of the same section.

The committee report for the underlying Northern Cheyenne Lands Act bill, S. 2442, will also acknowledge and address this error. I hope this drafting error does not delay the Department of the Interior's implementation of these provisions, which is of great importance to the Northern Cheyenne Tribe in Montana. This conveyance, once completed, will correct a mistake made by the United States over a century ago, when the United States failed to convey this property to the Tribe as originally directed by Congress.

Mr. MANCHIN. Madam President, I rise to address American military involvement in the Syrian civil war and our strategy for protecting America and our interests in the region.

I would first like to say that I am adamantly opposed to extending authority to provide funding to train and arm Syrian rebels. That authority is provided in the defense authorization bill that we are considering today. I voted against it in committee, spoke against it on the floor in September, and raise my objections to it now.

I do not know where the Syrian rebels' allegiances truly lie or if they will remain our allies once the Syrian civil war comes to an end. What I do know is that once our military begins to train and equip Syrian rebels of uncertain provenance, we will have put ourselves on a path that leads inevitably to regime change and nation-building in Syria. Such a course defies the lessons of American-led Middle Eastern nation-building over the last twelve years. And I cannot in good conscience justify to the people of West Virginia why we should continue down this path.

Before we commit more of our country's blood and treasure, we should acknowledge that after more than a decade of war, trillions of taxpayer dollars spent, and over 7,000 American lives lost in that part of the world, we have not established the pro-western representative democracies that were once envisioned. But that doesn't mean we can't protect ourselves.

While I caution against repeating the mistake of Middle Eastern nation-building, I reiterate my strongest support for our military, intelligence, and law enforcement professionals who are today defending Americans at home and abroad from the kind of vile atrocities perpetrated by ISIS. These professionals demonstrate every day that we have the means to identify terrorists and prevent them from doing harm to America.

If I thought that sending military trainers and weapons into Syria would further that end or would make Americans safer, I would support doing so. I do not. I reiterate what every Member of this body certainly believes, which is that we can and should take any necessary action to prevent a direct threat to the United States. But I firmly believe that protecting America does not require nation building in Syria.

Yet our military involvement in Syria and Iraq continues to grow, though to what end no one is certain. Because Congress has not had a robust public debate about our strategy in the Middle East, nor made hard decisions about what our military response should be.

We know that ISIS is a threat to Americans in the Middle East as well as to friendly nations and our allies there. But we have not debated whether entering another war is in our national interest.

One of the reasons this debate has not yet happened is that the President has not submitted to Congress a request for authority to use military force against ISIS. Instead, what is happening in Syria is basically this: the White House is relying on a decade-old congressional authorization that allows military force against al-Qaeda and is using that as its legal justification for attacking ISIS. Well, the world is changing, and we ought to be adapting our policies with it.

My colleague BOB MENENDEZ is pushing forward with an AUMF of his own. This week the Senate Foreign Relations Committee passed out of committee an AUMF that gives the President authority to go to war with ISIS, but which prohibits ground troops. This is a first step, and I look forward to debating the AUMF on the floor of the Senate.

But we should be debating this military authorization in the context of the President's Middle East strategy, which we have not yet seen because I believe we have a moral duty to have a full debate before we send any more Americans into harm's way.

Two important things are going on here. The first is that Congress is moving closer to give legal authorization for the President to conduct strikes against ISIS. The second is that the President is also pursuing a scheme to arm and train Syrians, which will certainly lead to regime change and nation building. It is therefore critically important that the President tells us clearly and plainly not just what the objectives of the military mission are—to degrade and destroy ISIS—but how he plans on doing so without putting us back into an open-ended war.

I support, as all my colleagues do, any action that prevents attacks on American property or persons. But before we commit more of our Nation's blood and treasure to political reform and religious settlement in the Middle East, we should consider the lessons of our decade of war there.

History has taught us that militarily training and arming Syrian rebels of uncertain provenance will put the United States on a path that leads inevitably to regime change and nation-building in Syria. Such a course defies the lessons of the American-led military operations of the last twelve years.

For these reasons I am adamantly opposed to sending American troops into Syria to further escalate a ground war that I do not believe is in the best interest of America or the region.

I ask the President and my colleagues in the Senate to allow us to give the American people the public debate they deserve, before we find ourselves again in an open-ended war in the Middle East.

Mrs. FISCHER. Madam President, I wish to speak on a provision in the appropriations measure. I am pleased to see that this legislation includes a provision in Division D-Energy and Water Development and Related Agencies Appropriations Act of 2015, which addresses a concern raised by farmers and ranchers around the country.

Section 111 of the General Provisions relating to the Corps of Engineers Civil Works Program states that: ''None of the funds made available by this Act may be used to require a permit for the discharge of dredged or fill material under the Federal Water Pollution Control Act for the activities identified in subparagraphs (A) and (C) of section 404(f)(1) of the Act.''

In section 404(f)(1) of the Clean Water Act, Congress provided a permitting exemption for certain activities including normal farming, forestry, and ranching activities, upland soil and water conservation practices, and the construction and maintenance of farm or stock ponds or irrigation ditches and the maintenance of drainage ditches.

One would think that with this clear exemption, our farmers and ranchers could go about their business without worrying about whether EPA or the Corps of Engineers would try to regulate plowing, seeding, and harvesting, or their farm ponds and ditches. Unfortunately, in recent years EPA and the Corps of Engineers have been trying to circumvent the 404(f)(1) permitting exemptions by interpreting the limited ''recapture'' provision in section 404(f)(2) in such an expansive way as to virtually swallow up the exemptions in 404(f)(1).

A farmer's field is not a water of the U.S. A farm pond is not a water of the U.S. An irrigation ditch is not a water of the U.S. But, there are overzealous regulators out there who disagree. We have seen the Corps try to regulate a family farm when the farmer tried to change from a ditch irrigation system to a piped irrigation system to improve water efficiency. The Corps argued that there would be runoff from the work

and that runoff somehow made the work subject to permitting under section 404.

Section 111 stops that regulatory overreach and preserves the protections Congress has provided to ranchers and farmers by making it clear that the recapture provisions of section 404(f)(2) do not apply to normal farming, forestry, and ranching activities, upland soil and water conservation practices, and the construction and maintenance of farm or stock ponds or irrigation ditches and the maintenance of drainage ditches.

Of course, the greatest abuse of the Clean Water Act is the Obama Administration's proposed ''waters of the United States'' rule, and this section does not alleviate the concerns that farmers, small businesses, and local communities have with the proposed rule. This section will, however, ensure that the will of Congress to protect farmers and ranchers from burdensome 404 permitting requirements is carried out, and I will continue to do everything in my power to stop EPA from finalizing the proposed ''waters of the United States'' rule next year.

Mr. INHOFE. Madam President, we are getting close to having votes on amendments and final passage tonight, the most significant vote of the year each year.

For 52 consecutive years, we have passed the National Defense Authorization Act. In almost every year there has been a last-minute misunderstanding as to how these different provisions might affect something that has nothing to do with the defense of America.

In this case, there was—and procedurally I have disagreed with it. I have said several times that a land package was included on the bill. I have felt that once we have gone through the process of what has been referred to as the big four, we have ironed out the differences. There are a lot of things that I don't like, but there are more things that I do like. I daresay to Chairman LEVIN, he is in the same situation.

I have to say one more time that this chairman has been so incredibly fair to everyone.

We have to keep in mind that we passed this bill. After working on it for 4 months, we passed it to the floor from the Senate Armed Services Committee on May 23. There are a lot of things on here that we had. Of course, it went over and the House then passed their bill. They passed their bill actually on May 22; we passed it out of committee on May 23. The problem is, they were able to pass theirs on the floor; we were not. It is something we should have done a long time ago, and I am hoping that we learned a lesson from last year to this year, and we are not going to let this happen again.

So we have now before us a bill that does the necessary things in this most difficult time. I think most people would agree there has not been a time in our history where we have had more opposition from different parts of the world. I refer to the good old days of the Cold War with two superpowers—we are one, and the Soviet Union was the other one—and they were predictable. Mutually assured destruction meant something. If something happened, we could bomb them and they would do the same to us, and it is now all over. That is not the way it is anymore.

We have forces out there from North Korea and Iraq, and all these things are taking place at a time when—and I don't want to make people angry about what this President has done to the military, but we have virtually disarmed America. Our generals now are facing the possibility of sequestration. So the most important bill is now even more than just most important. It is a must-pass bill. It has to pass. If this doesn't pass, there is no other time we can take it up. Should December 31 get here, it would be an absolute disaster.

We right now have 1,779,343 enlisted personnel in the military. If we didn't pass a reauthorization bill, they would lose their benefits on December 31. I have talked about the benefit of that. I think everyone understands it, and it would be redundant to repeat it. But we can't have people making career decisions predicated on assumptions that they would have hazard pay, the assumption if they are pilots that they would have pilot pay; that critical skills like the SEALs would have bonuses, and then all of a sudden on December 31 we take them away.

We are not going to let that happen. We are going to pass this bill today. The concern I have is that any amendments on it would cause a problem that I think would be insurmountable. It would have to go back. They would have to recall the House and then come back, and timewise it can't happen.

So this is the last train leaving town. We have to have this for the sake of our men and women in uniform. If there is time remaining after the chairman makes his remarks, I will even comment on some specific parts of this bill in terms of how good this bill is and why it is necessary to pass.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Michigan.

Mr. LEVIN. Madam President, I first thank my friend from Oklahoma, my partner as well in the Armed Services Committee. I have enjoyed the presence of the Presiding Officer on our committee, and I think she knows how well that committee works together, and Senator INHOFE and I guess both sides—both parties have worked very closely together for our troops. That is what this is all about is pulling together for our troops. They inspire us, they unify us, they protect us, and the least we owe them is a Defense authorization bill.

We haven't missed in 52 years. This would be the 53rd straight year that there would be a Defense authorization bill—coincidentally, the same number of years I have been married. So this may be the gift to my wife for our anniversary if we are done with this bill, if we finish it today.

This bill takes provisions critical to our national security, to the well-being of our men and women in uniform, to our retirees and their families. If we fail to enact this bill, the Department of Defense's statutory authority to pay combat pay, hardship duty pay, enlistment and reenlistment bonuses, incentive pays for critical specialties, assignment incentive pay, accession and retention bonuses for critical specialties, will expire on December 31. We cannot let that happen.

After that date, the statutory authority to provide combat pay to our troops in Afghanistan and Iraq will lapse. We cannot let that happen. We would lose some of our most highly skilled men and women with specialties that we vitally need. We cannot let that happen.

Not only would we be shortchanging our soldiers, sailors, airmen, and marines, we would be denying our military services critical authorities they need to recruit and retain high-quality servicemembers, and to achieve their force-shaping objectives as they draw down their end strengths.

And there is more. If we fail to enact this bill, school districts all over the United States that rely on supplemental impact aid to help them educate military children would no longer receive that money. If we fail to enact this bill, the Department of Defense will not be able to begin construction on important new military construction projects in the coming year. That would mean our troops don't get the barracks, the ranges, the hospitals, the laboratories, and the other support facilities they need to support operational requirements, conduct training, and to maintain their equipment.

It would mean that military family housing will not receive needed upgrades, and that schools to educate the children of our servicemembers will not be built or modernized.

If we fail to enact this bill, we will not enact provisions that strengthen survivor benefits for disabled children of servicemembers and retirees. We would not then enact provisions addressing the employment of military spouses, job placement of veterans. That is an issue which the Presiding Officer knows an awful lot about, because she has been so directly involved in that and so many other issues.

We would then not be enacting provisions relative to military hazing, military suicides, post-traumatic stress disorder, and mental health problems in the military.

If we do not enact this bill, we would then enact none of the 20 provisions in this bill addressing the scourge of sexual assault in the military. We will not eliminate the good soldier defense which is eliminated in this bill, as it

should be. We would not give victims of sexual assault a voice in whether their case is prosecuted in military or civilian courts. They should have that voice. We would not give survivors of sexual assault the right to challenge court-martial rulings that violate their rights and to challenge them in the Court of Criminal Appeals. They should have that right.

If we don't pass this bill, we would not be strengthening the psychotherapist-patient privilege.

So this bill includes critical authorities for the Department of Defense. It provides essential support to our men and women in uniform, military retirees, and their families.

If either of the motions we are going to be voting on is adopted, this bill then will not pass and not become law, because it would then in one instance be open to amendments, and that could be endless because there are so many amendments that people would like to offer. I have gone into the reasons why we are in a position where that simply is not practical or possible.

We are asking our colleagues to allow this bill to come to a final passage today and become the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2015.

Again, with thanks to all of our colleagues on the Armed Services Committee, thanks to my partner Senator INHOFE who has worked so closely, he and his staff, with myself and our staff.

I hope this would have an overwhelming vote and that we would not adopt any motion which would lead then to our not adopting this critically needed bill.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Oklahoma.

Mr. INHOFE. Madam President, it is just about time for the vote. I want to mention something which hasn't been mentioned.

We have two really great Americans, one serving in the House and one serving in the Senate. We have been talking about Chairman LEVIN and how fair and open he has been. I think there is not a person of the 100 Members of the Senate who doesn't agree with that.

At the same time, we have BUCK MCKEON over in the House of Representatives. He is the chairman of the House committee that CARL LEVIN is the chair of over here. He also is retiring, and he has served for quite some time—not as long as Senator LEVIN.

Against their objections, we have named this bill the CARL LEVIN-BUCK MCKEON bill, so I want to make sure everyone recognizes that proper tribute has been made to the long hours and years and the hard work they have contributed.

This guy over here to my left has been through 16 of these. He has been working about 36 years, and I want to say he is deserving of that recognition.

I also want to mention two other people. One is the guy sitting next to me to my right, John Bonsell; the other is Pete Levine, sitting next to the chairman. Their job is to make us look good and make all this a reality, because it is a very complicated thing. It is a 24-hour-a-day work project. So I thank them for their effort. I know we are just talking about amendments right now and we will have a chance to maybe expand later on, but I think it needs to be said, and it needs to be said more than once.

I yield the floor. The hour is here.

VOTE ON MOTION TO REFER

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion to refer the House message on H.R. 3979 to the Committee on Armed Services with instructions.

Mr. LEVIN. Madam President, before asking for the yeas and nays, I want to thank my friend again, Senator INHOFE, for mentioning our staff. John Peter has done such good work with all of our staffs. We put the names of our staffs in the RECORD a day or two ago and they deserve that and a lot more.

I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. WALSH). Is there a sufficient second?

There is a sufficient second.

The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

The result was announced—yeas 18, nays 82, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 323 Leg.]

YEAS—18

Blunt	Cruz	Paul
Boozman	Grassley	Rubio
Chambliss	Johnson (WI)	Scott
Coats	Lee	Sessions
Coburn	McConnell	Thune
Corker	Moran	Vitter

NAYS—82

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

The motion was rejected.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore.

The Senator from Oklahoma.

MOTION TO SUSPEND RULE XXII

Mr. COBURN. Mr. President, I move to suspend rule XXII for the purposes of proposing and considering amendment No. 4098, and I ask for the yeas and nays.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Pursuant to the precedent set by the Senate on October 6, 2011, such a motion is dilatory postcloture, and is not in order.

APPEAL OF THE DECISION OF THE CHAIR

Mr. COBURN. Mr. President, a motion to suspend the rules postcloture is not dilatory, and on those grounds I respectfully appeal the decision of the Chair, and I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There is a sufficient second.

The question is, Shall the decision of the Chair stand as the judgment of the Senate?

The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant bill clerk called the roll.

The result was announced—yeas 55, nays 45, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 324 Leg.]

YEAS—55

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

NAYS—45

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. WALSH). On this vote, the yeas are 55, the nays are 45.

The Senate sustains the decision of the Chair.

The majority leader is recognized.

ORDER OF BUSINESS

Mr. REID. For the information of all Members, we have two more votes based on the prior order that was entered last night. I alert all Members they better not leave here right now for the weekend because we have matters we need to dispose of. I have spoken to Senator MCCONNELL recently, and we are going to try to work something out so that we may be able to get off tomorrow and Sunday. We are going to have to work on Monday morning unless something comes up in the meantime. Everybody should just take it easy until we get something worked out; otherwise, the Government will run out of money tomorrow night at midnight. We have to complete this omnibus bill prior to that time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the motion to concur with an amendment is withdrawn.

The question is on agreeing to the motion to concur in the House amendment to the Senate amendment to H.R. 3979.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There is a sufficient second.

The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk called the roll.

The result was announced—yeas 89, nays 11, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 325 Leg.]

YEAS—89

Alexander	Franken	Murkowski
Ayotte	Graham	Murphy
Baldwin	Grassley	Murray
Barrasso	Hagan	Nelson
Begich	Harkin	Portman
Bennet	Hatch	Pryor
Blumenthal	Heinrich	Reed
Blunt	Heitkamp	Reid
Booker	Heller	Roberts
Boozman	Hirono	Rockefeller
Boxer	Hoeven	Rubio
Burr	Inhofe	Schatz
Cantwell	Isakson	Schumer
Cardin	Johanns	Scott
Carper	Johnson (SD)	Sessions
Casey	Johnson (WI)	Shaheen
Chambliss	Kaine	Shelby
Coats	King	Stabenow
Coburn	Kirk	Tester
Cochran	Klobuchar	Thune
Collins	Landrieu	Toomey
Coons	Leahy	Udall (CO)
Corker	Levin	Udall (NM)
Cornyn	Manchin	Vitter
Donnelly	Markey	Walsh
Durbin	McCain	Warner
Enzi	McCaskill	Warren
Feinstein	McConnell	Whitehouse
Fischer	Menendez	Wicker
Flake	Mikulski	

NAYS—11

Brown	Lee	Risch
Crapo	Merkley	Sanders
Cruz	Moran	Wyden
Gillibrand	Paul	

The motion was agreed to.

PROVIDING FOR A CORRECTION IN THE ENROLLMENT OF H.R. 3979

DIRECTING THE CLERK OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES TO MAKE A CORRECTION IN THE ENROLLMENT OF H.R. 3979

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. BALDWIN). Under the previous order, H. Con. Res. 121 and H. Con. Res. 123 are considered and agreed to en bloc and the motions to reconsider are considered made and laid upon the table en bloc.

The Republican leader.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Madam President, I wish to take a moment to speak on something that I think there is an overwhelming bipartisan desire to achieve, and that is to finish tonight. There is no good reason not to.

We are working to clear an agreement on our side to process the CR/omnibus, the extenders bill, and TRIA tonight—tonight

UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUEST—H.R. 5771.

As for right now, I can tell you we are prepared to go forward on the extenders bill. Therefore, I ask unanimous consent that at a time to be determined by the majority leader, after consultation with the Republican leader, the Senate proceed to consideration of H.R. 5771, the Tax Increase Prevention Act; that there be up to 1 hour of debate equally divided between the two leaders or their designees prior to the vote on passage of the bill; further, that the vote on passage be subject to a 60-vote affirmative threshold.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader.

Mr. REID. Reserving the right to object, we have had bipartisan conversations about having a more than 1-year extension of the tax extenders, bipartisan conversations about moving to a 2-year bill or maybe doing what we did in the Senate and passing the extend bill.

So I respect my friend, who is trying to get us out of here as quickly as possible, but we have to have a path forward to make sure we understand what is happening with the extenders.

The Senator mentioned TRIA. We also have some problems with that. So I believe we need a path forward on the omnibus and a way forward on the nominations before we start dealing with whether there should be a 2-year extension or a 1-year extension and what amendments, if any, we would have on TRIA, so I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

Mr. MCCONNELL. I would briefly make the point that we are very close to being cleared on this side to finish. I want everybody to understand that it is possible to finish tonight. Very shortly, we will be able to announce that there are no impediments toward getting to that goal on our side of the aisle.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader.

Mr. REID. We have the omnibus we have to do, we have to do the tax extenders, we have to do TRIA, and we have some nominations that we have an obligation to the American people to do, so we are not going to finish tonight. I think we could finish the omnibus tonight, but we are not finishing tonight.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

NOMINATION OF MARK GILBERT TO BE AMBASSADOR EXTRAORDINARY AND PLENIPOTENTIARY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO NEW ZEALAND, AND TO SERVE CONCURRENTLY AND WITHOUT ADDITIONAL COMPENSATION AS AMBASSADOR EXTRAORDINARY AND PLENIPOTENTIARY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO THE INDEPENDENT STATE OF SAMOA

NOMINATION OF ROBERT C. BARBER TO BE AMBASSADOR EXTRAORDINARY AND PLENIPOTENTIARY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO THE REPUBLIC OF ICELAND

NOMINATION OF DAVID NATHAN SAPERSTEIN TO BE AMBASSADOR AT LARGE FOR INTERNATIONAL RELIGIOUS FREEDOM

NOMINATION OF AMY JANE HYATT, A CAREER MEMBER OF THE SENIOR FOREIGN SERVICE, CLASS OF MINISTER-COUNSELOR, TO BE AMBASSADOR EXTRAORDINARY AND PLENIPOTENTIARY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO THE REPUBLIC OF PALAU

NOMINATION OF ARNOLD A. CHACON, A CAREER MEMBER OF THE SENIOR FOREIGN SERVICE, CLASS OF MINISTER-COUNSELOR, TO BE DIRECTOR GENERAL OF THE FOREIGN SERVICE

NOMINATION OF VIRGINIA E. PALMER, A CAREER MEMBER OF THE SENIOR FOREIGN SERVICE, CLASS OF MINISTER-COUNSELOR, TO BE AMBASSADOR EXTRAORDINARY AND PLENIPOTENTIARY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO THE REPUBLIC OF MALAWI

NOMINATION OF DONALD L. HEFLIN, A CAREER MEMBER OF THE SENIOR FOREIGN SERVICE, CLASS OF MINISTER-COUNSELOR, TO BE AMBASSADOR EXTRAORDINARY AND PLENIPOTENTIARY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO THE REPUBLIC OF CABO VERDE

NOMINATION OF MICHAEL W. KEMPNER TO BE A MEMBER OF THE BROADCASTING BOARD OF GOVERNORS

NOMINATION OF LEON ARON TO BE A MEMBER OF THE BROADCASTING BOARD OF GOVERNORS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will proceed to executive session to consider the following nominations, which the clerk will report.

The assistant legislative clerk read the nominations of Mark Gilbert, of

Florida, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to New Zealand, and to serve concurrently and without additional compensation as Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the Independent State of Samoa; Robert C. Barber, of Massachusetts, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the Republic of Iceland; David Nathan Saperstein, of the District of Columbia, to be Ambassador at Large for International Religious Freedom; Amy Jane Hyatt, of California, a Career Member of the Senior Foreign Service, Class of Minister-Counselor, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the Republic of Palau; Arnold A. Chacon, of Virginia, a Career Member of the Senior Foreign Service, Class of Minister-Counselor, to be Director General of the Foreign Service; Virginia E. Palmer, of Virginia, a Career Member of the Senior Foreign Service, Class of Minister-Counselor, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the Republic of Malawi; Donald L. Heflin, of Virginia, a Career Member of the Senior Foreign Service, Class of Minister-Counselor, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the Republic of Cabo Verde; Michael W. Kempner, of New Jersey, to be a Member of the Broadcasting Board of Governors; and Leon Aron, of Virginia, to be a Member of the Broadcasting Board of Governors.

VOTE ON GILBERT NOMINATION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. There is 2 minutes of debate equally divided prior to a vote on the Gilbert nomination.

Mr. REID. Madam President, I yield back all time on all of these nominations.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. All time is yielded back on all nominations.

The question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the nomination of Mark Gilbert, of Florida, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to New Zealand, and to serve concurrently and without additional compensation as Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the Independent State of Samoa?

The nomination was confirmed.

VOTE ON BARBER NOMINATION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the nomination of Robert C. Barber, of Massachusetts, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the Republic of Iceland?

The nomination was confirmed.

VOTE ON SAPERSTEIN NOMINATION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the nomination of David Nathan Saperstein, of the District of Columbia, to be Ambassador at Large for International Religious Freedom?

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Alaska (Mr. BEGICH), the Senator from Vermont (Mr. SANDERS), and the Senator from Colorado (Mr. UDALL) are necessarily absent.

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

The result was announced—yeas 62, nays 35, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 326 Ex.]

YEAS—62

Alexander	Hagan	Murray
Baldwin	Harkin	Nelson
Bennet	Heinrich	Paul
Blumenthal	Heitkamp	Pryor
Blunt	Heller	Reed
Booker	Hirono	Reid
Boxer	Johnson (SD)	Rockefeller
Brown	Kaine	Rubio
Cantwell	King	Schatz
Cardin	Kirk	Schumer
Carper	Klobuchar	Scott
Casey	Landrieu	Shaheen
Collins	Leahy	Stabenow
Coons	Levin	Tester
Corker	Markey	Udall (NM)
Cruz	McCaskill	Walsh
Donnelly	Menendez	Warner
Durbin	Merkley	Warren
Feinstein	Mikulski	Whitehouse
Franken	Murkowski	Wyden
Gillibrand	Murphy	

NAYS—35

Ayotte	Flake	McConnell
Barrasso	Graham	Moran
Boozman	Grassley	Portman
Burr	Hatch	Risch
Chambliss	Hoeven	Roberts
Coats	Inhofe	Sessions
Coburn	Isakson	Shelby
Cochran	Johanns	Thune
Cornyn	Johnson (WI)	Toomey
Crapo	Lee	Vitter
Enzi	Manchin	Wicker
Fischer	McCain	

NOT VOTING—3

Begich	Sanders	Udall (CO)

The nomination was confirmed.

VOTE ON HYATT NOMINATION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the nomination of Amy Jane Hyatt, of California, a Career Member of the Senior Foreign Service, Class of Minister-Counselor, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the Republic of Palau?

The nomination was confirmed.

VOTE ON CHACON NOMINATION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the nomination of Arnold A. Chacon, of Virginia, a Career Member of the Senior Foreign Service, Class of Minister-Counselor, to be Director General of the Foreign Service?

The nomination was confirmed.

VOTE ON PALMER NOMINATION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the nomination of Virginia E. Palmer, of Virginia, a Career Member of the Senior Foreign Service, Class of Minister-Counselor, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the Republic of Malawi?

The nomination was confirmed.

VOTE ON HEFLIN NOMINATION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the nomination of Donald L. Heflin, of Virginia, a Career Member of the Senior Foreign Service, Class of Minister-Counselor, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the Republic of Cabo Verde?

The nomination was confirmed.

VOTE ON KEMPNER NOMINATION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the nomination of Michael W. Kempner, of New Jersey, to be a Member of the Broadcasting Board of Governors?

The nomination was confirmed.

VOTE ON ARON NOMINATION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the nomination of Leon Aron, of Virginia, to be a Member of the Broadcasting Board of Governors?

The nomination was confirmed.

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

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senate will resume legislative session.

The majority leader.

INSULAR AREAS AND FREELY ASSOCIATED STATES ENERGY DEVELOPMENT

Mr. REID. Madam President, I ask the Chair to lay before the Senate a message from the House with respect to H.R. 83.

The Presiding Officer laid before the Senate the following message from the House of Representatives:

Resolved, That the House agree to the amendment of the Senate to the bill (H.R. 83) entitled "An Act to require the Secretary of the Interior to assemble a team of technical, policy, and financial experts to address the energy needs of the insular areas of the United States and the Freely Associated States through the development of energy action plans aimed at promoting access to affordable, reliable energy, including increasing use of indigenous clean-energy resources, and for other purposes," with an amendment.

MOTION TO CONCUR

Mr. REID. Madam President, I move to concur in the House amendment to the Senate amendment to H.R. 83.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the motion.

The bill clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Nevada [Mr. REID] moves to concur in the House amendment to the Senate amendment to H.R. 83.

CLOTURE MOTION

Mr. REID. Madam President, there is a cloture motion at the desk. I ask the Chair to order it reported.

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

The 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 motion to concur in the House amendment to the Senate amendment to H.R. 83.

Harry Reid, Barbara A. Mikulski, Brian Schatz, Benjamin L. Cardin, Martin Heinrich, John E. Walsh, Richard J. Durbin, Thomas R. Carper, Patty Murray, Tim Johnson, Angus S. King, Jr., Mark R. Warner, Tom Udall, Dianne Feinstein, Bill Nelson, Mark L. Pryor, Tammy Baldwin.

MOTION TO CONCUR WITH AMENDMENT NO. 4100

Mr. REID. Madam President, I move to concur in the House amendment to the Senate amendment to H.R. 83, with a further amendment.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report.

The bill clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Nevada [Mr. REID] moves to concur in the House amendment to the Senate amendment to H.R. 83 with an amendment numbered 4100.

The amendment is as follows:

At the end, add the following:

This Act shall become effective 1 day after enactment.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

AMENDMENT NO. 4101 TO AMENDMENT NO. 4100

Mr. REID. I have an amendment at the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the amendment.

The bill clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Nevada [Mr. REID] proposes an amendment numbered 4101 to amendment No. 4100.

The amendment is as follows:

In the amendment, strike ''1 day'' and insert ''2 days''.

MOTION TO REFER WITH AMENDMENT NO. 4102

Mr. REID. I have a motion to refer the House message with respect to H.R. 83 with instructions.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report.

The bill clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Nevada [Mr. REID] moves to refer the House message on H.R. 83 to the Committee on Appropriations with instructions to report back forthwith with an amendment numbered 4102.

The amendment is as follows:

At the end, add the following:

This Act shall become effective 3 days after enactment.

Mr. REID. I ask for the yeas and nays on that amendment.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

AMENDMENT NO. 4103

Mr. REID. Madam President, I have an amendment to the instructions which is at the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report.

The bill clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Nevada [Mr. REID] proposes an amendment numbered 4103 to the instructions of the motion to refer.

The amendment is as follows:

In the amendment, strike ''3 days'' and insert ''4 days''.

Mr. REID. I ask for the yeas and nays on that amendment.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

AMENDMENT NO. 4104 TO AMENDMENT NO. 4103

Mr. REID. I now have a second-degree amendment at the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report.

The bill clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Nevada [Mr. REID] proposes an amendment numbered 4104 to amendment No. 4103.

The amendment is as follows:

In the amendment, strike ''4'' and insert ''5''.

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

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

Mr. REID. Madam President, we now are waiting for a vote to occur. Under the rules, this will occur 2 days from now, 1 hour after we come into session. So I would hope we can work something out to get this done tonight. Remember, midnight on Saturday the government is out of money.

I hope that cooler heads would prevail and we can move forward and get this done. There is just no sense in our waiting around. This bill has been talked about for days now. It has been very good work to get it where we are.

The two managers of this bill, the distinguished Senator from Maryland and, of course, the senior Senator from Alabama, have worked hard to get this bill done. I hope we can move forward on this as quickly as possible. There is no reason we have to wait until Sunday to do this.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Maryland.

Mr. CARDIN. Madam President, I just wish to underscore the point that it is urgent we take up this Omnibus appropriations bill; that we do this in order to have a budget for our country and that we don't threaten another government shutdown—we know how damaging that is to this country; and that we don't have another continuing resolution.

Another continuing resolution provides uncertainty to our agencies. They can't do the critical work they need to do. It establishes last year's priorities rather than trying to establish the priorities for this year and represents a failure of the Congress.

So I start by first thanking and congratulating my colleague from Maryland, Senator MIKULSKI, for her incredible leadership through this process, working with Senator SHELBY and their counterparts in the House of Representatives.

This is not easy. We have sharply different views in this Congress, and we have seen over and over again gridlock where we are unable to make decisions. I congratulate Senator MIKULSKI for bringing the negotiations of the omnibus to a successful conclusion. When we look at the work she did in the appropriations part of this Omnibus appropriations bill, I am very proud, and I think we all should be very proud and very supportive of the work she has done.

As I pointed out earlier, if we don't pass an Omnibus appropriations bill, we are either going to have a government shutdown or we are going to resort to a short-term continuing resolution. In either case, it is very damaging to our country and to our economy.

The Omnibus appropriations bill we have before us allows us to set certain priorities. I know Senator MIKULSKI has gone through many of those priorities. I just wish to outline a few: the fact that we give additional resources for missing and exploited children; the fact that we provide law enforcement with rape kits to help in law enforcement against those who have perpetrated violence against women; the fact that we provide an additional $5 billion-plus to fight the Ebola crisis globally. This has a direct impact on the world economy, on world health, and directly affects the United States; the appropriations for our Department of Defense to be able to combat the extremist ISIL in its fear that it has invoked not just in that region but globally.

This Omnibus appropriations bill provides the resources in order to carry out these important responsibilities of government. The alternative is a continuing resolution, at best. How do we fight a war on a continuing resolution? How do we fight Ebola on a continuing resolution? We will not have the ability to be able to do it.

I thank Senator MIKULSKI. She has provided funds in here for our Farm Service Agencies, which is particularly important to keep open the 250 threatened closures of farm services offices. I mention that because in Maryland these offices are very important to our agricultural community. Maryland farmers in their conservation efforts to help us on the Chesapeake Bay work in conjunction with the service agencies. The closing of these agencies would be devastating.

The omnibus provides a modest pay adjustment for our Federal workforce, our Federal workforce which has been asked to do more with less people—less people, more responsibilities. They are on the front lines of public service. This omnibus recognizes their service by giving them a modest adjustment to their pay.

The transportation program, which is critically important for economic growth—I can go over the differences here if we don't get the omnibus. For example, the funds for our transit projects—I know in Maryland there is $100 billion here for the Purple Line in Prince George's County and Montgomery County. For those who travel in this region, we know firsthand the gridlock problems on our roads. The only good thing about being here tonight is that I don't have to fight the traffic going home to Baltimore. We need the transit funding, and thank you, Senator MIKULSKI, for providing that. If we have a continuing resolution, we lose it. The funds for Baltimore—lost, if we don't have the omnibus appropriations bill.

There are funds for dredging of the Baltimore Harbor. I particularly appreciate the Appropriations Committee continuing the commitment we made in 2008, the legislation that I authored for the full funding of the Federal contributions to the WMATA system.

The funds that are here for our contract air traffic control towers. You know, not too long ago there was a threat of a shutdown. We were going to have to close the contract offices that worked the air traffic control towers in our small airports, including in Maryland. Well, we are protected by the omnibus so that will not occur. Go to a continuing resolution, and there is no such protection.

The Appalachian Regional Commission gets a bump-up in this appropriations bill, for good reason. The work they do is critically important to the rural part of Maryland, the western part. They need that. If you go to a continuing resolution and those initiatives are gone, we don't get that.

We can go on and on and on. There is $1.4 billion of additional money for community health centers—community health centers. Thank you. In Maryland we have used those funds to expand community health centers, to expand prenatal care, increasing infant survival in our State. We have used it for community mental health services, we have used it for pediatric dental services, and in the omnibus bill we will be able to continue to make that progress. If we don't get the omnibus, all bets are off. On a continuing resolution we cannot move forward in those programs.

I would thank you on behalf of the veterans of this country. What you have done requiring advanced funding is that you have protected our veterans and the benefits that we promised them regardless of the problems we have had getting our appropriations bills done. It is the right thing to do. They fought to preserve the liberties of our country, so they should at least know we are going to live up to the commitments we made to protect our veterans.

I also appreciate that in this omnibus you have extended the TAA's benefits that help our workers in transition who otherwise would not have jobs due to the international trade issues. My colleague Senator BROWN has been very instrumental in this. We extend that through fiscal year 2015.

Military construction. Military construction is critically important. We have gone through a BRAC process. We have gone through ways in which we have consolidated our military, but we also have to modernize our facilities and the military construction budgets would come to a standstill if we don't have a budget in Maryland, and we will have projects that move forward in Havre de Grace, Annapolis, Indian Head, Pax River, and Andrews. All of that is very important.

Money has been provided in this omnibus to help in regard to the problems of Central America. We saw what happened on our borders. I think we all agree we want children to be safe. It must be a horrible choice for a parent to put their child on a transit to come to the United States because of what is happening in their Central American country. We begin on this omnibus bill to say, hey, let's try to work for safer conditions in Central America which will give us more stability in regard to what is happening on our own borders. That makes sense. That is in there.

I also thank Senator MIKULSKI for an initiative I requested that deals with Holocaust survivors. For the first time we have a direct appropriation to help Holocaust survivors. These are individuals who have a great fear of ending up in an institution. You can understand why. So access to fundamental services in the community is particularly important. This omnibus is sensitive to make sure that we provide that. Again, if we don't have the omnibus, that initiative is gone.

You are protecting our Pell grant recipients so they can continue to receive their Pell grants at current levels. All of this is so important in the omnibus if we don't get it.

There are some things in this omnibus I don't like at all. As I said earlier, this is a compromise. I know that we have seen the bills come over from the House of Representatives. We have seen the antienvironmental, antifinancial consumer protection bills. So many bills have come over. And we know there were efforts made on numerous of these policy riders to the appropriations to the omnibus bill. Unfortunately, some got on, and I certainly understand the political process. I am not naive to understand that we could win on every issue; but I feel compelled to point out the policy riders that are on this omnibus bill that I hope we will work together to remove the harmful impacts that they could possibly have on policy in this country.

On the environmental front, there is a policy rider that restricts EPA's authority to deal with tackle and ammunition as it relates to lead content. Our policy should be based to allow EPA, based upon best science for how they protect public health. I think that is compromised by that rider.

There is a rider that could compromise how the agriculture community works on our clean water bills. All stakeholders have to be in together to deal with clean water. We do that with the Chesapeake Bay in Maryland. I think that rider could have some very negative impact. We have heard a lot of talk about the sage grouse which is a species that could become endangered. The Environmental Protection Agency should be able to do what is right in establishing the right conservation efforts, but instead there were restrictions placed on EPA, and I regret that. I hope we can work around that.

The definition of fill in mining regulations could open up more mountaintop removal for coal mining, the most obscene way to obtain coal, to blow up mountains and pollute streams. There are better ways. We shouldn't put these arbitrary restrictions on the Environmental Protection Agency.

There is a provision here you have heard a lot of comment on the floor on dealing with financial consumer protection which would repeal the Dodd-Frank provision where banks had to push out some of the derivative trading into separate accounts so they weren't subject to the FDIC, the government insurance program. That provision could be used for risky trading and could result in government bailout. That is bad. Let's work to make sure that doesn't happen. Let's work together to restore that type of protection in our financial services.

The IMF doesn't receive funds over this omnibus bill. I think that is a mistake. I think our responsibilities internationally require us to cooperate in that.

There are provisions in here that interfere with the District of Columbia home rule. That won't be the first time we have done that, and I regret that. So it is not unusual to see those provisions in an appropriations bill. It still doesn't make it right. It is not right.

There are some missed opportunities here. I am sorry we are not participating in the Green Climate Fund. This is an international effort to deal with the realities of climate change. The United States needs to be a leader. We are missing an opportunity by not participating in the Green Climate Fund.

I regret that this is an omnibus appropriations bill for all agencies except one: Homeland Security. That is wrong. Our Homeland Security needs the protection of a budget, not a continuing resolution. We may have very different views on what we should do on immigration policy, but that shouldn't stop us from allowing those

who serve in Homeland Security to have the confidence that we will support their budget for a year, and that they can go forward with an initiative. I regret that. That is a missed opportunity that is in the omnibus bill.

Lastly, let me mention the two extraneous issues that made their way into the omnibus appropriations bill. That was a mystery, I think, to Senator MIKULSKI and others who worked so hard in negotiating back and forth in good faith only to find that the Rules Committee in the House of Representatives added two extraneous provisions to an omnibus appropriations bill. The process is wrong. They shouldn't do that. That is an abuse of power. They are also, by the way, wrong on the policy.

One, it is a very serious issue, how to deal with multi-employer plans. I have been working on pension issues ever since I came to the Congress. We have a problem with the multi-employer plans, there is no question about that. But we should have a bill on the floor of the Senate and debate that. We shouldn't be passing a bill that could very well have some very stark consequences on individuals who are currently retired. That could very easily happen under this provision.

The second, which adds new categories of giving in our political system to political party conventions and to the building funds, and to recount, we don't need more money in politics in this country and we shouldn't be taking up that bill on an omnibus appropriations bill.

Let me conclude my remarks as I began. To me, this is an easy decision to make. It is an easy decision because the public does not want to see more gridlock in Washington. They know the House of Representatives has gone home. They know that our leaders have negotiated an omnibus budget for the next fiscal year, and they are saying at long last could we at least get this done, or are we going to have another threatened shutdown? Are we going to put the government on autopilot for a 3-month period?

I think we have a responsibility to see issues to conclusion, and on the appropriation issues that are in this bill, you should be very proud to support the work of Senator MIKULSKI and the entire group behind the negotiations of this omnibus bill, Senator SHELBY and others. We should support that and recognize that what we need to do next year—I know my colleague from Maryland has been the champion of this. I heard her speak so eloquently in our caucus about this and on the floor of the Senate, but what we need to do is get a budget done in regular order so the appropriators know what their budget limits are and they can work on the individual appropriation bills. We can bring them to the floor, we can debate them, have amendment votes, and then we won't be as frustrated as we are tonight, in the eleventh hour dealing with issues for the very first time that we see on the omnibus appropriations bill.

I know Senator MIKULSKI has been the great champion of saying let's get back to regular order. She did that in her committee. We are not surprised. We saw the work of her committee. It was done very openly. We had a chance for input, and that is why a lot of what is in this omnibus appropriations bill represents the work of each Member of this body. But we can do this in a more open and transparent way by considering individual appropriation bills on the floor of the Senate, reconciling those differences at the House, and really doing the people's business and not just confront ourselves with another omnibus appropriations bill.

I encourage my colleagues to support the good work that has been done and I hope we can approve the omnibus appropriations bill this evening well in advance of the hour of midnight, which will be here sooner than we think, in order to avoid a government shutdown and let the people of this Nation know we are doing our very best.

With that, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Maryland.

Ms. MIKULSKI. Madam President, I rise to speak on the consolidated and further continuing appropriations for fiscal year 2015.

Every year we have a particular responsibility that is mandated by the Constitution, which is that the Congress of the United States shall pass an annual revenue bill to fund the government. The power of the purse is vested in the Congress. It is not vested in the executive branch. Our subcommittee on appropriations is a constitutionally mandated committee. The reason for that is, if one reads the Federalist Papers, it says that if the leader of a country controls the purse, they tend to be kings. But if the executive branch has to share power with the legislative branch controlling the purse, you have checks and balances.

Tonight is the night we talk about what is in our annual bill. It had been the hope of myself and my vice chairman, Senator SHELBY, that we could file something here called regular order, where the 12 subcommittees in Appropriations would have brought up one bill at a time. For a variety of reasons—mostly deep partisan politics—we were not able to bring up 12 individual bills, and I regret that.

As a new party takes over, I hope we listen to the message of the voters—end gridlock, end deadlock, end the partisanship that is crippling our country. One way to correct that is to return to regular order. I look forward to continuing to work with both sides of the aisle to do that.

Tonight we are where we are. We are bringing the consolidated bill to the Senate floor which represents the work of 12 subcommittees: Defense, Interior, Labor, Education, Health, Foreign Operations, the State Department, and Homeland Security will be on a continuing resolution. I could call all their names. We will be looking at a $1 trillion expenditure, which is the discretionary funding of the United States of America; $550 billion of that is in defense—DOD only. The remaining amount is in domestic agencies which is also considered the State Department.

We need to pass this bill tonight so we can show that there is no government shutdown. The funding for the Government of the United States of America expires at midnight. We want to be sure there is no government shutdown, but we also don't want to be on a continuing resolution. A continuing resolution simply says take what you have done in 2014 and put it on autopilot.

If we pass the continuing appropriations, which I hope we do, the government will be able to show that we have exercised thought and set national priorities and worked on this. I hope today we will be able to do our job.

The House passed the bill on Thursday night by a vote of 219 to 206. We will now take up that bill.

It is remarkable in today's era of slam-down politics, that those of us who have been working on this committee have been able to set aside our differences, work across the aisle, and work across the dome to find a way to compromise without capitulation on principles. The American people said they wanted us to do that, and that is the job we have done.

My wonderful colleague from Maryland, Senator BEN CARDIN, explained a good part of the bill. We are so close and we think so much alike, we could have given each other's speech. He kind of gave my speech.

I will reiterate what is in this bill. This agreement provides for our national security. It ensures readiness for our troops. It funds training for the troops, as well as our maintenance facilities, so that our military assets, such as aircraft carriers and ships, are ready to go and our soldiers receive the training they need.

Military leaders say readiness is our top priority, and the bill will provide $162.5 billion for readiness.

It also includes important funds for our National Guard and Reserve so our units are ready for the job we ask them to do, and we have included $200 million more for our national. We also included a 1-percent pay raise—a 1-percent COLA, cost of living for the Defense Department's 3 million employees.

We worked very hard on a variety of issues, one of which of course has been the way we serve our veterans. One of our greatest accomplishments is this bill is what we do for them.

Veterans service organizations came to me and many of the members this evening and said: We not only need funding to implement the reforms that were passed by the Congress, but we also want you to do it for this year and a year in advance. We said: We don't do

that. And they said: You have to do that because we are concerned that often with the dysfunction and delay as a strategy in Washington, it creates chaos for veterans and their survivors. Guess what. We were able to do it.

For the first time ever, we provide funding for this year and 1 year in advance. It means that no matter what happens to the government, veterans can count on their disability check, their pension check, a check to help fund the GI bill, and their health care will be paid for. We also deal with the incredible problem of veterans backlog, and we put in the money to able to do that. For the VA backlog process, over $2.5 billion, adding another $40 million to do that.

I have been horrified—in my own home State of Maryland—that the claims backlog at one point took more than 125 days. We are doing our reform.

I also wish to talk about compelling human needs. We know that one of the most able Members of the Senate, Senator TOM HARKIN, is retiring. But during the years he has served, he has never let up in championing the little guy and the little gal to make sure we had access to health care, access to education, and truly looking out for our constituents. I am so proud that—working with him—we were able to fund the child care development block grant, which passed the Senate overwhelmingly, by adding over $75 million. That means they will able to ensure that thousands more children will be able to qualify for daycare, and it will be safe and affordable.

I wish to talk about college affordability as well—a great passion of Senator HARKIN, myself, and I know many Members of the Senate. We increased the maximum Pell grant by $100, we reformed the Pell grants to give students a chance to be able to go to college and get their GED. This has been a tremendous problem for many single mothers and they would drop out.

They now know they have to earn, and they are ready to learn. But in order to be eligible to go to community college, they had to have their GED, and they are now able to do both. It also restores the community colleges' efforts to be able to fund scholarships from their own endowments.

I will take a moment to speak about jobs. We need to create jobs in the United States of America, and what we did when we focused in on jobs was to fund the infrastructure. Guess what. We put in money in the Federal checkbook for the highway trust fund and the harbor maintenance fund so our harbors could be dredged, our roads and bridges would be safe, and also included more money for dam safety.

In my own home State, we funded the Metro and made a big downpayment on the Purple and Red Lines. These are jobs to improve our infrastructure and are absolutely crucial.

I know there are others who wish to speak, and I am going to show that we looked at trying to fund jobs and infrastructure. I will talk about what we did in the commerce committee and how we came up with a way to end the backlog on patents in the area of intellectual infrastructure. There were over 400,000 patents pending. We wanted to make sure in this America, that if you invent something, you get to protect your idea so you can move it into the marketplace.

We also funded these regional innovation centers in manufacturing. We promoted 3D manufacturing and made it local. In many of our States where we lost it, we had major advances. I will talk more about it, but I see my colleague, Senator UDALL, is on the floor. I will yield the time and allow him to speak.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. BLUMENTHAL). The Senator from New Mexico.

Mr. UDALL of New Mexico. I thank Chairwoman MIKULSKI and the Presiding Officer.

I will say a few words about Chairwoman MIKULSKI.

First of all, I am honored to serve on the Appropriations Committee. For the last couple of years I served as the chairman of the Subcommittee on Financial Services and General Government, and with her guidance and work, it has been a truly fulfilling task.

I thank Senator MIKULSKI for the last 2 years since she has taken over and putting us on track in terms of having a good, solid appropriations process, where we make every attempt to get the appropriations bills through the Senate and in place at the beginning of the budget year. That could make a real difference, as she has indicated, for veterans, for jobs, and for all of the agencies that are funded throughout government, and particularly in my State where we have two premier national laboratories—Los Alamos and Sandia National Laboratories. We have three Air Force bases, national parks, and national monuments. There is so much that is a part of this appropriations bill that is very important to my State.

We have a lot of work to do today, and I will speak for a few minutes on some of the issues that are important to my State and our country.

First, I will start out on a positive note. The Senate just recently passed the Defense authorization bill. That bill is critical to our Nation's security and for our troops at home and abroad who deserve our support and respect.

In addition, this year it also includes landmark conservation measures to protect some of the most beloved landscapes in New Mexico. These are measures we have worked on for many years—since Senator Bingaman was in office—and they are the result of many years of dogged hard work by a diverse group of sportsmen, conservationists, local businesspeople, and others.

With this bill, we are designating Columbine Hondo Wilderness, giving permanent congressional protection to this special area. We are increasing public access to the Valles Caldera by transferring management to the National Park Service. This will ensure financial stability for one of the best places in New Mexico for hiking, hunting, and fishing.

We are dedicating a historical Manhattan Project a national park that will include Los Alamos, NM, where Americans can learn about and remember our complicated Cold War history.

This bill protects the special and important places, increases tourism, and creates jobs. We also renewed a BLM pilot program to improve the permitting process for the oil and gas industry. This is critical to energy development in New Mexico and other Western States.

It ensures that BLM has the resources to do all parts of its job—managing land for conservation, grazing, and permitting for oil and gas development.

I thank my colleague Senator HEINRICH, who serves on the Energy and Natural Resources Committee, for being a strong partner in getting these measures passed.

Now the Senate has another important duty pending before us—passing an appropriations bill to fund the Federal Government, including many vital programs in my home State of New Mexico. We have not had regular spending bills in recent years, and here we are at the eleventh hour with an omnibus bill at the last minute.

The fact that we have a bill is due, in great part, to the leadership of Chairwoman MIKULSKI, and I am glad to be part of her team on the Appropriations Committee.

The alternative to this bill is a short-term CR or a couple of short-term CRs for the whole year. I think that is an unacceptable way to do business, and it would cost jobs and hurt our economy in New Mexico. New Mexico's labs and bases need certainty in their critical jobs to keep our Nation safe. Communities in my home State rely on funding through the Payments in Lieu of Taxes Program to provide basic services, such as schools and public safety.

I know Chairwoman MIKULSKI understands the PILT Program, has worked hard to make sure that PILT is funded in this bill, and it is greatly appreciated in the rural parts of the West.

Let me say again that continuing resolutions are disruptive. They are inefficient. They lock in place programs that prevent us from evaluating what is working and what isn't and keep us from rooting out wasteful spending. But trying to put this omnibus bill at the end of the year is far from ideal.

There was a time not long ago when having to pass an omnibus bill was a sign that work had broken down. Today it is the best possible option. I am extremely happy to have it. Again, I credit our chairwoman with fighting hard to get us to this point. It has not been easy. But the American people deserve better than this broken process.

They deserve a Congress that works, that is open and deliberate, not last-minute deals and gimmicks for special interests. Our duty is to the American people, not Wall Street billionaires and bankers.

I will continue to do all I can as a member of the Appropriations Committee to get back to the regular order. We cannot keep getting in just under the wire.

In that respect, our colleagues in the House have to stop sending over all of these riders. We had more than 100 riders sent over from the House. As Chairwoman MIKULSKI knows, this isn't the way to legislate on an appropriations bill. We are not supposed to be putting riders in there. So they sent more than 100 of these over from the House of Representatives. It is disruptive. Senator MIKULSKI took them off and was able to work through them and get a decent, good final product. I am going to continue to do all I can to make sure we get back to the regular order.

Now I wish to speak about why this bill is important and why it is important to pass this omnibus bill.

First of all, this bill is critical to my State of New Mexico. New Mexico has two fine national laboratories—Sandia and Los Alamos; three Air Force bases; White Sands testing range; and a number of other Federal institutions, national parks, and national monuments. They are all funded, and when they are funded on a regular basis at the beginning of a fiscal year, it is a much better situation for everyone.

For PILT funds, which our counties depend on for schools, roads, law enforcement, and anything they feel is important in their county, they can rely on these PILT funds.

At this point my State is in severe drought. We have water projects such as the Navajo Gallup project that can't keep waiting. There is money in this bill to keep that project going. Communities can't just put their needs on hold because Congress is broken. Navajo communities in New Mexico still need clean water. In fact, every day we delay, their situation gets worse. That is true of so many projects that are funded by the Federal Government. Communities and businesses have to plan, and they need certainty. The needs don't go away. So let's get this done.

Finally, I wish to speak a little bit about the authorization, of course, that we just produced out of the Foreign Relations Committee. I urge Congress to address another important issue—this issue of the authorization of force. We need to update the authorization of force for our military in light of our changing involvement in a variety of Middle Eastern conflicts—most notably, ISIS. If we leave without doing this, we are failing the American people, our troops, and shirking our constitutional duty.

ISIS is a brutal terrorist group, and it must be stopped. We must continue to work with our allies, including those in the region, to use strategic force to stop ISIS. I am proud of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee for recognizing our essential duty in defining the parameters of this fight. This is the first step, but our Constitution requires the full Congress to authorize war. This is a matter that deserves debate. It should not be taken lightly. The last 13 years of conflict in Afghanistan and in Iraq illustrate this—why it is so important to be thoughtful and deliberate about war.

I urge my colleagues to stay until the work is done and we give the AUMF consideration by the full Senate. This is not easy work, but this is not a normal situation. ISIS is a rapidly growing terrorist group recruiting young people from the West. It spans two countries, with very expansive ambitions.

We must defeat ISIS, but at the same time we cannot allow another open-ended war. That will yet again strain communities in my State and across the country and put us in a situation we cannot pay for.

Since July I have received over 1,100 letters and hundreds of phone calls from my constituents. They are clear, and I want to be equally clear: Congress should rise to its constitutional oversight of the Nation's war powers. This is a solemn responsibility, one I have taken very seriously throughout my time in Congress. I voted for the 2001 authorization for the war in Afghanistan. I voted against the 2002 authorization for war in Iraq.

I believe the new AUMF is strong in that it prohibits ground operations except in limited circumstances. Those circumstances, such as rescuing servicemembers or U.S. citizens, are specified in the text of the resolution. It also repeals the 2002 Iraq AUMF and sets a 3-year timeline for the 2001 AUMF, which is currently supporting military engagements around the world that we never intended when we originally passed them. But I would still caution that we must be watchful so that this engagement doesn't vastly change in scope without the approval of Congress or the support from our constituents.

I fought to provide Congress with an even stronger role. I proposed an amendment to limit authorization to 1 year. I also cosponsored a proposal with Senator PAUL to require a new authorization with Congress if U.S. forces were to be deployed outside of Iraq and Syria. We need this authorization to pass now, as the conflict has been ongoing for months, but we also must continue to be watchful. Costs should not just be charged to a credit card. Let's make sure we have a real conversation on how the generation that has decided to go to war will pay for it.

Again, I urge Congress to honor its responsibility to stay and finish this critical duty.

Just to wrap up, I once again want to say to my chairwoman Senator MIKULSKI that she has taken on a very difficult task in terms of looking at what was sent to us by the House of Representatives—more than 100 riders on all sorts of things, trying to dismantle the Affordable Care Act, trying to tackle and get into the IRS and diminish its ability to carry out its responsibilities, and on and on. The Senator from Maryland has worked through these amendments diligently and come up with a good product. This is much better than struggling through continuing resolutions 2, 3 months at a time and then coming back again. This gives certainty to government, gives certainty to businesses, and it shows that we are trying to react responsibly to the situation that is before us.

Again, I applaud Senator MIKULSKI. It is a real honor to work with her on the Appropriations Committee.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Washington.

Mrs. MURRAY. Mr. President, I am delighted to be on the floor this evening to take, first of all, a minute to thank my good friend and mentor Chairwoman MIKULSKI for her tremendous work on the product that is before us tonight. We want to get something done when we come here. In order to get anything done in Congress, we have to be willing to compromise. We have to fight hard for our principles and what we believe in. But at the end of the day it is a give-and-take. It is never easy, and no one never ends up with a bill they have written on their own.

Chairwoman MIKULSKI deserves so much credit for what is in this bill that puts our country on a better track. Putting jobs and economic growth first is a principle she always speaks to, and she fought for them in this bill.

She fought off so many policies and riders that were thrown at her. I know because I have spoken with her time and time again as she has tried to say: What can I absolutely draw a line in the sand on, and what can I put in here in order to make sure I am doing what is right for my country? It is not easy to do that.

She fought off many riders that all of us on this side of the aisle would have found extremely difficult to ever vote for. She took those out.

She maintained the budget levels Chairman RYAN and I agreed on last year. That was very hard to do. She is trying to put together a bill to fund our government across the board, from defense, to agriculture, to transportation, to so many areas that people take for granted every day until our government shuts down. Then they remember how much they rely on our national parks or our research and our investment or the protection that is so important in our Homeland Security bills. She worked hard under very strict requirements that we all supported in another compromise a year ago and maintained that in this bill.

Critically, her work on this bill avoids another government shutdown.

Running this place by crisis we know doesn't work. It hurts our economy. It hurts our families. Certainly, it hurts the stature of the Senate.

So her work to put this together and have this bill before us tonight is truly a remarkable accomplishment and really is proof of the stateswoman she is. I commend her for that.

I am especially grateful that she put so much into this legislation that really helps our everyday, average, middle-class families who are struggling so hard in this country and really lays down a strong foundation for long-term and broad-based economic growth. She did not forget that principle at all in what she fought for, and that is embedded within the legislation.

There are, of course, provisions in this bill that any one of us can pull out and oppose, and there are certainly some provisions with which I do not agree. I am really disheartened that the House Republicans put Wall Street interests ahead of middle-class families and demanded a provision in this bill. I am very concerned that some of the provisions could increase health care premiums for our families and our businesses. And I strongly oppose the policy change that was slipped into the bill that could lead to a reduction in pensions for many of our retirees. I share the concerns of many of us on this side that that is in this legislation.

This is a compromise piece of legislation, and we had to swallow and the other side had to swallow. Why? It is because at the end of the day, we do not want to run our country in continuing resolutions, in this economic upturn, in crisis management every 30 days or 60 days for the next 2 years. That is why we had to look to the greater good of this bill, and I am very pleased with some really significant pieces of legislation in this bill.

I worked very hard with my good friend and colleague on the other side of the aisle, Senator COLLINS, who is my partner on the Transportation, Housing and Urban Development Subcommittee. Senator COLLINS and I worked very hard to find a compromise that makes significant investments in our transportation infrastructure to help our commuters and our families and our businesses and our economy.

I want my colleagues on this side of the aisle to know that the investments in this bill that are in Amtrak, in public transit, in air traffic control modernization, and in airport improvements are very critical for all of our communities. I am going to vote yes for those tonight. The bill makes it possible for the FAA to keep sufficient numbers of air traffic controllers and inspectors on the job. This is a key safety issue that I will be supporting in this bill. And our bill puts to work new, targeted investments to help the Department of Transportation to do everything possible to keep our communities safe as the number of oil shipments by rail continue to increase in the country.

I am especially proud of our part of this legislation that continues to support a very successful TIGER program, and so many Members have come to me and said they really appreciated that in this bill because it allows investments in critical pieces of transportation infrastructure in their home States that helps create jobs and boosts their regional economy. I know this has been important in my State. I know the demand is very high. We were not able to have the number we liked, we did have to reduce it, but it remains in this bill as a very strong investment in our communities, and I would be proud to be supporting that in this bill.

On the housing side of our bill, we maintain the housing assistance for low-income families that is so important today that they have the support while they get back on their feet.

To not pass this bill tonight means we put a lot of people who are struggling today at risk in their communities to not have the home that is so important to their family's stability.

I am especially proud we are going to continue funding the HUD–VASH Program. It is a program so many Members have told me is important to them and takes the important steps of expanding HUD–VASH to Native Americans who are at risk of homelessness living on reservations. We increased the number of public housing units that can be part of the public assistance demonstration that allows public housing authorities to leverage private capital and to make capital improvements to more than 100,000 additional units of affordable housing. We worked hard to make sure this bill continues to support public housing and economic development projects in communities across the country through the CDBG Program. I will say that virtually every Member of the Senate has said we need to maintain the CDBG Program on how important it is. There are local communities to make decisions about the local communities, and the funding is absolutely critical. This isn't just about spending. Our legislation contains a number of reforms that are going to improve government and save taxpayer dollars. Let me repeat that. We are voting to save taxpayer dollars because we approved the process for administering emergency preparedness grants, and we make sure property owners are held accountable if they fail to take care of housing funded with taxpayer resources.

We included a provision that supports efforts to improve the coordination between domestic violence service and housing systems to make sure our domestic violence survivors are getting the care and support they deserve. I know much has been made of the provisions that people don't like, and I share that angst.

But I think it is so important that we, as adults, stand up to the responsibility we have, as the Senate and as Congress, to pass a funding bill through the next year that makes sure we don't have gridlock and dysfunction running this economy again.

The alternative to a bipartisan compromise spending bill is just another short-term continuing resolution and another short-term continuing resolution. We cannot run this government by crisis or short-term resolutions. That is an irresponsible autopilot approach and would cut off our ability as Senators to make decisions about how our government operates.

I again want to thank my colleague and my mentor, the amazing Senator from Maryland, the chairwoman of this committee, BARBARA MIKULSKI, for the work she has done and for the drive she has. She never lost sight of what her goal is, despite some very difficult negotiations, and I want to remind all of us that tonight hopefully we will be voting on a compromise.

I know personally that in this country what everybody says to me constantly is: We are tired of the partisan bickering. We want you to compromise. That is what this is. We want our country to work again. That is what this bill does. I urge our colleagues to support this legislation.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Utah.

Mr. LEE. Mr. President, I rise in opposition to the spending bill before us. I rise in opposition to the cynical substance of the legislation. I rise in opposition to the un-Republican and undemocratic process by which a small collection of political and economic insiders crafted it to benefit each other at everyone else's expense.

Finally, I rise in particular opposition to the signals that this so-called CRomnibus sends, the signal it sends to political insiders on both ends of Pennsylvania Avenue in Washington, the signal it sends to special interest cronies on Wall Street and K street, and the signal it sends to working families struggling on Main Streets across this country who have been waiting for a decade for someone in this city to start putting them first.

Those problems with this bill—each one alone enough to merit opposition—do not even speak to its greatest weakness, its failure to correct the President's lawless Executive amnesty. Since last night when it was taken up in the House of Representatives, supporters of the CRomnibus have couched their support in the language of compromise: ''This isn't a perfect bill,'' they say.

But on the contrary, it is perfect. As a representation of everything wrong with Washington, DC, as an example of exactly the kind of unfair, unrepresentative legislating that triggered successive electoral waves of bipartisan condemnation in 2006, 2008, 2010, and again in 2014—the CRomnibus is perfect.

Members of my party do not have the luxury of blaming this latest failure on the outgoing Senate majority. No. This one is on us.

Americans just last month thought they went to the polls and voted for change to stop this kind of thing: unread, 1,000-plus page bills written in secret, filled with hidden favors for special interests while funding the lawlessness of an out-of-control President.

Americans looking for that change will not find it in this bill. Rather, they will find what the discarded revolutionaries of ''Animal Farm'' found at the end of George Orwell's classic:

> The creatures outside looked from pig to man, and from man to pig, and from pig to man again; but already it was impossible to say which was which.

Americans across our country are facing a new and unnatural kind of squeeze, an opportunity deficit that is warping our free enterprise economy and our voluntary civil society. This opportunity deficit is not simply the result of globalization or technology or free trade. No. It is the result of politicians creating a welfare system that traps poor families in poverty—sometimes for generations at a time—and locks lower skilled workers out of potential jobs, an education system that traps poor kids in bad schools and college students into a lifetime of debt, a health care system that locks the poor in second-class care and erases what few wage gains the middle-class families ever see, a tax system that unfairly discourages work, saving, investment, marriage, and children.

Government policy unfairly protects the privileges of those who have already climbed the ladder of success, while putting that ladder out of the reach of those who have not yet grasped its very bottom rungs.

On Wall Street, corporate profits continue to soar. In Washington the influence economy booms and booms on. Almost everywhere else, take-home pay is flat. Jobs remain scarce. Small businesses are struggling to grow, while new businesses are struggling even to get off the ground.

More and more today in America, the people who work hard and play by the rules are being forced to subsidize political and economic elites who don't. It is not big business or big special interests who created this toxic environment. All they can do is ask. Only government—big government—can rig the system. Only government can carve out a regulatory exception for certain big banks while intensifying its regulatory squeeze on smaller banks or tweak accounting rules to line the pockets of certain big insurance companies or create new taxpayer subsidies for certain industries and cynically present all of the above as unamendable—take it or leave it, take it or shut down the government propositions, as this bill does.

We wonder why the American people distrust their government, distrust this government. We wonder why the principled grassroots of both political parties—conservatives and progressives—are up in arms against their Washington establishments over this bill. The American people do not trust Congress because, as we are proving once again today, Congress is not trustworthy.

Yet as rotten as the CRomnibus before us is, I want to state for the record that this week leaves me with nothing but optimism about the prospects we have for real reform and revival in the coming years.

The miserable process we witnessed this week represents the last gasping throes of a discredited Washington status quo. Ten years ago this bill would not have been controversial. Five years ago an easy majority would have been purchased with earmarks. This week, with the full weight of both party's leaderships, it barely made it over the finish line. Change comes slowly, as we know, and it comes most slowly to those institutions that make the rules, but change is coming. The era of passing 1,600-page bills, written in secret, via a process that includes lobbyists but excludes the American people is coming to an end. The era of big government rigging the rules for special interests while leaving everyone else behind is coming to an end. A new era is coming in which Washington will once again be forced to work for the American people instead of the other way around. To those Americans who have watched with dismay what Congress did—and did not do—this week, who made their voices heard by flooding both sides of the aisle with phone calls and emails, my message is simple. Take heart. It may not look like it today, but you are winning. America is winning.

The beltway establishments of both parties are exhausted, out of ideas, and running out of time. Next year a new unified Congress has an opportunity, a real open opportunity, to reshape the national debate, to challenge Washington's failing status quo and its failed champion in the Oval Office.

We can finally begin the hard, overdue work of rescuing our economy from the grips of government dysfunction and political privilege, of rescuing our health care system from ObamaCare, of reviving our education system and modernizing our transportation system, of ending special interest manipulation of our tax system and reforming regulations to level the playing field for small and new businesses, of fixing our broken immigration system.

Next year, just next month, we can begin to craft a new reform agenda, to increase access to and opportunity within America's middle class, an agenda that grows the economy and increases take-home pay, an agenda that restores mobility and opportunity to working families and communities while putting political and corporate elites back to work for everyone else. We can look to our own House of Congress to reform the way Congress conducts the people's business, the way we budget and spend the people's money, so embarrassments such as this CRomnibus might become relics of the past. We can do this. We must do this and we will.

For too long the working families of and aspiring to America's middle class have been fighting an all-too-lonely battle to keep up and to get ahead. For too long, Washington has been an obstacle, even an opponent, in that fight. That fight will remain uphill, but the first time in a long time there is hope. There is a real chance that fight may get a little less steep, and it might get a little less lonely. Help is on the way.

I know it is hard to see right now. It is hard to see it in Washington, and it must be even harder to see out in the country, but change is coming. A new Congress is on the way, with new ideas and a new renewed reform sense of purpose.

Temporary setbacks such as this bill should not discourage us, and they will not deter us, for the only way to keep winning is to keep fighting. Washington may still be broken, but America is ready to fix it, no matter how long it takes and no matter how much Washington resists it. Our opportunity to finally begin that work is almost here. We just need to know where to look for it, for:

> . . . not by eastern windows only
> When daylight comes, comes in the light;
> In front the sun climbs slow, how slowly!
> But westward, look, the land is bright!

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Vermont.

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, I commend the distinguished senior Senator from Connecticut. I realize when presiding he cannot respond. But I just want to say what a pleasure it is, as a fellow New Englander, to serve with him in the Senate. Sometimes you feel like you are on a graveyard shift on a Friday night presiding over the Senate. But I must tell him, after decades here, it is extremely important. To have someone of his integrity, his ability, his competence, and his experience presiding over the Senate should make every Senator, both Republican and Democratic, proud.

After late night theatrics in the House yesterday, I hope the Senate will soon vote on the fiscal year 2015 omnibus appropriations bill. I support this comprehensive spending package.

Chairwoman MIKULSKI has done an outstanding job. She has been a giant of the appropriations process. She should be congratulated for her perseverance in getting us to this point.

I spoke yesterday about the funds included in the bill for the State Department and foreign operations. I commended members of my staff, Senator GRAHAM's staff, and the editorial and printing staff who worked so hard on that.

We included important funding for the environment, for AIDS prevention and treatment, for United Nations peacekeeping, and for emergency funding for Ebola. This bill protects U.S. security, humanitarian, and economic interests around the world.

But it also funds many of the domestic priorities that face budget cuts, that the people of our States depend upon, from law enforcement to transportation, health care, and protecting our national parks. This Congress and a past Congress, in what I believe was a terrible mistake, voted to spend $1 to $2 trillion for the war in Iraq that we should never have been involved in. As a result, we did not have the funds for our police, health care, national parks, or to fix our decaying bridges and roads in America.

I think most Americans think we should take care of those things. This omnibus spending bill does that. It includes critical investments in our rivers and lakes, including an increase in funding for one very near and dear to my heart—Lake Champlain. That is done through the EPA's geographic program.

Lake Champlain is a great treasure to this country. It is the largest body of fresh water outside of the Great Lakes. It borders Vermont, New York, and Canada in the Province of Quebec. Some parts of it are hundreds of feet deep. It is special to me as a Vermonter, and because my wife Marcelle and I first met on the shores of Lake Champlain.

I want to thank Senator JACK REED, the chairman of the Appropriations Subcommittee on the Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies, for his assistance in protecting the funding for all of the geographic programs receiving funding in this bill—not just Lake Champlain but all of them.

We fund critical investments that address the heroin crisis. Some may think of rural States as being some kind of an enclave that are immune from what happens in the rest of the country. Well, those of us who live in rural America know differently. The heroin crisis has had a devastating impact on communities in small, rural States like Vermont.

It does not make any difference if they are a red State or blue State; they have been hurt. With Senator MIKULSKI's support, I was pleased to include funding for anti-heroin task forces, to provide Federal assistance to law enforcement efforts to investigate and combat the distribution of heroin. Ensuring our local agencies have the tools they need is just one portion of our effort to deal with this crisis.

But it is also unacceptable that Americans face a waiting list when seeking help to recover from their addictions. This legislation provides crucial funding to expand treatment services for those with heroin dependence.

The omnibus makes important investments in our students by providing funding to increase access to a college education through the Pell Grant Program. It increases funding for the TRIO Program, which helps low-income first-generation students get a college education. They are the future of this country.

The bill provides $30.3 billion for the National Institutes of Health—that is a treasure in this country—and funding for the development of a vaccine against Ebola. Can anyone be against that?

It raises the cap in the Crime Victims Fund to a historic $2.3 billion. It means more money for victims assistance grants at the State and local levels. This is a program I have supported from my early days in the Senate. I compliment the Presiding Officer who always also voted, in the Judiciary Committee, to help victims of crimes. Like me, he knows from his own past experience as a prosecutor that we have money to go after those who break the law, but we also have to help the people who are the victims of crime.

The compromise package invests in housing for veterans and seniors. It supports grants to help schools purchase critical equipment for their school lunch programs. It provides funding for a new food safety outreach program, helping the Food and Drug Administration work with farmers and small businesses to understand complex new food safety laws.

The bill protects our Nation's forests through a strong investment in the Forest Legacy Program. Coming from a State that values its forests I know how important this is. The list goes on.

So obviously, as I have praised the chair of the committee, Senator MIKULSKI and what she has done, I do intend to support this appropriations bill. She knows that I am disappointed with some last-minute negotiations that forced the inclusion of several controversial riders. It would have been a lot worse if she had not stood her ground. They had nothing to do with funding the operations of the Federal Government. She knew those provisions forced us into a choice between shutting down the government or enacting this omnibus bill.

There is no doubt Congress has to do something to address vulnerable pension plans. We all agree on that. The 11th-hour provision that we were forced to accept by the Republicans in the House of Representatives to reduce hard-earned benefits for retirees is shameful. For decades these retirees have worked hard. They have contributed to pension plans. They assumed those benefits would be there when they needed them the most.

Now the game is being changed. I cannot help but wonder how the Republicans in the House who are responsible for this provision would react if it affected their pensions?

This legislation includes a particularly offensive rider that rolls back an important provision of the Dodd-Frank Act that protects taxpayers from another Wall Street bailout.

We know that elections have consequences. I worry this is the start of a pattern we can expect to see over the next 2 years of protecting the rich on Wall Street at the expense of hard-working Americans on Main Street. Frankly, like Senator MIKULSKI, I stand with the hard-working people on Main Street. They are the people I feel comfortable with. Those are the people I know. When I walk down the streets of Montpelier or Burlington or Brattleboro, those are the people who call me by my first name. Those are the people paying the bills. Those are the people representing businesses like the one my mother and father ran, the Leahy Press.

I am also dismayed that this spending package includes another body blow to what little remains of campaign finance law. By increasing the amount of money wealthy donors can contribute to political parties, we further roll back long-held campaign finance limitations that protected the voice of every voter at the ballot box—not just those who paid to have their voices heard.

It is unfortunate that pressure groups and special interests prevailed in making this happen. It is also unfortunate that when we had a chance in this Senate to do something, to restore part of what has been called McCain-Feingold, after Citizens United, we failed by one vote. Every Democrat in this Senate voted to restore many of the provisions of McCain-Feingold. Every single Republican voted to gut McCain-Feingold. It was gutted by a one-vote margin.

Finally, while I am pleased this omnibus bill will fund most of our government through fiscal year 2015, I am disappointed that programs and agencies funded through the Department of Homeland Security will only be funded through February 2015. Yet, for months—for nearly 18 months—House Republican leaders refused to bring to a vote the bipartisan Senate-passed immigration reform bill.

We had hundreds of hours of markups, hearings, and a debate on this floor. Two-thirds of Senate Republicans and Democrats joined together to pass the immigration bill that came out of the Senate Judiciary Committee. It is political hypocrisy on the other side when they say: Oh, look what President Obama is doing on immigration. We have to stop him. They had the chance to pass a bill that would have trumped whatever the President might do. They refused to even vote on it because they were afraid that it would pass.

They wanted to talk about it. They wanted to talk about immigration. They want to talk about what they wanted to do, but they never wanted to vote one way or the other. We stood up here in the Senate, Democrats and Republicans together, and we passed an immigration bill. They refused to even vote on it so they could talk about what is wrong with immigration. It is political hypocrisy at its worst. The bill would have passed, and we would not be where we are today.

No bill is perfect, especially one of this size. There are certainly provisions in here that I wish were not, as I have said. But this bill moves us away

from governing by autopilot and takes off the table the threat in 1, 2 or 3 months of yet another government shutdown. If we fail to pass this bill, under Republican majorities in the House and Senate next year it will only get worse.

Senator MIKULSKI and Chairman ROGERS in the House have kept us from a government shutdown. It is easy to criticize, but waiting until next year is not an option. This bill provides essential funding for this country, for programs the American people depend on. And I would say from a parochial point of view, it will do a great deal to help Vermont.

Any Senator opposing this bill because of the riders it includes should remember that a continuing resolution or omnibus spending bill next year will contain many more, and some far worse.

Chairwoman MIKULSKI has done a heroic job in getting us to this point. I hope we can do as well next year.

I know Senator COCHRAN of Mississippi, one of the closest friends I have had in this body since coming to the Senate, and the incoming Appropriations Committee chairman, agrees that we should return to the regular order of debating and passing individual appropriations bill.

We will be well off with Senator COCHRAN and Senator MIKULSKI. These are the people who know the difference between rhetoric and reality. They are legislators. They believe in solving problems. The American people do too. They are tired of partisanship, drama, and the harmful consequences of shutting down the government.

Is this bill everything I wanted? No. Is it everything the chairwoman would like? No. Is it everything that any one of us would like? No. But it is a lot better than shutting down the government, or leaving it to the next Congress. I will support it.

I yield the floor.

Ms. MIKULSKI. I note the Senator from Massachusetts wishes to speak and I will yield to her.

But before the Senator from Vermont leaves, first I thank him for his leadership in chairing the Subcommittee on the State Department and Foreign Operations.

What he has done is make sure that we continue to be able to conduct public diplomacy, to ensure money for embassy security.

There are many here who pound their chests and call for investigations, but he actually puts money in the Federal checkbook, meets with the State Department and the embassy security people so that if you work for the U.S. Government, and you are in the embassies, at least you will have the security you need.

The other is his work on foreign operations, making sure the poor, dispossessed, and the marginalized of the world have the assistance of the United States as a partner—whether it is curing malaria, fighting AIDS in Africa, fighting Ebola.

Also at the same time I remember the great honor and how touched I was to visit Madagascar with him when we looked at the children who were the victims of land mines. This man has done heroic work, not only to prevent the ghastly consequences of the land mines, but to make sure that the children who have been injured by this ghastly weapon had the means to recover their limbs and in that way their livelihood. Really, we owe you a debt of gratitude and it is an honor to serve with you.

Mr. LEAHY. I thank my dear friend from Maryland.

Ms. MIKULSKI. I yield to the Senator from Massachusetts.

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

Ms. WARREN. I thank the Senator from Maryland and the senior Senator of Vermont. They both show extraordinary leadership and we learn from them every day.

I am back on the floor to talk about a dangerous provision slapped in a must-pass spending bill at the last minute solely to benefit Wall Street. This provision would repeal a rule called prohibition against Federal Government bailouts of swaps entities.

On Wednesday I came to the floor and talked to the Senate Democrats to ask them to strip this provision out of the omnibus bill and to protect taxpayers.

On Thursday I came to the floor to talk to Republicans. Republicans said they don't like bailouts either, so I asked them to vote the way they talk. If they don't like bailouts, then they could take out this provision that puts taxpayers right back on the hook for bailing out big banks.

Today I come to the floor to talk about not Democrats or Republicans, but to talk about a third group that also wields tremendous power in Washington—Citigroup.

In recent years many Wall Street institutions have exerted extraordinary influence in Washington's corridors of power, but Citigroup has risen above the others. Its grip over economic policymaking in the executive branch is unprecedented.

Consider just a few examples. Three of the last four Treasury Secretaries under Democratic Presidents have had close Citigroup ties. The fourth was offered the CEO position at Citigroup but turned it down.

The vice chair of the Federal Reserve system is a Citigroup alum.

The Under Secretary for International Affairs at Treasury is a Citigroup alum.

The U.S. Trade Representative and the person nominated to be his deputy, who is currently an assistant secretary of Treasury, are Citigroup alums.

A recent chairman of the National Economic Council at the White House was a Citigroup alum.

Another recent chairman of the Office of Management and Budget went to Citigroup immediately after leaving the White House.

And another recent chairman of the Office of Management and Budget is also a Citigroup alum—but I am double-counting because he is now Secretary of the Treasury.

That is a lot of powerful people all from one bank, but they aren't the only way that Citigroup exercises power. Over the years, the company has spent millions of dollars on lobbying Congress and funding the political campaigns of its friends in the House and Senate.

Citigroup has also spent millions trying to influence the political process in ways that are far more subtle and hidden from public view. Last year, I wrote Citigroup and other big banks asking them to disclose the amount of shareholder money they have been diverting to think tanks to influence public policy.

Citigroup's response to my letter? Stonewalling. A year has gone by and Citigroup didn't even acknowledge receiving my letter.

Citigroup has a lot of money. It spends a lot of money, and it uses that money to grow and consolidate power—and it pays off.

Consider a couple of facts.

Fact 1: During the financial crisis, when all the support through TARP, FDIC, and the Fed is added up, Citi received nearly half a trillion dollars in bank loans. That is half a trillion with a t. That is almost $140 billion more than the next biggest bank received.

Fact 2: During Dodd-Frank, there was an amendment introduced by my colleagues Senator BROWN and Senator Kaufman that would have broken up Citigroup and the other largest banks. That amendment had bipartisan support and it might have passed, but it ran into powerful opposition from an alliance between Wall Streeters on Wall Street and Wall Streeters who held powerful government jobs. They teamed up and they blocked the move to break up the banks, and now Citi is larger than ever.

The role that senior officials from the Treasury Department played in killing the amendment wasn't subtle. A senior Treasury official acknowledged it at the time in a background interview with ''New York'' magazine and said:

> If we'd been for it, it probably would have happened. But we weren't, so it didn't.

That is power.

Democrats don't like Wall Street bailouts. Republicans don't like Wall Street bailouts. The American people are disgusted by Wall Street bailouts. Yet here we are, 5 years after Dodd-Frank, with Congress on the verge of ramming through a provision that would do nothing for the middle class, do nothing for community banks, do nothing but raise the risk that taxpayers will have to bail out the biggest banks once again.

There is a lot of talk lately about how Dodd-Frank isn't perfect. There is

a lot of talk coming from Citigroup about how Dodd-Frank isn't perfect.

So let me say this to anyone who is listening at Citi. I agree with you, Dodd-Frank isn't perfect. It should have broken you into pieces.

If this Congress is going to open Dodd-Frank in the months ahead, then let's open it to get tougher, not to create more bailout opportunities. If we are going to open Dodd-Frank, let's open it up so that once and for all we end too big to fail—and I mean really end it, not just say that we did. Instead of passing laws that create new bailout opportunities for too-big-to-fail banks, let's pass Brown-Kaufman. Let's pass the 21st Century Glass-Steagall Act, a bill I have sponsored with JOHN MCCAIN, ANGUS KING, and MARIA CANTWELL. Let's pass something, anything, that would help break up these giant banks.

A century ago, Teddy Roosevelt was America's trust buster. He went after the giant trusts and monopolies in this country. A lot of people talk about how those trusts deserve to be broken up because they have too much economic power. But Teddy Roosevelt said we should break them up because they had too much political power. Teddy Roosevelt said break them up because all that concentrated power threatens the very foundations of our democratic system.

Now we are watching as Congress passes yet another provision that was written by lobbyists for the biggest recipient of bailout money in the history of this country, and it is attached to a bill that needs to pass or else the entire Federal Government will grind to a halt. Think about that kind of power. If a financial institution has become so big and so powerful that it can hold the entire country hostage, that alone is reason enough to break them up.

Enough is enough. Enough is enough with Wall Street insiders getting key position after key position and the kind of cronyism that we have seen in the executive branch.

Enough is enough—with Citigroup passing eleventh hour deregulatory provisions that nobody takes ownership over, but everybody will come to regret.

Enough is enough.

Washington already works very well for the billionaires, the big corporations, the lawyers, and the lobbyists, but what about the families who lost their homes or their jobs or their retirement savings the last time Citi bet big on derivatives and lost? What about the families who are living paycheck to paycheck and saw their tax dollars go to bail out Citi only 6 years ago?

We were sent to the Senate to fight for those families. And it is time, it is past time, for Washington to start working for them.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from South Carolina.

Mr. GRAHAM. I will be supporting their bill. I will gladly support the bill. I am not pleased with every aspect of it, but let me respond to my good friend from Massachusetts.

You are tired, you are frustrated, you are upset about a provision in the bill that you don't like and think the country is going down the wrong road. You have every right to be upset. You have every right to vote no and to argue to bring the bill down.

Do you know what a lot of people on our side are tired of? The President changing the law whenever he would like. Taking ObamaCare and changing it unilaterally to fit the political needs of the President and his party, by Executive action, turning the ObamaCare statute upside down.

Do you know what people on my side are tired of? A President who feels like he is more of a King than a President. Unilaterally reaching out and conferring legal status on 4 million to 5 million people without coming to the Congress because he is frustrated.

I have been working on immigration since 2006. I will put my frustration up against yours, Mr. President, but democracy is democracy. You can be frustrated all you like, but there are rules to play by that keep us all safe.

So there are people on my side who want me to bring this bill down because they have had enough. They have had enough of President Obama going it on his own, taking the laws that we pass, ignoring some, rewriting others, and the Executive action is the straw that broke the camel's back. It is one thing to defer prosecution on people in terms of your discretion, it is another thing to reach out to 4 to 5 million people and say: You now have a legal status, without going through the Congress. That should scare every Democrat, Republican, Libertarian, and vegetarian.

So people on my side—and we will hear from some of them, saying that this is an outrage and we should shut the government down and defund all the parts of the government that would be used to implement this illegal executive amnesty. I understand where they are coming from, and I understood a year ago when people in my party said ObamaCare is bad for the country, we need to stop it, and I am willing to shut the entire government down or at least that part of the government that depends on funding of ObamaCare, because I am upset with this law. I have been on the side of listening to this on my side and understanding the frustrations but always rejecting that temptation because we do have a country to run.

As much as I am upset about the Executive action, I am not going to heed the call of not passing this bill because I am mad because within this bill we have money to fight ISIL, and God knows we need to fight them. In this bill we have money to contain and fight Ebola, and God knows we need to do that. In this bill we have infrastructure improvements that God knows are long overdue.

So to my good friend from Massachusetts, there is something in here you don't like? Welcome to democracy. You have absolutely the same right as people over here on my side to blow up the whole place, but I hope most of us will listen to your concerns and not follow your lead.

And listen to what the Senator from Massachusetts said when the shoe was on the other foot, when people on my side were willing to take it all down because they were mad. I was one of a handful who said no. I would like to repeal and replace ObamaCare, but I don't believe defunding the government is going to make the President repeal his signature issue, and we don't have enough votes to override a veto. It takes a long time to say that, and the people I was responding to were mad and emotional because they thought they were wronged. I understood they were mad. I understood they were emotional. But I thought I had a duty beyond just worrying about me.

If you follow the lead of the Senator from Massachusetts and bring this bill down and do a CR—which is the worst possible way to run the government—I will tell you what will come your way. It is what came our way. People are not going to believe you are mature enough to run the place. Seventy percent of the Democrats in the House voted against this bill, and three out of four Republicans voted to get it over here—a level of maturity and judgment I haven't seen in my party in quite a while. Speaker BOEHNER and your team: Well done.

To the Democrats, I am sure on MSNBC and on the liberal version of talk radio you are a hero and you will have your moment with that crowd. I can promise you this: There are people on our side who are having their moment on other channels. But almost one-third of the Democratic Party resisted that temptation, and I know how they feel. Some of them will get a primary. I had six primary opponents. I am glad I did not follow the lead of people who were trying to get me to shut down the government because I felt I was wronged. That is not the way to run a country.

So here is what the Senator said: For this rightwing minority, hostage taking is all they have left—a last gasp for those who can not cope with the realities of our democracy. The time has come for those legislators who cannot cope with the reality of our democracy to get out of the way.

Those were good words then, and you should read them now and apply them to yourself.

What you are offering, there are plenty of people on our side who would serve it up too. What you are offering is to take one part of a complicated bill and try to convince people throughout the country that some horrible wrong is being done and the rest of us who want to get on with governing are the problem.

My advice: Don't follow her lead. She is the problem. There are people on my side who are the problem.

We will address the Executive amnesty action in a responsible way next year, attack it on every front, but we will not deny our troops the money they need to fight the war to protect us all. We will not deny those who are working to contain Ebola and doing heroic things the money they need to protect us all. We will not deny the infrastructure improvements that have long been overdue.

So to my Democratic colleagues, welcome to my world. It may seem tempting to go the road of least resistance, but you will regret it. It hurt our party, and it will hurt yours. If you do what is best for the country, over time it will work out for you.

To my colleagues on this side, remember last year? Did we learn anything? I hope so. I will make a prediction. To the voices on my side that say ''Burn it down, blow it up, start all over again'' because they are mad at President Obama's Executive amnesty and the voices coming from the Democratic side, mainly through the Senator from Massachusetts, saying ''Blow it up because we have done something for Wall Street we shouldn't have done,'' I think most of us will put this in context. Most of us will understand there are things in this bill we don't like, but we do have an overriding duty to our country to govern.

I hope that next year we can do our appropriations process in the normal course of business, that we don't find ourselves in these messes. But all I can say about democracy is that it is messy, it is emotional, it requires give and take, it requires some people not to follow the hottest person in the room, and there will always be somebody running hot.

And something else about democracy: As bad as it is, I can't think of a better idea. I have seen the other way of doing business in the Mideast and throughout the world. I certainly don't want any part of that.

So tonight, tomorrow, or whenever that day comes—and to my Democratic colleagues who have put this bill together with my Republican colleagues on appropriations, I applaud you. I will vote for your effort and for the product you created, knowing it is not perfect. To the people on my side who want us to tear this down because you are mad at President Obama, that is not the way to do business. To the people on the other side who want to have the same result for a different reason, don't follow their lead.

TRIBUTES TO DEPARTING SENATORS

Mr. President, I will now speak very briefly about my retiring colleagues and then turn it over to the Senator from Florida. I promise I will be brief.

Everybody will face retirement, voluntarily or involuntarily. There will be a last vote to cast and a last speech to make. Only God knows when that day comes because we are all just one car wreck away from ending our careers.

To the retiring Members, I have had the pleasure of serving with you, and I know you all. You did what you thought was best for our country and your State, and what more could anyone ask? My good friend MARK PRYOR, who tried to find common ground at a time when it is hard to find. MARY LANDRIEU, who is—MARY would drill under the Capitol if she thought it would help American energy independence. We have good friends on the other side, and I will miss you, and I wish you well. But I would like very briefly to speak about four.

SAXBY CHAMBLISS

SAXBY CHAMBLISS and Julianne and the Chambliss family have become my family. If you are lucky in politics, you will make a few friends. I have been very lucky, and I have made lifelong friends with the Chambliss family, not just SAXBY.

SAXBY represents the best in being a Senator. He looks the part, and he acts the part. And I would say to the people of Georgia that he worked very hard on your behalf. He protected our country against terrorism. He helped the farmer. He did everything he knew how to do to serve the people of Georgia, and I will miss my friend.

MIKE JOHANNS

MIKE JOHANNS—he introduced me to Bono. I said: Who is Bono? I don't follow that music that much, but I actually did know Bono.

MIKE introduced me to Africa. He was the Secretary of Agriculture for the Bush administration, and he had a passion for the developing world, particularly Africa. And through MIKE I got to know The One Foundation and the Gates Foundation. Through MIKE and Stephanie I have been to Africa many times, and you represent the best in our country. You are absolutely wonderful people. You will be missed. And my way to repay you is to stay involved in the developing world.

TOM COBURN

To TOM COBURN, when I grow up, I want to be like TOM. I don't see that happening anytime soon, me growing up. TOM COBURN has been at this for 20 years. We came in together. He was one of the first people I met in the freshman class of 1995—the 1994 Contract with America class. He was full of ideas and determination from the first day I met him until the very last day he leaves.

I cannot tell you, TOM, how proud I am to call you my friend. You and Carolyn have become dear friends, and you, my friend, have changed this body for the better. You had an awesome staff, and you will be missed, but what you contributed to the Senate will last long after I am gone, and we will all be the better.

CARL LEVIN

The last person is CARL LEVIN. If I had to describe to somebody from a foreign country what a good Senator was like, I would pick CARL. CARL understands the details of the government—very studious. He was the chairman of the Armed Services Committee and ran it very evenhandedly. He had a disposition that I don't know how he held on to in these fractious times, but he was a gentleman.

I can promise you, working with CARL LEVIN, we both resisted the temptation to go down some very dangerous roads on this detainee contentious issue. All I can tell the men and women in uniform and the people of Michigan is that you never had a better friend.

To all of you, Godspeed. I wish you nothing but the best.

I am fortunate enough to go into my third term. To my colleagues, as we go into the next Congress, let's try to do better. I know we can. And if we do, all boats will rise.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Florida.

Mr. NELSON. Mr. President, one of the great things about America is that two Senators with different outlooks, from different States, can come to the same conclusion, as we have on this legislation.

What the Senator from South Carolina has just said is not only my hope and my prayer, but I hope it will be the hope of the whole of the Senate as we embark on the Nation's business next year. And let's see if we can get along. Let's see if we can work together in a civil way. Let's see if we can find that elusive consensus that has been so elusive in the course of these past very contentious and highly partisan and highly ideological years. Let's see if we can get it done.

There is a lot to be done. I am going to have the privilege of serving with the new chairman of the Commerce Committee, JOHN THUNE of South Dakota. I will be the ranking Democrat on that committee. JOHN and I have already started having personal and private conversations about working together and getting things done, and I am looking forward to it.

So in the words of the Senator from South Carolina—of which he is very sincere—I want to echo those words, and I am not only sincere, I am very determined. Now, we will see if it works, but this we know: The people of this country want it to work, and they want us to work together. They are tired of this nonsense they see.

So we come here late on a Friday night and we have in front of us our responsibility to spend taxpayer money, hopefully wisely and responsibly. It is one of our chief duties.

So the appropriations bill is in front of us. I will vote for it. There are a lot of good things in it. Previous speakers have mentioned those things.

We have to be prepared to take on the Nation's enemies, those whom we identify and those whom we don't identify. They are all lurking out there in many different ways.

We have to help the health of this country by continuing to try to give the appropriate amounts to institutions such as the National Institutes of

Health. There was a time a few years ago that they were being cut. That didn't make sense. The head of NIH, Dr. Francis Collins, came to us and said: I have to stop dead in the tracks 700 research grants going out the door to universities and hospitals across this country, research grants for trying to find cures for diseases.

That doesn't make sense. So we are beginning to correct that in this bill, and this bill across the spectrum of government will be able to fund the needs of government. But we have before us what is nothing more than a blatantly partisan attempt to undermine the legislative process and ram through a number of provisions that have no business being in there.

We can hear the note of sadness in my voice that in the process of making legislative sausage, some odiferous ingredients got in the sausage because tucked into this spending bill is a provision to once again bail out big banks and undo some of the reforms we made after the financial crisis of 2008.

Have we forgotten that just 6 years ago our economy was on the verge of collapse? Do we remember when the Republican Secretary of the Treasury got on his knees in front of the congressional leadership and begged them to pass the Troubled Assets Relief Program to try to buoy up the financial institutions so that the entire country would not go into a financial death spiral? Have we forgotten the lessons we learned from that crisis? Have we forgotten what happens when we allow banks to make extremely risky bets and tell them that if they win they can keep the profits, but if they lose the U.S. Government will bail them out?

In this case, this bill would undo part of the financial reforms that say the government isn't going to cover or subsidize the banks' so-called credit default swaps. This is no way to legislate.

There is also a provision in here that would let truckdrivers drive even longer hours without having to stop to rest overnight. Eliminating this rule—this rule that simply requires truckdrivers to stop for some rest once in a while—is a direct threat to public safety. It endangers motorists on America's highways.

What we have seen is that what happens when truckdrivers make a mistake because of the lack of sleep, that lack of sleep increases risk. We enacted these rest requirements to protect folks, to make traveling on our highways just a bit safer. They are common sense. But this safety provision is reversed in a spending bill, of all places.

I intend to raise this issue in the commerce committee next year and hope to have the support—and I know I will—of the Senator who is now presiding in the Senate.

It doesn't stop there. Look what they are trying to do to health care. There is a provision in here that would gut part of the new health care law that helps to keep insurance premiums stable. Why would we want to make people pay more for health care? Do you want to score some political points with your base? Do you want to do it on the backs of millions of hard-working Americans who are already struggling to make ends meet? Well, the American people deserve better. If we want to change policy, let's have an open and honest debate on the issues, not some backroom deals tucked into a spending bill.

But we are down to the moment of truth, and it is either this spending bill—which in large part is very good. The alternative is uncertainty and a stop-start kind of appropriations process that will do no one any good.

It is essential for there to be financial fiscal certainty in the funding of the government for the remainder of this fiscal year. So I am going to vote for the bill.

As I conclude, I, too, want to say a word about the Senators who are retiring, and I will make this very short.

I am glad the chairman of the Appropriations Committee is coming back to the floor, and I will happily yield to her very wise stewardship. Having already spoken about the extraordinary measures, I would just mention one thing while she is here. I have told this to her privately.

Today I spoke to former Senator Kay Bailey Hutchison of Texas. Kay Bailey and I had the privilege of being in the right place at the right time when this Nation's human space program was at a crossroads. There was no direction. There was uncertainty and debate in the administration as to what direction it would take, and the task fell to Senator Hutchison and me to try to give that direction with passage of the NASA Authorization Act of 2010.

That act has served as the template for the direction of NASA. It needs to be updated with other authorization bills because that was 4 years ago. Yet there are Senators in this Senate who have prevented us, when there is no other objection, from getting unanimous consent to pass the NASA authorization update.

But there is a safety valve, and the safety valve is the Senator from Maryland and the Senator from Alabama, as they have taken the template of the 2010 NASA authorization bill and fleshed it out and put flesh on the bones of the structure each year, including this bill.

I will speak at length at another time about our colleagues who are all such personal friends of mine who are departing: Senator HAGAN; Senator PRYOR—one of my best friends in the Senate, someone with whom I have met in private prayer sessions each week we were in session; Senator BEGICH; Senator UDALL; and that mighty fighting force known as LANDRIEU of Louisiana as well.

Some of our other retiring Senators I have had the privilege of speaking to at the time they gave their farewell speeches on the floor. I look forward to further comments.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

Ms. MIKULSKI. Mr. President, I wish to give an update. The leadership on both sides of the aisle is negotiating the time and method by which we will continue to proceed with this bill, the omnibus spending bill for fiscal year 2015. But what I have been happy about is that people have actually come to the floor to make presentations on the substance of the bill, both pro and con and sometimes in the same speech. I think that has been both enlightening and informative. I thank all of my colleagues, including the Presiding Officer, for coming.

I would like to make a comment about my Subcommittee on Financial Services and General Government. This is a subcommittee that has been chaired by the very able Senator from New Mexico, Mr. TOM UDALL. He has done an outstanding job.

Much is being discussed about Dodd-Frank and Wall Street bailouts. Are we throwing our soul into the fires of greed? I can appreciate the passion and the concern because I, too, remember, as the Presiding Officer said, that grim day when the leadership in the Bush Administration kept telling us that fundamentally we are OK, fundamentally we are OK. Well, there was nothing fundamental about our American values being thrown under the bus, and more than that, really we were very concerned that the entire economy of the United States America could be at risk.

Now, I come from a family who are Roosevelt Democrats. My dear father and mother opened a small neighborhood grocery store the year they were married in Baltimore. That year was 1935. It was the height of the depression, and this young couple—second generation immigrants—opened a business. Years later when I had the opportunity to have conversations with my father about the decisions made, what he did and why, I said: Dad, why did you open a business in the middle of the depression? We lived in a neighborhood where there were all these working class people, men who—it was at that time primarily men—worked at General Motors, worked at Bethlehem Steel, making steel or at least hoping they would have jobs to make steel. The shipyards—we were a blue-collar manufacturing town, and all those jobs were at risk with high unemployment and the travesty of the Great Depression.

So I said: Dad, why did you do it? How could you have the verve to do it? He said: I did it because I believed in

Roosevelt. I believed Roosevelt was going to lead us forward, and Roosevelt was doing things with the banks where if you put a dollar in you could get a dollar back out—the famous FDIC. Roosevelt was leading the way, and I believed in Roosevelt, and Roosevelt believed in me. They believed then that a President believed in them. I went for it.

Well, that wonderful grocery store was open to lots of people in good times and bad. When there were good times, we were there. When there were rough times in the community, my father dealt on credit. When my father passed away from the ravages of Alzheimer's, over 700 people came to his funeral. They all had a story for my two great sisters and me.

So we are Roosevelt people. We do believe in the public institutions and the safeguards that were created so many years ago to protect the little guy and the little gal against gouging.

I believe in this bill. By and large and far from perfect we have continued to do this.

This bill does protect the public and consumers by focusing on five priority areas. It protects investors from fraud and manipulation of financial markets. I will elaborate on that. It safeguards the financial system from abuse and illegal practices, such as money laundering and deciphering complex Tax Code provisions so taxpayers can accurately file returns. It promotes a fair, safe, and robust marketplace by preventing fraud and enforcing against it and other unfair business practices. It works with small business by making sure that our agencies that are in charge of enforcing the rules to protect against abuse are funded.

Let's go to the Securities and Exchange Commission. Without enforcement, you could have every law on the books, you could have every good intention on the books, you can say that we are going to stop it, but unless you fund the Securities and Exchange Commission and the Commodity Futures Trading Commission, and unless you also make sure that the now Consumer Financial Protection Bureau is protected against being defunded, you don't have a law.

So what did we do? We actually worked on a bipartisan basis. It took a little shove from some of us Democrats, but both sides of the aisle want to look out for the little guy. So, guess what. This legislation that is being so scrutinized needs also to take a look at the fact that it includes $1.5 billion so that the Securities and Exchange Commission can actually do its job. This funding level is $150 million more than it was in fiscal 2014. This will help protect investors, promote capital formation, and maintain fair, honest, and efficient stocks and securities. We funded the Securities and Exchange Commission.

Then there is the Commodity Futures Trading Commission. Farmers and businesses use the futures market to manage risk as well as pensions and endowments. They rely on the CFTC to properly monitor markets to guard against fraud, manipulation, and systemic risk. They work to bring more transparency and accountability into the futures and into that derivative market that everybody has been talking about for several days. So I don't want the derivative market to go wild. This is not the wild West. So we made sure we put money in the Federal checkbook so that the Commodity Futures Trading Commission, the CFTC, would have the money it needs for enforcement. The funding level is actually $35 million more than in fiscal year 2014. It is more money than 2014 to make sure the needed staffing and sophisticated technologies are in place to foster open competitive and financially sound futures and the swap markets.

A lot has been said about that swap market, right? We are worried about it, too. We are absolutely worried about derivatives. We are worried about the exploitation and manipulation of derivatives. But you can have section 716, whatever that number is—and I am not trivializing it; people worked very hard to create that legislation—but unless you fund the enforcement agency, what does it mean?

Now, for whatever we did or didn't do, we actually put money in to keep these agencies functioning. I am really proud of that. I am absolutely proud of that.

A lot has been said about backroom deals and secret negotiations: Why can't we do this out in the open? Guess what. Every single rider that we faced—98 riders that came over for us to deal with in our conference report—all passed the House of Representatives. They all passed the House of Representatives. They had mark-ups in full committee. They had debate on the floor. They passed them.

The so-called 716 problem that has everyone concerned—and it has me concerned—passed the House of Representatives. They supported it by passing it 292 to 122. There was nothing secret about it when they passed it in the House. Seventy Democrats voted for it. It was dumped in our lap. It was also dumped in our lap with several other riders in that area, but we had a total of 98. So when people say in middle of the night, every rider that came over that was so controversial had come over from the House—very few came from the Senate, very few—and we had to deal with them.

In the financial services subcommittee alone, where Mr. UDALL was the subcommittee chairman, we had six of these—six. They were tough. But you know what. We were able to deal with them. There was a whole rider to make the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau weaker by taking away its mandatory funding. We stopped the weakening of the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau that the wonderful Senator from Massachusetts had stood up for. We protected it. We protected the agency, and we protected its money.

Also there was this whole attempt on a rider from the House to stop the IRS from implementing the Affordable Care Act. We were able to deal with that and eliminate that. Then there was the SEC. There was an attempt to make sure that legislation would have affected the investors by making sure we prevented the securities exchange with the fiduciary standard of care for brokers. We also prevented the Treasury from a rider that would have stopped the Treasury from designating certain insurance companies as too big to fail. So it was not like we were asleep at the switch here. It is not like we were all sitting around saying, oh, Wall Street, our dear friends—these were hard fights.

So, what did we do? This is the Appropriations Committee. We would have preferred to do an individual bill, open a debate. But guess what. It wasn't meant to be. We had to fund it. We had to deal with all 11 committees and with Homeland Security on a continuing resolution, and we worked, we debated, we argued, we fought. We won some, and we lost some. One we did lose. This is the subject of great controversy and debate here. But I want everybody to know it was one out of six. It is a big one, but it is one out of six. And I want everyone to know we added 11 percent more for the Securities and Exchange Commission to do their job in enforcement. We added 15 percent more to the Commodity Futures Trading Commission to do their job. Every one of those poison pill riders to shrink the effectiveness of Dodd-Frank was voted on in the House and came over, just like the controversial one on gutting section 716. I will repeat: That passed the House 292 to 122, with 70 Democrats voting for it. That doesn't make it right. That doesn't make it right, but it is not like we invented it. It is not like we brought this up in a secret backroom deal.

So I want everybody to know, when they look at what we did in the financial services, we did what I think my father would have wanted me to do: Make sure that these institutions that were created to enforce the law against fraud and gouging investors, taking advantage of the taxpayers—I think we have done our job by making sure they were funded adequately to do the enforcement job we asked them to do. Second, out of six riders that would have really limited or handicapped the enforcement to protect investors or to implement other laws such as the Affordable Care Act, we were able to achieve, I think, some significant victories.

So, I want the record to show this. Are we a quiet committee? Yes. Did we work? Oh, yes, we did work. You know the secret meetings everybody likes to talk about over the next several days, do you know when they occurred? They occurred this summer when we were trying to get the bill ready to come to

the floor and we were stopped in September, when everybody worked on weekends, when we went out at Thanksgiving, when both that Senate Republican staff and the Senate Democratic staff worked through the weekend. So while everybody else was having a good time eating pumpkin pie, they worked all the way up to Thursday night and were back on the job Friday so we would not have a government shutdown and so the government would not be on autopilot.

If you don't like what we did and the way we did it, then let me and Senator COCHRAN—for whom I have so much respect—get back to regular order. I need everybody who is cranky about this—and I don't dispute the validity of their concerns because I share them myself, but I have won some, I lost some, but I sure fought for them all—and don't like the process, then why did they stand for this process? I wanted to bring up individual bills. The vice chairman—the gentleman from Alabama, Senator SHELBY—wanted to bring up individual bills. We were bringing them up.

We held 60 hearings in 60 days on these topics so that we could have regular order and the Senate could consider them one at a time. So for everyone who is concerned, I am ready for a new process. I have been trying to do this for a couple of years now. Now we will be under Senator COCHRAN's watch, and I will talk more about the process later.

I know there are other Senators waiting to talk, but I would like to say a word to Senator COCHRAN. I have been informed that his beloved and dear wife of so many years, Rose, has passed away. I personally want to express my condolences, and I want to do it for several reasons: one, just as a Member of the Senate, we should be concerned about one another and what other Members are going through.

I also wish to express my gratitude to Rose herself. When I came to the Senate—now many years ago—there were only two women in the Senate, Senator Nancy Kassebaum, a wonderful Republican Senator from Kansas, and myself. When I came, I was welcomed in the Senate. As the Democratic woman, I often said although I was by myself, I was never alone. I had Senator Paul Sarbanes, Senator Ted Kennedy, and Senator Bob Byrd, who helped me learn the ropes of the Appropriations Committee that I now chair.

I also had some other special help from the women of the Senate—the spouses of the Senate. There were only Senator Nancy and myself in those days, but the spouses of the guys in the Senate really reached out to me, and the Southern women were particularly gracious to help me learn the ropes—even learn about the building and how to maneuver here in so many ways.

Senator Howell Heflin's wife, Mike; Sam Nunn's wife, Colleen; and then there was Rose. She was vivacious, charming, fun, and savvy. We often took trips together. Thad and I were on the NATO Committee, and it was always Rose who said, come on, Barb, come with us. Not only did she make sure I was included, she made sure that I was welcomed.

It was the sense of hospitality that made me think, my gosh, what a wonderful institution. We are not Democrats or Republicans, we are working together. The Senators were working together, the spouses were welcoming. It was not so much a club as it was a family. I wish we could get back to that.

Rose died from Alzheimer's. I spoke earlier about my father. My father died from Alzheimer's, so I know what Senator COCHRAN went through. Even when an illness is so ravaging, so cruel, where you hope that death is either anticipated, or part of your heart even hopes for it, when it comes, you just can't believe it.

I know he is going through his own grief, but I want him to know that in his grief. I not only want to express my condolences, but I want to express my gratitude to Rose, who made me feel so welcome and made me feel like the Senate was a family. I hope we can get back and honor her memory and act more that way.

Mr. President, as chairwoman of the Commerce, Justice, Science, CJS, Appropriations Subcommittee to discuss funding in the 2015 omnibus bill, I am pleased to have worked with Senator SHELBY on this bill. He is a true partner.

The CJS bill totals $50.1 billion in discretionary spending. That is $1.5 billion below the 2014 level of $51.5 billion. Our bill focuses on two priorities: jobs and the Economy and keeping communities safe. We used those priorities to guide all our funding decisions, from Federal law enforcement to space exploration.

The bill provides $8.5 billion for the Department of Commerce, which is $286 million more than 2014 level of $8.4 billion. The Commerce Department keeps America open for business—helping businesses to keep the jobs they have, and helping entire industries to create new jobs. The department works with business to promote business. Protecting patents, promoting trade, and providing economic development projects in every state.

The bill includes strong support for manufacturing. The National Institute of Standards and Technology is funded at $864 million, creating the standards that drive new technologies and new industries and make household products safer and more reliable. The Omnibus also includes the ''Revitalize American Manufacturing and Innovation Act'', which creates public-private partnerships that revitalize U.S. manufacturing in areas such as nanotechnology, photonics, microelectronics.

The U.S. Patent and Trademark Office is funded at $3.4 billion in this bill, which is $434 million more than last year's level of $3 billion. This funding means the USPTO will hire 1,000 new patent examiners, reducing the patent backlog, resulting in shorter wait times for companies seeking patents and sending new ideas out to markets. USPTO protects American ideas.

The Economic Development Administration is funded at $250 million, providing funding for local projects like, water infrastructure for new hospitals which support thousands of local workers. Funding for EDA also provides grants for projects, such as those through the Trade Adjustment Assistance for Firms, that promote infrastructure and innovation, setting our small businesses up for success. Every $1 issued in EDA grants leverages $10 in local investment and creates jobs in our home States, not in DC.

Commerce Department also promotes American goods and services around the world, supporting more than 11 million jobs in the U.S. I support President's pivot to Asia, but I believe that if we can put guns in Southeast Asia, we can put Commercial Service Officers there too to create new markets for American products and create American jobs. So this bill puts more Commercial Service Officers on the front lines getting products from American small businesses into the hands of buyers around the world, including markets like Asia and Africa where it's difficult for new companies to do business.

Commerce doesn't just promote American business, it also protects communities. The National Weather Service warns Americans to get out of the way when hurricanes, tornadoes and other severe storms threaten our communities. Accurate weather information is important to every mom trying to get a kid to school, every school superintendent trying to decide whether to close school, and every state emergency coordinator trying to decide when to deploy snow plows. Deploy too early and communities waste money. Deploy too late and roads and highways become commuting catastrophes.

However, reliable weather data doesn't come from an App. That is why our CJS bill includes more than $3 billion for keeping flagship weather satellites on-track and on-budget, and keeps our weather forecasting offices fully staffed and ready to make sure it gives citizens the weather predictions they need.

The Omnibus provides $28 billion for the Justice Department. That is $393 million more than 2014 level of $27.7 billion, and $156 million more than the President's request. The Justice Department's mission is to keep America safe from crime and terrorism, to protect communities and families, and to administer justice fairly. The bill funds key law enforcement and prosecution agencies including: FBI; Drug Enforcement Administration; Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms, and Explosives; U.S. Marshals Service and the U.S. Attorneys.

We can't have strong, vibrant communities unless they are safe. I have heard from Senators from every state about the rise of heroin. Heroin is relatively inexpensive—$10 a hit. It is readily available and highly addictive. The Department of Health and Human Services reported that heroin use rose 79 percent nationwide between 2007 and 2012. We need to take action now so the bill funds several programs that tackle the heroin problem.

That is why the bill funds a new anti-heroin task forces with $7 million of grants for State and local law enforcement to investigate distribution of heroin in an effort to keep these drug dealers off of our streets. The bill also funds residential drug treatment with $10 million so that when drug offenders are released from jail, they don't relapse. Finally, the bill provides $11 million for Prescription Drug Monitoring that helps States monitor and prevent those who ''doctor shop'', getting real time info to police and doctors to prevent overdoses and showing where overdoses are occurring so police can see patters and stop drug rings.

I am proud to include $430 million in this Omnibus for Violence Against Women Act programs. This is a record funding level for VAWA grants to prevent and prosecute rape, and help women escape their abusers.

Too many women are being doubly assaulted, first by a predator, then by a broken system that fails to test DNA evidence. A Justice Department investigation found 400,000 rape test kits sitting on shelves and in police lockers. This bill tries to break the back of the backlog by funding proven grants to test DNA in crime labs, such as $125 million for programs like Debbie Smith DNA Grants, and $41 million for new grants to test rape kit in police storage. These new grants will not only test kits but also reform the system so rape victims aren't victimized twice.

The bill also triples funding for the Crime Victims Fund to $2.36 billion, which will go to help victims of violent crime. This is an increase of $1.5 billion over the fiscal year 2014 level of $745 million. States can help more victims pay their medical bills and get counseling and legal assistance

The Science portion of the CJS bill supports jobs and the economy by driving innovation. The bill provides $25 billion for science agencies: NASA and the National Science Foundation. This funding for innovation, research and discoveries creates American ideas, American products, and American jobs in the private sector.

The National Science Foundation is funded at $7.3 billion in this bill, $172 million more than the 2014 level. NSF will be able to fund 290 more competitive grants in 2015, supporting 4,100 more technicians, scientists, and students. NSF research and education programs provide scholarships to the next generation of Cyber warriors, bridge and building engineers, and chemistry laboratory technicians. STEM education builds jobs and builds an opportunity ladder for students.

NASA is funded at $18 billion. This will provide for a balanced space agency with reliable space transportation, cutting-edge aeronautics, and strong Space science. This funding directly supports NASA's high tech workforce at Goddard Space Flight Center, Wallops Flight Facility and other NASA facilities around the country: machinists grinding precision parts for spacecraft exploring the galaxy; computer operators compiling data used to make forecasts or understand the big bang; engineers designing rockets that expand our reach to other planets; and scientists rewriting the textbooks and inspiring our next generation of explorers.

NASA funding also supports NASA's Turbo Contractors who build rockets and satellites and design computer systems, providing jobs.

The Omnibus is not just a spending bill, it is also a reform bill. Appropriators are shrewd stewards of federal funds, getting value for every taxpayer. The CJS Subcommittee puts a premium on oversight, inviting Inspectors Genera to testify at every hearing. The CJS bill includes robust funding for IGs who help us root out waste, fraud, abuse, and mismanagement. IGs give us good ideas for how to save money in areas like addressing growth in the prison population and improving management of the Census. CJS has dealt with its share of techno-boondogles, such as 2010 Census handhelds, satellite costs, and IT systems that never worked. To prevent techno-boondoggles, the bill includes early warning systems when costs begin to escalate, audits of grants and contracts, specific IG and GAO oversight of costly items like the 2020 Census, weather satellites, the James Webb Space Telescope, the patent backlog, and Crime Victim Fund spending.

This Omnibus is a good bill, with balanced spending. It protects community safety, keeping the thin blue line from getting thinner and making our weather forecasts better. The bill invests in jobs and the economy, generating new ideas through research and discoveries and creating markets for more American products throughout the world.

I urge my colleagues to support the omnibus.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. DONNELLY). The Senator from Delaware.

Mr. COONS. Mr. President, I rise to speak tonight in support of the omnibus appropriations package that Senator MIKULSKI, the Chair of our Appropriations Committee, has spoken at great length about, and that Senator COCHRAN has also dedicated so much of his time and effort and energy to, and that so many Members of this Chamber have contributed to. There are questions on the minds of my constituents from the home State of Delaware and questions on the minds of colleagues of mine who have spoken earlier this evening about this very large package—this $1.014 trillion spending bill—appropriations package.

There have been questions raised about some specific provisions—an issue here about pensions, an issue there about Dodd-Frank and swaps, an issue about an environmental concern. There are a few issues that have Members—particularly of my caucus—who are very concerned. I have messages coming in to me in my office from social media and email saying: Why on Earth would you support this? My Senator, CHRIS COONS from Delaware, why would you support this?

We are going into the holiday season and I want us to take a few minutes and look at what is actually in this package, to unwrap it a little bit and to better understand why on Earth I would stand on this floor and speak in favor of this package.

You have heard of the hard work of our Appropriations Committee Chair. What you don't know is the tireless and determined and dedicated work of all of the Appropriations Committee members and staff who, across 12 different subcommittees, held more than 60 different hearings to hammer out provision after provision, department after department, and it is difficult sometimes to know what that means. Let me put this in some context.

First, in terms of bad avoided and good invested. In terms of bad avoided, the version of this that came over from the House—11 full appropriations bills out of 12 that had within it all sorts of provisions. We call them riders because they are provisions that ride on top of the underlying appropriations bill.

You have heard about some of these riders that have been defeated and beaten back. It is not one or two or three. They cover all the same areas where concerns have been raised by colleagues in my caucus—the environment, protections for organized labor and labor concerns, protections for the safety of our communities related to firearms, protections for the safety and soundness and transparency of our financial system through preserving the Dodd-Frank act, preserving a woman's right to choose and protecting the implementation of the Affordable Care Act.

Dozens and dozens of riders came over in the bill from the House, which our committee Chair and her dedicated staff worked tirelessly to remove from this bill, and you have heard about some of them in the speech just concluded by Chair MIKULSKI.

There was everything from fish and wildlife rules to fiduciary rulemaking, from issues around union elections to concerns about the strength and ability of the ATF to keep our community safe, strengthening and supporting the CFPB and SEC and their ability to enforce Dodd-Frank or ensuring a woman's right to choose. The actions of our committee Chair ensure that these dozens and dozens of bad—from our perspective—riders were removed from the bill.

Now we stand here on the verge of the end of the authority of the government to continue to function, and we have a package in front of us, and we have two choices. The choices are simple and clear. If we do not pass this omnibus, we will continue government by crisis, government by continuing resolution, government by chip shot down the lane, and we will fund the government for a temporary 3-month extension, and then this entire package will be put back together, not by a Democratic Senate and a Republican House, but by Republicans on both sides of this Capitol. We won't have one or two or three riders from the perspective of my caucus to be concerned about, we will have dozens and dozens. All of this that has been removed and taken out of the package by the hard work of our committee Chair and her staff will be right back in the mix.

If we turn away from enacting this package, we will do two things: We will fail to give the certainty and clarity and predictability to our government agencies and entities that they will have authorization and funding through next September, and we will face a package toxic—far more difficult for us to accept. It will have dozens and dozens of problems riddled throughout it, and frankly, everyone in my caucus, I expect, will vote against it and perhaps the President will even veto it. We cannot let the perfect or the ideal be the enemy of the good.

I will take a few minutes and talk about what there is in this package that is good because you only heard speeches tonight that have highlighted concerns and focused in on the three or four provisions that cause great alarm or concern to all of us who are on my side of the aisle. I don't think there has been quite as much exposition as there should be about what there is in this package that I hope to unwrap for you that is actually good.

Why would I be standing here, as the Senator from Delaware, defending this hard-crafted, hard-wrought, hard-won package if it were not full of things that are important for the working families of Delaware, for our community and our country, and that didn't advance our core values?

Well, I will take a few minutes and touch on a couple of things that I think bear your consideration.

Infrastructure. The bridges, the roads, the rails, the ports that from the very founding of our Nation have been the work of the Federal Government and that are woefully behind to the point where we are not competitive globally and where we could put people to work right away by infusing more responsible investment and upgrading our infrastructure.

As far as rebuilding American infrastructure, this package includes $54 billion for transportation and housing programs that communities and States such as Delaware care deeply about. It is $1.8 billion more than what passed in the House package.

This covers things from the TIGER grants program that encourages and incentivizes and leverages cutting-edge investments in infrastructure to funding for Amtrak. For the east coast of the United States, Amtrak is such a vital means of transportation. It also includes funds for harbor maintenance and dredging, which are so vital to our maritime industries. This is just one of dozens of areas we could talk about this evening.

It will put Americans back to work, it will make our country more competitive, and it will give us more resources in these areas than we would ever get from renegotiating this package from the ground up.

Second, there was an unfortunate story about my hometown of Wilmington in the past week that drew real alarms about the murder rate and violent crime rate. This is a pressing issue in my hometown of Wilmington. There is real concern because we have a record murder rate and a record gun violence rate in my town.

This omnibus package includes financial resources that will help communities large and small all over this country keep themselves safe with these sorts of targeted and wise Federal investments in State and local law enforcement that we have come to rely on and that we need. There is something called the Byrne Justice Assistance grant. When I was a county executive, my county police department relied on that critical program. There is $2.3 billion, which is $55 million more than last year, for the Byrne Justice Assistance grants and will affect States and localities all over the country.

Something that I fought hard for on this floor and I care about—the bulletproof vest program that has saved the lives of law enforcement officers in the small towns of Delaware and in our biggest cities. That grant made it possible to fund for state-of-the-art vests that are correct and appropriate and current and save officers' lives.

There is a regional information system called RISK that provides current intelligence and data so that law enforcement can be more effective regionally.

There is the implementation of Violence Against Women Act programs—all of these are at least sustained or increased over previous years and make the sort of investments that are vital for our communities and their safety.

There is $1.1 billion in this omnibus package to help the ATF, FBI, and DOJ fight gun violence, and that matters to my hometown. That matters to the families who wonder whether what we are doing here is relevant to them. To turn back from this omnibus and turn away from those investments in keeping our community safe, I think is unwise.

There is more money for criminal enforcement by the ATF to fund straw gun purchases and their investigation and their prosecution, to fund keeping guns away from traffickers and criminals, to improve interstate background checks, to train law enforcement for the responsible carrying out of their public responsibility, to intervene and stop active shooter situations in schools or in public facilities, and, last, the sort of resources we need for the victims of crime.

There is $2.3 billion in this omnibus for helping the victims of violent crime and their families to get access to badly needed services. I could go on, but in the area of law enforcement and criminal justice, there are investments that matter to me and that matter to my hometown as we work together to fight violent crime.

Let me lastly take on two other areas. No. 1, I am on the Foreign Relations Committee. I am concerned that if we turn away from this package, the vital investment in our central ally, Israel, and in the Iron Dome program, which has been shown to keep Israel safe, will not be made; and the multibillion dollar investment in fighting the scourge of Ebola in West Africa, at this moment when the tide is turning and we have a chance to heal three nations and contain this plague, which otherwise may get out, get loose, and become a global pandemic, will not be made. We need to make these investments. To not do so now is to put our children's future at risk. Imagine if we could go back in time to where HIV/AIDS was just beginning to spread around the globe and for a modest investment, with an international effort, we could have contained it to just two or three countries, instead of the hundreds—the thousands of communities across dozens of countries that have suffered through HIV/AIDS now for nearly 25 years. If we fail to invest in turning the tide in the fight against Ebola now, we put at risk the future public safety of not just a continent, but the world.

We also have to be mindful of what this omnibus makes possible for our health and our safety and our future. Entities most Americans don't think about or haven't heard of that perform basic science research or advanced research, from the National Science Foundation to the National Institutes of Health—institutions that are doing cutting-edge, world-class science and developing the cures and the treatments for everything from Alzheimer's to cancer—we continue to sustain and support investment with billions of dollars in these areas in this bill. Again, to walk away from this package means to wrap back up and put away the potential for enormous progress.

There is $172 million more for basic science research programs in this bill over last year. It raises up to $7.3 billion the level of NSF funding. That may sound abstract and disconnected from our lives at home, but in my State of Delaware, that funds education, training, and research at the University of Delaware, Delaware State University, and in public schools

across our State. At a time when we need science education and when we need the outcomes, the fruits of our labors and research more than ever, I think that is vital funding.

Last, there is an area that I have spoken about on this floor many times in this Congress and that I am passionate about because it is how I came up. I spent years in the manufacturing sector. As a young man working in the private sector for a family manufacturing business, I saw its power to create good, high-wage, high-skill jobs. Manufacturing is an area where most of the research and development in this country that is privately funded is done, and manufacturing is an area that many mistakenly think we have lost our edge in and can never regain. But the truth is quite different. Over the last 3 years, we have grown more than 750,000 new manufacturing jobs in this economy, and those are great jobs—jobs people can raise their families on, jobs that provide a renewed growth back to the middle class. If we fail to invest in the things that will make manufacturing grow in this country, we miss a vital opportunity.

There is an entity called the Manufacturing Extension Partnership. In the scope of all of this, it is a tiny little program. But for the dozens of small and medium manufacturers in Delaware that I have visited and that the Delaware Manufacturing Extension Partnership has helped, it makes an amazing difference. It helps them understand how to compete internationally. It helps them with upgrading the skills of their workforce. It helps them with deciding what capital equipment to buy.

I have stood on manufacturing floors from Bridgeville to Lewes, from Dover to Claymont, and heard stories of companies transformed by this powerful investment of Federal services—a public-private partnership that really, genuinely makes a difference.

Lastly, in this provision of the bill, there isn't just renewed funding for the National Institutes of Standards and Technology, or NIST—a provision that includes the Manufacturing Extension Partnership and the Advanced Manufacturing Technology Program—there is also renewed opportunity for the funding and sustainment of manufacturing hubs, a strategy that our competitor, Germany, has used very well and very wisely to have doubled their GDP in manufacturing—a strategy that this administration has led on and that we hope to emulate, and where I think the investments made in this bill are wise and lay the foundation for middle-class job growth and prosperity.

There are a dozen other areas I could speak to this evening, where throughout this bill the investments made have been cut in some areas that needed to be reduced and increased in others that are wise for our States and our communities.

Some from my home State, watching the speeches on this floor earlier this evening, have contacted me and said, Why on Earth would you vote for a bill with this or this or this provision that concerns me? It is a fair question. I hope in these few minutes I have helped my people hear that our choice is not between a perfect bill from the perspective of Democrats in the Senate or the country and a terrible bill, but a choice between a great bill and no bill at all—a choice between returning to regular order and ending what has been a nearly 4-year pattern of government by crisis, by short-term extension, by chip shot, and by near default, and instead respect and honor the very hard work of the dozen subcommittees of this great Appropriations Committee, and move forward a package that strengthens our country, that honors our veterans, that invests in our future, that lifts manufacturing, that makes us safer and healthier, and that does the job of bringing America into the future.

That is why I will be voting for this package, and that is why I hope all of my colleagues will consider doing the same.

Thank you, Mr. President.

With that, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Alabama.

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. President, I will not be voting for the bill.

I am frustrated that we have gone through now 8 years of domination by the majority leader in the Senate, denying votes on even simple amendments as part of the entire funding of the discretionary accounts of the United States of America. There is over $1 trillion in spending, not one amendment, refusing to bring up the bills individually as they should have been, refusing to pass the bill by September 30 when the fiscal year ends, and appropriations should be done before that date to fund the next fiscal year.

So what do we do? Well, they didn't want to vote because an election was coming up. They didn't want to vote the previous year when an election was coming up, I guess 18 months later, so there is always some excuse. But the fundamental thing that has occurred in this Senate is the majority leader, through the device of filling the tree, places himself in control, places himself in a position to block amendments to any bill. That is what he has done, to a degree that has never before been done in the U.S. Senate.

Chairman MIKULSKI says she looks forward to getting on a better path next year under Republican leadership, so we will have a more regular process. Maybe the Republicans will allow the minority Democratic Party next time to have rights that have been denied us for all of these years. This is a fact. People can spin it any way they want to. I have been here for 18 years, and I know what is happening. We have demolished the collegiality in the Senate. It has caused the kind of frustration and tension that has resulted in these failures to pass bills.

So what do they do? They cobble the entire funding of the United States together in one omnibus bill, bring it up at the last minute, and say, If you don't agree to vote it out without getting any amendments, we will accuse you of shutting the government down. We will accuse you of shutting the government down. It is all your fault. For some reason, our friends in the media seem to think that is true. And if anybody has the gumption to stand up and object to this abusive process, they are shutting the government down. What planet are we on? Don't we know what really has happened?

So I have an amendment and I wanted to offer it to this bill. It would simply say that Congress is going to fund the United States government; we are going to fund the entire discretionary account in this country, but we are not going to provide money to allow the President of the United States to execute an unlawful, illegal amnesty. He has already established a building across the river in Crystal City, and they have ads out to hire 1,000 people, salaries up to $150,000. And they are going to process people who are here unlawfully, give them a photo ID, a Social Security number, and a work authorization, and allow them to participate in Social Security and Medicare. They will allow them, if their incomes are low—and statistics tell us their incomes are lower—they are entitled to child tax credits of $1,000 per child and they are entitled to the earned income tax credit. Combined, according to the recent article by David Frum in ''The Atlantic'', that is almost $5,000 if you are a working person with a family of four earning up to $40,000 a year—you will be entitled to a direct check. A tax credit is not a tax deduction. It is a direct check from the Treasury for an average of nearly $5,000. It is a stunning situation that should not be happening.

So I just wanted to have an amendment that funds the government, allows the country to go forward, but just say to the President: Mr. President, we don't authorize any funding for this project. It can easily be done. It has been done hundreds of times. In fact, that is why Guantanamo prison in Guantanamo, Cuba, where the terrorists are being held—that is why it has not been closed, because Congress has told the President, who wants to close it, we are not going to allow you to spend a dime to close that prison. It has been successful. Because Presidents can't spend money not authorized by Congress, not appropriated by Congress. He cannot spend that money. It is wrong. It is actually a criminal offense to spend money. The Antideficiency Act says that anyone who pretends to represent the U.S. Government and spends money not appropriated by the Congress of the United States—not authorized by the Congress to be spent—violates a law, because the Congress has the power of the purse.

We don't have to fund everything the President asks for. We don't have to

fund programs we think are bad, that are unworthy of funding. What is Congress for? Otherwise, it is a rubberstamp that cannot make an independent judgment. We absolutely have a duty, a responsibility to not fund a program that violates the law, violates the Constitution; to allow the President to eviscerate and fail to enforce huge chunks of our immigration law and, at the same time, allow him to create an entirely new scheme of immigration law.

So the President's Executive amnesty say: I am not going to enforce the law with regard to 5 million people. And not only that, the law says if a person is here unlawfully, they can't work; and the law says if a person is a businessperson, they can't hire somebody who is here unlawfully—I am not going to enforce that, either. In fact, I am going to go even further. I am going to get an office in Crystal City and I am going to bring in 1,000 people and we are going to give the people who are here unlawfully, as defined by the American people through their Congress—I am going to give them a certificate, a photo ID that says they are here lawfully. And I am going to say despite the fact that a person is not supposed to work here if they are here unlawfully, I am going to give them the right to work. And, by the way, they are not entitled to Social Security or Medicare, and I am going to give that to them, too. By the way, when they filed their tax return using that Social Security number, if their income falls in this range—up to $40,000—they can get a tax credit and a child tax credit. And for people making, say—a typical family making $40,000 and with 2 children will not owe any income tax.

They are not going to owe any income tax. What they are going to do is file their return and wait for their $5,000 check from Uncle Sam. At this time I am on the Budget Committee, ranking Republican, and I can tell you: we are going broke. The last thing we need to do is put Social Security and Medicare in a worse condition. The last thing we need the country to do is for our Treasury Department to be sending out billions of dollars in tax credits to people who have come to the country unlawfully. We have to borrow money. Do we not know?

We borrow money every day in huge amounts to keep this government afloat, and all this is going to do is add more. I am not happy about it. I don't think the American people are happy about it. Poll after poll, election after election—in November people said they were going to come to Washington and do better. People who have been complicit in this kind of activity are not going to be here next year, many of them.

I think Congress needs to listen to the American people. What is wrong with what they are telling us? What is wrong with them saying we want a lawful system of immigration? We don't care what Big Business wants. We don't care what the special activist groups want. We want a lawful system of immigration that is fairly applied and we can be proud of and that serves our interests; that helps my child, my husband, and me have a job. We would like to see wages rise. We expect the people in Congress to look after us, not people who violate our laws.

Let me share some further thoughts that I believe are important. A lot of people are ignoring this. They don't want to hear about it. They don't believe it. They have taken the view they are going to dismiss it. I want my colleagues to be aware of this, and I intend to continue to press this issue:

The U.S. Department of Commerce informs us that ''today's typical 18- to 34-year-old earns about $2,000 less per year, (adjusted for inflation), than their counterpart in 1980.''

It is a painful and a sharp decline for young Americans.

What has happened to the labor markets since 1980? Data from the U.S. Census Bureau offers this insight:

> From 1930 to 1950, the foreign-born population of the United States declined from 14.2 million to 10.3 million . . . [but] Since 1970, the foreign-born population of the United States has increased rapidly due to large-scale immigration.

Let me just stop here and say America has been generous in this immigration policy. We have the largest number of people entering our country on a lawful immigrant status than any country in the world by far.

What I want us to do is to understand that we need to ask ourselves how many people the United States can absorb without damaging the wages and job prospects of unemployed, underemployed Americans.

The U.S. Census Bureau statistics report that in 1980, the foreign-born population stood at 14.1 million. But from 1980 through 2013, the immigrant population tripled from 14 million to more than 41 million. The large increase in the size of the immigrant population is the direct product of policies in Washington, creating both an expanded lawful system and an expanded unlawful system.

Legal immigration during the 1980s averaged around 600,000 people a year. But since 1990 through today, it has averaged about 1 million annually—meaning the annual rate almost doubled. The sustained large-scale flow of legal immigration—overwhelmingly, this group are lower-wage and lower-skilled—has placed a substantial downward pressure on wages.

I don't think there is any doubt about that. Some try to ignore it and talk around it, but I think the facts are clear. We have right now a very slack labor market with more jobseekers than jobs. The White House has itself estimated that there are three unemployed Americans today for each one job opening. We don't have a shortage of workers. We have a shortage of jobs. The Economic Policy Institute estimates that in the construction industry there are seven unemployed persons for each available job opening.

This is huge. Some in the construction industry said they need more foreign workers, even as these statistics shows large numbers of unemployed American construction workers.

This large-scale immigration flow, paired with the forces of globalization and automation and robotics, has made it ever more difficult for American workers to earn a wage that can actually support a family.

Consider this report just published in The New York Times.

> Working, in America, is in decline. The share of prime-age men—those 25 to 54 years old—who are not working has more than tripled since the late 1960s, to 16 percent. More recently, since the turn of the century, the share of women without paying jobs has been rising, too. The United States, which had one of the highest employment rates among developed nations as recently as 2000, has fallen toward the bottom of the list.

Continuing the quote from the New York Times—

> At the same time, it has become harder for men to find higher-paying jobs. Foreign competition and technological advances have eliminated many of the jobs in which high school graduates . . . once could earn $40 an hour, or more.

That is what the New York Times is telling us. It is not just a recent development. It is a development of some years. Since the end of the 1960s—the timeframe identified by the article, during this period we have seen this decline in employment—the share of the U.S. population that is foreign born increased from less than 5 percent to more than 13 percent. As a total number, the size of the foreign-born population has quadrupled over the last four decades.

Due to current Washington policy, these figures are only going to rise. The nonpartisan Congressional Research Service estimates that the foreign-born population could reach as high as 58 million within a decade based on recent trends.

Again, let's be frank and talk honestly. Prime Minister David Cameron of the United Kingdom recently said it is not wrong to talk about this. Our Nation needs to talk about the wages of its people, the financial status of its people, and it is all right and proper to ask the question of whether immigration can impact that in an adverse way.

I just want to say I am not being anti-immigrant. There are many good people who want to come be a part of America. I am not denying that. What I am saying is that we are hurting, not helping, those who come to America when we bring in more people than there are jobs. We also don't have jobs for those who are American-born. Now we are bringing in millions more. We need to ask ourselves honestly: Is this a good policy for the Republic which we are supposed to serve? Only an adjustment in policy, I suggest, will change this trajectory—just as policy

has changed early in the 20th century to allow labor markets to be tightened and wages go up. This is an issue that affects all residents, our foreign born who are here wanting to work and the U.S. born. Among those most affected by the size of these large immigrant flows are the new immigrants themselves who want to get a good job that pays a good salary.

By continuing to admit these large numbers over such a sustained period of time, many immigrants themselves are unable to find jobs. For instance, less than half of the immigrants who entered California since 2010 are participating in the labor force. They are not finding jobs. There are not enough jobs for them. Half the entire number of immigrants who entered California since 2010 are not working. In Los Angeles, where 4 in 10 residents are immigrants, one-third of those who recently arrived are living in poverty.

We have an obligation to those whom we lawfully admit not to create a circumstance where, by admitting continuing to admit many more, we are diminishing their job prospects. A sound immigration policy must serve the needs of people who are lawfully here and who are native-born. That has to be the primary focus of what we are doing. This discussion has to be had. We can't ignore this. We can't make like we can absorb an unlimited number of workers; we don't have jobs for the workers we have.

Immigrants and native-born workers are also competing with a large flow of temporary guest workers. Temporary guest workers are brought into the United States from abroad for the explicit purpose of taking a job, not on a path to green card and citizenship. They come just to work for a limited period of time. Each year the United States admits roughly 700,000 guest workers. They fill jobs that otherwise might go to people here. Of those 700,000 guest workers, roughly about 10 percent are in agricultural work. A lot of people think the guest workers are working on a farm somewhere. That is not so. Only about 10 percent are. Ninety percent take jobs in almost every industry in America, from good-paying construction jobs to coveted positions at technology firms in Silicon Valley.

The pressures on the middle-class are great. We have a large flow of permanent immigration and temporary workers. The elimination of many good-paying jobs at factories and plants due to advances in robotics, the shedding of manufacturing jobs due to overseas competition, a sluggish and overregulated economy that is growing too slow to keep pace with the population growth and the high costs of energy, health care, income and household goods. Policymakers in Washington need to be reducing the burdens on working families, not making their lives more difficult—but that is exactly what we have been doing.

Professor George Borjas—an top expert on these matters who has worked on them for decades—estimates that high immigration flows from 1980 to 2000 reduced the wages of lower skilled American workers by 7.4 percent—about $260 per month—as a direct result of the size and flow of immigration from 1980 to 2000. I don't think it is defensible for colleagues to say it will help wages to bring in more people. That's why the Congressional Budget office said the Senate immigration bill, rejected by the House, would have reduced wages for the next dozen years.

Professor Borjas estimates a current net loss of $402 billion for American workers who compete with foreign labor.

Mr. President, $402 billion. Furthermore, as documented for the Center for Immigration Studies, relying exclusively on government data, all net employment gains among the working-age since the year 2000 have gone to immigrant workers—net gains.

This remarkable trend occurred even as the number of working-age native-born Americans increased by nearly 17 million. So the 17 million is a dramatic figure. There is not a decline in native workers, as some businesses try to say. Oh, we have a demographic decline. We have to deal with it. The figures show we are still growing in the working-ages, a nearly 17 million increase in the age group since 2000.

Here are a few more statistics. There are not temporary trends but prolonged trends. Nearly one in four Americans in their prime working years—25 to 54—is not working. This includes 10 million American men and 18 million American women.

Real, median weekly earnings are lower today than in the year 2000. Median family income is down $4,000 since November of 2007. Our wages and earnings for families have declined dramatically—$4,000 is almost 350 a month.

So it is in this context that we must consider the economic fallout from the President's unconstitutional Executive amnesty.

In plain violation of law and the express will of the American people, the President has ordered 5 million work permits to be issued to those illegally here. Those illegal workers will now be able to compete for any job in America. They can now compete for jobs with the power company, the county commission, city hall, working at construction companies—good-paying jobs for which they are not now eligible to compete.

The President's order will give illegal immigrants unfettered access to compete for any job in America. If they are not hired at city hall because the mayor thinks he should not hire someone who entered the country illegally, they can file a lawsuit and demand to be hired. They have been given lawful status ordered by the President of the Unite States, an ID card with a Social Security number and a worker authorization. They will be participating in Social Security and Medicare, weakening those programs which are already in deep financial trouble.

So this illegal amnesty is part of a broader immigration vision from the President, legislation he endlessly champions, a bill written behind closed doors with billionaire activists and open-borders enthusiasts and immigration lobbyists. This legislation surges immigration levels every year. That is his vision.

After four decades of record immigration, the President's bill, supported unanimously by Senate Democrats, stopped in the Republican House, tripled the issuance of permanent residency cards over 10 years. In the next 10 years, had that bill passed, it would have tripled the number of people given permanent legal status in America.

The Center For Immigration Studies explains that this legislation would, in a mere 6 years from today, increase the percentage of the U.S. population born abroad to a level never before reached in American history. And by 2033 nearly one in six residents, under this plan, would be foreign-born. This is a dramatic and historic change in our immigration policy. Unsurprisingly, the nonpartisan Congressional Budget Office projected that the results of such legislation would be lower wages, higher unemployment, and reduced per capita GNP.

All of this begs a simple question: Who is looking out for Americans? Who is looking out for their interests, fighting to help them get a better job and better pay, or working to help their communities climb out of poverty? Who is looking out for their interests?

The immigration debate in our Nation's Capital is always centered, it seems to me, on the needs of illegal immigrants, foreign workers, or large employers. Is it not time, after decades of open immigration, that we focus on what we can do to help Americans? Is not time to focus on how we can grow their wages and improve their job prospects?

We have seen declining wages and higher unemployment. Is it not the sensible and rational thing to just slow down a little bit, allow wages to begin to rise some, assimilation to occur more effectively, and help those who are already here today, including foreign immigrants who have come to America, who are struggling to rise into the middle class? Will this not help them be more successful, more prosperous, and flourish better in America?

The American people have begged and pleaded for a lawful system of immigration that serves the national interest—not special interests. But the politicians have refused, refused, refused. This summer alone the White House met 20 times, it was reported, with business executives, amnesty lobbyists, and immigration activists to craft their executive orders legalize people who are here unlawfully. They have been meeting for years with those

groups. They have spent $1.5 billion, according to one independent group, to promote their rejected amnesty legislation since 2007. But you know who was not invited into that room? You were not invited into that room. You, the American citizen, were not there. Do you not get a say in these secret meetings?

We just had a meeting 2 days ago with sheriffs from all over America. They said: Do not allow this unlawful amnesty to occur. They weren't invited to these secret meetings either.

So the super-elites in Washington and on Wall Street dream of a world without borders, a paradise, I guess, where little things like law and rules and national boundaries are not a problem. Do not get in the way of their wild chimera, their vision.

The only challenge these great global citizens face are these pesky people called the voters who cling to the old-fashioned idea of a nation as a home and a border as something real and worth protecting. These elites, you see, know better.

If you are worried about your jobs or wages; if you are concerned that the pace of immigration into your community is too fast and too large; if you feel as though your needs are not being considered, well, you are just a nativist, you see. You are selfish.

So when an election happens and the people rebel against this open-borders agenda, there is really one thing for these wise elites to do: They just impose their own law.

How Congress answers this challenge will shape the future of this Republic. Will we defend and protect the people who sent us here, their laws duly passed, their Constitution, and their communities, or do we once again abandon them, give them lip service but no real action? I pose that question to the body.

I suggest there is no purpose to our being here if it is not to serve and protect and defend the loyal people who sent us here on their behalf.

It is time for us to get busy.

I am deeply disappointed that the majority leader is blocking an amendment that would deal with this matter. In the Senate, a Senator from any State should be able to have an amendment that deals with the crises of our time. We are being blocked once again. It denies accountability. It is wrong. It is improper. The American people are tired of it. And those who facilitate this conduct in the future will hear that message clearly from the American people.

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

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

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

THE AMERICAN DREAM

Mr. RUBIO. Mr. President, I appreciate this opportunity to speak on the floor tonight. People watching at home—to the extent there is anyone watching at home tonight—but to those who have gathered here and are still in the gallery watching the Senate, the Senate is debating a budget. It is a massive budget. It is the largest in the world in terms of any entity—I was about to say any government but of any entity on the planet.

As of right now, if that budget is not passed I believe by tomorrow night, the Federal Government will not have authority to keep operating beyond the bare minimum. That is what the debate is about that you are watching. We will see what is going to happen over the next few hours in terms of ultimately getting a vote and what the leaders of the respective parties have agreed on.

But what I wanted to talk about is related to the budget but goes much deeper than that; that is, the state of America and the state of our economy.

Last night I had the opportunity to come here and speak a little bit about foreign relations and an international situation we were facing. But I wanted to speak for a moment because that is what the budget is about—it is about our domestic affairs. I think the budget is a reflection of that.

You have heard a lot of different speeches here tonight—to the extent you are watching—about different things that are happening in our country. The Senator from Alabama spoke a moment ago about immigration, but in talking about immigration, he talked about the constraints that are upon the middle class. Before that, we have seen others speak about issues. So at the end of the day, as we talk about the budget, increasingly the debate is through the lens of those factors that people are facing in their daily lives throughout this country.

I always tell the story of my parents because, for me, it puts a different framework to my vision of this country. My parents were very poor. They grew up in another country. My father lost his mother when he was 9 years old. He had to go to work literally the next day. He would work for the next 70 years in Havana, Cuba.

My mother was one of seven girls who remembers that she never went hungry, but she is pretty sure her parents did so that their children would have enough to eat. She was raised by her father, my grandfather, who was disabled as a young man. He had polio and struggled his whole life to provide for his girls.

They came to America in 1956 in search of a better life. They came here with nothing more than the dream of a better life and the hope of a better life. They did not know anyone. They barely had any money. They barely had any formal education. They arrived in this country in 1956. They never made a lot of money here. My father ended up settling into a job as a bartender, at a hotel primarily. My mother was a cashier. She was a stock clerk at Kmart. She worked as a maid at a casino in Las Vegas. My parents never became rich, but my parents achieved the American dream because the American dream is never about how much money you make.

The American dream has always been about achieving happiness as you define it. And while they weren't rich, my parents were able to afford and own a home in a safe neighborhood—a neighborhood safe enough that they would allow us, my sister and me, to walk to school when we lived in Las Vegas.

My parents were able to retire with dignity. My parents—just a generation removed from poverty and a lack of any formal education—lived to see all four of their children go to college and have a life much better than their own. They fully lived the American dream.

It is the American dream that has been possible because this Nation was founded on the powerful idea that all people are created equal and that all people deserve an equal opportunity to achieve happiness as they define it.

That American dream isn't just a talking point. It defines us as a nation and as a people. It makes us different, special, and, in my opinion, better than any other nation that has ever existed.

But today something that troubles us is that American dream seems to be eroding in the minds of way too many people, and we understand why. There are people, when they open the newspaper every day and they read—today is a perfect example. The Dow Jones closed over 300 points. Wall Street is setting record profits.

They keep reading about how the economy is rebounding and unemployment is down, but they don't feel any of this. They are working as hard as they ever have, but their paychecks haven't gone up in more than a decade. In the meantime, everything in life costs more.

Think about that. You are working hard, making less than ever relative to how much things cost, and you are frustrated to read that all these other people seem to be doing so great. Everybody keeps telling you about how the economy is doing fantastically, and meanwhile you are being squeezed in your own life. You can't get a pay raise, there is nothing you can do about it, and everything costs more: your rent payment, your health care, your children's education. This squeeze is real and the middle class is feeling it.

We ask ourselves, but why is this happening? This is not just because of a downturn. We had a very serious financial crisis in this country. We had a very serious downturn.

But what I describe to you is not just a feature of that, because if this were just a cyclical downturn, it would go up, down, and back up again.

We have had a very dramatic change in the structure of our economy. Our

policies have not reacted to that, have not changed with those structural changes that have happened in our economy.

Even in this debate about the budget, you will see evidence of that. I didn't come to the floor to be critical of people who worked on it, I know they have worked hard, but our policies do not reflect these structural changes. They are very real.

In the 20th century, practically anybody who wanted a job in America could find one. There were plenty of blue-collar jobs for people such as my parents and there seemed to be plenty of white-collar jobs for people such as their children. But in the 21st century many of those jobs are gone. They have been sent overseas or they have been replaced because of technology or innovation. New jobs have been created, but they require skills that too many of our people still don't have.

In the 20th century, ours was a national economy. Your clients and your competitors were halfway across town, maybe halfway across the country.

In the 21st century, we operate in a global economy where your customers, your clients, your investors, your competitors, and your partners are just as likely to be halfway around the world as they are halfway down the street. That has made a dramatic structural change to our economy.

Last but not least, everything costs more. In the 20th century a bartender and a maid could afford to own a home, own a car, take a vacation once a year with their kids. If my parents tried to do today what they did in 1956, they couldn't. Those jobs just don't pay enough and all those things I just described cost so much more money.

We have to respond to these structural changes. We have to turn the page on these old ideas and, quite frankly, on the leaders who have those old ideas. We cannot continue to confront 21st century challenges with 20th century strategies.

We need new leaders, and we need new ideas that respond to these deep structural changes. For 4 straight years that I have been talking about this in the Senate, the progress in that regard unfortunately has been slower.

I didn't come here today to be overly partisan, but I know in 2008 a lot of people thought that our current President would be that kind of new leader, but that is not what we have gotten. They thought he would be that kind of new leader because he talked about being a champion for the middle class. He talked about a modern agenda of hope and change.

But that is not what we have received. Instead of focusing on working families, he focused on things such as the liberal dream of government-run health care.

He focused on radical environmental policies instead of focusing on the middle class.

Instead of modern ideas, what we got was just old-fashioned big government and crony corporatism. A startling example of it is how the insurance companies have gamed ObamaCare.

Imagine for a moment if you were in a business and the government came in with a law that said: We are going to make the people buy the product that you sell. We are going to give them the money to buy the product that you sell. By the way, if you lose money selling the products, we are going to bail you out with taxpayer dollars.

That is what big insurance companies were able to get out of ObamaCare. People are required to buy insurance, they get a subsidy to buy that insurance, and if they lose that money, they get a bailout with taxpayer dollars. That is outrageous, and it is not surprising that the stock prices of big insurance companies have doubled since ObamaCare passed.

Meanwhile, working Americans are paying more, higher deductibles, higher copayments, higher premiums, and they are getting less coverage. That is an example of corporatism.

Despite all this rhetoric that they are fighting on behalf of the middle class, the past few years have been a bonanza for big business, a bonanza for people who can hire the lawyers and the lobbyists to navigate the complexities of government.

So it is very simple. If you can hire an army of lawyers and lobbyists in Washington, DC, you get your priorities and bills like the one that is before us today, or others, for that matter. But if you are trying to start a business out of the spare bedroom of your home, if you are a small businessperson who works 7 days a week, 16 hours a day just to stay afloat, you can't hire the best law firm in Washington, DC, to navigate those regulations. And you sure can't afford to hire a lobbying firm to come here to write those laws to your advantage.

In fact, I would go farther and say that big government is a competitive advantage for big businesses, because they know that the bigger and more complicated the rules are, the harder it is for someone new to come along and compete with them for that same business.

We have seen that time and again. I saw it during my time as a State official, as the speaker of the State house in Florida, and I see it in Washington, DC.

This is corporatism and both parties are guilty of it.

That is why it shouldn't surprise us that under the past 6 years of this presidency, 95 percent of the income gains in this country have gone to the top 1 percent of earners and 93 percent of Americans have seen virtually no income growth in the past 6 years. Yet we continue to see an effort to push policies from this administration that keeps us on the same course. Here is the course that we are on—radical environmental groups are going to get their way, their policies, and their Executive orders written. Meanwhile, people who work at factories, people who are dependent on energy jobs, they get nothing.

Public employee unions that are well represented and spend a lot of money influencing government, they get all the rules they want from the NLRB and the government. They get their help.

Do you know who doesn't? The UPS truckers, the plumbers, the pipefitters, the electricians, and the construction workers. All these elites who are going around begging for more government spending, they are going to get their way in this bill from this administration—and middle-class Americans who are working as hard as they ever had, they get stuck with the tax bill to pay for it.

We can't keep doing this. If we keep doing this, we are going to lose the American dream. We are going to lose what makes us different, and we are going to lose what makes us special.

But I believe with all my heart that if we can turn the page on these policies, not only can we save the American dream but we can have another American century. To do that, there are three key things we have to do, and I wish more of this was reflected in the bill before us.

The first thing we need is we need better jobs. Jobs that don't just pay more—and that is important, but jobs that provide enough flexibility as well so that you do have time if you need to take time off to go take your kids to a field trip or a doctor's appointment.

Do you know how many Americans out there can't take their kids to a dental appointment because that requires them to take 2 hours off of work? Do you know how many Americans don't have the flexibility to be able to watch their son or their daughter at the Christmas pageant this year in school because their job doesn't have flexibility?

These better jobs that I am talking about are jobs that pay more but ultimately provide the flexibility so you have the time to be a better spouse, a member of your community, and a better parent—and jobs that won't disappear with the next advancement in technology, jobs that give you an opportunity for promotion and upward mobility. These are the kinds of jobs we need.

In order to have those jobs in America in the 21st century, we need to become globally competitive. We are engaged in a global competition with the rest of the world for these jobs. It is the economic olympics every single day.

We can win that competition. We can win it if we had a Tax Code that no longer made America one of the most expensive places in the world to create those jobs. We could win it if we reformed our regulatory code so that we are no longer such a burdensome place to create those jobs. We could win it if we got our national debt under control, which scares people from creating those jobs here because they believe we

are headed for a debt crisis in the future.

We can win that competition if we fully utilize our energy resources in a safe and responsible way. We have already seen the benefits of American energy exploration, the jobs it creates, not only in energy but in manufacturing.

You have already seen the benefits of American energy production in the falling price of gasoline at the pump, and that has real-world implications. Being from Florida, we expect that many more people are going to take the drive to Disney World this winter because getting there is a lot cheaper than it was a year ago. Ticket price is another matter, but getting there is a lot cheaper than it was before. This has real implications.

The other thing is we can win that competition, but we have to keep our edge on innovation. We are the world's greatest innovators. We can't lose that edge. By the way, winning that global competition requires us to be globally engaged.

We must remain involved in global affairs. Strong American leadership on this planet is a factor in allowing the world to have the prosperity and the stability it needs for a rising middle class—people who can afford to buy the things we sell, the products we offer, the services we offer. We will benefit from that.

But creating more of those jobs is not enough. The second thing we have to do is to make sure people have the skills for those new jobs because these new jobs in the 21st century are going to require a higher level of skill than ever before. The problem is we have an archaic 20th century education model.

We tell kids in high school that the only way you will ever be successful is you all have to get a 4-year degree. There is nothing wrong with getting a 4-year degree, but it is wrong to tell children and students in this country that is the only way to get ahead when we know in the 21st century there are going to be millions of quality middle-skilled, quality-paying jobs that require more than high school but less than 4 years of college.

We have a system that does nothing, absolutely nothing, about that. We don't offer nearly enough vocational problems in high school.

Why have we stigmatized jobs where people work with their hands, when we know that we need airplane mechanics, electricians, plumbers, and pipefitters? We need high-tech welders and people who know how to do 21st century welding and machinists for 21st century factories and manufacturing.

We can teach these people skills while they are still in high school so they can graduate ready to go to work. We also need more apprenticeship programs, and that is something we can partner with labor unions so we can train and retrain Americans in these higher skilled jobs. We also need to help people who have to work full time.

Imagine for a moment a single mother raising two kids on her own and she is a receptionist at a law firm. She is never going to get a significant raise working as a receptionist. The only way she is ever going to get ahead is if she can become a paralegal. But to become a paralegal, she has to go to school. How is she going to go to school under this current system?

She wakes up at 6 o'clock in the morning, makes her kids breakfast, drops them off at school, drives to work, works 8 or 9 hours, rushes to the daycare center or the afterschool program before it closes, picks them up and brings them home. She is already tired, but she is not done. She has to make them dinner and make sure they finish their homework.

By 11 o'clock she hits that bed and she is exhausted. When is she going to go to school—4 o'clock in the morning?

We need to have an education system that is flexible enough so that she can acquire the skills to become a paralegal while she works full time and she raises that family, allowing her to package learning from online courses and work experience.

If someone is a receptionist at a law firm and has worked there for 8 or 9 years, there are some skills they have picked up working there that should count for credit hours, instead of forcing you to sit through a 2-year program so the college they are going to can make the money off of them. We need to create programs so that people like her can acquire those skills for 21st century jobs.

We also need to create alternatives to traditional college. It doesn't matter where you acquire the learning. You should be able to package all of your learning. Take, for example, someone who has worked 10 years, served in the military, has extensive experience at volunteering, has taken a number of courses at a community college, and wants to get a degree in something. We should be able to package all of that lifelong learning, all of those sources of learning, into the equivalent of a degree program.

Do you know how many Americans out there are sitting on 30 or 40 credit hours from a community college? But having 30 hours of college credit is the same as having zero because you don't get any degree certificate for it. So the private sector looks at you and says: We are glad you went to class, but where is your degree or your associate's degree?

I wish we had a more concerted effort in helping people who are halfway there to get all the way there by using things such as online coursework and giving them credit for life and work experience.

We need to think outside the box on these issues because if we don't empower people with these skills, they won't be able to take advantage of the opportunities of the 21st century. This is what a 21st-century educational system looks like.

I would make one more point when talking about schools. The most important school a child will ever attend is their home. We cannot ignore the fact that the breakdown of American families is having a dramatic impact on our economy and the quality of life of our people. There is a reality here about this. A growing number of children are born into single-parent homes or are born into broken families. We have to help them because we know that, statistically speaking, children being raised in broken families and single-parent homes with low incomes will struggle to succeed. They will not have an equal opportunity unless someone does something to help them out.

We can help. We can help by helping their parents acquire the skills they need for better jobs, such as the single mother I talked about earlier, but also by giving their parents the opportunity to send them to the school of their choice. It is immoral, it is un-American that the only people in this country who cannot choose where their children go to school are poor people. It is outrageous. Rich people can send their kids to any school they want, and that is their right. The middle class will move to a better neighborhood or struggle to put together just enough money to put their kids into a better school. But if you are poor and the school in your neighborhood is a dangerous school and you are not learning, there is nothing you can do. That is outrageous. The answer to that is, well, improve that school. I agree. But in the 5 years it takes to improve that school, that child has gone from first grade to sixth grade, and you are never getting those years back. Every parent in America—especially low-income parents—deserves the opportunity to put their children in the school of their choice.

There are other ways we can help families. Primarily that is our responsibility as individuals and communities. But we should have a promarriage Tax Code, a promarriage government program. We shouldn't have marriage penalties. We shouldn't tell people ''If you get married your taxes are going to go up'' or ''If you get married you will lose Medicare, Medicaid.'' We have to get rid of those things. We have to remove those marriage penalties in our Tax Code and in our programs.

By the way, we should also protect our faith communities. They are an important part of instilling values because you can have all the diplomas on the wall you want, but if you don't have the values of hard work and discipline and self-control and respect for others and respect for the dignity of the life of all people, you will struggle to succeed. No one is born with those values; those values have to be taught by strong families in a strong home, and they have to be reinforced by strong communities. One of the pillars of a strong community is our faith community, whatever faith you choose.

That is why protecting religious liberty is so important.

Last but not least, restoring the American dream isn't just about better jobs and better training and better skills; it is also about dealing with the cost of living. That is why I think in the coming year we desperately need a profamily Tax Code. Instead of all these loopholes that are designed to help big business or the cronies of the people who serve here in Washington, we need a profamily Tax Code. For example, let's increase the child tax credit because it costs money to raise children in the 21st century and these working families are struggling to provide for their children. Let's have a profamily Tax Code like the one Senator LEE of Utah and I have proposed. Let's increase the child tax credit.

We also have to deal with the cost of higher education. It is completely out of control. Do you know who is getting destroyed by that? The middle class.

I had the honor of teaching a course at Florida International University. There are many working-class students there. And here is their frustration, and they are right: Their parents make too much money for financial aid, but they do not make enough money to be able to afford the school. So do you know what they do? They take out loans in the tens of thousands of dollars.

I know about this firsthand because when I was sworn into the Senate here 4 years ago, I owed over $100,000 in student loans. My parents could never afford to pay for my school. I was blessed to be able to receive Pell grants and other assistance, but I still had to use loans.

When we first got married, it was our single largest expenditure. I used to joke with my wife: You didn't just get married to me; you got married to Sallie Mae. Every month Sallie sent us a $1,300 or $1,400 bill.

There are tens of thousands, hundreds of thousands of young people across America who are stuck with big loan debt and degrees that don't lead to jobs. I hope we will tackle that this year, and there are a couple of proposals that I think will help. The first is we should make income-based repayment the repayment method for everyone unless you opt out of it.

Second, I think people deserve the right to know before they take out a loan how much they can expect to make. Before you take out a loan to pay the tuition of the school, that school should be required to tell you: This is how much people who graduate from our school make when they graduate with this degree. So you can decide whether it is worth borrowing $100,000 to be a Greek philosophy major because the market for Greek philosophers is very tight these days.

Last but not least, I think we need alternatives to traditional student loans. One of the things I have proposed is something called the student investment plan, which allows people to invest in your future. Basically, it is a venture fund in you. Someone will come forward and say: We will give you the money to go to college. In exchange, you will pay us back 1 or 2 percent of your income for your first 10 years.

They are investing in you. It is a student investment plan. It is not for everyone. It is not a panacea, but it is an alternative to student loans.

One of the things that would help, by the way, that would be an alternative to student loans, is what I mentioned earlier—if you were able to package learning and turn self-directed learning into the equivalent of a degree.

There are other big items contributing to the cost of living. Health care I don't need to tell you about. How many people out there today, particularly in the middle class, are starting to find out they have higher deductibles, higher copayments, higher premiums, and are getting less coverage than they used to have. This is not a myth. It is not a rumor. This is happening to millions of people. We get the calls, and so do you in your office about all these things.

One last point on the cost of living is dealing with poverty. Our antipoverty programs don't work. There are antipoverty programs in this Cromnibus—a term, by the way, none of us have ever used before. I don't know who makes these things up. But anyway, there are antipoverty programs in this bill. Our antipoverty programs alleviate poverty, but they don't cure it.

Imagine if you broke your arm and you went to the hospital and they said: Here is a lifetime supply of pain killers. I am not saying you shouldn't help people with the pain from the broken arm, but you have to fix that broken arm.

Our programs don't fix poverty. They do not cure poverty. We need programs that will cure poverty. That is why I believe we need what is called the flex fund, where we take all of our existing antipoverty dollars—I am not saying cut it; I am saying take our existing antipoverty dollars and put them in a flex fund and allow States and local communities to design specific plans that work in their communities.

I can tell you that in the State of Florida, urban poverty and rural poverty have different elements to them. A program that might work very well in the inner city of Miami doesn't work at all with the rural poverty in South Dade. We should allow States and local communities to design programs that help cure poverty.

The ultimate cure for poverty is a good job. That means everyone who is on these assistance programs should either be in school acquiring the skills they need for a better job or they should be working, improving their skills through experience.

Let me just say this about that, and I have talked about one of the aspects of the reforms we want—a wage enhancement. If the only job you can find pays $8 or $9 an hour but you need $15 an hour to provide for yourself, I would rather come up with government money and make up the difference through a wage enhancement than give you $9 or $10 an hour or the equivalent of $7 or $8 an hour in a welfare check. Because while you are working, you are gaining experience, and we are also helping supplement your paycheck so you can pay your bills.

That condition isn't forever. It can't become a way of life. But if you have been unemployed for 5 or 6 years and you show up somewhere to get a job and they ask you what you have been doing for the last 6 years and you say you haven't been doing anything, your chances of getting that job have just diminished dramatically. It is not good for people to be unemployed long term in terms of their long-term job prospects. That is why I have talked about a wage enhancement program as well.

I think if we do all these things I have talked about—make ourselves a globally competitive economy so the jobs are created here, give our people 21st-century skills, help people deal with the cost of living—I think we have every reason in the world to be optimistic about our future.

I will close by saying that I think sometimes we get confused here about how we measure the greatness of our country or the progress we are making. We look to facts and figures, such as the unemployment rate, and we look at the GDP of the country, and these are important figures. We shouldn't ignore them. But let me tell you how I measure the progress of this country.

I mentioned earlier that my father was a bartender. At many of the events I have been involved in through public service over the years, I give a speech somewhere, and there is a bartender standing behind a bar in the back of the room. Almost every time I see that, it reminds me of my father, who stood for so many years behind a bar. He was happy for the work he had, but that is not the life he wanted for us. He wanted something more for us. My father stood behind that bar all those years so that one day I could have the chance to stand here on the floor of the United States Senate and talk about things like the American dream. That journey from behind that bar to where I am standing here tonight is the American dream. That is the American dream.

A few years ago someone heard me give that speech in New York City, and after I was done speaking the employees there came up to me and handed me this name tag. It said ''Rubio, Banquet Bartender.'' It was one of the most touching gifts I ever got from anyone, but it was also a reminder that whether we remain a special nation will be determined by whether people today can do what my parents did; by whether people today can still make that journey my father made from behind that bar to where I stand today. Can the single mother provide her children

the life she always wanted but never had? Can that worker at that hotel open doors for their children that were closed for him? That is how we will know we are still special. If they can, then this new century is also going to be an American century.

We do have real challenges, but we also have real opportunities. And there is no time in history that I would rather be in than right here, right now. I believe technology will allow us to collaborate and reach more people than ever before. I believe innovation will solve problems we once thought were insurmountable. I believe a rising global middle class will provide more prosperity to more people everywhere than we have ever seen. That is what I believe the 21st century can be about.

I believe you and I live on the eve of another American century. All we have to do now is to reach for it and grab it. All we have to do now is do what our parents did for us—whatever it took to leave for their children a better life and a better future. If we do that, then we will leave behind for our children what every generation of Americans before us has left behind: the single greatest nation in the history of all mankind.

With that, Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Texas.

Mr. CRUZ. Mr. President, anyone watching Congress right now would have little reason to think that an historic election occurred only a few weeks ago.

Washington, DC, sadly, continues to remain deaf to the American people. Washington, DC, continues to refuse to listen to the American people.

Even though millions of voters rose up just 1 month ago to protest how President Obama and the Senate Democrats were running Washington, business as usual is continuing inside the marble halls of the Congress. What is happening here?

Last night we saw chaos in the U.S. House of Representatives as they were there until late in the night, voting on a bill that the vast majority of the Members had never even sat down to read. Yet somehow, at the last minute, just in the nick of time, with an arm twisted here and a nudge there, it passed the House. Now it is here in the Senate.

Before the Senate today is a $1.1 trillion bill full of Christmas presents for the lobbyists and special interests here in Washington. I know it is Christmastime, but it is not our job to be playing Santa to K Street.

This bill is not designed to help working Americans. It is designed to pay off all the promises made to lobbyists who funded campaigns over the past year. It is designed to make sure that a whole lot of folks can fly home and ensure that more campaign dollars will be coming in the coming weeks.

Before the Senate is a bill that continues to fund the train wreck that is ObamaCare, and does nothing to provide relief to the millions of men and women who are hurting, who are suffering, who lost their jobs, who lost their health care because of this disaster.

And before the Senate is a bill that does nothing—absolutely nothing—to stop President Obama's illegal and unconstitutional amnesty. That is why I rise to speak here today.

The President's Executive amnesty is lawless and unconstitutional. To be clear, the dispute over Executive amnesty is not a dispute between President Obama and Republicans in Congress. It is a dispute between President Obama and the American people.

In this last election President Obama said something that was absolutely correct. He said his policies were on the ballot all across this country. The President was right. This election was a referendum on amnesty.

I spent roughly 2 months on the road campaigning for Senate candidates all over the country, one after the other, in race after race. Front and center was: If you elect Republicans, we will stop President Obama's amnesty.

The American people's verdict on that referendum was not ambiguous. Over and over again voters in States across this country decided not to send back the incumbent Democrats, but to elect a new Republican.

I recall 2 years ago when the Presiding Officer and I were freshmen. There were nine Democratic freshmen that year and just three Republicans. Today there are 12 Republican freshmen—12 new Senators, a quarter of the Republican conference—elected as the result of a referendum on amnesty. The people have spoken loudly. Yet, sadly, President Obama has reacted to the voters in a way that, frankly, is unprecedented in American history.

Previous Presidents, particularly second-term Presidents, have been repudiated by the voters, and there is a way Presidents typically responded: They react with humility. They react acknowledging the American people, trying to course correct. Sadly, President Obama didn't do that.

Instead, he came out angry and defiant. He came out and declared to the American people: It doesn't matter, in his view, what the American people say. And it doesn't matter, in his view, what the Congress, elected by the American people, says. He is instead going to unilaterally decree amnesty for some 5 million people who are here illegally.

We are going to have a vote in time on this omnibus bill. But critical in that vote should be a vote on President Obama's illegal amnesty.

We should consider the constitutionality of his actions. Every Senator in this body should be put on record whether he or she believes it is constitutional for a President to disregard—to ignore—Federal immigration laws, and grant blanket amnesty to millions in defiance of both the laws on the books and the voters.

This President believes he can unilaterally alter laws he disagrees with. There is a form of governance where one man or one woman can make the laws, can change the laws, can enforce the laws. It is called a monarchy. There are countries on Earth right now that have monarchies that vest the legislative and executive power in one person.

I would note Americans historically are not unfamiliar with monarchy. We fought a bloody revolution to free ourselves from a tyrannical monarch. And when our Framers drafted our Constitution, it was designed, as Thomas Jefferson put it, to serve as chains to bind the mischief of government.

The danger we are facing here right now is profound insofar as it concerns amnesty, and is even greater as it concerns the checks and balances in our government and the protection of individual liberty. Because a President who can set aside the law, who can pick and choose which law to follow and which law to ignore, is no longer a President. That should concern all 100 Senators here.

If President Obama can decide I don't agree with the immigration laws, so I will not enforce them, I will unilaterally change them—I promise you there is going to come another President—another President with different policy views. And the next time it may not be immigration laws that he or she is changing, it may be tax laws or environmental laws or labor laws.

I fervently believe we need tax reform, labor reform, and environmental reform, but there is a proper way to do it. The proper way to do it is this body debating and making legislative changes to the laws, not one President by dicta setting aside the law. A Presidential temper tantrum is not an acceptable means of discourse.

One of the characteristics of a monarch is he or she need not compromise. The President has justified this illegal amnesty by saying he told Congress what he wanted, and Congress refused to give it to him. Well, the relationship in our constitutional Republic between the President and the Congress is not the relationship between a parent and a child. The President does not get to demand of Congress: Here is the policy I want. Either give me what I want, or I will decree it to be so and ignore the law. That is the President's bargaining position.

The President wants to reform immigration. And let me be clear: We need commonsense immigration reform. I support commonsense immigration reform. But the way it works in our constitutional system is if you want to change the laws, you have to work with the other branches. And that means you have to compromise. It means the President doesn't get everything he wants. And this is a President who is barely willing even to talk to Congress, much less to compromise on anything.

As Alexander Hamilton explained in Federalist 69: A monarch decrees, dictates, and rules through fiat—which is

what President Obama is attempting to do right now.

When the President embraces the tactics of a monarch, it becomes incumbent on Congress to wield the constitutional power this body has as the elected people's representatives to stop it.

The Congress representing the voice of the people who just spoke resoundingly in an election should use every constitutional tool available to prevent the President from subverting the rule of law.

When the President usurps the legislative powers and defies the limits of his authority, it becomes all the more imperative for Congress to act. And Congress should use those powers given to it by the Constitution to counter a lawless executive branch, or this body will lose its authority. If the President will not respect the people, Congress must.

Second, let me ask a question. Why are we here today in a lameduck? Why is there a session of Congress the second week of December with so many Members voting who the American people just said they no longer want to be represented by? Why are there so many Members getting ready to land at cushy law firms and lobby jobs in industry and trade associations? All of our colleagues, a whole bunch of them, we are going to see them again—except they will have more expensive suits, more finely tailored, and come with an army of lobbyist aides with them.

Both the House and the Senate are filled with people who won't be here next year. And that is not of accident, because these bodies are voting to fund a $1 trillion spending bill, and those Members who were defeated or retiring aren't accountable to anybody. They won't have to answer for this.

But it is even worse. I mention this omnibus is a payoff to K Street. That is where a lot of these retiring Members are going to go. So what a perfect way to start your job is to ensure that you come with goodies for the rich and powerful.

Look, the American people are disgusted by the way Washington works. Washington under the Obama administration takes care of the rich and powerful, those who walk the corridors of power, and ordinary working men and women are left in the dark.

People who have been hurt the most under the Obama economy have been the most vulnerable among us. They have been young people, they have been Hispanics, they have been African Americans, they have been single moms. And yet, I am sorry to say, in this current Senate there are very few advocates for the people who are really hurting.

Let me give one example. One of the elements of this bill is the so-called expatriate health insurance plan fix that this omnibus exempts from ObamaCare.

Now what is this about? Well, American insurance companies that sell insurance policies to expatriates—Americans living abroad—are subject to all of the oppressive mandates of ObamaCare. All of the mandated coverage mandating things—like maternity care for women who are no longer in childbearing years—all sorts of mandates that drive up the costs. And they are also subject to the crushing impunity taxes.

So what has happened? Insurance companies have come to Congress and said: It is not fair. It is hurting our business, it is hurting our jobs. It is amazing. Get enough lobbyists together, and suddenly you get bipartisan agreement.

This provision has Republicans and Democrats together saying we should carve a special exemption for the big insurance companies.

There are a lot of things about this body that they don't teach in civics class. There are a lot of things in this body that would horrify the typical junior high or high school student learning about how government operates.

One of them is something called the hotline. An awful lot of legislation gets passed on the hotline. That is, someone introduces legislation, sends around an email and says, unless you object, this will be treated as automatically passed. All sorts of items get done on the hotline without this body ever debating it, ever considering amendments, ever taking it to the floor.

Well, this ex-patriot insurance amendment was hotlined. Senators, both Democrats and Republicans, want to shoot it through in the lame duck in the quiet of night. Now listen, I think there are some good arguments on its merits for this ex-patriot bill. It is not unreasonable to recognize that ObamaCare is costing jobs, and it is hurting. But I will tell you the way a hotline works is any single Senator can object. So I objected. Let me tell you why. I said listen, this may make sense, but we shouldn't do it with no amendments, no debate, in the dark of the night. We should do this on the floor of the Senate, with a debate and with amendments. In particular, I want to take the opportunity to ask my friends and colleagues who are Democrats, who are supporting this exemption, if you think these provisions of ObamaCare are so onerous, so damaging, are killing so many jobs, why won't you provide an exemption for the people that live in your State? If it is right that these are harmful, why discriminate against the people living in your State? I want to take it up on the floor in a context where you could offer amendments to say, listen, it is all fine to take care of the big insurance companies, but how about somebody stand up for single moms—single moms who are in vast numbers being forced into part-time work, forced to work 28, 29 hours a week because in ObamaCare the threshold that kicks in is 30 hours a week? How about somebody stand up for the average working men and women.

But I will tell you what. The single moms, the African-American teenagers, the legal immigrants—they don't have fancy lobbyists. There is no provision in the past several months that I have been more heavily lobbied over than this ex-patriot bill. I had an insurance company CEO on the phone with me. I had Senators on the phone and lobbyists on the phone all saying, look, take care of this provision. I responded very reasonably. I said look, we could take it up in just a couple of weeks. In January, with a new Congress, we could take this up, we can debate it, we can consider it. But if we are going to be making exemptions for ObamaCare, how about if we not start with the richest and most powerful corporations? How about instead we start with working men and women, put working men and women first because they are the ones paying the biggest price. Yet I am sorry to tell you this is a great illustration of how Washington works. When it couldn't get hotlined in its own bill, what happened? It magically appeared on the omnibus, tacked on at the last minute because they knew it would go just right through Congress in the dark of night—how profoundly corrupt.

Listen, if you are a Fortune 100 company, you should feel thrilled because you can marshal armies of lobbyists to get special carve-outs for you. But if you are a steelworker out of work, if you are a single mom, if you are a Hispanic teenager trying to get her first job to start climbing the economic ladder and moving towards the American dream, you know what; you don't have a high-paid lobbyist, and unfortunately, this Senate is not listening to you.

We need to change that. We need to change that. Another provision of this omnibus is a special carve-out for Blue Cross Blue Shield. Blue Cross Blue Shield is a very fine company. Blue Cross Blue Shield spent more than $15 million on lobbyists this year. Now it is all fine and dandy that Blue Cross Blue Shield gets a carve-out. What about working men and women? Under the Harry Reid Senate, do you know how many bills we have debated on the floor to provide meaningful relief to the millions of Americans who have lost their jobs, lost their health care, have been forced into part-time work, who face skyrocketing insurance premiums and lost their doctors? Zero, not a single one, because working men and women don't have $15 million to hire fancy lobbyists. And the corrupt culture of Washington listens to the lobbyists and not the people.

Let me be clear on this. This is a bipartisan bill. HARRY REID, the Democratic Senate, has shut this institution down and has ceased working for working Americans. But Republicans share in that sin, share in that embrace of corporate welfare. Enough with the corporate welfare. God bless big companies that provide jobs. We don't need to be providing corporate welfare. How

about instead we have fundamental economic reform that brings back growth, that helps small companies start and grow and create jobs. How about we stop playing favorites and picking winners and losers, and instead how about Washington listening to the American people?

Another provision in this bill—another bit of corporate welfare—is Brand USA, a travel promotion company. That is one of the current majority leader's pet projects because it helps promote casinos in his home State. Last I checked, casinos were very profitable endeavors that didn't need the taxpayers helping them out, didn't need the Congress serving your hard-earned dollars and handing it out to promote casinos.

Another example is the Overseas Private Investment Corporation. It is also reauthorized in this bill. Most people haven't heard about it, but let me tell you what it does. Over the past few years, OPIC has approved a $20 million loan to help luxury cars be built in Eastern Europe. Coincidentally, the man who owns the company is a donor to President Obama and Vice-President BIDEN. OPIC has also backed hundreds of millions of dollars for solar farms in South Africa. It has also helped finance the Ritz Carlton in Istanbul. It has backed $150 million in insurance for Citibank to open branches in Pakistan, Jordan, and Egypt. How is it that one of the largest banks in the world cannot get its own insurance? Why should taxpayers take on that risk? They shouldn't.

Also spread throughout this bill are all kinds of provisions mandating what kind of vehicles the U.S. Government may buy for use, limits on how much the car can weigh, rules on how it must be powered, where the corporation is based and put together. They all together work to give U.S. corporations that produce expensive electric cars an advantage. Instead of saving the taxpayer money, this bill is pushing the government to purchase Chevy Volts and Teslas, instead of other more affordable cars.

Yet another problem in the lameduck was seen in a bill we considered earlier today, the National Defense Authorization Act. The NDAA had a lot of good provisions in it. I serve on the Armed Services Committee. I introduced amendments that were accepted and included in the bill, including one that is near and dear to my heart, a provision that finally, finally, finally, allows the 14 innocent souls who were murdered by Nidal Hassan of Fort Hood to be eligible for the Purple Heart. It has been far too long that this administration has declared that terrorist attack to be workplace violence. That was a good provision. There are other good provisions in that bill. Yet in the last minute, a giant chunk of legislation got added to the Defense authorization that had nothing to do with defense. Instead it was a giant land grab. Once again it was bipartisan—Democrats and Republicans coming together and saying, let's have the Federal Government seize a bunch of land. So the Defense authorization bill added 250,000 acres of new wilderness designation.

The Defense authorization bill resulted in 400,000 acres being withdrawn from productive use. It added three new wild and scenic river designations, three new studies for additional designations. Some of these provisions may have been sound on their own, but there was a reason they weren't brought up on their own. There is a reason they weren't debated on the floor of the Senate—because they couldn't withstand the scrutiny. So instead, the way corrupt Washington works, they were stuck on to a Defense authorization that was deemed must-pass, and suddenly the Federal Government takes roughly one-half million acres of land out of productive use, out of use by the citizenry.

You know that is disrespectful to the men and women in the military. It is a disservice. We shouldn't be using the Defense authorization as a tool for congressional pork.

I will make an additional point about President Obama's amnesty. In all likelihood, in a matter of hours or a matter of days, the Senate is going to pass this massive pork-filled mess of a bill, a $1 trillion-plus amnesty that is paying off lobbyists throughout this land.

Yet leadership from both parties—Republican leadership in both the House and Senate have promised this bill is designed for Congress to stand up to President Obama's illegal amnesty. They have said repeatedly that in just a few weeks help is on the way. In just a few weeks Republicans will be the majority in this body and in just a few weeks we will have a new majority leader.

The new majority leader, my friend the senior Senator from Kentucky has said:

> If President Obama acts in defiance of the people and imposes his will on the country, Congress will act. We're considering a variety of options. But make no mistake. When the newly elected representatives of the American people take their seats, they will act.

I take the soon-to-be majority leader at his word.

The Speaker of the House has said: ''Come January, we'll have a Republican House and a Republican Senate, and we'll be in a stronger position to take action.'' The Speaker went on to say that the current plan is ''the most practical way to fight the President's action.''

Again, I take him at his word. When the Republican leaders promise this bill is all designed so that come January and February—just a few weeks from now—we will see both Houses stand together and make clear that when the continuing resolution expires for the Department of Homeland Security, this body will not appropriate money to DHS to carry out President Obama's illegal and unconstitutional executive action, I take them at their word, because the alternative would be that elected leaders are saying something to the American people they don't believe and they don't intend to follow through with. And I very much hope that is not the case.

Indeed, I am reminded of Reagan's famous admonition: Trust but verify.

So I take them at their word, but I would note that a whole lot of citizens across this country feel a little bit like Charlie Brown with Lucy and the football. Where in fight after fight, leadership in Congress says: We will fight next time. Not this time—no, no, no—the wise thing to do is fight in a month, fight in 2 months, fight in 3 months—not now. It always seems to be when the month or 2 months or 3 months happens, the same statement is made: No, no, no—not January, maybe March. No, no, no—not that. How about June? No, no, no. How about September?

There has been a time when Charlie Brown has kicked the football and fallen on his rear end one too many times. So when our leaders in both Chambers say as a commitment, we will fight, and we will stop President Obama's illegal amnesty, I take them at their word. But I am confident that the American people will hold them to their word. The American people may not be quite so trusting, as am I, because they have seen far too many Members of Congress say one thing and do another.

We will learn soon enough if those statements are genuine and sincere. We will learn in just a few weeks if leadership intends to follow through on the promises they have made over and over again.

I would note that over the course of this election, Republican Members of the House, Republican Members of the Senate campaigned all over this country and they said two things repeatedly. They said No. 1, if you elect us we are going to do everything humanly possible to stop the train wreck that is ObamaCare, and they said, No. 2, if you elect us, if you give us a Republican majority in the Senate, we will stop President Obama's illegal action.

All over the country, that is what Republican candidates said, and it is the reason they told the American people to elect a Republican majority.

My admonition to my friends—especially to the newly elected Republicans—is very simple: Do what you said. Simply do what you said.

Virtually every Republican on this side of the Chamber told the men and women in his or her State: If you elect us, we will stop President Obama's amnesty.

We must do what we said because it is profoundly unfair. This amnesty is unfair to millions of legal immigrants who followed the rules and waited years in line yet see those who came illegally being rewarded nonetheless by the Obama administration. This Executive amnesty is profoundly unfair to

the 92 million Americans who are not working right now and to all the working men and women struggling to just put food on the table to feed their kids. This Executive amnesty is profoundly unfair, especially to the African-American community, which is facing historic unemployment.

If Congress acquiesces and does not stand up and assert the prerogative of this institution to legislate, to pass laws, and prevent the President from ignoring the laws on the books, then we will have ceded our authority not just on immigration but across the field.

It is incumbent on all of us to defend the Constitution, and it is my hope that the Senators who take an oath to uphold the Constitution will honor that oath more than party allegiances.

I will note that in recent weeks no fewer than a dozen Democratic Senators have publicly criticized President Obama's illegal Executive amnesty. I welcome that criticism. It is nice to see that sort of candor coming from Democratic Senators, but, as my wife is fond of telling me, talk is cheap. If those dozen Democratic Senators who criticized President Obama's Executive amnesty as illegal and unconstitutional mean what they say, then the only responsible action is to use our legislative authority to stop it.

I hope my Democratic colleagues will put partisan politics aside—even those who may agree with President Obama's amnesty—and say that the way to change the immigration laws is to work with Congress and compromise. You may not get everything you want, but we have a system of checks and balances.

It is striking—in many ways the simplest and best explanation of what the President has done came from ''Saturday Night Live.'' The week after the President's illegal amnesty, ''Saturday Night Live'' reprised the classic ''Schoolhouse Rock—How a Bill Becomes a Law.'' They had a giant dancing, singing bill come out and say: ''First I go to the House, then I go to the Senate, and if I'm lucky, the President will sign me and I become a law.'' Then on ''Saturday Night Live,'' President Obama walked out onto the steps of the Capitol and pushed the bill down the steps of the Capitol. He pushed the bill down the steps of the Capitol four separate times, and then out walked an Executive order smoking a cigarette, as it so happens, and it simply said: ''I'm an Executive order. I pretty much just happen.''

Do you know what? ''Saturday Night Live'' is exactly right. The President is ignoring the basic checks and balances of our Constitution and trying instead to decree the law. That is unconstitutional, and a portion of this bill that has been sent over from the House of Representatives funds the Department of Homeland Security to carry out that unconstitutional action.

Therefore, Madam President, I am now offering and raising a constitutional point of order against division L of this bill on the grounds that it violates the following provisions of the Constitution: the separation of powers embodied in the vesting clauses of Article I, Section 1 and Article II, Section 1; the enumerated powers of Congress stated in Article I, Section 8; and the requirement that the President take care that the laws be faithfully executed, as stated in Article II, Section 3.

It is incumbent on this body to resolve those constitutional questions and to honor and protect the constitutional authority of the United States Congress.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. WARREN). Is the Senator raising the point of order at this time?

Mr. CRUZ. I am.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. At this time, a motion to refer is pending barring other actions on the measure.

Mr. CRUZ. Madam President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

Mr. REID. I appreciate everyone's patience. You have all been waiting.

I ask unanimous consent that at 5 p.m., Monday, December 15, the Senate proceed to vote on the motion to invoke cloture on the motion to concur in the House amendment to the Senate amendment to H.R. 83; that if cloture is invoked, there be 30 minutes postcloture debate time remaining on the motion to concur.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Mr. LEE. Madam President, reserving the right to object. The American people have grave concerns with the President's decision to take action unilaterally with regard to Executive amnesty. This is an action that is rather unprecedented and rather unsupported by law, notwithstanding the President's insistence to the contrary. It is an issue that is of concern to a great many people.

Right now we are being asked to punt all of our activity until Monday at 5 p.m. I don't see any reason to do this. I don't see any reason why the Senate should suspend its operations while the American people are waiting for us to act. I don't see any reason why we should wait until Monday at 5 p.m. I certainly don't see any reason why we should agree to move forward then and not have any assurance that we would at least have an opportunity to vote on an amendment that would impose a spending limitation on the President's ability to implement his Executive amnesty action.

I would respectfully request that the majority leader modify his request and that he modify his request to assure us that we would receive a vote on a spending limitation amendment that we could have in connection with the CR/omnibus when we reconvene.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader.

Mr. REID. I am unable to do that.

Mr. LEE. In that case, I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

MORNING BUSINESS

FOIA IMPROVEMENT ACT

Mr. LEAHY. Madam President, I am deeply disappointed that last night the House failed to pass the FOIA Improvement Act. This bipartisan bill was reported unanimously by the Senate Judiciary Committee last month, and it was the product of months of hard work by Senator CORNYN and me. Our bill is supported by more than 70 public interest groups that advocate for government transparency, and it passed out of the Senate unanimously. I would think that Members of the House Republican leadership, who have spent so much time on oversight of the Obama administration, would support the goal of making government more accountable and transparent, but instead of supporting this bill, they have chosen secrecy over sunlight.

The FOIA Improvement Act would codify what the President laid out in his historic Executive order in 2009 by requiring Federal agencies to adopt a ''presumption of openness'' when considering the release of government information under FOIA. This bill would require agencies to find a foreseeable harm if they want to withhold information from the public. Prioritizing the people's interest in what their government is doing, our bill will reduce the overuse of exemptions to withhold information. Federal agencies have been required to apply this standard since 2009. They also used this same standard during President Clinton's terms in office. It was only during President George W. Bush's term of secrecy that this standard was rolled back. It appears the House leadership wants to return to that era. It should not matter who is in the White House, information about what their government is doing belongs to the people.

In a political climate as divided as this, I had hoped that we could come together in favor of something as fundamental to our democracy as the public's right to know, that government transparency and openness would not just be the standard applied to the Obama administration but what is applied to every future administration. The FOIA Improvement Act would have done just that.

SUCCESSFUL EFFORTS TO ADDRESS CYBER BULLYING

Mr. LEAHY. Madam President, I want to take a moment to share with the Senate one successful story coming out of Vermont.

In this digital age, our children have the opportunity to communicate, to collaborate, and to connect at all times over their cell phones, tablets, social media pages and blogs. But with this limitless connectivity also comes a responsibility to make use of these technologies maturely and respectfully. In Vermont, students and their school community have boldly fought back against cyber bullying. I want to praise their efforts and call the Senate's attention to their achievement.

Cyber bullying has become one of the most troubling threats to the safety and security of our children in this time of unprecedented digital access. Last week, students at Rutland High School were targeted online, as negative posts on an anonymous school news app were discovered. Together, students and school leaders gathered to address this negativity and to recommit themselves to building a more positive school environment. These students organized a ''Positive Post-It'' event to change the climate and then called on one another to delete the application.

Rutland High students went further still and banded together to issue a petition to persuade Apple to take down the app so that other students would not be victimized by anonymous posts. After the gathering, Rutland High School principal Bill Olsen said on Monday ''kids left school on that day feeling very good about how they could help each other overcome such adversity.'' Governor Peter Shumlin has also touted their accomplishment.

According to the 2013 Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance Survey, more than 15 percent of high school students were electronically bullied in the past year. Rutland High School has gained international attention, as a wonderful example of how students have acted bravely to stand up against this trend and to hold one another accountable for a safe school space. Other States are following this trend as well. In Michigan, school leaders have also recently spoken out against the use of apps that promote anonymous, negative online behavior. The petition to remove the app has been successful, and Apple has since removed it from its online store.

The leadership that these students have displayed is admirable, heroic, and an example to others. In recognition of their efforts, I ask unanimous consent to have an article from The Rutland Herald printed in the RECORD.

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

[From the Rutland Herald, Dec. 6, 2014]

RHS RALLIES AGAINST CONTROVERSIAL APP

(By Erin Mansfield)

Students and faculty at Rutland High School organized this week against a controversial iPhone app they say is being used to bully students via their cellphones.

Principal Bill Olsen said Friday he found out about the After School app Wednesday morning, when many students ended up crying in their guidance counselors' offices because of the things other students wrote about them on the Internet.

An app, short for application, is a computer program often used on smartphones and mobile devices that can access the Internet. After School, according to the iTunes Store, works as a virtual bulletin board for posting ''funny, anonymous school news for confessions and compliments.''

But Olsen said most of the things being posted are harming students' self-esteem at school, so the administration immediately sent out a letter to parents and began asking student leaders to speak out against the app.

Catherine DiPalma, a senior, said anyone can download the app for free through iTunes. Students log in using a Facebook account, confirm the school they attend, and begin posting anonymously.

A cheerleader, DiPalma said she and about 25 other students involved in clubs or sports teams went on the school's video announcements Thursday morning to ask their peers to delete the app from their phones and support the kids who had their feelings hurt.

''Nobody wants to walk down the hall and see their friends crying,'' she said. ''Even if you're not friends with someone, we said 'stand up.' ''

Olsen and the student leaders then asked kids to respond by writing positive messages on colorful Post-It notes and sticking them on windows in many of the school's hallways.

Some of the messages on the windows Friday were directed specifically to cheer up kids who had been criticized on the app, and some were compliments for their favorite teachers. Others told their peers to ''please go gay for me'' and ''nice butt.''

''I thought it was awesome,'' said Logan Boyle, another senior who spoke with the group on the morning announcements.

''I think it's cool that you can walk down the hall and see all the awesome things people say rather than all the nasty things people say,'' she said.

''A lot of us had the app, and we were just reading it,'' she said. ''We told everyone that just by having the app and reading it, you're giving power to the people who are saying the mean things.''

Kate Herling, a RHS guidance counselor who advises a student group against cyber bullying, said bringing student leaders into their advocacy was effective.

''Kids were supporting one another,'' Herling said. ''Now we walk down the hall and see people smiling because maybe they found their name.''

She said, ''I felt that everyone kind of came together to really stop this and make a positive thing about such a nasty thing that really happened.''

Olsen said he and Superintendent Mary Moran have sent out letters to get the state's Agency of Education and the Vermont Superintendents Association to organize around the issue.

They said they want local schools to gather together and pressure the app's creator to delete the software, and get Apple to take down the app from the iTunes Store. As of Friday, the store labeled the app for ''frequent/intense mature/suggestive themes,'' and for ages 17 and up.

Rebecca Holcombe, the state's secretary of education, said Rutland City Public Schools ''is quite rightly going after it.'' She said the Agency of Education just received the district's letter and will address the concern next week.

''There is free speech,'' Holcombe said. ''There's also bullying, and bullying is not protected speech in school. Parents send us their children as a public trust, and one of those things is protecting them from bullying and harassment.''

''We do honestly find it extremely troubling, and we do think it shows extremely poor judgment on the part of the company,'' she said.

A Michigan student's petition against the app says Massachusetts-based Ambient Corporation is the developer of After School. But a company representative said Friday they have nothing to do with the app.

The iTunes Store says ONE, Inc. holds the copyright, but that company was unable to be reached for comment.

The After School app website says: ''We believe in free speech and the ability for people to express themselves. If you find the majority of the content too offensive, consider using your phone to instead look at cat pictures or browse a less cutting-edge social network like Facebook.''

Olsen pointed to news articles from Michigan and Minnesota, where he said schools are warning parents about the effects of the After School app on their children and encouraging them to remove it from their smartphones.

''Apps like this and companies that make them really should be held accountable,'' Olsen said. ''The kids set an example for the adults (on Thursday). We should do the same thing and try to fight this.''

NET NEUTRALITY

Mr. LEAHY. Madam President, the principle of ''net neutrality'' to protect an open Internet has found its way into the public consciousness like few other regulatory issues that I have seen in my time in the Senate. Over 3.5 million Americans have submitted comments to the Federal Communications Commission, FCC, during its consideration of replacement net neutrality rules this year. The reason for this record-setting level of public engagement is simple: The net neutrality debate is fundamentally about how we want the Internet to operate. Millions of Americans have made their voices heard because they want an open and free Internet that works for everyone, not simply those with deep pockets. I could not agree more.

An Internet that is split into the haves and have-nots is unacceptable. That is why the FCC should enact clear and enforceable rules to prevent ''paid prioritization'' agreements that would allow some content providers to outbid smaller competitors to gain fast-lane service to customers online. At the same time, the country's leading broadband providers should unequivocally commit that they will not engage in this type of detrimental deal. We need meaningful pledges from our Nation's broadband providers that they share the American public's commitment to an Internet that remains open and equally accessible to all.

In October, I wrote to the major Internet service providers, ISPs—Comcast, Time Warner Cable, Charter, Verizon, and AT&T—asking them to make exactly that commitment. They all maintained that they do not currently plan to engage in paid prioritization—an assertion I welcome. What they did not do was answer my call for a firm commitment that they will never engage in that behavior in

the absence of clear rules prohibiting such deals.

This is disappointing. As Comcast noted in its letter, voluntary commitments from individual companies would not serve as a substitute for rules applicable to all broadband providers. Such pledges would, however, send a strong signal to the American people that broadband providers share their commitment to an open and equal Internet. It is unfortunate that these companies were unwilling to make that commitment—presumably because they know that if fast lanes are allowed in the future, market forces may drive them and other ISPs to consider such deals to maximize profits at the expense of competition online. This ''race to the bottom'' scenario is exactly why we need clear rules in place prohibiting such agreements. I appreciate that Comcast went further than the other ISPs by expressing support for my legislation with Representative DORIS MATSUI of California, which would require the FCC to ban paid prioritization agreements so that all ISPs are subject to such a rule.

The concern over a pay-to-play Internet that advantages the largest corporations over smaller players is very real. I was disappointed that some Internet service providers in their responses brushed aside these concerns dismissively. It is not ''demagoguery,'' as Verizon suggested in its response, when small business owners like Cabot Orton of the Vermont Country Store say that they simply want to see an Internet that continues to treat all businesses equally. It is not a ''phantasm'' when independent content creators like actress Ruth Livier acknowledge that they would not have been able to start their Web sites if they had to pay for priority access to reach viewers online or compete against players who did. These are real concerns, shared by millions of Americans. Their voices should not be casually and callously dismissed because they cannot afford to pay lobbyists to advocate on their behalf at the FCC.

The FCC is continuing its important work to craft new open Internet rules. For months, I have been clear that I will not support any rules that do not ban Internet fast lanes. I have spent much of this year listening to Vermonters and others to hear firsthand about how a pay-to-play world would harm the Internet ecosystem.

The responses to my letter highlight one element that unites all of those involved in the net neutrality debate—the need for certainty. Broadband providers understandably want to know the rules by which their actions will be governed, and consumers want certainty that their Internet service will continue to provide them unfettered access to lawful content online. Recently, some broadband providers like AT&T have threatened to stop investing in further innovation and deployment of broadband in the name of uncertainty. Of course, they could decide to provide certainty on issues like paid prioritization at any time regardless of the FCC's actions by making the pledge to consumers I have called on them to make.

I will continue my call for broadband providers to listen to their customers and pledge to never engage in paid prioritization. While they did not do so in response to my letters, it is never too late for them to make that commitment to the American people.

TRIBUTE TO JIM FRANSEN

Mr. LEAHY. Madam President, there is no shortage of attorneys here in Washington, DC, but some of the most talented lawyers work in the Office of Legislative Counsel here in the Senate. Drafting legislation is often a complicated exercise. It takes years under the mentorship and tutelage of others to grasp the difficult process of drafting complicated bills. At the end of this Congress, after nearly 40 years of service, legislative counsel Jim Fransen will retire. His family's gain will be the Senate's loss.

Jim first joined the Office of Legislative Counsel in 1975—the same year Vermonters elected me to the Senate. He served as an assistant counsel and a senior counsel, rising to become the finance and tax team leader. For the last 15 years, he has served as legislative counsel. He is the second longest serving legislative counsel, and his career has seen many accomplishments.

Jim has been one of the key drafters of Federal tax legislation since joining the office in 1975. He has had a hand in drafting such monumental bills as the Tax Reform Acts of 1976 and 1986, the Economic Recovery Act of 1981, the American Jobs Creation Act of 2004, and the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009. He helped to draft the Balanced Budget Act of 1997 and the Energy Policy Act of 2005, and he was a key drafter of the most sweeping health reform legislation in generations, the Affordable Care Act.

Through Republican and Democratic administrations, Republican and Democratic Senate majorities, Jim has been a true public servant. I know in his retirement, he will enjoy spending time with his family: his wife Margaret, his three daughters and his two grandsons. Wherever his retirement travels may take him, Marcelle and I wish him the best.

TRIBUTE TO BRIAN SEARLES

Mr. LEAHY. Madam President, one of Vermont's most dedicated public employees, Brian Searles, is retiring after 45 years of service to both State and local government. As a police chief, city manager, airport director, and two tenures as the Vermont secretary of transportation, Brian is a model of commitment both to his work and to his State.

For the past 4 years Brian and his team at the Vermont Agency of Transportation have overseen vast improvements in the State's infrastructure. In 2008 nearly 20 percent of Vermont's bridges were structurally deficient. By 2013 that number was reduced to just 8 percent. Additionally, in 2008, 36 percent of Vermont's pavement was rated in ''very poor'' condition, but through his work and the support of Governor Shumlin, Brian and his team were able to improve that number to 21 percent. Brian has also remained committed to supporting Vermont's rail infrastructure, spending the time necessary to apply for and win Federal grants. This necessary funding allowed Vermont to realize the final stages of completing the Western Rail Corridor project designed to connect Rutland to Burlington, as well as upgrade track to complete high speed rail service between Saint Albans and Montreal. The success of these projects could not have happened without Brian's leadership.

Brian and I have tackled many projects together, always working to accomplish big goals for Vermont's transportation and infrastructure needs. In August of 2011, Tropical Storm Irene hit the State, wiping out 500 miles of roadway and forcing 33 bridges to close in Vermont's worst natural disaster in recent history. Brian helped to bring our rural devastation to a national stage by testifying before the Senate's Committee on Environment and Public Works and then led his team to successful rebuilding efforts. For this, Vermonters will always be grateful.

About a year ago, Brian approached Governor Shumlin with a resignation letter in his pocket. Looking at the wealth of knowledge and historic improvements in the agency's work during Brian's tenure, the Governor prevailed upon him to remain at the helm until the end of the Governor's second term. Brian accepted the call, finished the year, and is now leaving the Vermont Agency of Transportation as a well-respected arm of Vermont's State government.

Marcelle and I join all Vermonters in thanking Brian for his years of service to the State and wish him and his family the very best as they begin a new chapter of their lives.

RECOGNIZING MARY POWELL

Mr. LEAHY. Madam President, Vermont is a national leader in sustainable energy. Green Mountain Power, with its CEO and President Mary Powell at the helm, is the perfect example of the progress our State has made and should serve as an example for the rest of the Nation.

Mary was recently named the 2014 Power-Gen Woman of the Year. Mary is a leader and trailblazer in the power industry. She took the reins of Green Mountain Power, GMP, in 2008 and has transformed it into Vermont's ''energy company of the future.'' Mary is truly committed to the idea that energy can spur socioeconomic change for

Vermonters and strives to help people save money and move toward more renewable sources. Under her leadership, GMP has launched successful initiatives to improve the company's quality of service, through providing low carbon, low cost, and reliable power to Vermonters.

Recently, Mary led Green Mountain Power in becoming the first utility in the world to receive B corporation certification. B corporations use the power of business to solve social and environmental problems. Mary wants Green Mountain Power to not only be the best utility in the world but the best for the world.

Mary is among the very few women who have achieved this level of success in the utility industry. I am grateful for the work she has done for the State of Vermont. She is redefining success in the energy industry, and I congratulate her on receiving the 2014 Power-Gen Woman of the Year Award.

I ask unanimous consent that the Burlington Free Press article ''Mary Powell Named Woman of the Year'' recognizing Mary for her achievements be printed in the RECORD.

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

[From the Burlington Free Press, Dec. 10, 2014]

MARY POWELL NAMED WOMAN OF THE YEAR

POWER GENERATION INDUSTRY GROUP CITES HER ADVANCEMENTS, OUTREACH

The leader of Vermont's largest utility was named woman of the year at her industry's largest trade show this week.

Mary Powell, president and CEO of Green Mountain Power in Colchester, was named Power-Gen 2014 Woman of the Year. Powell was selected because of how she has advanced the power generation industry and for her community involvement.

Powell received the award at the 2014 Power-Gen Woman of the Year Awards Dinner Monday in Florida as part of Power-Gen International, the largest trade show in the world for the power generation industry. She is scheduled to give the keynote address today during the Women in Power Luncheon.

In a statement, Powell called the award an ''incredible honor.''

''Energy can be transformational in moving customers and society to a more secure and environmentally sound future, and we are determined to lead the way,'' Powell said. ''GMP is partnering with customers to accelerate the pace of change as Vermont's energy company of the future.''

Jennifer Runyon, chairwoman of the Women in Power Committee, called Powell a ''trailblazer.''

''We hope that our award will inspire young women to not only consider careers in the power industry, but also show them that dedication and hard work can lead to brilliant results,'' Runyon said in a statement.

David Crane, president and CEO of NRG, a large utility with headquarters in Princeton, New Jersey, and Houston, said in a statement that Powell ''starts with the heretical notion of giving the modern-day energy consumer what they want—which is affordable, convenient, clean and storm-resistant energy—and then uses her native intelligence, charm and drive to make sure it happens.''

GMP said it is collaborating with NRG to make Vermont a ''leader'' in sustainable energy. Beginning early next year, the partnership will bring ''innovative, cost-effective clean energy products and services to Vermont,'' according to a statement from the Vermont utility.

TRIBUTE TO GEORGE MARCUS

Mr. REID. Madam President, I rise today to honor the work of my friend George M. Marcus, an accomplished businessman and philanthropist.

Born in Euboea, Greece, George Marcus and his family immigrated to the San Francisco Bay area in 1945. George was raised in California and attended college at San Francisco State University. After graduating with an economics degree in 1965, George began working in real estate. Always with an emphasis on client satisfaction, analysis, and evaluation, he founded Marcus & Millichap Real Estate Investment Services in 1971. His business acumen and willingness to innovate have spawned a variety of subsidiaries that have expanded his company to include 35 states.

George's successes are not limited to the real estate industry. A noted entrepreneur, Mr. Marcus has been called ''a modern day Midas with an uncanny ability to create successful companies'' by one news outlet. Indeed, his ventures range from SummerHill Homes, a bay area homebuilder, to a partnership in two enormously popular Greek restaurants: Evvia Estiatorio in Palo Alto and Kokkari Estiatorio in downtown San Francisco.

Mr. Marcus' legacy extends far beyond shareholders and profits into the heart of his own community. He has served on the California State Universities Foundation Board of Governors and the Board of Regents of the University of California. On the board he worked to preserve the financial viability of higher education for residents. He has also supported San Francisco's de Young Museum since its foundation and established San Francisco State University's International Center for the Arts.

Remembering his heritage, George has contributed generously to the Greek-American community and its institutions. In 2008, he was instrumental in organizing the National Hellenic Society to provide resources to promote Hellenic ideals. For his numerous services, he has been awarded the AXION Award, the Ellis Island Medal of Honor, the Elios Cultural Achievement Award, the Patriarch Athenagoras I Humanities Award, and the Aristeio Award of the American Hellenic Council of California.

This past month George was honored by the Greek Orthodox Metropolis of San Francisco with the Theofanis Economidis Award for his work on behalf of the Greek Orthodox Church in the United States. I congratulate George on this much-deserved recognition.

But for all of the awards and accolades from the private and public sectors, George Marcus' greatest accomplishment is his family. George and his wife Judy are the proud parents of four children—Mary Jane, John, Demetra, and Alexandria.

In 2011, George gave the commencement address at San Francisco State University. In his remarks he quoted Aristotle, urging the graduates to remember that ''excellence is a habit. . . . For your success in whatever you pursue, you must take to heart and be the best you can . . . and don't forget to give back.'' George Marcus has made excellence his habit at home, in his community and in the corporate world. He has achieved unparalleled success in nearly every walk of life. Yet he has never forgotten to give back. He has never stopped being the best he can.

Today, I, along with the Senate, congratulate him on his well-deserved award from the Greek Orthodox Metropolis of San Francisco, but more importantly, we thank George Marcus for all he has done for the people of this nation.

On a personal note, George Marcus has been my friend for three decades. It is a friendship I will always cherish.

REGARDING THE EXCISE TAX LEVIED ON LIQUEFIED NATURAL GAS

Mr. BENNET. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent to engage in a colloquy with my colleagues.

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

Mr. BENNET. Madam President, I rise to discuss an amendment regarding natural gas that was adopted earlier this year by the Senate Finance Committee and was included in the Senate-passed highway bill. I wish it were included in one of the year-end measures this body is passing in the next few days. This is a bipartisan proposal that passed the Senate overwhelmingly and deserves to be enacted before we conclude this Congress.

The measure—a bill we worked on with Senator BURR from North Carolina—would equalize the tax treatment of liquefied natural gas, LNG, and diesel fuel. The federal highway excise tax on both diesel and LNG is set at 24.3 cents per gallon. However, because LNG contains less energy per gallon than diesel fuel, on an energy equivalent basis, LNG effectively pays 170 percent of the diesel tax rate. The current highway excise tax treatment of LNG is a disincentive to investment in new LNG trucks and fueling stations, and should be corrected to encourage capital investments and help diversify transportation fuel choices.

LNG is a transportation fuel used for large trucks and some marine and rail vessels. The fuel has attracted the attention of fleet operators due to its low cost at the pump and reduced environmental impact. LNG produces significantly lower levels of toxic emissions than diesel fuel, including lower levels of carbon dioxide, nitrogen oxide and sulfur dioxide. Using LNG instead of

diesel fuel also reduces pollution from so-called ''black carbon,'' also known as soot. Black carbon is a major contributor to climate change, second only to carbon dioxide in the amount of heat it traps in the atmosphere once emitted.

This amendment would change the highway excise tax and the Inland Waterways Financing rate on LNG so that the tax is imposed on the energy content of a diesel gallon, known as a diesel gallon equivalent, rather than strictly on a per-gallon basis. LNG has huge potential as a cheaper, cleaner, domestic energy source and we need to ensure our tax system is not putting it at a disadvantage.

Mr. BURR. Madam President, I rise as a cosponsor of the amendment from the Senator from Colorado. This amendment would correct a mistake and level the transportation fuel tax playing field by taxing LNG on an energy equivalent basis rather than a volumetric basis.

It would also put this cleaner and cheaper source of energy on an even playing field with diesel fuel. It would help a new industry get off the ground and become commercially viable simply by leveling the playing field.

When Congress first established the transportation fuel tax on LNG, it was not yet a fuel that had entered the commercial marketplace. There were no LNG trucks on the road. There was no one to educate us on the technical or marketing differences of these two fuels. Now that the LNG market is emerging, however, this unfortunate drafting error has shown its real world consequences.

The current tax system can result in thousands of dollars of additional tax for those who choose to utilize LNG. For example, if a diesel truck travels 100,000 miles at 5 miles per gallon it consumes 20,000 gallons of diesel fuel, however, an identical LNG truck would require 34,000 gallons of LNG to travel the same distance. Both trucks would consume the same amount of energy, measured in BTUs, but the current tax system would result in the LNG truck paying an additional $3,402 in taxes because of the 14,000 more gallons of liquid fuel consumed.

In addition, although we do not yet have any marine vessels operating in the U.S. on LNG, this too is an emerging market with great potential. High horsepower manufacturers are still developing the engines that will be needed to power vessels on LNG and we do not yet have a marine fuel sales infrastructure, but some ship owners are planning ship conversions or new orders that will allow them to utilize cleaner and cheaper natural gas fuel. We should not be raising a new obstacle for the marine industry by perpetuating this differential tax treatment on marine diesel fuel. Furthermore, there should be no scoring penalty from CBO or Joint Tax when we eventually get around to fixing the tax treatment of LNG versus diesel.

This is a commonsense proposal that allows diesel fuel and LNG to compete in the market fairly, opening doors for companies interested in switching to this environmentally friendly domestic energy source. We really need to find a way to fix this issue so that we can realize the economic and environmental benefits of the increased use of domestic natural gas.

Mr. WYDEN. Madam President, I support the amendment from the Senators from Colorado and North Carolina and I especially want to thank Senator BENNET for his leadership on this issue. I was proud to help them by including it in the highway legislation mentioned by the Senator from Colorado and I regret that the measure is not included in any of the bills we are considering as we wind down this Congress. I would like to commit to working with my colleagues to find an appropriate vehicle for moving this proposal early next year.

Mr. HATCH. Madam President, I was a cosponsor of this amendment to the highway bill in the Finance Committee and understand the importance of equalizing the tax rate between LNG and propane and diesel fuel. Unfortunately, we cannot add this amendment that I support to this time-sensitive legislation. Senator BURR and Senator BENNET, I hope to find an opportunity to include this important provision regarding LNG and propane in legislation next year. This inequitable treatment of LNG and propane deserves a better fate than what exists under current law. I especially want to thank Senator BURR for his tireless efforts on this issue.

SUPPORT OF DIVISION M OF THE CONSOLIDATED AND FURTHER CONTINUING APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2015, THE EXPATRIATE HEALTH COVERAGE CLARIFICATION ACT

Mr. CARPER. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent to engage in a colloquy with my colleague, Senator COONS.

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

Mr. CARPER. Madam President, along with my colleague Senator COONS, I rise today in support of Division M of the Consolidated and Further Continuing Appropriations Act, 2015, the Expatriate Health Coverage Clarification Act. I would also like to clarify the intent of this bipartisan and technical bill, which was necessary to clearly explain how the Affordable Care Act, ACA, should apply to U.S.-issued expatriate health insurance plans and to ensure that U.S. health insurers who provide expatriate health insurance plans encounter the same legal requirements and expectations as foreign expatriate health insurers.

Expatriate health insurance plans are high-quality and comprehensive health insurance plans intended for a globally mobile, highly skilled and sought-after workforce. Expatriate workers can be found in diverse industries and sectors, including corporations such as airlines and oil and gas exploration companies, nonprofit organizations, foreign aid groups, and contractors in conflict zones supporting or protecting U.S. troops and citizens. Expatriate workers often travel between multiple countries several times within 1 year or live in foreign countries for prolonged periods of time. These expatriate workers and their families typically require and depend on comprehensive health care services and other supporting services in multiple countries in the course of one year. U.S.-issued expatriate plans cover fewer than 500,000 individuals, which primarily include Americans working overseas.

My understanding and intent is that the Expatriate Health Coverage Clarification Act should make only limited and technical modifications to the ACA that apply to U.S. health insurers providing health insurance coverage to ''qualified expatriates'' as defined by this legislation. These modifications are necessary to ensure that U.S. insurance companies offering expatriate health plans can remain competitive in the global marketplace for these plans, alongside foreign insurers who are not subject to the same ACA requirements. This legislation should not affect current labor or immigration laws or regulations. I have worked hand-in-hand with Senators COONS, TOOMEY, RUBIO, HARKIN, WYDEN, ALEXANDER, HATCH, and a bipartisan group of our House colleagues to ensure that the Expatriate Health Coverage Clarification Act is narrowly written to respect, and leave undisturbed, our existing immigration laws and regulations.

Mr. COONS. Madam President, As Senator CARPER noted, the Expatriate Health Coverage Clarification Act should not reduce the Affordable Care Act's health insurance coverage protections based on U.S. workers' immigration status, including those employed with nonimmigrant work visas. We intend that the definition of ''qualified expatriate'' be closely adhered to in the implementation of this legislation by the administration, the health insurance companies that seek to offer expatriate health plans, and the employers who utilize these plans on behalf of their workers who are transferred or assigned both within or outside the United States.

It is my expectation that expatriate health plan enrollment should remain relatively constant, accounting for the normal ebbs and flows of the demand of and supply for expatriate workers. The provisions of this bill apply to the two Federal laws that it seeks to modify—the Affordable Care Act and the Health Care and Education Reconciliation Act. It is not Congress's intent to affect other Federal law. As Senator CARPER stated, the legislation would not change existing immigration law or regulations—including those that

govern benefit equivalency between nonimmigrant visa holders and their U.S. counterparts. It is also not Congress's intent to impact or diminish in any way an employee's rights under title VII of the Civil Rights Act or any other antidiscrimination protections or to preempt any relevant State law governing employees' rights.

The Expatriate Health Coverage Clarification Act is a bipartisan, technical clarification of health insurance law, intended to place U.S. expatriate health insurers on equal footing with their foreign counterparts. We look forward to the passage of this bill and are grateful for the bipartisan coalition that has worked so constructively to find a path forward on this issue.

STATEMENT IN SUPPORT OF DIVISION M OF THE CONSOLIDATED AND FURTHER CONTINUING APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2015, THE EXPATRIATE HEALTH COVERAGE CLARIFICATION ACT

Mr. WYDEN. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that a statement in support of Division M of the Consolidated and Further Continuing Appropriations Act, 2015, the Expatriate Health Coverage Clarification Act be printed in the RECORD.

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

STATEMENT OF SENATORS WYDEN, HATCH, HARKIN, ALEXANDER, SESSIONS, CARPER, TOOMEY, COONS, AND RUBIO IN SUPPORT OF DIVISION M OF THE CONSOLIDATED AND FURTHER CONTINUING APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2015, THE EXPATRIATE HEALTH COVERAGE CLARIFICATION ACT

The undersigned submit the following Statement for the Record in support of Division M of the Consolidated and Further Continuing Appropriations Act, 2015, the Expatriate Health Coverage Clarification Act, as amended by Senators Carper, Toomey, Coons, and Rubio.

The Expatriate Health Coverage Clarification Act is a bipartisan, technical clarification of health insurance law, intended to place U.S. expatriate health insurers on equal footing with their foreign counterparts. We look forward to the passage of Division M and are grateful for the bipartisan coalition that has worked so constructively to find a path forward.

The purpose of this bipartisan and technical bill is to ensure that U.S. health insurers who provide expatriate health insurance plans encounter the same legal requirements and expectations as foreign expatriate health insurers. Further, it is important to clarify that the intent of the language regarding the application of section 4980I of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to ''qualified expatriates'' who are ''assigned'' to work in the United States means that, notwithstanding other provisions in the Expatriate Health Coverage Clarification Act, the excise tax continues to apply in the case of highly skilled qualified expatriates, as defined by this legislation, who are newly assigned to work within the United States in a specialty occupation and should not apply with respect to qualified expatriates working in the United States with L, E, O, and R visa classifications. Furthermore, this legislation is not intended to expand the universe of eligible employer-sponsored coverage to which section 4980I applies.

The Department of the Treasury will be drafting regulations to implement the portions of Expatriate Health Coverage Clarification Act that fall within its responsibility. It is important to highlight the definition of ''qualified expatriates'' who are ''assigned'' to work in the United States because it is the intent of Congress that the Treasury regulation relating to Expatriate Health Coverage Clarification Act, and code section 4980I, in particular be promulgated and implemented in a timely and workable manner.

NOMINATION OF DR. VIVEK MURTHY

Ms. MIKULSKI. Madam President, I urge the Senate to schedule an immediate vote on the nomination of Dr. Vivek Murthy to serve as the next Surgeon General of the United States. One year ago, President Obama nominated Dr. Murthy to serve as our next Surgeon General. Ten months ago, Dr. Murthy's nomination was approved by the Senate Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions, HELP, Committee. Since then, his nomination has stalled. I, along with many of my colleagues, have written to Senate leadership, requesting an immediate floor vote. Yet—here we are—still no vote.

The Surgeon General serves as ''America's Doctor.'' He ensures Americans are receiving the very best scientific information available in order to improve their health and reduce risk of injury or illness. The Surgeon General also oversees the U.S. Public Health Service Commissioned Corps, a group of 7,000 men and women who are uniformed public health professionals working throughout the federal government to protect, promote, and advance our Nation's health. Finally, the Surgeon General is responsible for chairing the National Prevention Council.

The urgent need to have a Surgeon General in place and at-the-ready is never more evident than when we are confronted with a public health crisis, as we are now. Over the past many months, our global community has struggled to respond to the Ebola epidemic plaguing West Africa and threatening communities nationwide. The United States has been rightly focused on dealing with the epidemic at its epicenter in West Africa, protecting our ports of entry, and protecting America's public health. Yet, our response has been hindered because we do not have a confirmed U.S. Surgeon General in place.

Households across our nation were flooded with misinformation and confusion when Ebola was first diagnosed in the United States. If Dr. Murthy had been in place as Surgeon General, he would have been responsible for increasing public understanding about Ebola; providing accurate, important, and timely medical information; and helping to ease fears. As ''America's Doctor'' he would have provided an additional trusted voice that could have communicated with the public and helped address their concerns. Instead, ''America's Doctor'' was sitting on the sidelines awaiting a Senate vote on his nomination.

Like so many of us, Dr. Murthy is the son of immigrant parents. He completed his early education in Miami, FL, and attended college at Harvard University where he received a bachelor's degree in biochemical sciences. He went on to receive an MD from the Yale School of Medicine and an MBA in Health Care Management from the Yale School of Management. He completed his residency in Internal Medicine at Brigham and Woman's Hospital.

As a physician at Brigham and Women's Hospital, Dr. Murthy has cared for patients with a range of illnesses from diabetes and cardiovascular disease to cancer and infections. As a researcher, he has worked on vaccine development and he has studied the inclusion of women and minorities in clinical trials. As a teacher at Harvard Medical School, he knows what issues face our next generation of doctors. As a public health educator, Dr. Murthy created HIV/AIDS education programs for thousands of young people through an organization he cofounded. He built a rural community health partnership in India to train young women to be health care educators and leaders. As an organizational leader, Dr. Murthy cofounded a national medical organization, Doctors for America, to improve communication between physicians, patients, and policy makers. Finally, as a leader in prevention, he served on the Advisory Group to the National Prevention Council and helped develop the nation's first National Prevention Strategy. I think it is pretty clear that Dr. Murthy has the background and the boots on the ground expertise to serve as our Nation's 19th Surgeon General.

Doubts about his ability to serve as Surgeon General are not the problem holding up his nomination. I fear that policy matters outside the scope of this position are actually to blame. I hope that my colleagues do not let public policy debates unrelated to the position in which he would serve stall his nomination any longer.

Dr. Murthy's nomination has received widespread support from local, State, and national public health organizations including the American Academy of Pediatrics, American Cancer Society, American Diabetes Association, American Heart Association, and American Public Health Association.

It is time to confirm Dr. Murthy as our Nation's 19th Surgeon General. It is time to take ''America's Doctor'' off the sidelines and put him into the game. Thank you.

ENACTMENT OF THE HARRIET TUBMAN NATIONAL HISTORICAL PARKS ACT

Mr. CARDIN. Madam President, I wish to celebrate the long awaited enactment of the Harriet Tubman National Historical Parks Act, a bill to establish the Harriet Tubman Underground Railroad National Historical Park on the Eastern Shore of Maryland and the Harriet Tubman National Historical Park in Auburn, NY. This is an effort that I have worked closely with Senators MIKULSKI, SCHUMER and GILLIBRAND as well as Secretary Clinton, when she represented New York in this body, and mark the culmination of the legislative work on this effort started by my predecessor, Senator Sarbanes when he passed legislation commissioning the National Service to conduct a Special Resource Study on Harriet Tubman. We all share a deep appreciation for how important establishing these parks is to preserving the legacy of this remarkable historical figure in American History but also to how important these parks will be to the communities where they will be located.

In my career, I have spoken on the Senate Floor, at events in Maryland, in meetings with constituents and with my colleagues about Harriet Tubman's legacy. While I hope each opportunity I have taken to discuss the life of this remarkable woman helps raise awareness about her importance to the history of our great nation, my ultimate goal has always been to properly commemorate her life and her work by establishing the Harriet Tubman Underground Railroad National Historical Park on the Eastern Shore of Maryland and, to establish the Harriet Tubman National Historical Park in Auburn, NY.

For the last 7 years I have championed the legislation that was enacted today as part of the National Defense Authorization Act.

I also greatly appreciate the support this legislation received in the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee and the Senate as a whole. In both this Congress and the 112 Congress, the Harriet Tubman National Historical Parks Act was reported out of committee with bipartisan support including the support of Chairwoman LANDRIEU and Ranking Member MURKOWSKI. I am incredibly grateful for the work of the Chair and Ranking Member, and their staffs, to maintain progress on the bill which has led to its passage today.

The establishment of the Harriet Tubman Historical Parks has been years in the making and is long overdue. The mission of the National Park Service has evolved over time from not only preserving natural wonders across the U.S. for recreational purposes but also commemorating unique places of significance to historical events and extraordinary Americans that have shaped our nation.

The woman, who is known to us as Harriet Tubman, was born in approximately 1822 in Dorchester County, MD, and given the name Araminta, Minty, Ross. She spent nearly 30 years of her life in slavery on Maryland's Eastern Shore. She worked on a number of different plantations on Maryland's Eastern Shore and as a teenager was trained to be a seamstress. As an adult she took the first name Harriet, and when she was 25 years-old married John Tubman.

In her late twenties, Harriet Tubman escaped from slavery in 1849. She fled in the dead of night, navigating the maze of tidal streams and wetlands that, to this day, comprise the Eastern Shore's landscape. She did so alone, demonstrating courage, strength and fortitude that became her hallmarks. Not satisfied with attaining her own freedom, she returned repeatedly for more than 10 years to the places of her enslavement in Dorchester and Caroline counties where, under the most adverse conditions, she led away many family members and other slaves to freedom in the Northeastern United States. She helped develop a complex network of safe houses and recruited abolitionist sympathizers residing along secret routes connecting the Southern slave states and Northern Free States. No one knows exactly how many people she led to freedom or the number of trips between the North and South she led, but the legend of her work was an inspiration to the multitude of slaves seeking freedom and to abolitionists fighting to end slavery. Tubman became known as ''the Moses of her people'' by African-Americans and white abolitionists alike. Tubman once proudly told Frederick Douglass that in all of her journeys she ''never lost a single passenger.'' She was so effective that in 1856 there was a $40,000 reward offered for her capture in the South. She is the most famous and most important conductor of the network of resistance known as the Underground Railroad.

During the Civil War, Tubman served the Union forces as a spy, a scout and a nurse. She served in Virginia, Florida, and South Carolina. She is credited with leading slaves from those slave states to freedom during those years as well.

Following the Civil War, and the emancipation of all black slaves, Tubman settled in Auburn, NY. There she was active in the women's suffrage movement, and she also established one of the first incorporated African-American homes for aged to care for the elderly. In 1903 she bequeathed the Tubman Home to the African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church in Auburn where it stands to this day. Harriet Tubman died in Auburn in 1913 and she is buried in the Fort Hill Cemetery. Fortunately many of the structures and landmarks in New York remain intact and in relatively good condition.

Only recently has the Park Service begun establishing units dedicated to the lives of African-Americans. Places like Booker T. Washington National Monument on the campus of the Tuskegee University in Alabama, the George Washington Carver National Monument in Missouri, The Buffalo Soldiers at Guadalupe Mountains National Park, the National Historical Trail commemorating the March for Voting Rights from Selma to Montgomery Alabama, and most recently the Martin Luther King Jr. memorial on the National Mall are all important monuments and places of historical significance that help tell the story of the African-American experience.

As the National Park Service continues its important work to recognize and preserve African-American history by providing greater public access and information about the places and people that have shaped the African-American experience, there are very few units dedicated to the lives of African-American women, and there are no National Historical Parks commemorating African-American women.

I cannot think of a more fitting hero than Harriet Tubman to be the first African-American woman to be memorialized with National Historical Parks that tell both her personal story and her lifelong fight for justice and freedom starting with her fight against the cruel institution of slavery and work of the Underground Railroad she led to her work in the women's suffrage movement.

I am grateful for the support of my colleagues. These parks will hopefully pave the way for the Park Service to develop more National Historical Parks commemorating the lives of many other important African-American women in our history.

The vision for the Tubman National Historical Parks is to preserve the places significant to the life of Harriet Tubman and tell her story through interpretative activities and continue to discover aspects of her life and the experience of passage along the Underground Railroad through archaeological research and discovery.

The buildings and structures in Maryland have mostly disappeared. Slaves were forced to live in primitive buildings even though many slaves were skilled tradesmen who constructed the substantial homes of their owners. Not surprisingly, few of the structures associated with the early years of Tubman's life remain standing today. The landscape of the Eastern Shore of Maryland, however, is still evocative of the time that Tubman lived there. Farm fields and loblolly pine forests dot the lowland landscape, which is also notable for its extensive network of tidal rivers and wetlands that Tubman, and the people she guided to freedom, under the cover of night. In particular, a number of properties including the homestead of Ben Ross, her father, Stewart's Canal, where he worked, the Brodess Farm, where she worked as a slave, and others are within the master plan boundaries of the Blackwater National Wildlife Refuge.

Similarly, Poplar Neck, the plantation from which she escaped to freedom, is still largely intact in Caroline County. The properties in Talbot County, immediately across the Choptank River from the plantation, are currently protected by various conservation easements. Were she alive today, Tubman would recognize much of the landscape that she knew intimately as she secretly led black men, women and children to freedom.

There has never been any doubt that Tubman led an extraordinary life. Her contributions to American history are surpassed by few. Determining the most appropriate way to recognize that life and her contributions, however, has been exceedingly difficult. The National Park Service determined that designating a Historical Park that would include two geographically separate units would be an appropriate tribute to the life of this extraordinary American. The New York unit would include the tightly clustered Tubman buildings in the town of Auburn. The Maryland portion would include large sections of landscapes that are evocative of Tubman's time and are historically relevant.

Harriet Tubman was a true American patriot. She was someone for whom liberty and freedom were not just concepts but values she fought tirelessly for. She lived those principles and so selflessly helped others attain freedom. In doing so, she has earned a Nation's respect and honor.

Harriet Tubman is one of many great Americans that we honor and celebrate every February during Black History Month. In schools across the country, American History curriculums teach our children about Tubman's courage, conviction, her fight for freedom and her contributions to the greatness of our Nation during a contentious time in U.S. history. Now it is time to add to Tubman's legacy by preserving and commemorating the places evocative of Harriet Tubman's extraordinary life.

Every year, millions of school children, as well as millions of adults, visit our National Historical Parks gain the experience and knowledge about our Nation's history that simply cannot be found in history books or on the Internet. Our Nation's strength and character comes from the actions of the Americans who came before us and the significant events that shaped our Nation. The National Park Service is engaged in the important work of preserving the places where American history was made and providing a tangible experience for current and future generations to experience and understand. It is one thing to learn about Harriet Tubman from a book, and it is yet a completely different and fulfilling experience to explore, see, listen to and feel the places where she worked as a slave, where she escaped from and where she lived out her life as a free American.

The National Park Service is uniquely suited to honor and preserve these places of historical significance and I urge my colleagues to join me in preserving and growing the legacy of Harriet Tubman by establishing the Harriet Tubman National Historical Parks in her honor.

BROWNS CANYON NATIONAL MONUMENT BILL

Mr. UDALL of Colorado. Madam President, I submit this statement for the RECORD to clarify several provisions in my Browns Canyon national monument and wilderness bill, S. 1794. I have asked President Obama to use this bill as the model for a designation of 22,000 acres of Browns Canyon as a national monument under the Antiquities Act because it contains many specific provisions that were developed in careful consultation with the community.

I introduced my bill over a year ago after 18 months of working side-by-side with Chaffee County residents and other stakeholders. I held public listening sessions, received thousands of written comments, and my staff and I conducted over 50 meetings. The resulting bill was emblematic of how public lands bills should be done: from the bottom up and based on what the community wants.

Browns Canyon is a unique natural resource. Hundreds of thousands of visitors come to Browns Canyon year after year to raft or kayak the canyon's exciting whitewater rapids or to fish the Gold Medal trout waters of the Arkansas River. But there is a lot more to this landscape than just the river. The rugged and remote lands to the east feature quiet canyons and rock formations, outstanding habitat for bighorn sheep and elk, and sweeping views of the Collegiate Peaks and Arkansas Valley.

Protecting Browns Canyon has a wide base of support, including more than 200 local businesses and sportsmen who welcome the area's Gold Medal trout waters and big game hunting opportunities. Both the town of Buena Vista and the city of Salida passed resolutions of support, and a majority of the Chaffee County commissioners support the proposal with its carefully crafted conditions. The Denver Post and local Salida Mountain Mail have editorialized in favor of an Executive action. Indeed, I hosted a public meeting in Salida last weekend—attended by senior State and Federal officials, including U.S. Senator MICHAEL BENNET, U.S. Forest Service Chief Tom Tidwell and Bureau of Land Management Deputy Director Steve Ellis—to gauge public support for protecting this nationally significant landmark. The more than 500 attendees at the standing-room-only meeting overwhelmingly endorsed the idea, noting how a national monument designation would boost the local economy, support Main Street businesses and help protect Colorado's special way of life.

The intent of my Browns Canyon national monument bill is to preserve this special place just as it is now—for us and future generations. Therefore, I submit this statement to clarify the intent behind several key passages related to the role of the State of Colorado, water rights, and livestock grazing.

First, I want to recognize the model partnership between the Bureau of Land Management and the State of Colorado that has been in place since 1989 to manage the 148 miles of the Arkansas River corridor. This partnership is known as the Arkansas Headwaters Recreation Area, AHRA, and includes Browns Canyon. The intent is that the Browns Canyon National Monument will have no impact on this partnership. However, it is also the intent that the Federal agencies will closely consult with the State of Colorado on the development of a comprehensive management plan for the national monument, and that the State could be a cosignatory to the plan. The State of Colorado has interests beyond just the AHRA because it will manage the wildlife in the National Monument and has a stake in maintaining the economic viability of associated industries, such as outdoor recreation and agriculture.

Second, the intent is that the Browns Canyon National Monument shall not have any impact on the existing water rights of any party. It is also the intent that the national monument will not have any effect on how river flows are managed and administered, such as the current Voluntary Flow Management Program in place for the Arkansas River.

Finally, as I have stated previously before the National Parks Subcommittee, it is critical that local ranchers maintain flexibility to run livestock in the national monument and transfer their grazing allotments to future generations. To address this, I included legislative language that all existing laws continue to apply just as they did before the monument was designated. Colorado's farms and ranches are an important part of my State's economy and identity—and produce food and fiber for the world. In particular, cattlemen and women play a critical role in the economy, culture, and heritage of the Arkansas River Valley. Therefore, Browns Canyon National Monument must support that industry and educate visitors about its role.

Browns Canyon National Monument is an idea whose time has come, and I am proud to have led this most recent effort in a 20-year campaign to protect this spectacular and nationally significant resource.

FAREWELL TO THE SENATE

Mr. UDALL of Colorado. Madam President, it is humbling to stand here to speak one final time with my colleagues as a United States Senator.

As a lifelong mountain climber, I have learned far more from the mountains I did not summit, than those I did. Every climb, I have found, offers a

chance to look back and reflect, and standing here today gives me a unique opportunity to appreciate just how far we have come.

For the past 18 years, my most rewarding challenge has been exercising the power lent to me by the people of Colorado to fight on their behalf, first in the State House and then in the U.S. Congress. Throughout my career in public service—my 6 years in the U.S. Senate being but one chapter—I have always been guided by the rugged independence, strength and cooperative spirit that defines who we are as Coloradans and as Westerners.

That spirit helped me craft solutions to long-standing problems in my home State of Colorado. From my very first week in the U.S. Senate, I worked at resolving the decades-long impasse between southern Colorado ranchers and the U.S. Army, which uses the land surrounding Piñon Canyon to train soldiers for deployment into war zones. After 5 years of listening and lots of hard work, we reached a deal that protects the property rights of landowners while ensuring our troops are prepared to defend our Nation. It was a teamwork-oriented approach that reflected Colorado's best problem-solving traditions.

I have said for years that Coloradans pull together come hell or high water. Little did I know that this saying would prove itself to be true during my time in the U.S. Senate, from wildfires that left thousands homeless to a biblical flood in 2013 that swept over much of the Front Range. Despite the partisan Federal Government shutdown of 2013, we delivered more than $770 million in emergency flood support and marshalled nearly $2.5 billion in additional Federal assistance so that Colorado could rebuild better and stronger than before. This disaster relief work includes conservation easements and watershed protection funds to ward off future floods and a series of next-generation air tankers to help us fight fires for decades to come. This is in addition to the more immediate support needed to rebuild roads, bridges, and the infrastructure that our communities depend on.

Our uniquely Western perspective holds that compromise is not capitulation, and that we are stronger when every member of the community has a seat at the table—not just the privileged. This is a cause that my family has championed for generations and it is a creed that should continue to drive all Coloradans who answer the call to serve.

At this point in our politics, Americans are rightly impatient with the willful, partisan gridlock and dysfunction in Washington. Yet, in Colorado, we know that by working together we have been able to keep our State moving forward and do our part to overcome Washington silliness for the good of the Nation.

But even as we keep our eyes on the horizon and the work we still have to do, it is also important that we protect our special way of life—and safeguard our land, water and air for future generations. I strongly believe that we do not inherit the earth from our parents—we borrow it from our children. That is why I have championed efforts to preserve our public lands and the special places and natural wonders that define Colorado. Those efforts include creating new wilderness areas around James Peak, ensuring that future generations can experience the beauty of the Great Sand Dunes and Chimney Rock, and turning Rocky Flats—a former nuclear weapons facility—into a wildlife refuge. I will continue working hard to protect Brown's Canyon, which I hope to see designated as a national monument in the days ahead.

Protecting these special places along with our clean air and water is just part of the larger fight to confront the challenges and opportunities posed by climate change. Colorado has long led the Nation's pursuit of a balanced, forward-thinking energy strategy. Much of the progress Colorado has made came after I fought alongside Republican Speaker of the Colorado House Lola Spradley in 2004 to pass our State's first renewable electricity standard. This was the Nation's first democratically-passed renewable energy policy, and one which has actually been strengthened and added to since it was created. Since then, Colorado's renewable electricity standard has increased from its start at 10 percent to the 30 percent it is today. It has become a model for the Nation in how to create good-paying clean energy jobs while fighting the causes of climate change.

I built on this effort in the U.S. Senate by successfully pushing to extend the Production Tax Credit for wind energy. This has been a years-long, bipartisan effort that I am proud to have led alongside Senator GRASSLEY from Iowa. From coming to the floor more than two-dozen times to explain the importance of wind State-by-State and to demand an extension in 2012, to fighting to extend the wind tax credit again this year, I have never given up on Colorado's thriving wind-energy industry and the more than 5,000 jobs it supports across the State. This is the sort of common-sense, bipartisan policy that helps hardworking American families today but is also part of implementing a clean energy future for generations to come.

As a Nation, over the past few years, we have persevered through difficult times to continue building toward a more perfect union. When our country was faced with the possibility of another Great Depression, we took decisive action—avoiding financial collapse, supporting 6 straight years of job growth in private industry, and making smart investments in everything from repairing our crumbling roads to re-invigorating Denver's historic Union Station. That is something to be proud of. There's a lot more to be done—but it is important to pause and note the successful milestones we have already reached on the road to recovery.

Despite a flawed roll-out, the Nation's healthcare law has increased access to quality health coverage for more than 400,000 Coloradans, helped families lower expenses and plan their future with free contraceptive care, and kept costs down for the first time in decades. This is helping to keep families out of bankruptcy and making sure that all Americans—not just the wealthiest among us—receive the care they and their families deserve.

Thomas Jefferson once said that a true patriot loves her country not just for what it is . . . but for what it can be. I think a country where every family can rest easy knowing that they will never be left in the cold again when it comes to accessing health care is a cause worth fighting for, and I could not be more grateful to those who have fought alongside me to make that a reality. At the same time, we must also continue to monitor closely its implementation to ensure we identify and correct any unexpected and uneven impacts on Coloradans and Americans.

While protecting Americans from the abuses of an out-of-control healthcare system is an achievement we should all celebrate, I have been equally as passionate about upholding the Bill of Rights and protecting our freedom and right to equality. We still have a ways to go, but I am proud to have followed in the footsteps of so many great leaders, including many in my own family, who fought to make sure America lives up to the values enshrined in our Constitution.

Many of you may recall that my father, Mo, helped to integrate the University of Arizona, when it was beset by racial divisions. My grandfather, Levi, issued a famous court decision that recognized Native Americans' constitutionally protected right to vote in our elections. My uncle Stewart challenged discrimination in our Nation's capital when he confronted the Washington football team to demand they allow black athletes to play alongside white athletes. It has been these examples among so many others that inspired me to take action when I felt we were not living up to our constitutional ideals.

That includes leading the successful fight to repeal the military's discriminatory ''Don't Ask, Don't Tell'' policy that had so shamefully kept gay and lesbian Americans from openly serving their country in the Armed Forces. It includes passing landmark hate crimes prevention legislation and a law to make it easier for women to fight wage discrimination.

While there is much work left to be done to protect our constitutional rights, I am proud to have led the effort to reconcile the enormous power of our Nation's intelligence agencies with the bedrock principles of our democracy. We have proven that the choice

between ensuring our security and protecting our privacy is a false choice, and that we can keep faith with our Nation's founding principles while also safeguarding our communities. So when the CIA tortured people in the name of the Americans it was supposed to serve, we were strong enough as a Nation to admit our mistakes and commit to learning from this dark period in our Nation's history. That is why I led the fight on the Intelligence Committee to declassify the findings of our landmark report on the CIA's Detention and Interrogation Program, to make sure that future presidents and intelligence community leaders do not violate the principles that make America so exceptional.

These are all important accomplishments—but I would be remiss if I did not acknowledge that true leadership is a team sport. I have been fortunate to be surrounded by many people whose insights, counsel and contributions have made me a stronger and more effective advocate for Colorado. In particular, I want to point out that former Colorado U.S. Senator Gary Hart has been a key, trusted advisor and a dear friend throughout my 18 years of public service. I want to thank my Chief of Staff, Michael Sozan, who has guided my Senate office with a steady hand for the last 6 years . . . and my State Director, Jen Rokala, who I have had the pleasure of working with over the past 15 years as we served the people of Colorado. I also want to thank Joe Britton, my Deputy Chief of Staff; Jake Swanton, my Legislative Director; John Fossum, my administrative director; and Mike Saccone, my Communications Director, for ably guiding me and my office.

Even before coming to the Senate, I had the pleasure of working with many dedicated people who put everything on the line to better serve Colorado. I want to thank Alan Salazar, my former Chief of Staff, along with Laura Davis, Lisa Carpenter, Stan Sloss, Doug Young, Cookab Hashemi, and Tara Trujillo for their guidance, patience, and good humor. I also want to thank two staffers who have been with me from the start: Jennifer Barrett, one of my most trusted advisers, and Carter Ellison, my constituent services director. The list of talented and driven people who have worked with me over the years is too long to read but their commitment to serving Colorado and our Nation fills me with awe. I will miss my team greatly.

It also has been my honor to serve as a member of the Senate Armed Services Committee for the last 6 years—and on the House Armed Services Committee before that. During that time, I had the privilege of working on behalf of the tremendous men and women who defend our Nation. I have witnessed their great courage, professionalism and commitment in performing dangerous missions in Iraq, Afghanistan, Djibouti and other places around the world. I have been humbled by the indomitable spirit of our wounded warriors recovering at Walter Reed, Bethesda and in Colorado. I have mourned our fallen. Their sacrifice, and the loss that is borne by their families and a grateful Nation, is never far from my mind. To all those who have served, and to all their loved ones, I offer my deepest thanks and my never ending gratitude.

When I first came to the U.S. Senate, I told my colleagues that we were not elected to solve Democratic or Republican problems, but to find uniquely American solutions to our toughest challenges. Just like mountain climbers who are all on the same rope, we know that we are all in this together—and that we are only truly successful when we all succeed together.

The great writer Wallace Stegner challenged us to build communities to match our scenery. In a narrow sense, that means that we should strive to make our society as beautiful and thriving as the natural landscape that surrounds us. But in a broader sense, it also means that our communities should bring out the best in us, and that we should never stop building on the uniquely independent yet cooperative spirit that makes Colorado great.

That is the spirit that has guided me throughout my time in public service, and it is the spirit that will continue to guide me as I find new ways to keep Colorado and our country moving forward.

It has been the greatest privilege of my life to be a United States Senator from Colorado and I will be forever grateful for having had the challenge and the opportunity to serve our great country.

TRIBUTES TO DEPARTING SENATORS

SAXBY CHAMBLISS

Mr. HATCH. Madam President, I rise today to honor my good friend Senator SAXBY CHAMBLISS on the occasion of his retirement. For 20 years, he has served his fellow Georgians in Congress with honor and distinction. He will be sorely missed.

A preacher's son, SAXBY was born in Warrenton, NC. He graduated from the University of Georgia and the University of Tennessee College of Law. As a lawyer in south Georgia, he built a successful law practice representing the farmers that are the lifeblood of his state.

He put his expertise on farm issues to good use here in Congress and became a key player in negotiations for each of the farm bills considered during his tenure. And just 2 years after he was elected to the Senate, he assumed the chairmanship of the Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry Committee, the fastest any new Senator has risen to chair a standing committee since 1947.

SAXBY and I served together for many years on the Select Committee on Intelligence, where I came to appreciate his wisdom, his sound judgment, and his unyielding commitment to keeping this nation safe. He has been an enormously effective vice chairman over the past 4 years. And even as his tenure here draws to a close, he has once again demonstrated his superb leadership in setting the record straight on the Intelligence Committee's investigation of the CIA's detention and interrogation program.

Above all else, SAXBY is a proud husband, father of two, and grandfather of six. I know that his lovely wife Julianne and the rest of his family are eager to spend more time together in the coming years.

Mr. President, SAXBY and the entire Chambliss family should know that his colleagues, his fellow Georgians, and his fellow Americans are truly grateful for SAXBY's service and his family's sacrifices. I wish them all the best.

TOM COBURN

Madam President, I also pay tribute to my friend TOM COBURN as he prepares to leave the Senate. For 10 years, TOM has served the people of Oklahoma as their junior Senator. He is a man of principle and fierce determination. He has shown himself willing time and again to stand up to special interests and to fight for what he believes in. He will be missed.

Senator COBURN was born in Casper, Wyoming, in 1948 and was raised in Muskogee, OK. His father Orin was a prominent optician and the founder of Coburn Optical Industries. TOM attended college at Oklahoma State University, where he graduated with a degree in accounting. From 1970 to 1978 he was a manufacturing manager at his family's company. After a bout with cancer, TOM returned to school to become a physician, graduating in 1983 from the University of Oklahoma Medical School. Following his residency, TOM moved back to Muskogee to practice family medicine and obstetrics. He has personally delivered more than 4,000 babies.

Senator COBURN began his career in public service in 1994, when he was elected to the U.S. House of Representatives from Oklahoma. He served in the House for 6 years, then went back to Muskogee to resume his medical practice. Three years later, in 2004, TOM was elected to the U.S. Senate to fill the seat being vacated by retiring Senator Don Nickles. Here in the Senate he has served with distinction on a number of important committees, including the Committee on Homeland Security and Government Affairs, of which he is the Ranking Member.

Since first arriving in Congress, Senator COBURN has been a strong proponent of fiscal restraint. His efforts to fight deficit spending, pork barrel projects, and earmarks earned him the nickname ''Dr. No.'' I have always thought this nickname was a compliment to TOM. It shows he is willing to stand up against powerful interests in defense of his principles, and that he takes seriously the problems of unnecessary spending and long-term debt.

Passing a balanced budget amendment has been a priority of mine for many years, and I have been glad to count TOM as a strong ally in that effort.

I have also been fortunate to work with Senator COBURN on a number of other issues during his time in the Senate. Earlier this year, TOM and I, along with Senator RICHARD BURR, introduced the Patient CARE Act, a market-based alternative to Obamacare. TOM and I have also worked together to fight waste and corruption at the Department of Health and Human Services and to reinvigorate the States' roles in meeting transportation, safety, and other needs.

Madam President, Senator COBURN is an honorable and steadfast man. He has served his country well. I wish him, his wife Carolyn, and their family the very best.

MIKE JOHANNS

Madam President, as well I honor my colleague and friend MIKE JOHANNS. For many years, Senator JOHANNS has worked tirelessly for the people of Nebraska, first at the local level, then at the state level as Governor, and most recently as senior Senator from Nebraska. MIKE is a kind and thoughtful man, and I have been grateful to serve with him these past 6 years.

Senator JOHANNS was born and raised in Osage, IA, where he grew up working on his family's farm. After high school, he attended Saint Mary's University of Minnesota and Creighton University School of Law. Following law school MIKE clerked on the Nebraska Supreme Court and then practiced law in Lincoln, NE, where he was a founding partner at the firm Nelson, Johanns, Morris, Holdeman, and Titus.

In 1983, Senator JOHANNS was elected to the Lancaster County Board. Five years later he won election to the Lincoln City Council, and then, 3 years after that, became Mayor of Lincoln. MIKE followed his success in local politics with success in state politics. In 1998, he won his first term as Governor of Nebraska, and was reelected by a landslide 4 years later.

Senator JOHANNS entered national politics in 2004 when President George W. Bush asked him to serve as Secretary of Agriculture. Four years later he won election to the U.S. Senate from Nebraska, where he has served with distinction ever since.

When he retires later this month, Senator JOHANNS will have spent more than 25 years as a public servant. I commend him for his service to the state of Nebraska and to the people of this Nation.

Although his tenure in the Senate was brief, Senator JOHANNS wasted no time. His previous experience as Secretary of Agriculture proved indispensable as a member of the Senate Committee on Agriculture. To this committee, he brought an expertise on farming issues unrivaled by other freshman senators. He also served actively on the Banking Committee and was a member of the Senate's Gang of Eight during budget negotiations in 2011. Throughout his service, Senator JOHANNS always had the best interests of the Nation at heart.

Madam President, Senator JOHANNS is a good man who has served his country well. His retirement is well deserved. I wish him, his wife Stephanie, and their children the best going forward.

JAY ROCKEFELLER

Madam President, in addition I pay tribute to my friend and colleague JAY ROCKEFELLER, who will soon retire from the Senate. I have known JAY for many years. He is a man of principle who has dedicated his life to serving the citizens of West Virginia. He is a serious legislator and an honorable man. I will miss him.

Senator ROCKEFELLER is a member of a prominent and distinguished American family. He is the great-grandson of John D. Rockefeller, the founder of Standard Oil. JAY was born in New York City and attended school at Phillips Exeter Academy and Harvard College, from which he earned an A.B. After college JAY worked for the Peace Corps and the Department of Far Eastern Affairs. He then went to work for the Volunteers in Service to America (VISTA) program, during which time he moved to West Virginia.

Senator ROCKEFELLER began his political career in 1966, when he was elected to the West Virginia House of Delegates. Two years he later became the West Virginia Secretary of State. After a brief stint as President of West Virginia Wesleyan College, JAY returned to public service in 1976, when he was elected Governor of West Virginia. Following two successful terms as Governor, he won election to the U.S. Senate in 1984, where he has served ever since.

Senator ROCKEFELLER has held a number of important positions in the Senate, including Chairman of the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence, where I was privileged to serve with him. This is a crucially important committee that deals with some of the weightiest issues that come before Congress. JAY led the committee with equanimity and respect. His work helped keep our country safe.

Senator ROCKEFELLER has also been an active legislator. I was honored to work with him on the creation of the State Children's Health Insurance Program, or SCHIP, which has made health insurance available to millions of children. Other issues JAY and I have worked on together over the years include tax reform, stem cell research, and protecting the American flag. He and I did not always see eye to eye, but I always knew he did what he thought was right.

Mr. President, I am grateful to have been able to serve alongside Senator ROCKEFELLER these past 30 years. He's a man of deep conviction, and a man utterly devoted to the people of his home state of West Virginia. I wish the very best for him, his wife Sharon, and their family as they enter the next chapter of their lives.

MARK PRYOR

Madam President, I also honor my friend MARK PRYOR. For 12 years Senator PRYOR has served the people of Arkansas in this body. He is independent, open-minded, and hard-working. He will be missed.

Senator PRYOR comes from a distinguished Arkansas political family. His father, David Pryor, was Governor of and later Senator from Arkansas. MARK was born in Fayetteville, AR, and attended college at the University of Arkansas. He received a law degree from the University of Arkansas School of Law and then spent several years in private practice.

In 1991, Senator PRYOR was elected to the Arkansas House of Representatives. Eight years later he was elected Attorney General of Arkansas. In 2002, MARK won election to the U.S. Senate from Arkansas, winning the same seat his father once held.

In the Senate, MARK has distinguished himself through his independence and his willingness to reach across party lines. Although MARK and I have not always agreed, I have always known he has acted in what he firmly believes are the best interests of his State.

Senator PRYOR has served on a number of important committees during his time in the Senate, including the Appropriations Committee, the Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee, and the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation. I have been fortunate to work with him on a number of important pieces of legislation, on topics ranging from medical care to homeland security to victim restitution. He has been a strong partner in these efforts, and I have been grateful to have him as an ally.

Senator PRYOR is a decent and thoughtful man. He has served his State honorably. I wish him and his family the very best.

JOHN WALSH

Madam President, finally I pay tribute to Senator JOHN WALSH. I have known JOHN for only a brief time, but I know that he is a good man who has served his country well.

Senator WALSH began his service to our country long before he came to the Senate. He joined the Montana National Guard right after high school—the start of an impressive military career. JOHN served 8 years as an enlisted U.S. Army soldier before he was commissioned as a Second Lieutenant in 1987. As an officer, he distinguished himself and quickly rose through the ranks.

Senator WALSH led the 163rd Infantry Battalion in Iraq, commanding more than 700 Army National Guard soldiers in combat. He later received the Bronze Star and the Combat Infantryman's badge for his service. In 2008, Governor Brian Schweitzer appointed JOHN the Adjutant General of Montana's National Guard. As Adjutant General,

JOHN oversaw the command of thousands of troops. These soldiers and their families looked to him for leadership and strength, and he always delivered.

Senator WALSH moved from military service to public office when he became Montana's Lieutenant Governor in 2013. Governor Steve Bullock appointed JOHN to fill former Senator Max Baucus's seat in February 2014, making JOHN the first Iraq War veteran to serve as a Senator.

Though his time here in the Senate was brief, Senator WALSH was an active member of the Committee on Rules and Administration; the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry; and the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation. He always treated me and our other colleagues with the utmost kindness and respect.

Senator WALSH is a good man who has dedicated his life to serving our country and keeping us safe. I wish him, his wife Janet, and their children the very best.

TOM COBURN

Mr. ENZI. Madam President, at the close of each session of Congress it is our tradition to take a moment to express our appreciation and say goodbye to those of our colleagues who will be retiring at the session's close. It is always a bittersweet moment to reflect on the important contributions our friends have made as they worked so hard to represent their States and our Nation.

Such an individual is TOM COBURN and that is just one of the reasons why we will miss him. TOM always has and always will be a strong voice for conservative values and principles. There are not many who can express their beliefs with the same kind of clarity and power he brings to the issues the Senate takes up for deliberations.

I will always believe that TOM has been so successful in his career as a political leader and a doctor because he began his life with one of the greatest of all advantages—he was born in Wyoming, in Casper. That was not all. He graduated from Oklahoma State University with a degree in accounting. As an accountant myself I was not surprised by that. His love of accounting, his fondness for numbers and details, and his Wyoming birth all help to explain his power of persuasion.

I am kidding about that but one thing that is true about his background is how his love of numbers and his understanding of budgets and accounting practices has helped him to understand the financial problems we currently face as a nation and the importance of taking action to address them before they get so far out of hand we will be jeopardizing the future of our children and our grandchildren.

That would have never happened on TOM's watch. Grandfathers are like that. With one eye on the bottom line and the other on the future of our Nation, TOM has developed an amazing knack for finding ways to cut waste and save money, time and effort. For TOM it is clear, if it is not worth doing at all, it is not worth doing well.

His insight and his immediate grasp of the essence of so many controversial and complicated issues has made him a great asset on the committees on which he has served. His willingness to get involved and lead on some pretty difficult issues has enabled him to make a difference that will be remembered around here for quite a while.

In our deliberations one of TOM's great weapons has been his mastery and understanding of the facts surrounding his positions on the issues we have taken up in committee and on the floor. He is an excellent speaker and when he talks we are all very attentive. The reason why is simple. If you agree with him you want to know what his views are so you will be able to strengthen your own arguments on the bill with some of his reflections and recommendations. If you disagree with him you will still want to hear him speak so you will know what the toughest arguments are you will be faced with during our deliberations.

No matter what side you are on, it is rare that anyone has ever questioned his facts. They may not like them—but you can not avoid acknowledging them.

In addition, as a father, a grandfather and a physician, TOM has been an outspoken advocate on health and medical issues. During his career he has worked to increase the access of seniors to the health care services they need. He has also been active in efforts to try to control health care costs and protect the right to life of the unborn.

He has such a strong kinship with the delegations of the West because TOM has a strong and heartfelt understanding of the challenges of our urban communities. I have often said one of our great battles here in Washington is to help our colleagues get a deeper understanding of the difference in life in the large eastern cities and the smaller rural communities of the West. It is a crucial difference that must be understood to get a better sense of what is needed to help both our rural and urban communities to grow and prosper.

In the next session I know we will miss him, his understanding of our conservative values and principles and his commitment to this generation and the next—and beyond. TOM knows that if future generations are to have it as good as we have we will all have to learn to get along with a little less.

Now TOM is closing that great chapter of his life that contains his service in the House and the Senate. It has not been easy. The House and Senate are very different places in which to work—and make progress but TOM has managed to do it—and he has the results to show for his efforts.

Thank you, TOM, for all you have done to make our Nation a better place to live. We are grateful for your service, for your vision for America and most of all, your commitment to the future of Oklahoma and our Nation. Please keep in touch with us. I am going to keep your number on speed dial in my office so I'll have it when one of those days comes along when I need a thoughtful word or two for a debate or a committee session. As the saying goes facts are tough and powerful things and when it comes to those issues in which he truly believes so is TOM COBURN.

TIM JOHNSON

Madam President, it is a tradition here in the Senate to take a moment before the end of each session of Congress to express our appreciation for the service of those Members who will be retiring at the end of the year. It is always a difficult time to lose some of our best and brightest. One fellow Senator I know we will all miss is TIM JOHNSON.

TIM has had quite a remarkable career and legacy of service to South Dakota of which he should be very proud. He came to the Senate to work for the people of his State and he did such a good job they kept sending him back. It is been a mutual admiration society—the people of South Dakota and TIM.

TIM followed a proven path of success for his service in Congress by first serving in the South Dakota State Legislature. He had a knack for getting things done there that it preceded him to serve in the House as South Dakota's at-large Representative. He quickly developed a reputation in the House as someone who had an abundance of good ideas. As a freshman he had a list of bills he had dropped in that was longer than any other freshman in the House. It was clear to everyone that TIM was the kind of person who knew how to get results.

TIM and I were part of the same freshman class of the Senate. Over the years I have enjoyed having a chance to come to know him. He has proved to be a good friend, a great ally and someone who was willing to work with members on all sides to get things done for South Dakota and our Nation.

For me, it meant a great deal to have a Senator from a neighboring State who had an understanding of our agriculture industry. As I have often said, urban life is very different from rural life and it was good to have someone to work with whose background made those issues and the need for action clear to him.

That is one of the reasons why TIM has such a strong understanding of one of the key issues of the West—water. For many of us water is something that we take for granted. It is easy. You turn on the tap and you can have as much as you want.

Unfortunately, for our rural communities, it is not that easy. Water is a precious commodity—down to the last drop. In fact, just about everyone from the West has heard the old adage, ''Whiskey is for drinking, Water is for fighting!''

It is a message that has stayed with TIM throughout his service in the House and the Senate. It has been a priority for him to ensure that good, clean water supplies are available to everyone in South Dakota and the West. That is why you will find his legislative record of accomplishments filled with his efforts to pass infrastructure projects to ensure our water supplies would be both reliable and available.

I could go on about his other accomplishments and our work together on agriculture issues but I would be here for quite a long time and not begin to make a dent in what he has been able to achieve during his career. Let me just say that the work TIM began in the State Legislature and continued when he came to Congress has helped to make South Dakota what it is today. I think by any standard he has done a good job and made the people of his home State proud.

Through the years, TIM has had some health problems, but he never let them stop him or slow him down in his work for South Dakota. Sometimes I think of him as a warrior—a quiet one—who is blessed with a spirit to work for the people of South Dakota that just can not be diminished.

When I think of TIM I will always think of him as someone who leads the best way, by example. I have learned a lot from him over the years and I think we have made a difference together in our shared commitment to our Nation's agriculture industry. We have worked on a lot of bills together and by placing both our names on a bill we made it a bipartisan effort that I would like to think drew a lot of other Members to our side to work with us.

Thank you, TIM, for your service, not only to South Dakota but to the West and to all our Nation. You have a lot to look back on with the satisfaction that comes from having done a job and done it well. Diana joins in sending our best wishes to you for your hard work and determined effort to address the problems and challenges of our Nation. Thanks, too, for your friendship. Good luck on the next chapter of the great adventure of your life.

CARL LEVIN

Mr. CASEY. Madam President, I wanted to speak today about Senator CARL LEVIN and his years of service to the Senate and the people of Michigan. Senator LEVIN has served 36 years and is Michigan's longest serving senator.

John F. Kennedy once said that ''leadership and learning are indispensable to each other.'' Senator LEVIN's time here has been an illustration of that statement, and I have experienced this firsthand ever since I arrived in the Senate in 2007 and sought his guidance on difficult issues like the war in Iraq. He is one of the best informed and knowledgeable members of the Senate.

CARL LEVIN has been a leader for years on the Senate Armed Services Committee and the Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations. Senator LEVIN has served as the Democratic leader of the Armed Services committee since 1997, a term that overlapped with several defining events for U.S. national security, including the terrorist attacks on September 11, 2001, the beginnings of the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq, the operation against Osama bin Laden and the current conflict against the terrorist group ISIS. Chairman LEVIN has guided our caucus through the National Defense Authorization Act process every year, working to ensure members have an opportunity to include their priority issues in the bill. I am grateful for Senator LEVIN's support of my efforts to ensure Afghan women and girls remain at the forefront of our Afghanistan policy through this transition period. One of Senator LEVIN's most important legacies will be his thoughtful and principled opposition to shifting attention away from the fight against al Qaeda in Afghanistan to Iraq. Our caucus will miss CARL LEVIN's steady hand guiding us through these important matters.

At the helm of the Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations, Senator LEVIN has led the charge against some of the worst abuse and corruption occurring in our country. Under Senator LEVIN's leadership the subcommittee conducted an eighteen month investigation into the causes of the financial crisis that culminated in four hearings in April 2010. The hearings brought forth information that helped craft the Wall Street Reform and Consumer Protection Act of 2010. He also led an investigation into abusive and unfair practices of the credit card industry, which would lead to the Credit Card Accountability Responsibility and Disclosure Act, along with investigations into tax shelters, offshore tax havens and Federal contractor tax delinquency, among other issues. In 2012, the National Journal wrote that ''the Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations is one of the few institutions in Congress that's still working. CARL LEVIN is a big reason why.''

CARL LEVIN's legacy can be summed up in one word: integrity. His commitment to our security and our servicemembers is incomparable. We wish him well as he returns to Michigan and moves on to new challenges and I thank him for his service.

TOM HARKIN

Madam President, I also wanted to speak about my colleague TOM HARKIN who will be retiring at the end of this Congress. I commend him for his 40 years of service in Congress for the people of Iowa.

Senator Hubert Humphrey once said that the moral test of government should be how it treats those in the dawn of life, our children; those in the twilight of life, our older citizens; and those in the shadows of life, people with disabilities, among others. TOM HARKIN's work in the House and Senate has been a testament to what Senator Humphrey said. Senator HARKIN has never hesitated to stand up and fight for those without power. He is also proud of the legacy of the Great Society under President Lyndon Johnson and never shies away from reminding us of the work that was done then, or how much more we still have to do.

When it comes to protecting and championing people with disabilities, there is no equal to TOM HARKIN. He helped write the Americans with Disabilities Act, ADA, of 1990 and the ADA Amendments Act of 2008. These bills did for people with disabilities what the civil rights acts of the 1950s and 1960s did for African-Americans. He authored the Television Decoder Circuitry Act to create universal closed captioning and he expanded services for children with disabilities under the Individuals with Disabilities in Education Act, IDEA. Under the Workforce Investment Opportunity Act, he enhanced employment opportunities for young people with disabilities and under the Affordable Care Act he created the Community First Choice Option to give states that offer services to people with disabilities outside of nursing homes extra federal funding.

Senator HARKIN pushed the issue of prevention and the health and wellness of Americans long before those issues became national themes. Senator HARKIN wrote the prevention title in the Affordable Care Act and introduced the first bill that allowed the Food and Drug Administration, FDA, to regulate tobacco. He is also the reason the word ''Prevention'' is included in the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's name. Child labor is another area where TOM was ahead of the curve. The Clinton Administration's Executive Order, ''Prohibition of Acquisition of Products Produced by Forced and Indentured Child Labor,'' was backed by Senator HARKIN and he helped obtain the adoption and Senate ratification of United Nations Convention 182, a treaty that called for the elimination of the worst forms of child labor.

On a personal note, I want to express my appreciation to Chairman HARKIN and his staff on the HELP Committee for their help in getting three bills I introduced this Congress passed into law—the Children's Hospital GME Support Reauthorization Act, the Emergency Medical Services for Children Reauthorization Act and the Traumatic Brain Injury Reauthorization Act. Without the efforts of Chairman HARKIN and his team, these bills would not have moved forward.

The late Senator Paul Wellstone of Minnesota, once said that ''Politics is not just about power and money games, politics can be about the improvement of people's lives, about lessening human suffering in our world and bringing about more peace and more justice.'' TOM HARKIN is a living example of those words. Our Nation and our world are better today because of his life of service.

JAY ROCKEFELLER

Madam President, as the 113 Congress comes to a close, the time has come to

say goodbye to several colleagues and friends who will leave at the end of this Congress. Today, I would like to pay tribute to our friend and colleague, JAY ROCKEFELLER. Senator ROCKEFELLER has served the people of West Virginia for 50 years, the last thirty of them in the United States Senate.

While Senator ROCKEFELLER has accomplished many notable things in his decades of service, you can really sum up much of what he did for our country in one word—kids. Nelson Mandela once said ''There can be no keener revelation of a society's soul than the way in which it treats its children.'' JAY ROCKEFELLER worked tirelessly to ensure that we never lost sight of our children as we worked on issues large and small.

One key example of his advocacy is the Children's Health Insurance Program or CHIP as it is better known. In the 1990s, members like JAY ROCKEFELLER came together and created CHIP to ensure low-income children of working parents had access to health care. When my father was governor of Pennsylvania, he signed into law the CHIP program that initially insured over 50,000 children across the state and served as a model for the national program. On a personal level, I thank Senator ROCKEFELLER for helping to expand this program to children around the country and I look forward to working with my colleagues to ensure CHIP remains strong for children in the years ahead.

In 2009 health care reform was on the agenda again and JAY ROCKEFELLER played a key role in getting a number of important provisions included. He pushed to expand Medicaid and to make sure insurance companies actually spent the bulk of dollars on health care and not administrative costs. He also worked to ensure that information provided to consumers buying insurance on the exchange could be understood by all, and, of course, he led the charge to protect CHIP kids and make sure they did not end up with the short end of the stick.

Senator ROCKEFELLER's work extends far beyond health care and children. Coal miners and their families have had no better friend in the Senate than JAY ROCKEFELLER. He has tirelessly fought and won battles to protect their health, safety and pensions while also protecting and preserving Black Lung benefits for workers made sick by doing their jobs. His advocacy in this body will be missed. Now it is up to the rest of us to carry the torch.

Senator ROCKEFELLER is quoted as follows in the Charleston Daily Mail last year:

''Rockefeller said he knew all the Kennedys well but liked Bobby best. 'Because he struck me,' Rockefeller said. 'He had a soul, and there are a lot of photographs of him in West Virginia later when he ran for president sitting on a slag heap, looking mournful, looking off into the distance, thinking, 'Why does this condition exist, what can I do?' ''

JAY ROCKEFELLER also has a soul and he has spent his life asking those same questions and finding ways to make things better. We will miss him in the Senate. We will miss his conscience and his voice, but we will never forget his example. I thank him for his decades of service and wish him well.

MARY LANDRIEU

Ms. HEITKAMP. Madam President, I honor my friend and colleague from Louisiana, Senator MARY LANDRIEU, who is departing the Senate at the end of this year. Her career in public service began 34 years ago when she was elected to the Louisiana House of Representatives. During that time and in her service in the United States Senate, she has proved time and again that the people of Louisiana could not have asked for a better advocate and fighter on their behalf.

It is tough to describe someone like Senator LANDRIEU. Senator LANDRIEU is selfless, dedicated, tenacious, and resilient, but these are just words that, while accurate, fail to truly capture who this woman is and what she stands for. It is only by looking at Senator LANDRIEU's significant accomplishments that someone can truly begin to understand the depths of her selflessness, dedication, and resiliency. During my time in the Senate, I have seen MARY embody these words like few others in this body.

Senator LANDRIEU and I both come from large families. I know the impact being one of seven children had on me growing up and I am sure Senator LANDRIEU can attest to how big of an impact being one of nine children had on her. During her time in public service, Senator LANDRIEU has worked hard to ensure that all children can benefit from having a family to call their own. Senator LANDRIEU has worked extensively with the Angels in Adoption program since its inception, and cochaired the Congressional Coalition on Adoption and the Congressional Foster Care Caucus. Senator LANDRIEU's work has changed the lives of children across Louisiana, the country, and around the world. Because of her work, there are countless children who are now able to feel the love and benefits of having a family.

In 2005, Louisiana was victim of one of the worst natural disasters to ever hit this country. Hurricane Katrina devastated New Orleans and Louisiana the likes of which this country has rarely seen. With one of the country's great cities devastated and in ruins, it was MARY LANDRIEU who took the lead on recovery efforts. It was MARY LANDRIEU who held FEMA's feet to the fire to better serve Louisianans. It was MARY LANDRIEU who helped direct billions of dollars in recovery funds to the State. It was because of MARY LANDRIEU that the great State of Louisiana has bounced back strong as ever.

Senator LANDRIEU's leadership did not end with the recovery and rebuilding efforts. Following the passage of the Biggert-Waters Flood Reform Act in 2012, Senator LANDRIEU was one of the first to recognize and sound the alarm on the impending problems homeowners would face with unreasonably high flood insurance rates. Because of her early recognition of these problems and her proactive approach to finding solutions, Congress was able pass a bill preventing thousands of people across the country from being forced to pay disastrously high flood insurance premiums.

I have also had the privilege of working with Senator LANDRIEU on energy issues. There is no better advocate in the Senate on energy than Senator LANDRIEU. I came here with the intent of learning everything that I could from Senator LANDRIEU. My only regret is that there was no way to fully take in all of her knowledge in the brief time that I have been here. That is a testament to the incredible work that she has done over her career to advance a pragmatic energy policy for this country, work that I hope to continue in the years ahead building upon the energy legacy that Senator LANDRIEU will leave behind. A word you hear often when people describe Senator LANDRIEU is tenacious, and this was never more apparent than on her work to advance the Keystone XL Pipeline. Anyone who watched Senator LANDRIEU work that bill and work behind the scenes to get the votes knows that she will fight to the very last second for what she believes in and that the word ''can't'' doesn't exist in her vocabulary. Senator LANDRIEU single-handedly forced this bill to the Senate floor and brought us closer than we have been in 6 years to approving this project once and for all. Senator LANDRIEU's pragmatic approach to this issue and willingness to embrace solutions over politics stands as an example for the rest of the Senate to strive for.

Senator LANDRIEU always looked out for the energy interests of her State, while recognizing the need to provide and protect her gulf coast communities. She has pushed for increased LNG exports that would bring new jobs and significant investment to her State. She also has been instrumental in expanding oil exploration and production in the Gulf of Mexico, but while doing so she has made sure that her coastal communities receive a bigger share of the royalties and revenue to mitigate any impacts from the development. Working for jobs and economic development and protecting those most impacted by this development, that is a pretty good legacy to leave behind in Louisiana.

The Landrieu family name comes with a long history of public service in Louisiana. The Landrieus, known for their big personalities that are eclipsed only by their accomplishments in office, can rest easy knowing that MARY has more than lived up to the family name. The Senate, Louisiana, and the country, are better off because of the work MARY LANDRIEU has done in the

Senate. I know I am not alone in saying that we will miss having her here. I also know I am not alone in saying that I am sure her work is not done. I wish her luck in this next chapter of her life and look forward to seeing the tremendous work she will accomplish outside of this Chamber.

MARK PRYOR

Madam President, I also wish to honor my colleague, Senator MARK PRYOR, who will be leaving the Senate at the end of this Congress. Senator PRYOR has been a tireless champion for the people of Arkansas for 12 years in this legislative body. However, his commitment and dedication to the State of Arkansas is reflected not only in his work here, but in the public service he and his family have given for decades.

As the son of the former Governor and U.S. Senator, Senator MARK PRYOR grew up in a family which embodied public service, instilling his interest and desire to do the same in his career. After attending the University of Arkansas and working in the private sector as an attorney, he turned his sights to public service. While serving as a member of the Arkansas House of Representatives and then as attorney general for the State of Arkansas, Senator PRYOR honed his understanding of the needs of the State and developed strong connections through its institutions which served him well throughout his career. It was here that I first met Mark. He was serving as attorney general in Arkansas at the same time I was serving as attorney general in North Dakota. I was immediately impressed with this young public servant and grew to understand that he is intelligent and principled in how he approaches his life and career. In 2003, Senator PRYOR was elected U.S. Senator from Arkansas, reclaiming the seat his father once held.

As a Senator, he served on various committees which allowed him to fight for the priorities of Arkansas, pass legislation and champion initiatives which helped this Nation. During his tenure on the Armed Services Committee, Senator PRYOR protected the interests of Arkansas servicemembers and their families. His work on the Appropriations and Commerce Committees created opportunities for growth in transportation, rural broadband, energy, and agriculture, all critical interests for Arkansas. Leading these issues with bipartisan proposals and working closely with his colleagues on marshalling these efforts Congress after Congress, Senator PRYOR earned the respect of his colleagues for his quiet devotion and steadfast commitment.

MARK is a Senator who promotes common sense solutions—solutions that seek strong support and address some of the more important needs of this Nation's citizenry. During my short time in the Senate, we served together on the Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs and Small Business Committees. I very much enjoyed working with him and serving together for the benefit of others. I continue to find him to be a man of great honesty and integrity. This type of stewardship is to be admired and appreciated by those inspired to serve on the local, State or Federal level.

I applaud my colleague for his years of tireless commitment in defense of his home State, for his service in the Senate and this Country. I wish the very best to him and his family in the years to come.

MARK BEGICH

Madam President, finally I pay tribute and recognize the accomplishments of a trusted ally and dear friend, Senator MARK BEGICH, who will be leaving the Senate at the end of the term. Mark has been a tenacious and steadfast advocate for his constituents and the State of Alaska and a strong moderate voice during his years in the Senate.

I have had the honor and privilege to work with Senator BEGICH on both the Indian Affairs and Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committees. As someone who represents one of the most rural States in America, he has an impressive understanding and compassion for the unique challenges rural communities face.

As a member of the Homeland Security Committee, he played a major role in postal reform negotiations. He understood rural citizens rely most on the Postal Service for critical deliveries of prescription medicines, time sensitive bills, and other important communications. He knew that without a rural post office, many small, rural communities would cease to exist.

During his tenure on the Indian Affairs Committee, he was dedicated to confronting and addressing the unpleasant truths about the Federal Government's treatment of Native people in our country. He understood the threats facing subsistence rights, native languages, and rich cultural traditions, and fought to ensure they were given parity and respect. Senator BEGICH also knew far too many Native women today experience violence and sexual assault, particularly in remote areas, and so he fought for the tribal provisions in the reauthorization of the Violence Against Woman Act—VAWA—and advanced his Safe Families and Villages Act to extend those protections to Native women in Alaska. He has also been a fighter for American Indian and Alaska Native veterans and worked hard to increase their access to care at both Indian Health Service and Veteran Affairs facilities. His compassion for indigenous issues extended to tribes in the lower 48 States and Native Hawaiians, and I know Native people across the country feel they have lost a true champion with his departure.

Anyone who knows Senator BEGICH knows he is an intellectually curious and energetic person. He always approached issues from a solutions-oriented mindset, which meant he was more tied to outcomes than to rhetoric, and the Senate was well-served by his presence. Senator BEGICH is also a devoted family man to his wife Deborah and young son Jacob. I remind myself that our loss is their gain, as I am sure they are excited to have him home more. I truly enjoyed working alongside him and look forward to when our paths cross again. I wish him incredible happiness and success in the next chapter.

TRIBUTE TO NANCY ERICKSON

Mr. THUNE. Madam President, today I recognize Nancy Erickson for her 26 years of honorable service to the United States Senate.

Nancy is a native of Brandon, SD, and is a graduate of Augustana College and American University, where she earned her M.A. in public policy. Nancy began working for the Senate in 1989, when she accepted a position working for Senator Daschle. In 2005, Nancy began serving as the Democratic representative for the Senate's Sergeant at Arms. Then in 2007, Nancy became the 32nd person and the 6th woman to serve as Secretary of the Senate. Nancy has been a constant professional in the way she conducts herself and goes about her work.

Nancy has played a pivotal role in the function of the Senate, and I want to extend my thanks and appreciation to her and wish her continued success in the years to come.

REMEMBERING JOHN KREBS

Mrs. BOXER. Madam President, I ask my colleagues to join me in paying tribute to the life and extraordinary accomplishments of former Congressman John Krebs, who recently passed away at the age of 87 in Fresno, CA.

John was born on December 17, 1926, in Berlin, Germany. After Hitler came to power, he escaped with his family to Tel Aviv. There, he became a diamond cutter and joined the Haganah, a Jewish underground organization that supported independence from Britain and the establishment of an independent Jewish state.

John moved to California in 1946 to attend the University of California at Berkeley and after graduating in 1950, he became a United States citizen in 1952. Following two years in the U.S. Army, John graduated from the University of California Hastings College of Law and practiced law for three decades.

Throughout his remarkable life, John Krebs sustained a strong commitment to public service. He worked on numerous state and local campaigns and was a respected Democratic activist and community leader before his 1970 election to the Fresno County Board of Supervisors, where he was a courageous and eloquent advocate for his constituents.

In 1974, he was elected to the U.S. House of Representatives, where he

successfully championed a bill to permanently protect 25,000 acres of the Sierra National Forest known as Kaiser Ridge, saving this beautiful area above Huntington Lake from logging. Then, in 1978, Congressman Krebs took on an even greater challenge: fighting for legislation to transfer Mineral King Valley from the Sequoia National Forest to Sequoia National Park, thereby blocking plans to build a ski resort that would have destroyed this pristine alpine valley in the southern Sierra Nevada. Facing significant opposition, this was the toughest fight of his political career—one that may have cost him his seat in Congress—but John was proud of what he accomplished in preserving this natural treasure for future generations to enjoy.

Years later, I was honored to introduce legislation designating 40,000 acres of land, including the Mineral King Valley, as the John Krebs Wilderness. President Obama signed it into law in 2009, and that summer some 200 friends, family and admirers gathered in Mineral King Valley to dedicate this worthy tribute to John's courage and vision.

On Friday, November 14, more than 250 of John's friends and family joined together at Temple Beth Israel in Fresno to share memories and honor this remarkable man's amazing legacy. John Krebs's extraordinary life was a uniquely American story, and he will be truly missed. I extend my deepest sympathies to his wife and partner of 58 years, Hanna, children Daniel and Karen, and their families.

VOICE OF AMERICA UKRAINIAN SERVICE'S 65TH ANNIVERSARY

Mr. McCAIN. Madam President, today I honor Voice of America's Ukrainian Service as it celebrates its 65th anniversary this week. VOA has distinguished itself among the very best news organizations in the world. For over 65 years, from the dark days of Stalin's rule to the regime of Vladimir Putin, VOA has served as a beacon of truth for Ukrainian citizens. Throughout the Cold War, VOA supported the struggle for freedom and gave hope to citizens living under repressive rule in Soviet Ukraine. After the collapse of the Soviet Union, VOA was the first to pick up the call of independence and take advantage of new opportunities to speak freely to the Ukrainian people.

The organization's long history of comprehensive reporting and objective, reliable coverage proved ever more important in November 2013 when demonstrations broke out against then-President Yanukovych's decision not to sign an association agreement with Europe. Through all of this, VOA provided live video streaming and multimedia reporting from the center of the EuroMaidan demonstrations and was one of the few news outlets fully covering Russia's annexation of Crimea. In its coverage, the world saw the spirit of the Ukrainian people and stood with them in their struggle for democracy, human rights, and the values of the transatlantic community. Through its continued coverage today, the world is now witness to Russia's aggression and invasion.

More recently, VOA has been a critical source of information for the Ukrainian people as Russia continues to advance its propaganda campaign across the region, spreading disinformation and undermining the efforts of Ukraine's EuroMaidan reformers. Putin's control of information is a key part of his strategy to rebuild post-Soviet Russia through aggression, and he uses disinformation as a tool to complement his transnational military campaigns and subvert democratic growth and development in Ukraine and across Eastern Europe. At a time when Putin's propaganda machine is working to deny reality and distort perceptions, Ukrainians rely heavily on VOA's credibility and accuracy, and its message of freedom, hope and human dignity.

VOA's reporters have worked under difficult and at times dangerous conditions. Previous governments have attempted to manipulate the media through repression and intimidation, and journalists were often arrested or detained. Today, journalists attempting to report on the conflict in eastern Ukraine are being harassed, intimidated, and physically attacked, constantly under threat of Russian thuggery. But this has not stopped the brave men and women working for VOA Ukrainian Service. They have worked through trying times, but have always maintained the integrity and professionalism to which all journalists can aspire.

Over the last 65 years, VOA has delivered thoughtful, comprehensive, and honest reporting when the Ukrainian people needed it most. I thank all members of VOA Ukrainian Service, past and present, for their tireless efforts and congratulate the organization on its 65th anniversary. Thank you for the work you do in service to the people of Ukraine and the shared values we hold dear. Together, and with the information you provide, we can achieve the democratic aspirations of our people and make the world a better, safer place for all citizens.

TRIBUTE TO ROBERT F. HEIL, JR.

• Mr. HARKIN. Madam President, I salute an unsung hero in our government, Mr. Robert F. Heil, Jr. Bob, as he is known to his friends, is retiring as the budget director at the Health Resources Services Administration after 42 years of service to the Federal Government.

To be honest, I don't know Bob Heil but I have heard about him and his work for years. Bob isn't the guy who stands up and gives speeches, he's the guy that quietly makes things happen. Whenever there was a problem with one of the community health centers in my State, my staff would say ''I'll call Bob'' and I knew it would get straightened out. Bob would always call to let us know when something good might happen, and if something bad was coming, he would call with a solution before we knew there was a problem. He's a man you can trust.

In a town where political winds blow, Bob has won universal praise from both sides of the aisle for years. That's because he always answers the phone, if he knows the answer he gives it, and he treats everyone with the same respect—no matter who is in the White House or who is in control of Congress.

As Bob moves into another phase of his life, I thank him for his years of work expanding access to health care for the least fortunate among us. Hubert Humphrey once said, ''the moral test of government is how that government treats those who are in the dawn of life, the children; those who are in the twilight of life, the elderly; those who are in the shadows of life; the sick, the needy and the handicapped.''

By that measure, Bob has made our society and our government a much better one. Thank you Bob, on behalf of myself, my staff, and all those who will never know who to thank. I wish you all the best.•

REMEMBERING BOB BENNETT

Mr. PORTMAN. Madam President, I wish to talk about a friend, a mentor, a public servant, a husband, father, and son of Ohio, Bob Bennett, who passed away at his home in Cleveland last Saturday. I was sorry to miss the funeral service in Ohio today for Bob because we are still in session, but I did want to pay tribute to him in a lasting way through the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD.

Bob was a lawyer and a CPA, a man who loved sailing and giving back to the people of Ohio through his many charitable works such as his time serving on the Board of University Hospitals in Cleveland. He was a legend in Ohio and a giant of Ohio politics. He became chairman of the Ohio Republican Party in 1988 and remained actively involved in politics until his death last week. He was one of the longest serving State chairs of either party, was viewed as a true professional, and gained the respect of political leaders in both parties.

He was certainly successful in the world of politics. When he was first elected chairman, there were no statewide Republican office holders in Ohio. He went to work with the passion, the dedication, the commitment that would become his trademark. He was a happy warrior, beloved by those in his party and respected by his political rivals. He had a vision not only for what the Republican Party could become but for what it could accomplish for the people of Ohio.

Within a decade, under his leadership, Republicans controlled all three

branches of State government, from the Governor's mansion, to the statehouse, to the supreme court.

He never stopped working. The day before he died, he was on the phone with me, talking about 2016, giving me advice. He never let his illness hold him back, and he never stopped accomplishing things for the Ohio GOP. No one was more responsible for bringing the 2016 Republican National Convention to Cleveland than Bob Bennett. Like so many times before, he had a vision, and he made it happen. It will be his lasting legacy, and I only wish he could be there to see yet another of his dreams become reality.

That is the public story of Bob Bennett's life, and what a story it is. But those of us who knew him, who worked with him, who were inspired by him, we know that what made Bob Bennett great goes far beyond what he accomplished on the political stage. The number of people who he helped with advice, with guidance, or even just a kind word—the number of people who loved Bob Bennett as a close friend—could fill this Chamber.

It has been said that we can measure a man's life by the friends he makes, by the other lives he touches, by the people whose own journey on this Earth is made better because of him. By that measure, the measure that he would have cared about the most, Bob Bennett was a great man, indeed.

He will be missed, but he won't be forgotten.

TRIBUTE TO KEITH DETERS

Mr. PORTMAN. Madam President, I wish to congratulate Keith Deters on his retirement and to recognize his impressive career.

Keith has been with General Dynamics for 32 years and has served as plant manager of the Joint Systems Manufacturing Center, JSMC, previously known as the Lima Army Tank Plant, for the past 11 years.

Keith grew up in Ohio and received his bachelor's degree in organizational management from Bluffton College and earned his MBA from the University of Findlay. He now resides in Lima with his wife Donna. They have two sons and five grandsons

During Keith's tenure as plant manager at JSMC, the plant addressed a number of service programs, including the future combats systems, expeditionary fighting vehicle, ground combat vehicle, Mk46 Navy turret, Abrams SEP, Abrams TUSK armor, MRAP Cougar, Abrams heavy assault bridge, joint light tactical vehicle prototypes, Stryker family of vehicles, Stryker armor upgrade programs, Stryker slat armor kit, tank urban survivability kit, Merkava Namer APC, Abrams Egyptian FMS, Australian Abrams AIM FMS, KSA Abrams FMS, and the Iraq Abrams FMS.

In addition, Keith has been at the forefront of developing next-generation combat vehicle capabilities, and under his supervision while plant manager innovative prototype structures built at JSMC included the joint assault bridge, heavy assault bridge, joint light tactical vehicle, ground combat vehicle, amphibious combat vehicle, expeditionary fighting vehicle, future combat vehicle, Stryker slat armor kit, common ballistic shield, hull protection kit, Stryker reactive armor kit, tank urban survivability kit, mine roller kit, commanders remote operation weapon system, hull system demonstrator, and Scout vehicle.

Outside of work, Keith has been actively involved in the Lima community. He has served on numerous boards including the United Way of Greater Lima, the Ohio State University at Lima, the Ohio Energy & Advanced Manufacturing Center, Allen-Lima Leadership, and the Allen Economic Development Group. Keith is also a member of the Lima Rotary Club and Task Force Lima.

Keith is a supporter of his local Make A Wish Foundation and has been involved with Operation Christmas Tank, Family Day at JSMC for Lima employees and their families, the West Central Ohio Manufacturing Consortium with Rhodes College, and Lima Senior High School's Moonbuggy Project.

I would like to congratulate Keith on the many contributions he has made to JSMC and to the Lima community.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

RECOGNIZING THE REED FAMILY

• Mr. BOOZMAN. Madam President, I rise today to congratulate the Reed family for earning the distinction of 2014's Arkansas Farm Family of the year.

This honor reflects the dedication of Nathan and Kristin Reed to farming and the importance they play in Arkansas's number one industry. Nathan is a fourth-generation farmer. I know that he will pass along his passion for farming to the couple's young children; 2-year-old twins Stanley ''Eldon'' and Jane-Anne and 1-year-old Katherine.

The Reeds farm cotton, corn and soybeans on their Lee County farm where they emphasize conservation and sustainability. Using variable rate technology for applying fertilizer and irrigation wells and center pivot systems run off electric power, they save energy. Nathan is also constantly learning about different crops and crop rotating practices by experimenting on the farm.

The Reeds are not only committed to farming and producing safe supplies of food and fiber to the world, but they are also committed to their community. Nathan serves on numerous boards and committees.

As a long-time friend of the Reed family I understand the importance of farming, agriculture and community involvement that Nathan's father Stanley and his mother Charlene encouraged. Nathan is following in their footsteps. They were named the Lee County Farm Family of the Year in 1984.

The Arkansas Farm Bureau's program honors farm families across the State for their outstanding work both on their farms and in their communities. This recognition is a reflection of the contribution to agriculture at the community and State level and its implications for improved farm practices and management. The Reeds are well-deserving of this honor.

I congratulate Nathan, Kristin, Stanley, Jane-Anne and Katherine on their outstanding achievements in agriculture and ask my fellow colleagues to join me in honoring them for this accomplishment. I wish them continued success in their future endeavors and look forward to the contributions they will continue to will offer Arkansas farming and agriculture.•

REMEMBERING MICHAEL DAVID DAVIS, JR.

• Mrs. BOXER. Madam President, I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring the life of Placer County Sheriff's Detective Michael David Davis, Jr., an experienced detective, dedicated public servant and beloved husband, father, brother, son and grandson who was tragically killed in the line of duty on October 24, 2014.

Michael Davis, Jr. was born on October 29, 1971, in Bellflower, CA. After spending his childhood in Southern California, Michael moved to Placer County to pursue a career in law enforcement, continuing a family commitment to public service. Detective Davis's father, Michael Davis, Sr., was a Riverside County Sheriff's Deputy who also tragically lost his life in the line of duty. Detective Davis's aunt and uncle both retired from the Placer County Sheriff's Department, and Detective Davis's wife, Jessica, and his brother, Sergeant Jason Davis, worked by his side until Michael's life was so senselessly cut short on October 24.

Following his graduation from the Butte College Law Enforcement Academy, Detective Davis began his career in public safety as a Reserve Deputy for the Placer County Sheriff's Department in 1996. He later joined the Auburn Police Department as a Patrolman before returning to the Sheriff's Department in 1999 as a Deputy. In 2005, he was promoted to become a Homicide Detective in the Crimes Against Persons Division.

At a memorial service on November 4, Placer County Sheriff Edward Bonner recalled that Detective Davis approached his job with ''respect, tact, and empathy.'' Others remembered Michael Davis as a quick-witted family man who lived his life to the fullest, spending time with his loved ones at family gatherings, coaching Little League, rooting for his beloved San Francisco 49ers and Los Angeles Dodgers, and riding motorcycles with friends.

On behalf of the people of California, whom Detective Davis served so bravely, I extend my gratitude and deepest sympathies to his wife, Jessica; daughters Angelique and Samantha; stepchildren Ivey and Chayse; mother Deborah; brother Jason; and grandparents Bob and Joan.

We are forever indebted to him for his courage and sacrifice, and he will be deeply missed.●

REMEMBERING DANNY P. OLIVER

● Mrs. BOXER. Madam President, I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring the life of Sacramento County Sheriff's Deputy Danny Oliver, an experienced peace officer, dedicated public servant, and beloved son, husband and father who was tragically killed in the line of duty on October 24, 2014.

Danny Oliver was born on February 9, 1967, and grew up in the Del Paso Heights neighborhood of Sacramento. Both his father's career as a firefighter and his own experiences growing up in a high-crime neighborhood helped shape Danny Oliver's commitment to strengthening his community through public service. After graduating from the Sheriff's Academy at the top of his class, Danny joined the Sacramento County Sheriff's Department in 1999.

During his 15-year career with the Department, Deputy Oliver worked in the main jail, patrol, and most recently as a member of the Problem Oriented Policing, P.O.P., team, working closely with the community to reduce crime and improve public safety. Deputy Oliver knew that this job came with great personal risk. He understood it required a unique ability to gain the trust of local leaders and residents. As Deputy Oliver's colleagues and family recall so admiringly, he excelled at it all—arriving to work an hour early, answering every email, and attending countless community meetings in the neighborhoods he worked so diligently to protect.

Deputy Oliver's partner in life was his loving wife of 25 years, Susan Oliver. While Danny attended the Sherriff's Academy, Susan worked two jobs to support their family so her husband could follow his dream. Together they raised two beautiful daughters, Melissa and Jenny. The family enjoyed spending time together and traveling, making many happy memories before Danny's life was so senselessly and tragically cut short.

On behalf of the people of California, whom Deputy Oliver served so bravely, I extend my gratitude and deepest sympathies to Susan, Melissa, Jenny, and Danny's parents, Bill and Jeri Oliver.

We are forever indebted to him for his courage and sacrifice, and he will be deeply missed.●

REMEMBERING MARTIN LITTON

● Mrs. BOXER. Madam President, I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring the memory of Martin Litton, a legendary conservationist and great outdoorsman who died on November 30 at the age of 97.

Clyde Martin Litton was born in Los Angeles on February 13, 1917. As an English major at UCLA, he met his future wife, Esther, and became a conservation activist—forming a student group that kept roads out of California's wildlands. After graduating in 1939, he worked as the publicist for an Arizona dude ranch and as a tour guide at the Los Angeles Times. When war broke out, he joined the Army Air Corps and became a glider pilot flying missions behind enemy lines. In gentler times, he piloted his own plane and loved taking environmental and political leaders for wild rides into the wild.

After the war, Martin returned to the Times as a freelance writer, filing stories and photos from long backpacking trips with his wife and young family. He later worked at Sunset magazine, first as travel editor and later as senior editor.

In 1952, David Brower, the first executive director of the Sierra Club—which had hitherto been a hiking and outdoors group with little involvement in public policy—enlisted Litton to help him fight the Bureau of Reclamation's plan to build two dams at Dinosaur National Monument, and the group successfully lobbied Congress to scuttle the plan by 1956. That battle helped transform the Sierra Club into the powerful national advocacy organization we know today, with Litton supporting the Club's activism as a member of the national board from 1964 to 1972.

Along with his good friend Brower, Litton is widely recognized as one of the founders of the modern environmental movement. Brower called Martin his ''environmental conscience'' because he never compromised his principles as he led the conservation movement to some of its greatest victories. With his eloquent writing, beautiful photographs, and fiery rhetoric, he inspired the efforts to keep dams out of the Grand Canyon, a ski resort out of the Sierras' pristine Mineral King Valley, and logging out of the Giant Sequoia National Monument. He was instrumental in the creation of Redwood National Park in 1968; 2 years later, dissatisfied with the park's boundaries, he led the successful fight to protect an additional 48,000 acres.

A longtime oarsman and whitewater enthusiast, Litton also started a company in 1971 to take tourists through his beloved Grand Canyon in small wooden boats. He maintained an active role in Grand Canyon Dories and at 87 became the oldest person ever to pilot a boat through the Canyon.

A fierce and determined defender of our nation's wildlands, Martin Litton was a force of nature—and a force for the preservation of nature. On behalf of the people of California, who have benefitted so much from his life work, I send my deepest gratitude and condolences to his beloved wife, Esther; children John, Donald, Kathleen, and Helen; five grandchildren and four great-grandchildren. Martin's memory and legacy will live on with everyone who loves America's priceless natural heritage, which he did so much to preserve and protect.●

RECOGNIZING LOWCOUNTRY STUDENTS

● Mr. SCOTT. Madam President, I wish to commend the hard work and achievement of a team of students and their teacher in my State of South Carolina.

I believe that education, and especially STEM education, is a key to success, and I am thrilled to see students across my State and our Nation creating original research to compete for the honor of having their experiments performed in space by the Student Spaceflights Experiments Program.

This year, this team of Lowcountry students and teachers collaborated on an extraordinary experiment design to test the formation of tin whiskers in lead-free solder in space flight. With tin whisker formation causing failures in devices ranging from space satellites to pacemakers, the students chose an important and relevant topic for their work.

Rachel Lindbergh, a senior at the Palmetto Scholars Academy, Gabriel Voigt, a sophomore at Bishop England High School, and Joseph Garvey, a sophomore at Palmetto Scholars Academy, came together with their teacher facilitator Kelly Voigt and put in a tremendous number of hours to create an excellent research project design.

The team's experiment will be launched into space as part of the Student Spaceflight Experiments Program Mission 6 to the International Space Station.

I am very proud of their work, and hope that it will serve as an example for all students that if you work hard and follow your passion, there is no telling where it may lead you.●

TRIBUTE TO LOREN DUKE ABDALLA

● Mr. THUNE. Madam President, today I wish to honor the heroic service of Loren Duke Abdalla, a member of the Yankton Sioux Tribe and the great grandson of the great Chief Running Bull. Corporal Abdalla, better known as ''Duke'', is a brave Marine who fought courageously in the Pacific Theater of World War II, earning the Purple Heart.

Duke enlisted into the U.S. Marine Corps in October of 1943. After finishing his basic training at the age of 18, he was sent to the island of New Caledonia before being assigned to Pavuvu Island alongside the First Marine Division, 1st Regiment, 1st Battalion, A Company, 1st Platoon. Shortly after his training on Pavuvu Island, Duke's regiment was given orders to invade the Island of Peleliu on September 15, 1944.

His regiment worked its way toward Bloody Nose Ridge, where they became surrounded on three sides and suffered heavy casualties. Despite persistent enemy fire, receiving shrapnel wounds in both of his legs, and blasts blowing out both his ear drums, Duke fought hard through the 6-day battle. In the end, Duke was one of only 29 survivors of his battalion. He received the Purple Heart and was promoted to corporal for his heroic efforts and leadership at Peleliu.

After recovering from his numerous injuries, Duke resumed Active Duty and rejoined his brothers in arms in the Battle of Okinawa. A Company, 1st and 3rd platoons were tasked with advancing on enemy positions, and Duke was assigned 3rd squad leader of the 1st platoon. On May 5, 1945, 2nd Squad Leader CPL John Brady was burned by a phosphorous grenade. Under heavy fire, Duke threw CPL Brady over his shoulder and carried him to safety. Duke then swiftly returned to the frontline and proceeded to engage a series of six enemy machine gun nests. Duke was the only member of his 12-person team to reach the fourth nest, and he continued moving forward and removed the last two nests by himself. His actions permitted the First Marine Division to safely advance up the ridge.

While many Americans were honored for their courageous actions that day and throughout the campaign, Duke's heroic actions have largely gone unrecognized. I stand here today and ask that Duke's selfless and brave actions be acknowledged and not soon forgotten. Duke received an honorable discharge from the United States Marine Corps on February 28, 1947, ending a military career that undoubtedly factored into American successes in the Pacific Theater.

Duke is most deserving of recognition for his exemplary bravery in the face of great danger and for putting the concerns of others always before his own. His selfless acts saved the lives of his colleagues and helped to secure American victory in that great war. Our Nation will always be grateful for Duke's dedicated service, and as thankful citizens, we must never take for granted the courage displayed by heroes like Corporal Loren Duke Abdalla.●

REMEMBERING BRET KNAPP

● Mr. UDALL of New Mexico. Mr. President, in New Mexico we are very proud to be the home of Los Alamos National Laboratory. LANL employs some of the finest scientists and researchers in the world. Each day, these brilliant public servants go to work and make vital contributions to our national security and to cutting-edge scientific and innovative advances.

The dedicated men and women of LANL are a credit to my State and to our Nation. It is with regret that I rise today to remember Bret Knapp, a valued member of the LANL team, who passed away last month.

Mr. Knapp received his B.A. in mechanical engineering at the California Polytechnic State University and his M.S. in mechanical engineering at the University of California, Davis.

In a career that spanned over three decades, Mr. Knapp demonstrated valued expertise and leadership. His commitment to excellence was a defining element of his career, and, even as we mourn his passing, we are grateful for his service.

Over the years, Mr. Knapp established an outstanding reputation for programmatic achievements, as well as for technical depth, honest and open communication, and fostering a strong sense of partnership and collaboration. He was the principal associate director for the weapons program at LANL, which plays a crucial role in supporting our country's defense, energy, and environmental needs. He also served as acting director at the Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory.

Among his many accomplishments at LANL, Bret Knapp integrated the planning and execution of the stockpile stewardship program, which is a critical mission for the Nation. He received the NNSA Defense Program Individual Award for Excellence in 2000 and two NNSA Defense Program Awards for Excellence in 1998 and 1999.

Those are, of course, the public and well-deserved accolades of an exemplary career. But for those who worked closely with Bret Knapp, they recall an inspiring colleague, a good friend, and someone who will be greatly missed.

I offer my sincere condolences to Mr. Knapp's wife Sheryl and their sons, Trevor and Cameron. I hope that, for all of Bret Knapp's friends and family, your memories of his life will offer a measure of comfort now in your loss.●

MESSAGES FROM THE HOUSE

At 11:16 a.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Mrs. Cole, one of its reading clerks, announced that the House agrees to the amendment of the Senate to the bill (H.R. 2640) to amend the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act to adjust the Crooked River boundary, to provide water certainty for the City of Prineville, Oregon, and for other purposes.

The message also announced that the House agrees to the amendment of the Senate to the bill (H.R. 3329) to enhance the ability of community financial institutions to foster economic growth and serve their communities, boost small businesses, increase individual savings, and for other purposes.

The message further announced that the House has passed the following bills, without amendment:

S. 1353. An act to provide for an ongoing, voluntary public-private partnership to improve cybersecurity, and to strengthen cybersecurity research and development, workforce development and education, and public awareness and preparedness, and for other purposes.

S.1474. An act to amend the Violence Against Women Reauthorization Act of 2013 to repeal a special rule for the State of Alaska, and for other purposes.

The message also announced that the House has passed the following bill, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate:

H.R. 5859. An act to impose sanctions with respect to the Russian Federation, to provide additional assistance to Ukraine, and for other purposes.

At 1:00 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 bills, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate:

H.R. 2591. An act to amend certain provisions of the FAA Modernization and Reform Act of 2012.

H.R. 5699. An act to authorize the Secretary of the Interior to acquire approximately 44 acres of land in Martinez, California, and for other purposes.

H.R. 5803. An act to require the Secretary of the Interior to assemble a team of technical, policy, and financial experts to address the energy needs of the insular areas of the United States and the Freely Associated States through the development of energy action plans aimed at promoting access to affordable, reliable energy, including increasing use of indigenous clean-energy resources, and for other purposes.

At 5:13 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 bills, without amendment:

S. 2338. An act to reauthorize the United States Anti-Doping Agency, and for other purposes.

S. 3008. An act to extend temporarily the extended period of protection for members of uniformed services relating to mortgages, mortgage foreclosure, and eviction, and for other purposes.

The message further announced that the House agrees to the amendment of the Senate to the text of the bill (H.R. 2952) to require the Secretary of Homeland Security to assess the cybersecurity workforce of the Department of Homeland Security and develop a comprehensive workforce strategy, and for other purposes, with an amendment to the title.

The message also announced that the House agrees to the amendment of the Senate to the bill (H.R. 4007) to recodify and reauthorize the Chemical Facility Anti-Terrorism Standards Program.

The message further announced that pursuant to section 1238(b)(3) of the Floyd D. Spence National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2001 (22 U.S.C. 7002), amended by division P of the Consolidated Appropriations Resolution, 2003 (22 U.S.C. 6901), the Minority Leader reappoints the following member on the part of the House of Representatives to the United States-China Economic and Security Review Commission: Mr. Michael Wessel of Falls Church, Virginia.

The message also announced that pursuant to section 3(b) of the Public Safety Officer Medal of Valor Act of 2001 (42 U.S.C. 15202), the Minority

Leader appoints the following member on the part of the House of Representatives to the Medal of Valor Review Board: Mr. Brian Fengel of Bartonville, Illinois.

ENROLLED BILLS SIGNED

The President pro tempore (Mr. LEAHY) announced that on today, December 12, 2014, he had signed the following enrolled bills, previously signed by the Speaker of the House:

S. 1000. An act to require the Director of the Office of Management and Budget to prepare a crosscut budget for restoration activities in the Chesapeake Bay watershed, and for other purposes.

S. 1683. An act to provide for the transfer of naval vessels to certain foreign recipients, and for other purposes.

S. 1691. An act to amend title 5, United States Code, to improve the security of the United States border and to provide for reforms and rate of pay for border patrol agents.

S. 2142. An act to impose targeted sanctions on persons responsible for violations of human rights of antigovernment protesters in Venezuela, to strengthen civil society in Venezuela, and for other purposes.

S. 2270. An act to clarify the application of certain leverage and risk-based requirements under the Dodd-Frank Wall Street Reform and Consumer Protection Act.

S. 2444. An act to authorize appropriations for the Coast Guard for fiscal year 2015, and for other purposes.

S. 2519. An act to codify an existing operations center for cybersecurity.

S. 2521. An act to amend chapter 35 of title 44, United States Code, to provide for reform to Federal information security.

S. 2651. An act to repeal certain mandates of the Department of Homeland Security Office of Inspector General.

S. 2759. An act 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.

H.R. 1067. An act to make revisions in title 36, United States Code, as necessary to keep the title current and make technical corrections and improvements.

H.R. 1204. An act to amend title 49, United States Code, to direct the Assistant Secretary of Homeland Security (Transportation Security Administration) to establish an Aviation Security Advisory Committee, and for other purposes.

H.R. 1281. An act to amend the Public Health Service Act to reauthorize programs under part A of title XI of such Act.

H.R. 1447. An act to encourage States to report to the Attorney General certain information regarding the deaths of individuals in the custody of law enforcement agencies, and for other purposes.

H.R. 2719. An act to require the Transportation Security Administration to implement best practices and improve transparency with regard to technology acquisition programs, and for other purposes.

H.R. 2952. An act to require the Secretary of Homeland Security to assess the cybersecurity workforce of the Department of Homeland Security and develop a comprehensive workforce strategy, and for other purposes.

H.R. 3044. An act to approve the transfer of Yellow Creek Port properties in Iuka, Mississippi.

H.R. 3374. An act to provide for the use of savings promotion raffle products by financial institutions to encourage savings, and for other purposes.

H.R. 3468. An act to amend the Federal Credit Union Act to extend insurance coverage to amounts held in a member account on behalf of another person, and for other purposes.

H.R. 4007. An act to recodify and reauthorize the Chemical Facility Anti-Terrorism Standards Program.

H.R. 4193. An act to amend title 5, United States Code, to change the default investment fund under the Thrift Savings Plan, and for other purposes.

H.R. 4199. An act to name the Department of Veterans Affairs medical center in Waco, Texas, as the ''Doris Miller Department of Veterans Affairs Medical Center''.

H.R. 4681. An act to authorize appropriations for fiscal years 2014 and 2015 for intelligence and intelligence-related activities of the United States Government, the Community Management Account, and the Central Intelligence Agency Retirement and Disability System, and for other purposes.

H.R. 4926. An act to designate a segment of Interstate Route 35 in the State of Minnesota as the ''James L. Oberstar Memorial Highway''.

H.R. 5705. An act to modify certain provisions relating to the Propane Education and Research Council.

At 7:07 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 joint resolution, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate:

H.J. Res. 131. Joint resolution making further continuing appropriations for fiscal year 2015, and for other purposes.

The message further announced that the House has agreed to the following concurrent resolution, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate:

H.Con.Res. 125. Concurrent resolution providing for the sine die adjournment of the second session of the One Hundred Thirteenth Congress.

ENROLLED BILLS SIGNED

At 7:51 p.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Mrs. Cole, one of its reading clerks, announced that the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. WOLF) has signed the following enrolled bills:

S. 1353. An act to provide for an ongoing, voluntary public-private partnership to improve cybersecurity, and to strengthen cybersecurity research and development, workforce development and education, and public awareness and preparedness, and for other purposes.

S. 1474. An act to amend the Violence Against Women Reauthorization Act of 2013 to repeal a special rule for the State of Alaska, and for other purposes.

H.R. 2640. An act to amend the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act to adjust the Crooked River boundary, to provide water certainty for the City of Prineville, Oregon, and for other purposes.

H.R. 3096. An act to designate the building occupied by the Federal Bureau of Investigation located at 801 Follin Lane, Vienna, Virginia, as the ''Michael D. Resnick Terrorist Screening Center''.

H.R. 3329. An act to enhance the ability of community financial institutions to foster economic growth and serve their communities, boost small businesses, increase individual savings, and for other purposes.

H.R. 4771. An act to amend the Controlled Substances Act to more effectively regulate anabolic steroids.

H.R. 5057. An act to amend the Energy Policy and Conservation Act to permit exemptions for external power supplies from certain efficiency standards, and for other purposes.

ENROLLED BILLS PRESENTED

The Secretary of the Senate reported that on today, December 12, 2014, she had presented to the President of the United States the following enrolled bills:

S. 1000. An act to require the Director of the Office of Management and Budget to prepare a crosscut budget for restoration activities in the Chesapeake Bay watershed, and for other purposes.

S. 1683. An act to provide for the transfer of naval vessels to certain foreign recipients, and for other purposes.

S. 1691. An act to amend title 5, United States Code, to improve the security of the United States border and to provide for reforms and rate of pay for border patrol agents.

S. 2142. An act to impose targeted sanctions on persons responsible for violations of human rights of antigovernment protesters in Venezuela, to strengthen civil society in Venezuela, and for other purposes.

S. 2270. An act to clarify the application of certain leverage and risk-based requirements under the Dodd-Frank Wall Street Reform and Consumer Protection Act.

S. 2444. An act to authorize appropriations for the Coast Guard for fiscal year 2015, and for other purposes.

S. 2519. An act to codify an existing operations center for cybersecurity.

S. 2521. An act to amend chapter 35 of title 44, United States Code, to provide for reform to Federal information security.

S. 2651. An act to repeal certain mandates of the Department of Homeland Security Office of Inspector General.

S. 2759. An act 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.

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–8156. A communication from the Secretary of Defense, transmitting a report on the approved retirement of Vice Admiral Paul J. Bushong, United States Navy, and his advancement to the grade of vice admiral on the retired list; to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC–8157. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Fluopyram; Pesticide Tolerances'' (FRL No. 9918–99) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on December 11, 2014; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC–8158. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Natamycin; Amendment to an Exemption from the Requirement of a Tolerance'' (FRL No. 9919–35) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on December 11, 2014; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC–8159. A communication from the Senior Counsel, Bureau of the Fiscal Service, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled

''Government Securities Act Regulations: Large Position Reporting Rules'' (31 CFR Part 420) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on December 11, 2014; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC–8160. A communication from the General Counsel of the Federal Housing Finance Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Housing Trust Fund'' (RIN2590–AA73) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on December 11, 2014; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC–8161. 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 ''Extension for Deadline to Submit Option and Advisory Letter Applications for Pre-approved Defined Benefit Plans'' (Announcement 2014–41) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on December 11, 2014; to the Committee on Finance.

EC–8162. 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 ''Update for Weighted Average Interest Rates, Yield Curves, and Segment Rates'' (Notice 2014–78) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on December 11, 2014; to the Committee on Finance.

EC–8163. 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 Cumulative List of Changes in Plan Qualification Requirements'' (Notice 2014–77) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on December 11, 2014; to the Committee on Finance.

EC–8164. A communication from the General Counsel, Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Benefits Payable in Terminated Single-Employer Plans; Interest Assumptions for Paying Benefits'' (29 CFR Part 4022) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on December 11, 2014; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC–8165. A communication from the Chair of the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Commission's Semiannual Report of the Inspector General and the Semiannual Management Report for the period from April 1, 2014 through September 30, 2014; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–8166. A communication from the Administrator of the Small Business Administration, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Semiannual Report from the Office 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–8167. A communication from the Board Members, Railroad Retirement Board, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Board's Performance and Accountability Report for fiscal year 2014, including the Office of Inspector General's Auditor's Report; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–8168. A communication from the Chairman of the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Museum's fiscal year 2014 Report on Audit and Investigative Activities; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–8169. A communication from the Secretary of Education, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Department's Semiannual Report of the Office 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–8170. A communication from the Chief Financial Officer, National Labor Relations Board, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled ''Performance and Accountability Report for Fiscal Year 2014''; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–8171. 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; Texas; Repeal of Lead Emission Rules for Stationary Sources in El Paso and Dallas County'' (FRL No. 9920–34–Region 6) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on December 11, 2014; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–8172. 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; Illinois; Withdrawal of Direct Final Rule'' (FRL No. 9920–13–Region 5) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on December 11, 2014; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–8173. 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; Redesignation Request and Associated Maintenance Plan for the Baltimore, Maryland Nonattainment Area for the 1997 Annual Fine Particulate Matter Standard'' (FRL No. 9920–41–Region 3) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on December 11, 2014; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–8174. 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; Redesignation Request and Associated Maintenance Plan for the Maryland Portion of the Martinsburg-Hagerstown, WV–MD Nonattainment Area for the 1997 Annual Fine Particulate Matter Standard'' (FRL No. 9920–42–Region 3) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on December 11, 2014; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–8175. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Revisions to the California State Implementation Plan, Feather River Air Quality Management District'' (FRL No. 9919–52–Region 9) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on December 11, 2014; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–8176. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''National Priorities List'' (FRL No. 9920–06–OSWER) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on December 11, 2014; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–8177. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''EPAAR Clause for Work Assignments'' (FRL No. 9920–48–OARM) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on December 11, 2014; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–8178. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Ethylene Glycol Ethers; Significant New Use Rule'' ((RIN2070–AJ52) (FRL No. 9915–61)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on December 11, 2014; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–8179. A communication from the Acting Director of Sustainable Fisheries, National Marine Fisheries Service, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Fisheries of the Exclusive Economic Zone Off Alaska; Pacific Ocean Perch in the Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands Management Area'' (RIN0648–XD614) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on December 11, 2014; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–8180. A communication from the Acting Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Fisheries Off West Coast States; Modifications of the West Coast Commercial and Tribal Salmon Fisheries; Inseason Actions No. 10 through No. 23'' (RIN0648–XD425) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on December 11, 2014; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–8181. A communication from the Acting Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Fisheries of the Northeastern United States; Atlantic Herring Fishery; 2014 Sub-Annual Catch Limit (ACL) Harvested for Management Area 1A'' (RIN0648–XD570) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on December 11, 2014; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–8182. A communication from the Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Fisheries of the Exclusive Economic Zone Off Alaska; Dusky Rockfish in the Western Regulatory Area of the Gulf of Alaska'' (RIN0648–XD630) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on December 11, 2014; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–8183. A communication from the Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Snapper-Grouper Fishery of the South Atlantic; 2014 Recreational Accountability Measure and Closure for Gray Triggerfish in the South Atlantic'' (RIN0648–XD628) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on December 11, 2014; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–8184. A communication from the Deputy Assistant Administrator for Regulatory Programs, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act Provisions; Fisheries of the Northeastern United States; Northeast Groundfish Fishery; Gulf of Maine Haddock Annual Catch Limit Revision'' (RIN0648–BE45) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on December 11, 2014; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–8185. A communication from the Deputy Assistant Administrator for Regulatory

Programs, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act Provisions; Fisheries of the Northeastern United States; Northeast Groundfish Fishery; Fishing Year 2014; Emergency Gulf of Maine Cod Management Measures'' (RIN0648–BE56) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on December 11, 2014; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–8186. A communication from the Deputy Assistant Administrator for Regulatory Programs, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Highly Migratory Species; Technical Amendment to Regulations'' (RIN0648–BE54) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on December 11, 2014; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–8187. A communication from the Deputy Assistant Administrator for Regulatory Programs, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Fisheries of the Caribbean, Gulf of Mexico, and South Atlantic; Snapper-Grouper Fishery Off the Southern Atlantic States; Regulatory Amendment 14'' (RIN0648–BD07) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on December 11, 2014; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–8188. A communication from the Deputy Assistant Administrator for Regulatory Programs, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Fisheries of the Exclusive Economic Zone off Alaska; Monitoring and Enforcement; At-Sea Scales Requirements'' (RIN0648–BD90) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on December 11, 2014; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–8189. A communication from the Deputy Assistant Administrator for Regulatory Programs, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Fisheries of the Exclusive Economic Zone Off Alaska; Modifications to Federal Fisheries Permits and Federal Processor Permits'' (RIN0648–AX78) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on December 11, 2014; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–8190. A communication from the Deputy Assistant Administrator for Regulatory Programs, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Fisheries of the Exclusive Economic Zone Off Alaska; Amendment 96 to the Gulf of Alaska Fishery Management Plan; Management of Community Quota Entities'' (RIN0648–BD74) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on December 11, 2014; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

The following reports of committees were submitted:

By Mrs. BOXER, from the Committee on Environment and Public Works, with amendments:

S. 2055. A bill to allow for the collection of certain user fees by non-Federal entities (Rept. No. 113–309).

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

Report to accompany S. 1014, a bill to reduce sports-related concussions in youth, and for other purposes (Rept. No. 113–310).

Report to accompany S. 2581, a bill to require the Consumer Product Safety Commission to promulgate a rule to require child safety packaging for liquid nicotine containers, and for other purposes (Rept. No. 113–311).

By Ms. MIKULSKI, from the Committee on Appropriations:

Special Report entitled ''Further Revised Allocation to Subcommittees of Budget Totals for Fiscal Year 2015'' (Rept. No. 113–312).

By Mr. MENENDEZ, from the Committee on Foreign Relations:

Report to accompany S. 2922, a bill to reinstate reporting requirements related to United States-Hong Kong relations (Rept. No. 113–313).

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

Report to accompany S. 2482, a bill to implement the Convention on the Conservation and Management of the High Seas Fisheries Resources in the North Pacific Ocean, as adopted at Tokyo on February 24, 2012, and for other purposes (Rept. No. 113–314).

Report to accompany S. 2484, a bill to implement the Convention on the Conservation and Management of the High Seas Fishery Resources in the South Pacific Ocean, as adopted at Auckland on November 14, 2009, and for other purposes (Rept. No. 113–315).

Report to accompany S. 2485, a bill to implement the Amendment to the Convention on Future Multilateral Cooperation in the Northwest Atlantic Fisheries, as adopted at Lisbon on September 28, 2007 (Rept. No. 113–316).

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

Report to accompany S. 2442, a bill to direct the Secretary of the Interior to take certain land and mineral rights on the reservation of the Northern Cheyenne Tribe of Montana and other culturally important land into trust for the benefit of the Northern Cheyenne Tribe, and for other purposes (Rept. No. 113–317).

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

Report to accompany S. 2140, a bill to improve the transition between experimental permits and commercial licenses for commercial reusable launch vehicles (Rept. No. 113–318).

Report to accompany S. 429, a bill to enable concrete masonry products manufacturers to establish, finance, and carry out a coordinated program of research, education, and promotion to improve, maintain, and develop markets for concrete masonry products (Rept. No. 113–319).

Report to accompany S. 2022, a bill to establish scientific standards and protocols across forensic disciplines, and for other purposes (Rept. No. 113–320).

Report to accompany S. 2777, a bill to establish the Surface Transportation Board as an independent establishment, and for other purposes (Rept. No. 113–321).

Report to accompany S. 2799, a bill to extend the authority of satellite carriers to retransmit certain television broadcast station signals, and for other purposes (Rept. No. 113–322).

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

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

By Mr. BLUMENTHAL (for himself and Mr. ROCKEFELLER):

S. 3009. A bill to improve end-of-life care; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mrs. MCCASKILL:

S. 3010. A bill to improve the enforcement of prohibitions on robocalls, including fraudulent robocalls; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

By Mr. HATCH:

S. 3011. A bill to provide for the establishment of a process for the review of rules and sets of rules, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

By Mr. MENENDEZ:

S. 3012. A bill to improve the enforcement of sanctions against the Government of North Korea, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

By Mr. LEVIN (for himself and Mr. MCCAIN):

S. 3013. A bill to amend the Commodity Exchange Act to prevent manipulation of physical commodities prices, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

By Ms. AYOTTE (for herself and Mrs. SHAHEEN):

S. 3014. A bill to extend and modify a pilot program on assisted living services for veterans with traumatic brain injury, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

By Mr. PAUL:

S. 3015. A bill to establish a rule of construction clarifying the limitations on executive authority to provide certain forms of immigration relief; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. HEINRICH:

S. 3016. A bill to amend the Act of July 31, 1947, to provide for the termination of certain mineral materials contracts; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

By Mr. HATCH:

S. 3017. A bill to provide a categorical exclusion under the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 to allow the Director of the Bureau of Land Management and the Chief of the Forest Service to remove Pinyon-Juniper trees to conserve and restore the habitat of the greater sage-grouse; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

SUBMISSION OF CONCURRENT AND SENATE RESOLUTIONS

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

By Mr. UDALL of New Mexico (for himself and Mr. MERKLEY):

S. Res. 600. A resolution to limit certain uses of the filibuster in the Senate to improve the legislative process; to the Committee on Rules and Administration.

By Mr. MENENDEZ (for himself, Mr. KIRK, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, and Mr. CARDIN):

S. Res. 601. A resolution recognizing 35 years of cooperation in science and technology between the United States and the People's Republic of China; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

ADDITIONAL COSPONSORS

S. 2500

At the request of Mr. WALSH, the name of the Senator from Kentucky (Mr. PAUL) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2500, a bill to restrict the ability of

the Federal Government to undermine privacy and encryption technology in commercial products and in NIST computer security and encryption standards.

S. 2529

At the request of Mrs. SHAHEEN, the name of the Senator from California (Mrs. FEINSTEIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2529, a bill to amend and reauthorize the controlled substance monitoring program under section 399O of the Public Health Service Act.

S. 2581

At the request of Mr. NELSON, the name of the Senator from Rhode Island (Mr. REED) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2581, a bill to require the Consumer Product Safety Commission to promulgate a rule to require child safety packaging for liquid nicotine containers, and for other purposes.

S. 2645

At the request of Mr. MARKEY, the name of the Senator from Michigan (Mr. LEVIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2645, a bill to provide access to medication-assisted therapy, and for other purposes.

S. 2839

At the request of Mr. WHITEHOUSE, the name of the Senator from Massachusetts (Ms. WARREN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2839, a bill to authorize the Attorney General to award grants to address the national epidemics of prescription opioid abuse and heroin use.

S. 2930

At the request of Mr. REED, his name was added as a cosponsor of S. 2930, a bill to direct the Secretary of Defense and the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to provide for the conduct of an evaluation of mental health care and suicide prevention programs of the Department of Defense and the Department of Veterans Affairs, to require a pilot program on loan repayment for psychiatrists who agree to serve in the Veterans Health Administration of the Department of Veterans Affairs, and for other purposes.

At the request of Mr. MCCAIN, the name of the Senator from New York (Mr. SCHUMER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2930, supra.

SUBMITTED RESOLUTIONS

SENATE RESOLUTION 600—TO LIMIT CERTAIN USES OF THE FILIBUSTER IN THE SENATE TO IMPROVE THE LEGISLATIVE PROCESS

Mr. UDALL of New Mexico (for himself and Mr. MERKLEY) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Rules and Administration:

S. RES. 600

SECTION 1. MOTIONS TO PROCEED.

Paragraph 1 of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate is amended by inserting at the end the following new paragraph:

''Other than a motion made during the first 2 hours of a new legislative day as described in paragraph 2 of rule VIII, consideration of a motion to proceed to the consideration of any debatable matter, including debate on any debatable motion or appeal in connection therewith, shall be limited to not more than 2 hours, to be equally divided between, and controlled by, the Majority Leader and the Minority Leader or their designees. This paragraph shall not apply to motions considered nondebatable by the Senate pursuant to rule or precedent.''.

SEC. 2. EXTENDED DEBATE.

Paragraph 2 of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate is amended by striking the second undesignated paragraph and inserting the following:

''Is it the sense of the Senate that the debate shall be brought to a close? And if that question shall be decided in the affirmative by three-fifths of the Senators duly chosen and sworn, except on a measure or motion to amend the Senate rules, in which case the necessary affirmative vote shall be two-thirds of the Senators voting, a quorum being present, then cloture has been invoked.

''If that question is on disposition of a bill or joint resolution, a resolution or concurrent resolution, a substitute amendment for a bill or resolution, a motion with respect to amendments between the Houses, a conference report, or advice and consent to a nomination or treaty, and if such question shall be decided in the affirmative by a majority of Senators voting, a quorum being present, but less than three-fifths of the Senators duly chosen and sworn (or less than two-thirds of the Senators voting, a quorum being present, in the case of a measure or motion to amend the Senate rules), then it shall be in order for the Majority Leader (or his or her designee) to initiate a period of extended debate upon the measure, motion, or other matter pending before the Senate, or the unfinished business, in relation to which the motion to close debate was offered, in which case the period of extended debate shall begin one hour later.

''During a period of extended debate, such measure, motion, or other matter pending before the Senate, or the unfinished business, shall be the unfinished business to the exclusion of all other business, except on action or motion by the Majority Leader (or his or her designee).

''During a period of extended debate it shall not be in order for a Senator other than the Majority Leader (or his or her designee) to raise a question as to the presence of a quorum, except immediately prior to a vote or when it has been more than forty-eight hours since a quorum was demonstrated. If upon a roll call it shall be ascertained that a quorum is not present, then the Senate shall adjourn to a time previously decided by order of the Senate or, if no such time has been established, then to a time certain determined by the Majority Leader, after consultation with the Minority Leader.

''During a period of extended debate a motion to adjourn or recess shall not be in order, unless made by the Majority Leader (or his or her designee) or if the absence of a quorum has been demonstrated. Notwithstanding paragraph 1 of rule XIX, there shall be no limit to the number of times a Senator may speak upon any question during a period of extended debate.

''If, during the course of extended debate, the Presiding Officer puts any question to a vote, the Majority Leader (or his or her designee) may postpone any such vote, which shall occur at a time determined by the Majority Leader, after consultation with the Minority Leader, but not later than the time at which a quorum is next demonstrated.

''If at any time during a period of extended debate no Senator seeks recognition, then the Presiding Officer shall inquire as to whether any Senator seeks recognition. If no Senator seeks recognition, then the Presiding Officer shall again put the question as to bringing debate to a close (and the Majority Leader or his or her designee may postpone such vote in accordance with the preceding paragraph), which shall be decided without further debate or intervening motion. If that question shall be decided in the affirmative by a majority of Senators voting, a quorum being present, then cloture has been invoked and the period of extended debate has ended. If that question shall be decided in the negative by a majority of Senators voting, a quorum being present, then the period of extended debate has ended.

''If cloture is invoked, then the measure, motion, other matter pending before the Senate, or the unfinished business, in relation to which the motion to close debate was offered, shall remain the unfinished business to the exclusion of all other business until disposed of.''.

SEC. 3. POST-CLOTURE DEBATE ON NOMINATIONS.

Paragraph 2 of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate is amended by striking ''After no more than thirty hours of consideration of the measure, motion, or other matter on which cloture has been invoked, the Senate shall proceed, without any further debate on any question, to vote on'' in the fourth undesignated paragraph and inserting ''After no more than 30 hours of consideration of the measure, motion, or other matter on which cloture has been invoked, except on the question of advice and consent to a nomination other than a nomination to a position as Justice of the Supreme Court in which case consideration shall be limited to 2 hours, the Senate shall proceed, without any further debate on any question, to vote on''.

SEC. 4. CONFERENCE MOTIONS.

Rule XXVIII of the Standing Rules of the Senate is amended by—

(1) redesignating paragraphs 1 through 9 as paragraphs 2 through 10, respectively;

(2) redesignating any reference to paragraphs 1 through 9 as paragraph 2 through 10, respectively; and

(3) inserting before paragraph 2, as redesignated, the following:

''1. A nondivisible motion to disagree to a House amendment or insist upon a Senate amendment, to request a committee of conference with the House or to agree to a request by the House for a committee of conference, and to authorize the Presiding Officer to appoint conferees (or to appoint conferees), is in order and consideration of such a motion, including consideration of any debatable motion or appeal in connection therewith, shall be limited to not more than 2 hours.''.

SEC. 5. RIGHT TO OFFER AMENDMENTS.

Paragraph 2 of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate is amended by inserting at the end the following:

''After debate has concluded under this paragraph but prior to final disposition of the pending matter, the Majority Leader and the Minority Leader may each offer not to exceed 3 amendments identified as leadership amendments if they have been timely filed under this paragraph and are germane to the matter being amended. Debate on a leadership amendment shall be limited to 1 hour equally divided. A leadership amendment may not be divided.''.

SENATE RESOLUTION 601—RECOGNIZING 35 YEARS OF COOPERATION IN SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY BETWEEN THE UNITED STATES AND THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA

Mr. MENENDEZ (for himself, Mr. KIRK, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, and Mr. CARDIN) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations:

S. RES. 601

Whereas mutually beneficial cooperation between the Governments of the People's Republic of China and the United States in promoting science and technology has made tremendous strides since the signing of the Agreement Between the Government of the United States and the Government of the People's Republic of China on Cooperation in Science and Technology, done at Washington January 31, 1979, which was the first intergovernmental agreement since the United States and the People's Republic of China established diplomatic relations in 1979;

Whereas the Governments of the People's Republic of China and the United States have become active partners in fostering research and innovation since the signing of the Agreement Between the Government of the United States and the Government of the People's Republic of China on Cooperation in Science and Technology in 1979;

Whereas cooperation in science and technology since 1979 has brought numerous benefits to both countries, including—

(1) shared information on issues such as climate variability, seismic activity, and agricultural science;

(2) joint publication of scientific and technological research; and

(3) exchange of technical assistance and best practices in areas such as food and pharmaceutical safety and environmental cleanup;

Whereas the continued promotion of science and technology in both countries holds the potential to advance shared interests, as well as the interests of United States partners and allies in the region and globally, including in mitigating the effects of climate change, securing the availability of water, food and energy, and improving public health, disease prevention, and pandemic response;

Whereas the government-to-government relationship conducted under the Agreement Between the Government of the United States and the Government of the People's Republic of China on Cooperation in Science and Technology now consists of some 30 subordinate agency-to-agency protocols, including—

(1) cooperation between the Department of Energy and the Chinese Ministry of Science and Technology to form the Clean Energy Research Center to explore advances in clean vehicles, advanced coal technology, and building energy efficiency;

(2) cooperation between the Department of Agriculture's Agricultural Research Service and the Chinese Ministry of Science and Technology on agricultural biotechnology, natural resource management, food safety, and similar issues;

(3) cooperation between the National Institutes of Health and the counterparts in China, including the Natural Science Foundation of China and Chinese Ministry of Science and Technology to conduct basic and clinical biomedical research;

(4) cooperation between the Environmental Protection Agency and the counterparts in China, including the Chinese Ministry of Science and Technology and the Chinese Ministry of Environmental Protection to support joint environmental research, and to exchange best practices on environmental legislation and enforcement;

(5) exchange of personnel between the Chinese Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention to develop information exchange and response mechanisms for influenza pandemics;

(6) collaboration between the Food and Drug Administration and food and medical regulators in China to enhance the safety of imported food and medical products from China through better information sharing and access to production facilities; and

(7) collaboration between the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and Peking University Health Center (former Beijing Medical University) to study child health issues and health hazards caused by environmental factors;

Whereas many educational institutions in the United States and China have established partnerships to further science and technology research, including—

(1) Northwestern University, based in Evanston, Illinois, which has developed strategic partnerships in China, such as the Wanxiang Fellows Program, which allows Northwestern students to study emerging energy challenges and renewable energy innovations in the United States and China; and

(2) University of California, Davis, based in Davis, California, which has partnered with China's Northwest Agricultural and Forestry University in Shaanxi province to establish the Sino-U.S. Joint Research Center for Food Safety to promote international collaborative research for food safety in China and the United States;

Whereas the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign has signed 97 inter-institutional cooperative partnership agreements with various institutions that are headquartered in China in the fields of engineering, food sciences, and transportation, including a high-speed rail research partnership between the university's Railway Transportation and Engineering Center and China's oldest and most recognized railway engineering school, Southwest Jiaotong University;

Whereas, on December 5, 2014, China and the United States will commemorate the 30th anniversary, and renew for another ten years, the CHELBI partnership, which has created the largest joint venture engineering consulting firm in China, having undertaken over 600 bridge, road, and other projects the designs of which meet World Bank and Asian Development Bank standards, and has made significant progress in engineering knowledge-sharing for road, bridge, and other project design and construction between the United States and China;

Whereas several United States Department of Energy national laboratories have established partnerships with research institutions in China to advance energy research, including—

(1) Argonne National Laboratory in Lemont, Illinois, which has worked with the China Automotive Technology and Research Center (CATARC) to promote energy-efficient vehicle technologies and clean transportation fuels in China since 2003; and

(2) Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory in Berkeley, California, which has formed the China Energy Group to work collaboratively with groups in China to understand the dynamics of energy use, improve energy efficiency, reduce emissions in China, strengthen Chinese capabilities in energy efficiency, and enhance relationships on energy efficiency among Chinese, United States, and international institutions;

Whereas, in 2013, the State of California and the Chinese Ministry of Commerce signed a Memorandum of Understanding to establish a working group to deepen cooperation in fields such as biological pharmaceuticals, information technology, agriculture, and energy;

Whereas the exchange of ideas in science and technology and shared research conducted in China and the United States holds the potential to increase United States exports of non-sensitive commercial technologies to China;

Whereas the agreement reached in November 2014 between the United States and the People's Republic of China to expand the scope of goods covered by the Information Technology Agreement will further deepen trade, investment, and mutual cooperation in science and technology;

Whereas collaboration in science and technology since 1979 has provided both countries with the technological foundation to make ambitious pledges to reduce future emissions of carbon dioxide; and

Whereas people-to-people exchanges conducted under the Agreement Between the Government of the United States and the Government of the People's Republic of China on Cooperation in Science and Technology have fostered mutual understanding of both countries and have led to joint research in science and technology: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) recognizes the cooperation in science and technology between the Governments of the United States and the People's Republic of China since 1979;

(2) emphasizes the importance of open markets, intellectual property rights, and the free exchange of information to the development of science and technology; and

(3) expresses continued support for the principles of the Agreement Between the Government of the United States and the Government of the People's Republic of China on Cooperation in Science and Technology, done at Washington January 31, 1979, to which both countries remain committed.

AMENDMENTS SUBMITTED AND PROPOSED

SA 4100. Mr. REID proposed an amendment to the bill H.R. 83, to require the Secretary of the Interior to assemble a team of technical, policy, and financial experts to address the energy needs of the insular areas of the United States and the Freely Associated States through the development of energy action plans aimed at promoting access to affordable, reliable energy, including increasing use of indigenous clean-energy resources, and for other purposes.

SA 4101. Mr. REID proposed an amendment to amendment SA 4100 proposed by Mr. REID to the bill H.R. 83, supra.

SA 4102. Mr. REID proposed an amendment to the bill H.R. 83, supra.

SA 4103. Mr. REID proposed an amendment to amendment SA 4102 proposed by Mr. REID to the bill H.R. 83, supra.

SA 4104. Mr. REID proposed an amendment to amendment SA 4103 proposed by Mr. REID to the amendment SA 4102 proposed by Mr. REID to the bill H.R. 83, supra.

SA 4105. Mr. COBURN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 5771, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to extend certain expiring provisions and make technical corrections, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to provide for the tax treatment of ABLE accounts established under State programs for the care of family members with disabilities, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 4106. Mr. COBURN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 5771, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 4107. Mr. COBURN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 5771, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 4108. Mr. COBURN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 5771, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 4109. Mr. COBURN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 5771, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 4110. Mr. COBURN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 5771, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 4111. Mr. COBURN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 5771, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 4112. Mr. COBURN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 5771, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 4113. Mr. COBURN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 5771, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 4114. Mr. COBURN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 5771, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 4115. Mr. COBURN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 5771, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 4116. Mr. COBURN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 5771, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 4117. Mr. MENENDEZ (for himself, Mr. KAINE, Mr. CARDIN, Mrs. SHAHEEN, Mr. COONS, Mr. UDALL of New Mexico, Mr. MURPHY, Mr. MARKEY, and Mrs. BOXER) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 83, to require the Secretary of the Interior to assemble a team of technical, policy, and financial experts to address the energy needs of the insular areas of the United States and the Freely Associated States through the development of energy action plans aimed at promoting access to affordable, reliable energy, including increasing use of indigenous clean-energy resources, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 4118. Ms. WARREN (for herself, Mr. VITTER, Mr. MARKEY, and Mr. MERKLEY submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill H.R. 83, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

TEXT OF AMENDMENTS

SA 4100. Mr. REID proposed an amendment to the bill H.R. 83, to require the Secretary of the Interior to assemble a team of technical, policy, and financial experts to address the energy needs of the insular areas of the United States and the Freely Associated States through the development of energy action plans aimed at promoting access to affordable, reliable energy, including increasing use of indigenous clean-energy resources, and for other purposes; as follows:

At the end, add the following:

This Act shall become effective 1 day after enactment.

SA 4101. Mr. REID proposed an amendment to amendment SA 4100 proposed by Mr. REID to the bill H.R. 83, to require the Secretary of the Interior to assemble a team of technical, policy, and financial experts to address the energy needs of the insular areas of the United States and the Freely Associated States through the development of energy action plans aimed at promoting access to affordable, reliable energy, including increasing use of indigenous clean-energy resources, and for other purposes; as follows:

In the amendment, strike ''1 day'' and insert ''2 days''.

SA 4102. Mr. REID proposed an amendment to the bill H.R. 83, to require the Secretary of the Interior to assemble a team of technical, policy, and financial experts to address the energy needs of the insular areas of the United States and the Freely Associated States through the development of energy action plans aimed at promoting access to affordable, reliable energy, including increasing use of indigenous clean-energy resources, and for other purposes; as follows:

At the end, add the following:

This Act shall become effective 3 days after enactment.

SA 4103. Mr. REID proposed an amendment to amendment SA 4102 proposed by Mr. REID to the bill H.R. 83, to require the Secretary of the Interior to assemble a team of technical, policy, and financial experts to address the energy needs of the insular areas of the United States and the Freely Associated States through the development of energy action plans aimed at promoting access to affordable, reliable energy, including increasing use of indigenous clean-energy resources, and for other purposes; as follows:

In the amendment, strike ''3 days'' and insert ''4 days''.

SA 4104. Mr. REID proposed an amendment to amendment SA 4103 proposed by Mr. REID to the amendment SA 4102 proposed by Mr. REID to the bill H.R. 83, to require the Secretary of the Interior to assemble a team of technical, policy, and financial experts to address the energy needs of the insular areas of the United States and the Freely Associated States through the development of energy action plans aimed at promoting access to affordable, reliable energy, including increasing use of indigenous clean-energy resources, and for other purposes; as follows:

In the amendment, strike ''4'' and insert ''5''.

SA 4105. Mr. COBURN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 5771, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to extend certain expiring provisions and make technical corrections, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to provide for the tax treatment of ABLE accounts established under State programs for the care of family members with disabilities, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

Beginning on page 135, strike line 11 and all that follows through page 140, line 4 and insert the following:

''(e) OTHER DEFINITIONS AND SPECIAL RULES.—For purposes of this section—

''(1) ELIGIBLE INDIVIDUAL.—An individual is an eligible individual for a taxable year if during such taxable year the individual is entitled to benefits based on blindness or disability under title II or XVI of the Social Security Act, and such blindness or disability occurred before the date on which the individual attained age 26.

''(2) DESIGNATED BENEFICIARY.—The term 'designated beneficiary' in connection with an ABLE account established under a qualified ABLE program means the eligible individual who established an ABLE account and is the owner of such account.

''(3) MEMBER OF FAMILY.—The term 'member of the family' means, with respect to any designated beneficiary, an individual who bears a relationship to such beneficiary which is described in subparagraph section 152(d)(2)(B). For purposes of the preceding sentence, a rule similar to the rule of section 152(f)(1)(B) shall apply.

''(4) QUALIFIED DISABILITY EXPENSES.—The term 'qualified disability expenses' means any expenses related to the eligible individual's blindness or disability which are made for the benefit of an eligible individual who is the designated beneficiary, including the following expenses: education, housing, transportation, employment training and support, assistive technology and personal support services, health, prevention and wellness, financial management and administrative services, legal fees, expenses for oversight and monitoring, funeral and burial expenses, and other expenses, which are approved by the Secretary under regulations and consistent with the purposes of this section.

''(5) ABLE ACCOUNT.—The term 'ABLE account' means an account established by an eligible individual, owned by such eligible individual, and maintained under a qualified ABLE program.

''(6) CONTRACTING STATE.—The term 'contracting State' means a State without a qualified ABLE program which has entered into a contract with a State with a qualified ABLE program to provide residents of the contracting State access to a qualified ABLE program.

''(f) TRANSFER TO STATE.—Subject to any outstanding payments due for qualified disability expenses, upon the death of the designated beneficiary, all amounts remaining in the qualified ABLE account not in excess of the amount equal to the total medical assistance paid for the designated beneficiary after the establishment of the account, net of any premiums paid from the account or paid by or on behalf of the beneficiary to a Medicaid Buy-In program under any State Medicaid plan established under title XIX of the Social Security Act, shall be distributed to such State upon filing of a claim for payment by such State. For purposes of this paragraph, the State shall be a creditor of an ABLE account and not a beneficiary. Subsection (c)(3) shall not apply to a distribution under the preceding sentence.

''(g) REGULATIONS.—The Secretary shall prescribe such regulations or other guidance as the Secretary determines necessary or appropriate to carry out the purposes of this section, including regulations—

''(1) to enforce the 1 ABLE account per eligible individual limit,

''(2) providing for the information required to be presented to open an ABLE account,

''(3) to generally define qualified disability expenses,

''(4) to prevent fraud and abuse with respect to amounts claimed as qualified disability expenses,

''(5) under chapters 11, 12, and 13 of this title, and

''(6) to allow for transfers from one ABLE account to another ABLE account.''.

SA 4106. Mr. COBURN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 5771, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to extend certain expiring provisions and make technical corrections, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to provide for the tax treatment of ABLE accounts established under State programs for the care of family members with disabilities, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

Strike section 115.

SA 4107. Mr. COBURN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 5771, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to extend certain expiring provisions and make technical corrections, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to provide for the tax treatment of ABLE accounts established under State programs for the care of family members with disabilities, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 12, strike lines 9 through 16.

SA 4108. Mr. COBURN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 5771, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to extend certain expiring provisions and make technical corrections, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to provide for the tax treatment of ABLE accounts established under State programs for the care of family members with disabilities, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

Beginning on page 25, strike line 13 through page 26, line 7.

SA 4109. Mr. COBURN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 5771, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to extend certain expiring provisions and make technical corrections, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to provide for the tax treatment of ABLE accounts established under State programs for the care of family members with disabilities, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

Beginning on page 26, strike line 17 through page 27, line 5.

SA 4110. Mr. COBURN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 5771, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to extend certain expiring provisions and make technical corrections, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to provide for the tax treatment of ABLE accounts established under State programs for the care of family members with disabilities, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 11, strike lines 14 through 21.

SA 4111. Mr. COBURN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 5771, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to extend certain expiring provisions and make technical corrections, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to provide for the tax treatment of ABLE accounts established under State programs for the care of family members with disabilities, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 12, strike lines 18 through 25.

SA 4112. Mr. COBURN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 5771, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to extend certain expiring provisions and make technical corrections, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to provide for the tax treatment of ABLE accounts established under State programs for the care of family members with disabilities, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 14, strike lines 12 through 20.

SA 4113. Mr. COBURN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 5771, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to extend certain expiring provisions and make technical corrections, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to provide for the tax treatment of ABLE accounts established under State programs for the care of family members with disabilities, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. ____. PROHIBITION ON USING TAX-EXEMPT STATE AND LOCAL BONDS FOR CERTAIN FACILITIES.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 103(b) is amended by adding at the end the following new paragraph:

''(4) BOND TO FINANCE CERTAIN FACILITIES.—Any bond to finance a facility primarily used for gambling, a private or commercial golf course, a country club, a skybox or other private luxury box, or a stadium or arena for professional sports exhibitions or games.''.

SA 4114. Mr. COBURN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 5771, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to extend certain expiring provisions and make technical corrections, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to provide for the tax treatment of ABLE accounts established under State programs for the care of family members with disabilities, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 10, between lines 19 and 20, insert the following:

(c) PROHIBITION ON COMBINING THE NEW MARKET TAX CREDIT WITH OTHER SOURCES OF FEDERAL FUNDING.—Section 45D is amended by adding at the end the following new subsection:

''(j) PROHIBITION.—A qualified community development entity shall not use any equity leveraged through the new markets tax credit under this section on any project that is benefitting from the rehabilitation credit for certified historic structures under section 47.''.

SA 4115. Mr. COBURN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 5771, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to extend certain expiring provisions and make technical corrections, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to provide for the tax treatment of ABLE accounts established under State programs for the care of family members with disabilities, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 10, between lines 19 and 20, insert the following:

(c) PROHIBITION ON USE OF THE NEW MARKET TAX CREDIT ON CERTAIN FACILITIES.—Section 45D is amended by adding at the end the following new subsection:

''(j) PROHIBITION.—Any amounts allocated to a qualified community development entity under this section shall not be used to leverage funding for the purchase, construction, maintenance, or operation of a fast-food restaurant, gas station, flea market, doggy daycare or grooming facility, or brewery.''.

SA 4116. Mr. COBURN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 5771, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to extend certain expiring provisions and make technical corrections, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to provide for the tax treatment of ABLE accounts established under State programs for the care of family members with disabilities, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. ____. DISCLOSURE OF PUBLIC COMPANIES RECEIVING CERTAIN TAX BENEFITS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Notwithstanding section 6103 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 or any other provision of law, the Secretary of the Treasury, or the Secretary's delegate, shall provide to administrator of the website established under the Federal Funding Accountability and Transparency Act of 2006 (31 U.S.C. 6101 note), for purposes of inclusion on such website, the information described in subsection (b) with respect to any corporation—

(1) the stock of which is publicly traded on an established securities market, and

(2) which is allowed an applicable tax benefit.

(b) INFORMATION INCLUDED.—The information described in this subsection is—

(1) the name of the corporation,

(2) the type of applicable tax benefit, and

(3) the amount of the applicable tax benefit.

(c) APPLICABLE TAX BENEFIT.—For purposes of this section, the term ''applicable tax benefit'' means, with respect to any taxpayer for any taxable year beginning after December 31, 2013, any credit, deduction, or other benefit allowed to the taxpayer by reason of an amendment made by—

(1) part II or part III of subtitle A of title I of this Act,

(2) subtitle B of title I of this Act, or

(3) section 107(b) of this Act.

SA 4117. Mr. MENENDEZ (for himself, Mr. KAINE, Mr. CARDIN, Mrs. SHAHEEN, Mr. COONS, Mr. UDALL of New Mexico, Mr. MURPHY, Mr. MARKEY, and Mrs. BOXER) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 83, to require the Secretary of the Interior to assemble a team of technical, policy, and financial experts to address the energy needs of the insular areas of the United States and the Freely Associated States through the development of energy action plans aimed at promoting access to affordable, reliable energy, including increasing use of indigenous clean-energy resources, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

DIVISION ____—AUTHORIZATION FOR USE OF MILITARY FORCE AGAINST THE ISLAMIC STATE OF IRAQ AND THE LEVANT

SEC. ____01. SHORT TITLE.

This division may be cited as the ''Authorization for the Use of Military Force against the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant''.

SEC. ____02. FINDINGS.

(a) FINDINGS.—Congress makes the following findings:

(1) The terrorist organization known as the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant and various other names (in this division referred to as ''ISIL'') poses a grave threat to the people and territorial integrity of Iraq, Syria, regional stability, and the national security interests of the United States and its allies and partners.

(2) ISIL holds significant territory in Iraq and Syria and has stated its intention to seize more territory and demonstrated the capability to do so.

(3) ISIL leaders have stated that they intend to conduct terrorist attacks internationally, including against the United States, its citizens, and interests.

(4) ISIL has committed despicable acts of violence and mass executions against Muslims, regardless of sect, who do not subscribe to ISIL's depraved, violent, and oppressive ideology.

(5) ISIL has threatened genocide and committed vicious acts of violence against religious and ethnic minority groups, including Iraqi Christians, Yezidi, and Turkmen populations.

(6) ISIL has targeted innocent women and girls with horrific acts of violence, including abduction, enslavement, torture, rape, and forced marriage.

(7) ISIL is responsible for the brutal murder of innocent United States citizens, including James Foley, Steven Sotloff, and Abdul-Rahman Peter Kassig.

(8) It is the policy of the United States to work with regional and global allies and partners to degrade and defeat ISIL, to cut off its funding, to stop the flow of foreign fighters to its ranks, and to support local communities as they reject ISIL.

(9) The announcement of the anti-ISIL Coalition on September 5, 2014, during the NATO Summit in Wales, stated that ISIL poses a serious threat and should be countered by a broad international coalition.

(10) President Barack Obama articulated five lines of effort in the campaign to counter ISIL, including supporting regional military partners, stopping the flow of foreign fighters, cutting off ISIL's access to financing, addressing urgent humanitarian needs, and contesting ISIL's messaging.

(11) The United States Government calls on its allies and partners in the Middle East and North Africa that have not already done so to join and participate in the anti-ISIL Coalition.

(12) The United States Government has successfully conducted airstrikes in Iraq, in coordination with Iraqi and Kurdish security forces, to prevent humanitarian catastrophes, protect vulnerable minority populations, repel ISIL from areas of strategic importance, and demonstrate support to communities in western and northern Iraq being terrorized by ISIL.

(13) The United States Government has successfully conducted airstrikes in Syria, in coordination with local actors on the ground who demonstrate commitment and capability in countering ISIL, in order to target ISIL training camps and munitions facilities, stop sources of ISIL funding, protect vulnerable minority populations, and target extremist groups intent on attacking the United States and its allies.

(14) United States and Coalition airstrikes to date have succeeded in halting ISIL's advance in Iraq and Syria.

(15) The President should to the greatest extent possible act in concert or cooperation with the security forces of other countries in the region to counter the grave threat to regional stability and international security posed by ISIL.

(16) The anti-ISIL strategy requires effective local security forces in Iraq and Syria, and empowered political leaders committed to leading inclusive, representative governments that enable citizens in both countries to achieve their legitimate aspirations and to live in peace and security.

(17) President Obama stated on November 5, 2014, his commitment to working with Congress to pass an authorization for the use of military force for the anti-ISIL military campaign.

SEC. ____03. AUTHORIZATION FOR USE OF UNITED STATES ARMED FORCES.

(a) AUTHORIZATION.—The President is authorized, subject to the limitations in subsection (c), to use the Armed Forces of the United States as the President determines to be necessary and appropriate against the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant or associated persons or forces as defined in section ____06.

(b) WAR POWERS RESOLUTION REQUIREMENTS.—

(1) SPECIFIC STATUTORY AUTHORIZATION.—Consistent with section 8(a)(1) of the War Powers Resolution (50 U.S.C. 1547(a)(1)), Congress declares that this section is intended to constitute specific statutory authorization within the meaning of section 5(b) of the War Powers Resolution (50 U.S.C. 1544(b)), within the limits of the authorization established under this section.

(2) APPLICABILITY OF OTHER REQUIREMENTS.—Nothing in this division supersedes any requirement of the War Powers Resolution (50 U.S.C. 1541 et seq.).

(c) LIMITATIONS.—The authority granted in subsection (a) does not authorize the use of the United States Armed Forces for the purpose of ground combat operations except as necessary—

(1) for the protection or rescue of members of the United States Armed Forces or United States citizens from imminent danger posed by ISIL; or

(2) to conduct missions not intended to result in ground combat operations by United States forces, such as—

(A) intelligence collection and sharing;

(B) enabling kinetic strikes;

(C) operational planning; or

(D) other forms of advice and assistance to forces fighting ISIL in Iraq or Syria.

SEC. ____04. DURATION OF THIS AUTHORIZATION.

This authorization for the use of military force shall terminate three years after the date of the enactment of this Act, unless reauthorized.

SEC. ____05. REPORTS.

(a) PERIODIC REPORT.—The President shall report to Congress at least once every 60 days on specific actions taken pursuant to this authorization.

(b) COMPREHENSIVE STRATEGY.—Not later than 30 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the President shall submit to Congress an unclassified report, which may include a classified annex, on the comprehensive strategy of the United States in Iraq and Syria, including all activities authorized by this division. The comprehensive strategy report shall include—

(1) The specific political and diplomatic objectives of the United States in the region and the methods proposed to achieve them.

(2) Clearly defined military objectives of the United States, including—

(A) a list of the organizations and entities to be targeted by military operations;

(B) the geographic scope of military operations; and

(C) methods for limiting civilian casualties.

(3) Actual and proposed contributions from coalition partners of the United States, including financing, equipment, training, troops, and logistics support.

(4) Humanitarian assistance and support for displaced civilian populations.

(5) Benchmarks for assessing progress toward political, diplomatic, and military goals.

(6) A realistic end goal and exit strategy.

(7) An estimate of the costs involved and how any funds made available for activities authorized by this division will be fully offset through reduced spending, increased revenue, or both.

SEC. ____06. ASSOCIATED PERSONS OR FORCES DEFINED.

In this division, the term ''associated persons or forces'' means individuals and organizations fighting for or on behalf of the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant or a closely-related successor entity, for the purposes of action authorized to be taken under this division.

SEC. ____07. APPLICABILITY.

The provisions of this division pertaining to the authorization of use of force against the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant shall supersede any preceding authorization for the use of military force.

SEC. ____08. REPEAL OF AUTHORIZATION FOR USE OF MILITARY FORCE AGAINST IRAQ.

The Authorization for Use of Military Force Against Iraq Resolution of 2002 (Public Law 107–243; 116 Stat. 1498; 50 U.S.C. 1541 note) is hereby repealed.

SEC. ____09. SUNSET OF 2001 AUTHORIZATION FOR USE OF MILITARY FORCE.

The Authorization for Use of Military Force (Public Law 107–40; 50 U.S.C. 1541 note) shall terminate on the date that is three years after the date of the enactment of this Act, unless reauthorized.

SA 4118. Ms. WARREN (for herself, Mr. VITTER, Mr. MARKEY, and Mr. MERKLEY) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill H.R. 83, to require the Secretary of the Interior to assemble a team of technical, policy, and financial experts to address the energy needs of the insular areas of the United States and the Freely Associated States through the development of energy action plans

aimed at promoting access to affordable, reliable energy, including increasing use of indigenous clean-energy resources, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

Strike section 630 of title VI of division E (amending section 716 of the Dodd-Frank Wall Street Reform and Consumer Protection Act (15 U.S.C. 8305)).

PRIVILEGES OF THE FLOOR

Ms. BALDWIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that Larkin O'Hern, a military fellow in Senator MURRAY's office, be granted the privilege of the floor for the remainder of the 113th Congress.

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

ORDERS FOR SATURDAY, DECEMBER 13, 2014

Mr. REID. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that when the Senate completes its business today, it adjourn until 12 noon tomorrow, Saturday, December 13, 2014; that following the prayer and pledge, the morning hour be deemed expired, the Journal of proceedings be approved to date, and the time for the two leaders be reserved for their use later in the day; that following any leader remarks, the Senate resume consideration of the motion to concur in the House amendment to the Senate amendment to H.R. 83.

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

Mr. REID. Let me say I understand the sincerity of my friend from Utah. I am unable to agree with him, but it doesn't take away from the sincerity of his request.

PROGRAM

Mr. REID. For the information of all Senators, rollcall votes are expected throughout the day on Saturday. This is really the way it is going to be. It appears we are going have to have a series of votes all day tomorrow starting as soon as we get here, into the evening and perhaps into the morning.

ADJOURNMENT UNTIL 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.

Before the Chair rules on that, we have tried our very best to work something out to move forward with a consent agreement. We have spent all night and have been unable to do that. There have been a number of mixed signals to my Members. They are now being notified—for the last several hours—indicating that we have to be here this weekend. It is inconvenient for a lot of people. I am sorry. We are in the Senate and we are going to have to rearrange our schedules for the weekend.

There being no objection, the Senate, at 10:53 p.m., adjourned until Saturday, December 13, 2014, at 12 noon.

CONFIRMATIONS

Executive nominations confirmed by the Senate December 12, 2014:

DEPARTMENT OF STATE

AMY JANE HYATT, OF CALIFORNIA, A CAREER MEMBER OF THE SENIOR FOREIGN SERVICE, CLASS OF MINISTER–COUNSELOR, TO BE AMBASSADOR EXTRAORDINARY AND PLENIPOTENTIARY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO THE REPUBLIC OF PALAU.

ROBERT C. BARBER, OF MASSACHUSETTS, TO BE AMBASSADOR EXTRAORDINARY AND PLENIPOTENTIARY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO THE REPUBLIC OF ICELAND.

ARNOLD A. CHACON, OF VIRGINIA, A CAREER MEMBER OF THE SENIOR FOREIGN SERVICE, CLASS OF MINISTER–COUNSELOR, TO BE DIRECTOR GENERAL OF THE FOREIGN SERVICE.

MARK GILBERT, OF FLORIDA, TO BE AMBASSADOR EXTRAORDINARY AND PLENIPOTENTIARY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO NEW ZEALAND, AND TO SERVE CONCURRENTLY AND WITHOUT ADDITIONAL COMPENSATION AS AMBASSADOR EXTRAORDINARY AND PLENIPOTENTIARY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO THE INDEPENDENT STATE OF SAMOA.

BROADCASTING BOARD OF GOVERNORS

MICHAEL W. KEMPNER, OF NEW JERSEY, TO BE A MEMBER OF THE BROADCASTING BOARD OF GOVERNORS FOR A TERM EXPIRING AUGUST 13, 2015.

DEPARTMENT OF STATE

VIRGINIA E. PALMER, OF VIRGINIA, A CAREER MEMBER OF THE SENIOR FOREIGN SERVICE, CLASS OF MINISTER–COUNSELOR, TO BE AMBASSADOR EXTRAORDINARY AND PLENIPOTENTIARY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO THE REPUBLIC OF MALAWI.

DAVID NATHAN SAPERSTEIN, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, TO BE AMBASSADOR AT LARGE FOR INTERNATIONAL RELIGIOUS FREEDOM.

DONALD L. HEFLIN, OF VIRGINIA, A CAREER MEMBER OF THE SENIOR FOREIGN SERVICE, CLASS OF MINISTER–COUNSELOR, TO BE AMBASSADOR EXTRAORDINARY AND PLENIPOTENTIARY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO THE REPUBLIC OF CABO VERDE.

BROADCASTING BOARD OF GOVERNORS

LEON ARON, OF VIRGINIA, TO BE A MEMBER OF THE BROADCASTING BOARD OF GOVERNORS FOR A TERM EXPIRING AUGUST 13, 2016.

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

RECOGNIZING CARL LINDNER

HON. JOHN A. BOEHNER

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 11, 2014

Mr. BOEHNER. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize a very special person to our local area, Carl Lindner, as the city of Cincinnati recently moved to adorn one of its downtown streets with Mr. Lindner's name.

Mr. Lindner spent a lifetime making the Queen City the best place on earth to live and raise a family. I cannot think of a better place to honor him than on the streets of the city he loved and worked so hard to make better for us and for our children.

He was a wonderful man, and, more importantly, a good friend to so many of us. It's for these reasons that our community is so very grateful, and I ask all Members of the House to join me as we celebrate Carl Lindner's legacy.

TRIBUTE TO ELEANOR OWNBEY

HON. ADAM B. SCHIFF

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 11, 2014

Mr. SCHIFF. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to Eleanor Ownbey and to honor the work of her two daughters, Maggie and Sue Ownbey, for their many years of advocacy on behalf of their mother and the Alzheimer's disease community.

Eleanor battled Alzheimer's disease for more than ten years, passing away from this tragic disease on February 18, 2014. Maggie and Sue watched as their mother not only forgot that they were her daughters, but also how to talk, to walk, and to feed herself. Eleanor spent the last three years of her life in hospice care and most of that time confined to a bed. Her daughters describe her as a brave woman with a strong spirit and an infectious sense of humor.

Inspired by their mother's courage, Maggie and Sue have spent the last eight years telling their mother's story and how much this ravenous disease costs families, what caregivers need, and how desperately a cure needs to be found.

In fact, someone develops Alzheimer's disease every 67 seconds and more than five million Americans suffer from Alzheimer's disease. It is also the only cause of death in the top 10 in America without a way to prevent it, treat it, or slow its progression. This devastating disease is also taking a toll on our economy and health care infrastructure. Caring for people with Alzheimer's and other dementias cost the United States an estimated $214 billion in 2014, and unless something changes, costs are estimated to rise to a total of $1.2 trillion in 2050.

I call on my colleagues to recognize the growing Alzheimer's crisis and to support a strong increase in funding for Alzheimer's disease research for Fiscal Year 2015 that will enable the National Institutes of Health to arrive one step closer to finding a cure for this tragic disease.

Eleanor Ownbey is survived by her children Maggie, Sue, Steven, and Mark and her grandchildren Jason, Summit, Netanya, Allie, and William "Finn." I wish the Ownbey family all the best in their future endeavors and express my deepest gratitude for their advocacy on behalf of the millions of families whose loved ones suffer from Alzheimer's disease.

REMEMBERING AND HONORING SALVATORE FERRARA II

HON. DANIEL LIPINSKI

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 11, 2014

Mr. LIPINSKI. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life of Salvatore Ferrara II who passed away on November 27, 2014.

Salvatore attended Fenwick High School in Oak Park, IL and later served on the school's Board of Trustees. He then went on to graduate from Loyola University in New Orleans. Salvatore joined his father's company, Ferrara Pan Candy Company, in the mid-1970s and climbed the ranks to CEO. According to Salvatore's father, Nello, Salvatore is the inspiration behind the Lemonheads candy because Nello joked that he was born with a lemon-shaped head. The company is now located in Oakbrook Terrace and is known as Ferrara Candy Company. During his time as CEO, Salvatore managed the merger with Farley's & Sathers Candy Company in 2012 and oversaw a period of steady growth in which the company expanded to over 500 employees.

Salvatore is survived by his wife, Andrea, and is the father of five children as well as a grandfather of three. In his free time, his daughter says he liked to drive his red Ferrari and go out on his boat named Lemonhead.

When Salvatore was diagnosed with cancer, he became a strong advocate for encouraging others to become educated and get doctor checkups. I admire him for his courage as he battled his cancer and commend him for empowering others.

Salvatore's visitation and funeral Mass were held on December 1st at Holy Family Catholic Church in Chicago, IL. As his family grieves through this difficult time, I hope Mr. Ferrara's family finds comfort in knowing that he is with God now and is no longer in any pain. Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in remembering the inspiring life of Salvatore Ferrara II and extending condolences to his family.

IN APPRECIATION OF DR. ROBERT MORRIS

HON. SPENCER BACHUS

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 11, 2014

Mr. BACHUS. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to congratulate Dr. Robert Morris, a Board certified Ophthalmologist, a founding physician of Retina Specialists of Alabama, and the President of the Helen Keller Foundation for Research and Education. Dr. Morris also serves as Chairman of the International Society of Ocular Trauma and an Associate of Clinical Professor of Ophthalmology at the University of Alabama at Birmingham.

Dr. Morris, an outstanding professional and true humanitarian, is a leader in promoting better eyesight and vision care in Alabama and throughout the nation. It has been my honor to collaborate with him on a number of projects during my tine in Congress.

Dr. Morris' strong devotion to his patients and craft is evidenced by his ability to innovate new medical techniques including Vitreoretinal surgery while simultaneously managing a large clinical practice. He regularly contributes to national and international journals and conferences of vitreorenal surgeons and other ophthalmologists. His advanced training and surgical skills are particularly recognized in the treatment of severe eye injuries and surgeries of the macular (center of vision). Further, Dr. Morris pioneered techniques of temporary keratoprosthesis (TKP) vitrectomy to completely reconstruct injured or infected eyes. He has been consulted to treat patients who have suffered severe injury to both eyes resulting from terrorist bombs.

Dr. Morris has received numerous awards including the American Academy of Ophthalmology (AAO) Best of Show Award in 2001 and 2003 for videos of macular surgery. He is a recipient of the senior honor award from both the AAO and the American Society of Retina Specialists for extensive contributions to scientific activities.

As a teenager, Dr. Morris had a goal of becoming an astronaut. A failed eye test for the ROTC during college in Purdue led him to shift his focus to pre-medicine. Dr. Morris subsequently enrolled in Medical School at the University of Alabama. Six months before graduation, Dr. Morris signed up for the Air Force, with the possibility that becoming a pilot might provide an alternate pathway to space. However, after serving as a reconnaissance pilot in the Air National Guard, Dr. Morris made the decision to fully devote himself to the pursuit of ophthalmology and his choice has changed innumerable lives for the better.

Dr. Morris' professional accomplishments and life story are most impressive, but it is his charitable service that is unparalleled. He is quite literally a miracle worker. As President of the Hellen Keller Foundation, he and his team devote many weeks each year to treating children who have lost their sight.

The Hellen Keller statue currently on display in the United States Capitol would not have been possible without the leadership of Dr. Morris. His tireless dedication was instrumental in ensuring the placement of this statue in the Capitol where generations of children will be inspired by Helen Keller's ability to overcome obstacles, including the loss of vision, to become one of our nation's most esteemed educators and advocates.

Therefore, Mr. Speaker, let us commend Dr. Robert Morris for his accomplishments and professional and charitable service and wish him continued success in his many pursuits. He is one of Alabama's finest citizens and merits our appreciation for his dedication to his patients, charitable endeavors, the State of Alabama and the Field of Medicine.

THE FUTURE OF SPACE EXPLORATION

HON. PETE OLSON

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 11, 2014

Mr. OLSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Nicolle Walters for being one of a few students in America chosen to participate in NASA's Aerospace Scholars Program. Nicolle is currently a junior at Lamar Consolidated High School in Rosenberg, Texas—go Mustangs!

Nicolle will participate in an online learning experience with actual NASA engineers this spring and spend a week this summer working with aerospace engineers at the Johnson Space Center. Nicolle will have an amazing opportunity to be mentored by NASA engineers and scientists, which will hopefully aide her interest in space exploration. Nicolle is a member of the Project Lead the Way program at Lamar Consolidated. Project Lead the Way provides engaging, hands-on STEM courses and prepares students to be leaders in the fields of science, technology, engineering and math.

I wish Nicolle the best of luck with this amazing experience and with her future endeavors. On behalf of the residents of the Twenty-Second Congressional District of Texas, I again congratulate Nicolle Walters for being chosen to participate in NASA's Aerospace Scholars Program.

IN RECOGNITION OF FRANCIS CHESKO FOR EXTENSIVE MILITARY SERVICE DURING WORLD WAR II

HON. MATT CARTWRIGHT

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 11, 2014

Mr. CARTWRIGHT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor of Francis Chesko, who is being recognized by the Mahanoy City Historical Society on Saturday, December 13, 2014. During World War II, Mr. Chesko took part in the D-Day Invasion and the Battle of the Bulge, reached the rank of sergeant in the 148th Engineer Battalion, received five Bronze Stars and the Army Presidential Unit Citation for his service.

In 1942, Francis received his basic training in Camp Shelby, Mississippi. In October, he was deployed and stationed in Swidon, England, where he helped construct a Bailey bridge and a landing strip. While in Swindon, Francis was informed that his brother Joseph, who was also enlisted, was stationed 25 miles away from Francis's post. The two were able to visit each other one weekend with permission from Francis's captain. Shortly thereafter, Francis's outfit was ordered to move south to Southampton and prepare to leave for German-occupied France. On June 6, 1944, Francis landed on Utah Beach as part of the Allied Invasion of Normandy.

On July 19, 1944, Francis was wounded during German shelling in the town of La Haye du Puits. He returned to Swindon for treatment. After his recovery, Francis was sent back across the English Channel and joined the 7th Armored Division in Holland. While serving with the 7th Armored Division, Francis endured the Battle of the Bulge. During the battle, while his unit was constructing a small tree-cut bridge, Francis narrowly avoided being hit by an 88-mm enemy mortar shell.

While guarding a bridge in Holland, German forces took Francis's unit by surprise. After a friendly anti-tank round misfired, Francis and comrades had to fall back from their position. While trying to avoid a German tank, Francis was knocked over by debris sent flying by enemy gunfire. Friendly reinforcements arrived and disabled the German armor. Later, German forces began bombarding Francis's position. In the midst of the shelling, he took cover in a ditch and did not discover until the next morning that a mortar struck the ground above. Fortunately, the round did not go off.

Francis's unit was dug in at the town of St. Vith, Belgium when Germans attacked the town on December 17, 1944. His division was ordered to hold their position for three days; they held it for five. German forces eventually took the town, but on January 23, Allied Forces recaptured it. After the Battle of the Bulge, Francis's unit helped construct the longest bridge of the war (1,300 feet) over the Rhine river. As he pushed into Germany, Allied Forces liberated 1,200 captive American soldiers.

Francis currently resides in Mahanoy City, Pennsylvania with his wife Rose. They have been married over 65 years and have been blessed with 3 children, 6 grandchildren, and 3 great-grandchildren. I am sure Francis has been thanked many times for his brave service to his country, but, today, I add one more official notation of gratitude for his heroic answer to our nation's call to military duty.

HONORING THE NORTHWEST HIGH SCHOOL JAGUARS

HON. JOHN K. DELANEY

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 11, 2014

Mr. DELANEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the Northwest High School football team and Head Coach Mike Neubeiser of Germantown, Maryland. On Friday, December 5, the Jaguars won their second consecutive Maryland Class 4A State Football Championship.

The Northwest Jaguars capped off a 13–1 season with a 34–31 win over Old Mill. The Jaguars rolled through the playoffs, outscoring their opponents by an impressive 147–67 margin. The Jaguars repeated last year's success by winning their second title in a row, and being the first Montgomery County team to do so in 15 years. The championship is the team's third title.

Being the reigning champion, Coach Neubeiser's squad started the season as the favorite. Their only loss came in week 9, and the Jaguars quickly rebounded to stay on the championship road. I want to thank Coach Neubeiser and his staff for their leadership, as well as all the student-athletes for their hard work and determination to be the best they can be both in the classroom and on the field. I also wish the Northwest Jaguars the best of luck as they look to win their third straight title next season.

I ask that you and my other distinguished colleagues help me in honoring this significant accomplishment.

MARKING ONE YEAR SINCE CONFLICT BROKE OUT IN SOUTH SUDAN

HON. ELIOT L. ENGEL

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 11, 2014

Mr. ENGEL. Mr. Speaker, last December, a terrible civil conflict erupted in the nation of South Sudan. Two million people have been displaced, 1.5 million don't have enough to eat, and an estimated 50,000 have been killed. The scale of the human suffering and ethnic violence in the world's newest country is shocking.

It is deeply troubling that so little progress has been made towards a peace agreement between the parties to this conflict.

Today, I call on both parties to lay down their arms. It is unconscionable that the people of South Sudan should have to endure such suffering due to the irresponsible actions of their own leaders. The parties must set aside their differences and negotiate a nonviolent resolution for the good of their young nation.

The U.S. government must also step up its efforts, using its political and diplomatic influence to bring a lasting end to this crisis. As we mark a year since the onset of political violence in this country, we must reaffirm our dedication to working for peace in South Sudan.

SUPPORT OF THE INSURANCE CAPITAL STANDARDS CLARIFICATION ACT OF 2014

HON. GARY G. MILLER

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 11, 2014

Mr. GARY G. MILLER of California. Mr. Speaker, I along with Mrs. MCCARTHY of New York have authored legislation to address the capital requirements that apply to insurance companies under federal supervision pursuant to the Dodd-Frank Act. This legislation would strengthen the regulatory regime applicable to federally supervised insurance companies by

ensuring that they are not subject to bank-centric capital standards.

One of the central elements of the Dodd-Frank Act's financial reforms was stronger capital rules for both banks and certain non-bank financial institutions. Two sections of the Dodd-Frank Act expanded Federal Reserve authority to regulate large banks and imposed increased capital requirements—Section 165, which applies to large bank holding companies and to non-bank systemically important financial institutions (SIFIs), and Section 171, which applies minimum capital standards to insured depository institutions, depository institution holding companies, including insurance savings and loan holding companies, and to SIFIs.

We have been disappointed by the Federal Reserve's failure to recognize that they have the authority to implement the Collins amendment as it applies to insurers in a manner that tailors the capital requirements for the insurance business model. We continue to believe that the regulators could solve this problem using their existing authority. Our House bill, H.R. 4510, shows that there is strong bipartisan support for addressing this issue, with 227 of our colleagues cosponsoring the bill. A slightly amended version of our legislation, which we support, passed the Senate with unanimous support in early June, and passed the House as part of a larger package in July of this year. We are pleased that final action on this legislation is imminent, and hope it will be sent to the President before the end of the session.

Our bill (and the Senate version, S. 2270) is narrowly crafted to only address this issue as it relates to federally supervised insurance companies, including SIFIs and insurance savings and loan holding companies. Under the legislation banks will be subject to the full force of the Collins Amendment. That is as it should be, and we will not change that.

To accomplish the goal of directing the Federal Reserve to tailor rules for insurance, our legislation permits the Federal Reserve to create a non-Basel III regime for the insurance operations of supervised entities. The legislation allows the Fed to work with state insurance regulators to develop appropriate insurance-based capital standards for federally supervised insurance companies. Alternatively, the Fed could defer to state insurance regulators for the capital standards that should apply to the insurance activities that they regulate.

The bill clarifies that, in establishing the minimum leverage capital and risk-based capital standards under Section 171, the Federal Reserve Board is not required to include activities or companies that are engaged in the business of insurance and are subject to state insurance regulation, including state insurance capital requirements. Similarly, regulated foreign affiliates or subsidiaries engaged in the business of insurance and subject to foreign insurance regulation and foreign insurance capital requirements that have not been deemed to be inadequate also may be excluded from Section 171 capital standards. It is worth noting that the Government Accountability Office found that the state risk-based capital rules performed well during the financial crisis.

The bill allows the insurance capital requirements that have been effective to continue to determine the capital requirements for the activities of insurance companies and groups that are supervised by the Federal Reserve Board. Furthermore, activities of a holding company supervised by the Federal Reserve Board that are not the business of insurance would remain subject to the capital standards under Section 171. In determining insurance versus non-insurance activities of a supervised entity, the legislation provides regulators with the flexibility to tailor the rules for certain affiliates or subsidiaries of insurance companies that are necessary to the business of insurance, including, for example, affiliates or subsidiaries that support insurance company general and separate accounts.

Our legislation defines "business of insurance" by reference to Section 1002 of the Dodd-Frank Act, and under this definition the business of insurance means "the writing of insurance or the reinsuring of risks by an insurer, including all acts necessary to such writing or reinsuring and the activities relating to the writing of insurance or the reinsuring of risks conducted by persons who act as, or are, officers, directors, agents, or employees of insurers or who are other persons authorized to act on behalf of such persons." The reference to this definition of the "business of insurance" will help ensure that insurance activities of federally supervised companies are subject to tailored capital rules, whether those activities are undertaken by the insurance companies themselves or by their affiliates or subsidiaries on their behalf.

We also want to ensure that the Federal Reserve uses its authority to tailor capital rules for insurance operations of entities under its supervision, regardless of the size of the subsidiary insured depository institution. As we have stated, under this legislation and under current law, the Basel banking regime and the Collins Amendment requirements will continue to apply to all insured depository institutions. It would be at odds with sound public policy and the intent of this legislation for the Federal Reserve to impose a Basel banking capital regime on the entire enterprise of an insurer that happens to also own a sizable insured depository institution—the depository institution in that operation will already be subject to banking rules, but the insurance operations should not be.

Another important provision of our legislation addresses the issue of insurance accounting for a small number of non-publicly traded insurance companies. While every publicly traded company in the United States is required by the Federal Securities laws to prepare consolidated financial statements under Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP), all insurance companies in the United States—whether in mutual or stock form of organization—are required by their state insurance regulators to utilize an accounting method known as Statutory Accounting. Indeed, most mutual insurance companies only use Statutory Accounting in preparing their financial statements.

Statutory Accounting Principles (SAP) are generally more conservative than GAAP because they are specifically designed to promote insurer solvency and the ability to pay claims instead of measuring an insurer's value as a going concern. SAP does not allow a number of non-liquid or intangible assets to be included on an insurer's balance sheet and provides less favorable accounting treatment for certain expenses. In both the text of the Dodd-Frank Act and its legislative history, Congress recognized the acceptability of SAP for holding companies engaged in insurance activities coming under Federal Reserve jurisdiction. Specifically, Congress (1) directed the Federal Reserve to rely on existing reports and information provided to state and other regulators (which for insurance companies would have been prepared according to SAP); and (2) included Senate report language stating that Federal Reserve assumption of jurisdiction over savings and loan holding companies engaged in the business of insurance did not reflect a mandate to impose GAAP. However, in proposed rulemakings, the Federal Reserve expressed its intention to require all companies to eventually prepare GAAP financial statements—consistent with their existing model for all bank holding companies. Imposing such a mandate on companies using only SAP would cost insurers a substantial amount to take on multi-year financial projects yielding minimal—if any—supervisory benefit to regulators. Additionally, we believe the principle of preserving SAP should apply to any international discussions relating to insurance.

This bill makes clear that under Section 171 of the Dodd-Frank Act and the Home Owners' Loan Act, such a mandate is inappropriate where the holding company is a non-publicly traded insurance company that is only required to prepare and file SAP statements. Nothing in this provision prevents the Federal Reserve from obtaining any information it is otherwise entitled to obtain from a SAP-only insurer.

We and the many other supporters of this bill are pleased that the House is poised to consider a final version of this legislation and look forward to it reaching the President's desk soon. We expect regulators to follow through with appropriate, tailored capital rules for insurers under their supervision.

HONORING NANCY L. CARRINGTON, PRESIDENT/CEO OF CONNECTICUT FOOD BANK ON THE OCCASION OF HER RETIREMENT

HON. ROSA L. DeLAURO

OF CONNECTICUT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 11, 2014

Ms. DELAURO. Mr. Speaker, it is with great pride and a bit of a heavy heart that I rise today to join the many family, friends, and colleagues who have gathered to celebrate the retirement of Connecticut Food Bank President and CEO, Nancy L. Carrington. A dear friend and outstanding advocate, Nancy has spent the last three decades at the Connecticut Food Bank and, put simply, the organization will not be the same without her.

Nancy came to the Connecticut Food Bank just two years after it was incorporated. She began her work with the organization as a food solicitor—responsible for seeking the donation of excess and unsalable products from local and regional food companies. When Nancy first came to the Food Bank, the organization was already distributing 1.3 million pounds of food a year to 188 community agencies throughout Connecticut. Just five years after starting at the Connecticut Food Bank, Nancy became the organization's Executive Director; her title later changed to President and CEO.

Over the course of the last three decades, Nancy's leadership has guided the organization as it has grown from a grassroots, volunteer organization into the largest centralized source of donated, emergency food in Connecticut. Today the Connecticut Food Bank serves nearly 700 food-assistance programs in Fairfield, Litchfield, Middlesex, New Haven, New London and Windham counties and distributes an average of 40 tons of food every business day. And, just this past summer, the Connecticut Food Bank broke ground on what will be an 82,251-square-foot building that will be the organization's new home. While her daily presence at the Connecticut Food Bank will be missed, Nancy has certainly built it a strong foundation on which it can continue to succeed in its mission.

Nancy has not only been responsible for the day-to-day operations at the Connecticut Food Bank, but is also one of Connecticut's strongest voices on behalf of the hungry. She has said that "food should not be a privilege . . . it should be a basic human right." Nancy has made it her personal mission to overcome the challenge of feeding the hungry—her work touching the lives of thousands over the years. She has volunteered to deliver groceries to homebound seniors for an emergency food pantry. She served as a founding director of End Hunger Connecticut!, a statewide anti-hunger and food security organization. Nancy also works closely with other food banks in New England and partners with Feeding America, the national network of food banks. There is no stronger or more dedicated advocate.

I would be remiss if I did not take a moment to thank Nancy for her many years of friendship. Nancy and I are kindred spirits in so many ways—both having learned the importance of public service from our parents and both passionate about the need to address hunger in our community and across the nation. She is an inspiration to me and so many others and I am proud to call her my friend. And so I stand today to express my deepest thanks and appreciation to Nancy L. Carrington, for all of her good work and many years of dedicated service to the Connecticut Food Bank and wish her all the best for many more years of health and happiness as she enjoys her retirement.

TRIBUTE TO THE COHASSET HIGH SCHOOL FOOTBALL TEAM, 2014 MASSACHUSETTS DIVISION VI SUPER BOWL CHAMPIONS

HON. STEPHEN F. LYNCH

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 11, 2014

Mr. LYNCH. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to honor and congratulate the administration, coaches and players of the Cohasset High School football team. On December 6, 2014, the Skippers won the Massachusetts Interscholastic Athletic Association Division VI Super Bowl, earning them the title, State Champions.

Cohasset High School has a long tradition of excellence in high school football. In 1957, the CHS football team went undefeated with a 9–0 record. CHS has won eight South Shore League championships since then, but 2014 is the school's first state championship.

The 2014 team finished the season this year by winning ten consecutive games, including five hard-fought victories in the MIAA Tournament. This historic playoff run included a 35–3 victory over the previously undefeated Nantucket Whalers, a 28–7 victory over the Mayflower League Champion Bishop Connolly Cougars, a 20–7 victory over the Tri-Valley League Champion Millis Mohawks, a 35–6 victory over the Catholic Conference Champion Cathedral Panthers, and the 35–22 Super Bowl victory over the Littleton Tigers.

Mr. Speaker, the young men on this football team conducted themselves in such a way as to bring honor, pride and recognition to the Town of Cohasset. They represent what is truly best about high school student athletes. Today, it is my honor to join with the families, friends and residents of Cohasset, Massachusetts, to congratulate the Cohasset High School football team on their historic achievement.

Administration: Superintendent Barbara Cataldo, Principal Carolyn Connolly, Athletic Director Ron Ford, Head Coach Pete Afanasiw, Assistant Coaches Kevin Dooley, Jeff Knight, John Maher, Phil Maloney, Brian Pattison, Bob Silvia, Don Silvia, Dave Terry, Pete Umbrianna.

Players: Xander Schubert, Michael Cohen, Danny Durkin, Luke O'Brien, Danny Axelson, Drew Skolnick, Mike Lund, Henry Butenschoen, Adam Benson, Brett Dooley, Nick Hall, Kyle Ferreira, David Burke, Liam Lynch, Cole Sullivan, Connor Curran, Christian Hanke, Patrick Haggearty, Jake Koncius, Noah Froio, Joseph Welman, Zach Silva, Mike Nolan, Nick Slamp, Cole Kissick, Ray Tolosko, Ollie Hanke, Tim Gillis, Sam Sullivan, Chris Norton, Thomas Durkin, Charlie Swartwood, Max Fitzgerald, Sean Mavilla, Jake Johnson, Jack Osten, Matt Froio, Jack Hoffman, Steve Iantosca, Bobby Driscoll, Vincenzo Kulturides, Liam Prescott, Nick Lydon, Derek Bennett, Ryan Losordo, Cal Osten, Jake Bennett, Tyler Mulhern, Victor Najjar, James Hynes, Jack Mahoney, Chris Lydon, Reed Parks, Alex Norton, Hayes Keniley, Nick Tetreault, Will Thomas, Ryan Donovan, Jack Donohue, Jack Speer.

RECOGNIZING THE NAZARETH ACADEMY FOOTBALL TEAM FOR THEIR STATE CHAMPIONSHIP WIN

HON. DANIEL LIPINSKI

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 11, 2014

Mr. LIPINSKI. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the Nazareth Academy Roadrunners football team. On November 29th, Nazareth Academy captured their first Class 6A state football championship with a 26–7 victory over Lemont High School in Champaign, IL. I want to congratulate all of the players, coaches, trainers, and parents, and commend them on their hard work and on the dedication they have shown to their team, their school, and their community. I also want to congratulate Coach Tim Racki and the principal of Nazareth Academy, Deborah Tracy, for helping lead these young men to victory.

In the championship game, Nolan Dean rushed for 199 yards and two touchdowns and Julian Love added another rushing touchdown. Wide receiver Kevin Jackson also had a touchdown catch from quarterback Jonah Beauduy. The defense held Lemont to only one first quarter touchdown and had three interceptions of quarterback Ryan Dawson, two by Matthew Flach. The victory completed an undefeated 14–0 season for the Roadrunners.

With this championship, Tim Racki became the first coach in the state of Illinois to win titles with two different schools, having won four previously as coach of Driscoll Catholic High School.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing the Nazareth Academy Roadrunners football team and to congratulate them on their IHSA Class 6A State Championship. And I wish each player continued success as he moves forward.

THE HONORABLE CONGRESSMAN STEVE STOCKMAN

HON. KERRY L. BENTIVOLIO

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 11, 2014

Mr. BENTIVOLIO. Mr. Speaker, now that the 113th Congress is coming to a close, I would like to recognize my good friend and colleague from Texas' 36th District, STEVE STOCKMAN.

STEVE and I actually grew up in the same town and went to the same schools. But, when he reached adulthood, his Texas family roots called him to the Lone Star state so it was only years later, in our nation's capitol, that we should meet as Members of Congress.

Congressman STOCKMAN was first elected to the U.S. House of Representatives from Texas in 1994, defeating a 42-year incumbent in one of the biggest upsets in political history. He was re-elected to Congress on November 6, 2012, with the same vision he'd had in the 90's of limited government, strong support for American families, and a robust national defense.

STEVE has built very effective rapport with colleagues on both sides of the isle. His sense of humor and jovial approach to interpersonal relations endear him to us all, while we have come to recognize he has broad, but exceptionally deep understanding of many topics. He always has substantive inputs and bills, not only on specific Constitutional guarantees, but on national defense, freedoms and lack thereof in nations around the world.

You often find individuals with social interaction skills, and others with tremendous knowledge and insights. It is rare to find both qualities in a single individual. But, STEVE possesses both.

However, one would never know this about STEVE if they only read the press. That's because STEVE always stands up and speaks the truth, regardless of whether it's politically expedient. Consequently, he's vilified in the press; but Americans who are tired of business-as-usual here in our nation's Capitol applaud him and greatly appreciate Congressman STOCKMAN.

Congressman STOCKMAN has been a fierce defender of Constitutional liberties, and a leader in defending the Second Amendment. He

introduced the very first pro-gun bill in the House in 2013, H.R. 35, to repeal federal gun free zones.

When the President threatened to bypass Congress and enact gun control through Executive Orders, Congressman STOCKMAN, along with Sen. RAND PAUL of Kentucky in the Senate, introduced the ''Restore the Constitution Act of 2013,'' which would nullify any anti-gun orders.

The gentleman from Texas blue slipped both the Senate's gun control bill and their immigration bill.

Congressman STOCKMAN serves as Vice Chairman of the House Second Amendment Task Force, and also authored legislation to strip funding to the UN should that body attempt to restrict Americans' gun rights.

As a 100% pro-life supporter, STEVE authored the 2013 Sanctity of Life Act, which declares that life begins at conception, and which also limits the federal courts' jurisdiction in cases dealing with the unborn.

Congressman STOCKMAN was the first congressman to step up and introduce a bill to defend the rights of native Americans in southeast Texas. The Alabama-Coushatta Tribe of Texas won a Federal claim against the U.S. Government for millions, if not billions, of dollars. STOCKMAN's bill, if passed, would resolve that claim without any impingement on the Federal deficit.

Congressman STOCKMAN's district is home to NASA's Johnson Space Center, the research and training facility for all human space exploration and the location of the famous Mission Control Center.

As a member of the House Committee on Science, Space and Technology, Congressman STOCKMAN highlights the importance of a vigorous space exploration program and for keeping the U.S. at the forefront of space technology. He fought to save the arc jet facility at the Johnson Space Center, and advocated for defining a serious timetable and sufficient funding to actually land on and create research bases on the moon and Mars. Further, he understands the strategic necessity to remain the undisputed leader in space, and to not let non-democratic nations like China and Russia dominate the high frontier of space and high technology.

The gentleman from Texas' district has the highest number per capita of oil and gas refineries and downstream petrochemical plants in the world. STEVE has worked tirelessly for commonsense regulatory relief for the nation's oil and gas industries, which will lead to less U.S. dependence on foreign oil and more American jobs.

His tireless efforts were instrumental in expediting the building permits for state-of-the art new petrochemical plants to be built in his district that will bring in billions of dollars in new investment. The gentleman from Texas has used his position on the House Committee on Science, Space, and Technology to question the EPA's technological criteria for evaluating applications on hydraulic fracking. Also, legislation he's promoted will facilitate improvements in current technologies used in shale oil and gas production.

Congressman STOCKMAN has spoken out about the need to dredge southeast Texas ports from which many of the Gulf Coast petrochemicals are shipped. With hundreds of thousands of jobs at stake, these Ports are and will be fueling the Texas economic miracle.

At 3.5 cents per kilowatt hour, Texas has one of the cheapest power costs in the world and STOCKMAN, with fellow members of the Science, Space, and Technology Committee, has pressed EPA to release its stranglehold on latest technologies that will keep power costs low in Texas. http://science.house.gov/sites/renublicans.science.house.gov/files/documents/Letters/121 913__mccarthy.ndf

The National Taxpayer's Union honored Congressman STOCKMAN with the Taxpayers' Friend Award and NFIB named him ''Guardian of Small Business'' in recognition of his outstanding votes for legislation fostering healthy job-creating businesses. Earning a consistent ''100 percent'' rating by the American Conservative Union, my colleague from Texas has been honored with the ''Taxpayers Best Friend Award'' from Citizens for Tax Reform, and ''Taxpayer's Hero Award'' by Citizens Against Government Waste.

Always on the cutting edge of up and coming technologies and economic trends, Congressman STOCKMAN recently introduced a bill in Congress that would not only extend substantial protections to cryptocurrencies, but would also require that cryptocurrencies be classified as a ''currency.'' The bill, entitled the Cryptocurrency Protocol Protection and Moratorium Act (CryptPMA), begins by placing a five-year moratorium on any state legislation concerning, or taxation on, cryptocurrencies.

STOCKMAN believes in the future. He has predicted that three technologies will change the world. He forecasts that nanotubes, 3–D printers, and cryptocurerncies will revolutionize and change the world in fundamental ways. Furthermore, Congressman STOCKMAN has called for a study of magnetic poll shifting, resultant fluctuation of magnetic fields, and their impact on the earth's climate.

With his broad knowledge of geopolitical and socioeconomic affairs, it is appropriate that Congressman STOCKMAN sits on the House Foreign Affairs Committee, where—among other important actions—he's for greater openness about what really happened in the 2012 assault on the U.S. Consulate in Benghazi. He has also been a strong voice in the House in support of the Ukrainians' passion for strengthening liberties in their country.

Congressman STOCKMAN co-founded the House South Sudan Caucus, in support of the world's newest nation. South Sudan, which is a majority Christian nation, suffered decades of oppression and genocide from North Sudan, and still endures attacks, despite the existence of a peace agreement. Congressman STOCKMAN grieves the fact that now a simmering civil war is ongoing in the new nation. He has traveled to Juba, the South Sudan's capital, and led a Congressional delegation to Nigeria to investigate how the U.S. might better help that country end the brutal atrocities of Boko Harm. STEVE has also visited other parts of Africa, in support of medical missionary work.

As the 113th Congress comes to a close, the Conservative movement will lose a great friend to liberty and individual rights in Congressman STOCKMAN. I and many of our friends will miss working alongside my good friend and colleague who has been a staunch ally and supporter for life, liberty and country.

HONORING EISENHOWER ACADEMY

HON. BILL FOSTER

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 11, 2014

Mr. FOSTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor of Eisenhower Academy in Joliet, Illinois, which was ranked the best elementary school in Will County by the Chicago Tribune.

I would like to recognize the teachers, administrators, and students of this magnet school for their commitment to learning. The rankings were based on the Illinois Standards Achievement Test (ISAT) and found that over 94 percent of students in grades three through five met or exceeded expectations.

Although 100 percent of the students at the school come from low-income families, through hard work and with the support of teachers and parents, these students have already achieved something remarkable. I look forward to following their progress.

Congratulations to Eisenhower Academy and Joliet Public Schools District 86. I would like to thank the teachers, administrators, parents and students for their hard work and dedication.

HONORING CONGRESSMAN JOHN DINGELL ON HIS RETIREMENT

SPEECH OF

HON. BETTY McCOLLUM

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, December 9, 2014

Ms. MCCOLLUM. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to honor the inspiring career of Congressman JOHN DINGELL, and his retirement from this institution after 59 dedicated years of public service.

Few Americans have had a bigger, more lasting impact on the United States Congress than JOHN DINGELL. After serving his country in the Army during World War II, John was first elected to Congress in 1955, and has played a vital role in almost every significant piece of legislation passed over the last half century. During his time in office, JOHN DINGELL was a statesman who always put good policy above partisanship, and who nearly lost reelection because of his support for the Civil Rights Act of 1964. His impact on landmark legislation that includes Medicare, the Clean Water Act, the Endangered Species Act, and Affordable Care Act will continue to be felt for years to come.

The People's House has suffered a great loss with the Congressman DINGELL's retirement and his institutional knowledge will be sorely missed. Mr. DINGELL has been an inspiration, mentor, and friend to those who were lucky enough to know him. It has been an honor to serve alongside him, and I have no doubt that his legacy will endure for generations to come.

Mr. Speaker, please join me in honoring the service of Congressman JOHN DINGELL in the United States House of Representatives.

HONORING RALPH BENSON

HON. MIKE THOMPSON

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 11, 2014

Mr. THOMPSON of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise today with my colleague, Congressman JARED HUFFMAN, to honor Ralph Benson upon his retirement as Executive Director of the Sonoma Land Trust.

For the past twelve years, Mr. Benson has worked tirelessly to guide, expand and strengthen the Sonoma Land Trust, enabling the organization to better fulfill its goal of protecting and conserving our lands for generations to come. During his time as the Executive Director, Mr. Benson increased the Sonoma Land Trust's budget from $1 million to $5 million, doubled its staff and more than doubled its membership. During his tenure, the Sonoma Land Trust acquired 5,630 acres in the Jenner Headlands and opened the Baylands Center at Sears Point Ranch for use as an environmental education center. Under his leadership, Sonoma Land Trust is currently working on a tidal wetlands restoration project and trail expansion along San Pablo Bay and Highway 37.

Mr. Benson's impressive work to grow his organization and take on sizable projects has bestowed tremendous benefits upon our community. The Sonoma Land Trust now protects 48,000 acres of land, up from 15,000 acres, and has attracted outside capital to the County of Sonoma that amounts to more than $80 million.

Mr. Benson's colleagues credit his success to his ability to foster enduring and productive partnerships and connections. A true leader, Mr. Benson inspired others to believe in his vision of what the Sonoma Land Trust was capable of achieving and with hard-work and his can-do attitude, made his vision a reality.

Mr. Speaker, it is appropriate at this time that we honor and thank Mr. Benson for his invaluable contributions to land conservation in Sonoma County. On behalf of a grateful community, we wish him a most enjoyable retirement.

IN HONOR OF COLONEL (RET) ROY GEORGE PLUMMER

HON. SANFORD D. BISHOP, JR.

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 11, 2014

Mr. BISHOP of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize an outstanding citizen, leader, pastor and inspiration to the Columbus, Georgia community, Colonel (Ret) Roy George Plummer. Colonel Plummer will be retiring as JROTC Director of Army Instruction of the Muscogee County School District in Columbus, Georgia. A retirement dinner in celebration of Colonel Plummer will be held on Thursday, December 11, 2014 at the National Infantry Museum at Fort Benning in Columbus, Georgia.

A native of Jamaica, Colonel Plummer enlisted in the U.S. Army and served in several military assignments in the United States and Germany. He completed his Active Duty Army career as Chief of Chaplains at Fort Benning. He currently serves as the Chaplain for Rotary International District 6900, The State of Georgia.

As JROTC Director, he was responsible for eight high school JROTC programs and four other county JROTC programs. Since 1998, he has worked to create a successful district-level JROTC program which has grown from 400 cadets to an outstanding current operating enrollment of 1200 cadets. Under Colonel Plummer's leadership, the Muscogee County School District JROTC has earned GHSA State Rifle Championships, state-level awards in drill team and raider competitions, and honorable recognition in the annual JROTC Academic Bowl.

Always pressing towards the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus, to better improve the craft of Christian ministry and discipleship, Colonel Plummer has been the Senior Pastor and CEO of Faith Tabernacle Community Church, Inc. in Columbus, Georgia since he founded the church in 1994.

A shining light in the Columbus community, Colonel Plummer has played a leading role in several other religious-affiliated and community-based organizations, including the St. Francis Hospital Foundation, Columbus Hospice, United Way, Boy Scouts of America, and the Greater Columbus Georgia Chamber of Commerce.

To top off his diverse portfolio of service, Colonel Plummer served as an Assistant Professor at Columbus State University in the Department of Counseling Graduate Studies. He has earned a baccalaureate in Biblical Literature, Master of Arts in Human Relations and Group Process, Master of Science in Guidance and Counseling, Master of Divinity in Pastoral Care, and Doctorate in Divinity. This solid educational background coupled with his compassion and leadership inspired Colonel Plummer to create the Plummer Home for homeless and disenfranchised military veterans.

Colonel Plummer has achieved numerous successes in his life, but none of this would have been possible without the grace of God and his four daughters and seven grandchildren. He lives by Psalm 27:1, "The Lord is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear? The Lord is the strength of my life, of whom shall I be afraid?"

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me today in honoring Colonel (Ret) Roy George Plummer on the occasion of his retirement as JROTC Director of Army Instruction and recognizing him for his many great contributions to the people of Columbus, Georgia and the United States and for his life of selfless service to God, the church and to humankind.

INTRODUCTION OF THE TAX REFORM ACT OF 2014

HON. DAVE CAMP

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 11, 2014

Mr. CAMP. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to announce the introduction of H.R. 1, the Tax Reform Act of 2014. This bill—which formalizes, without modifications, the tax reform discussion draft I released publicly on February 26, 2014—reflects the years of work undertaken on this critical issue by the Committee on Ways and Means during my time as chairman. I want to thank the members of our committee, on both sides of the aisle, for their tireless efforts and for their outstanding contributions to this legislation and to the transparent, inclusive process that produced it. While I will not be returning to the House of Representatives next year, I very much look forward to watching the ongoing work of our great committee as the tax reform debate continues to unfold in the 114th Congress.

Mr. Speaker, the urgent need to fix our broken tax code—and the incredible progress we've made toward making tax reform a reality for the first time since 1986—has already been well documented, and I will not seek to recount all of that background and history here today. But I do hope that, going forward, Congress will continue to focus on the twin goals that have guided the tax reform process thus far—strengthening the economy, and making the tax code simpler and fairer for all Americans.

When I set out to produce a comprehensive tax reform bill, I wanted to do it the right way. So, over the last four years, the Ways and Means Committee held over 30 public hearings, including the first joint hearings with the Senate Finance Committee on tax policy since World War II. Ways and Means Ranking Member SANDY LEVIN—my home state colleague—and I formed 11 bipartisan working groups to tackle different areas of the tax code. In that time, I also launched TaxReform.Gov, which received more than 14,000 public comments and suggestions, while Sen. Max Baucus (D–MT) and I left the confines of Washington, DC to talk with taxpayers all across the country. I am proud to say that we have done this in the most open, transparent, and bipartisan way—getting input from all sides. Now, the debate about whether to do tax reform is over; the only debate now is about how.

At its core, the Tax Reform Act of 2014 is about making the tax code simpler and fairer for hardworking taxpayers. I believe every taxpayer should be able to do his or her taxes without fear that someone with better accountants or lawyers is getting a better deal. This legislation does that by ensuring that virtually all taxpayers would pay the least amount of taxes without having to keep track of every receipt and record and live in fear of an IRS audit. This legislation makes the Code more effective and efficient by getting rid of narrowly targeted provisions to lower tax rates across the board. This will enable small and large businesses alike to expand operations, hire new workers, and increase benefits and take-home pay.

The proposal flattens the rate structure by reducing rates and collapsing today's seven individual rate brackets into two brackets of 10 and 25 percent for virtually all taxable income, ensuring that over 99 percent of all taxpayers face rates no higher than 25 percent. The plan also reduces the corporate rate to 25 percent.

By making America's corporate tax rate more competitive and by modernizing our anti-competitive international tax rules, which have not been reformed since the 1960s, we would encourage companies to keep their headquarters in the United States, so they can grow, invest, and hire here, instead of moving overseas in search of a better tax environment. We need a real solution to this growing problem, and I believe a significantly lower

corporate tax rate and a more competitive tax system is just the solution we need.

Independent economists agree: Tax reform results in stronger economic growth, more jobs, and higher wages. In fact, the independent, non-partisan Joint Committee on Taxation (JCT) estimates that this plan could increase the size of our economy by $3.4 trillion—that's equivalent to 20 percent of today's economy. Based on that stronger economic growth, we could see nearly two million new jobs created. JCT also estimates that this proposal could generate up to $700 billion in additional Federal revenues that could be used to lower tax rates even further or to reduce the debt. Indeed, based on calculations using data provided by JCT, the average middle-class family of four could, under this proposal, have an extra $1,300 per year in its pocket from the combination of lower tax rates in the plan and higher wages due to a stronger economy. This is the kind of growth America needs, and these are the kinds of policies that can produce a stronger, more robust economy that benefits all Americans.

Before concluding, Mr. Speaker, I want to acknowledge the countless hours devoted to this effort by the Ways and Means Committee staff and the staffs of the Joint Committee on Taxation and the Office of Legislative Counsel. A project this large—on an issue of this magnitude—simply could not be undertaken by this institution without the dedication, the policy know-how, and the technical expertise of the professional staff. We owe all of them our sincere thanks. Indeed, their contributions to this proposal extend not just to the legislative language of the bill itself, but to a set of helpful explanatory materials as well. For those who are looking for a fuller description of the legislation I am introducing today as H.R. 1, a section-by-section summary of the proposal prepared by the Ways and Means Majority Tax Staff is available at: http://tax.house.gov/. Similarly, JCT's technical explanation of the proposal—along with JCT's revenue estimate, distributional analysis, and macro-economic analysis of the proposal—has been published as JCS–1–14, available at https://www.jct.gov/publications.html?func=startdown&id=4674.

With that, Mr. Speaker, I close by urging my colleagues who will be returning in January for the 114th Congress to keep pushing forward and to see this tax reform process through to a successful conclusion. It would undoubtedly be easier for Congress to hang its head and say that the problems with the current tax system are just too big, and that the work of tax reform is just too hard. But nothing worth doing is ever easy, and tax reform is even more necessary now than it was back in 1986. Indeed, today's generation of tax reformers should remember how the headline in the Washington Post captured the moment when the 1986 Act finally made it over the finish line—it called tax reform the ''impossible that became the inevitable.'' I would like to see that headline again, and with today's formal introduction of the Tax Reform Act of 2014, we take another important step down that historic path.

I thank the Speaker for reserving the bill number H.R. 1 for this legislation, and I hope that the formal introduction of this proposal in the House today will help spur further action on this critical issue in the 114th Congress.

HONORING CHIEF MICHAEL HOLUB FOR MORE THAN FOUR DECADES OF SERVICE TO OUR NATION AND COMMUNITIES

HON. DANIEL LIPINSKI

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 11, 2014

Mr. LIPINSKI. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor La Grange Police Chief Michael Holub for his more than four decades of service dedicated to protecting and serving our nation and our communities. At the end of this year, Holub will be retiring as Chief of Police.

Chief Holub is a native of Berwyn, Illinois, and attended Morton West High School, graduating in 1970. From there he joined the Army and served with the Official Ceremonial Unit and Escort to the U.S. President, which is known as the Old Guard because it is the oldest active duty regiment in the Army. After serving his country, Holub returned to serve his community and joined the Stickney, IL Police Department in 1974. He spent the next twenty years with the Stickney Police Department, rising through the ranks to become Chief of Police. He subsequently served as Chief of Police for the Village of Palos Park, IL, and as the Chief of Police for the Village of River Forest, IL, before coming to La Grange.

Chief Holub has highly valued education throughout his career. He earned his Bachelor's Degree from Lewis University in Romeoville, IL, as well as his Master of Arts Degree in Law Enforcement and Justice Administration. While Chief of Police, Holub continued to serve for 15 years as a member of the adjunct faculty of Triton College in River Grove, IL, teaching courses to undergraduate students in criminal justice. Chief Holub always challenged his officers to get their degrees so that they could move forward, as his mantra has always been ''to always be prepared for the next level.''

In addition to being Chief of Police, Michael Holub has always shown a deep commitment to his community in many other ways. He is a fixture at community events and is active with the American Legion, always helping with charity events and aiding the men and women in our armed forces as well as fellow veterans.

Today I express my admiration for Chief Michael Holub's lifelong dedication to our nation and our communities. I ask my colleague to join me in honoring his lifetime of service and wish him the best in his retirement.

IN COMMEMORATION OF THE DISTINGUISHED SERVICE OF DR. MICHAEL McCCALL TO THE COMMONWEALTH OF KENTUCKY

HON. HAROLD ROGERS

OF KENTUCKY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 11, 2014

Mr. ROGERS of Kentucky. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to my friend, Dr. Michael B. McCall, the Founding President of the Kentucky Community and Technical College System (KCTCS). Dr. McCall has announced that this will be his last year as System president and will be retiring in January.

Under the leadership of Dr. McCall, KCTCS has served as the major gateway to post-secondary education across the Commonwealth. Since his appointment in December 1998, Dr. McCall has achieved many successes, such as merging the 28 community and technical colleges into 16 individually accredited comprehensive community colleges and leading KCTCS to its position as the largest provider of post-secondary education in the Commonwealth of Kentucky. Because of his leadership, KCTCS currently serves over 92,000 students and represents over 47% of all undergraduate college students. Perhaps most importantly, KCTCS has dramatically increased participation in postsecondary education. The number of students participating in KCTCS has risen dramatically since the system was created, with enrollment increasing by 62,000 in the first decade.

I am proud to have five community colleges within the KCTCS System that serve my district: Somerset Community College, Southeast Kentucky Community and Technical College, Hazard Community and Technical College, Big Sandy Community and Technical College, and Ashland Community and Technical College. Each college has seen incredible growth since KCTCS was founded in 1997.

Dr. McCall has also led the System to create major advancements in education and pioneered many new educational opportunities that are unique to Kentucky, including the North American Racing Academy (first college-affiliated horse racing academy in the United States), the Kentucky Coal Academy, Kentucky Fire Commission, and the Kentucky Board of Emergency Medical Services.

Dr. McCall has served for more than 40 years in community and technical colleges. He has been recognized as Kentucky Monthly Magazine's Kentuckian of the Year and was also the Board Chair of the American Association of Community Colleges (AACC). This marked the first time a System-level president was elected chair of the AACC board.

I am proud to have known Dr. McCall since he became KCTCS President and wish him great luck in retirement. I offer my full congratulations to Dr. McCall for his service to KCTCS and the Commonwealth of Kentucky. Thank you and may God bless you.

REMEMBERING THE LIFE OF IRENE PORTER POWERS MATTHEW

HON. PAUL A. GOSAR

OF ARIZONA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 11, 2014

Mr. GOSAR. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor one of my constituents, Irene Porter Powers Mathew of Lake Havasu City, Arizona.

Irene Porter was born in Downs, Kansas, on November 20, 1917. She moved to Colorado where she attended high school at the age of 12, where she played basketball, sang in a trio, and the Glee Club. She graduated at the age of 16.

Following high school, she worked for the Colorado Agriculture Extension Service. In 1937, she went to work for the Farm Security Administration in Colorado. Around 1940, she moved to Amarillo, TX to assist in the establishment of the FSA regional headquarters.

On July 28, 1942, Irene married William (Bill) Powers, who was serving in the Army Air

Corps. They were married and raised four children: Rosemary, Gary, Suzanne, and Marilyn.

In the 1960s, Irene moved to Colorado Springs, Colorado to work as a private secretary with the Central Bank in Colorado. In 1974, she became the first female bank vice president in Colorado Springs, and likely in Colorado. This was a position she held until she retired in December 1979.

In the 1980s Irene and Bill retired and toured the country in a Holiday Rambler, including a trip to Guatemala. When they returned to the States, they returned to Colorado and spent the summer volunteering at Lutheran Valley Retreat, a Lutheran youth camp.

In 1986, as a second retirement, Irene and Bill retired to Lake Havasu, Arizona. Where they lived until Bill Powers died in 1991.

Irene married Kenneth A. Matthew, a retired lobster fisherman on February 3, 2007.

Irene is preceded in death by her parents, a brother, a sister, her first husband, Bill, two grandsons and one great-grandson. She is survived by her husband, Ken; children, Rosemary/Dave Tunnell, Gary/Sharon Powers, Suzanne/Rick Twinchek and Marilyn/Ryan Paradis; ten grandchildren, 18 great-grandchildren, two great-great-grandchildren and two sisters.

One last word from Irene, ''I want Ken, all my children, all my grandchildren, and now all my great-grandchildren to know how much I love them. You are all an important and beautiful part of my life.''

CELEBRATING THE 100TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE BELLEVUE AVENUE LIBRARY

HON. RODNEY P. FRELINGHUYSEN

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 11, 2014

Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the Bellevue Avenue Library, located in the Township of Montclair, New Jersey as it celebrates its 100th anniversary.

The Bellevue Avenue Library, part of the Montclair Public Library, officially opened its doors on December 7, 1914. Prior to its official opening, the library had been using a small rented space in the real estate office of John Mancini. In 1913, the Montclair Public Library received a grant from the Carnegie Corporation of $40,000 to construct a new building for the Montclair Public Library system on Bellevue Ave. In 1914, the new building was created and opened as the Bellevue Avenue Library.

The Bellevue Avenue Library was designed by architect F.A. Nelson, who also designed other prominent buildings in Montclair, such as the Post Office and the Upper Montclair Women's Club. The library is now on the National Register of Historic Places, with the register noting ''its temple-like austerity and diminutive size,'' along with its classical embellishment. Although the library underwent a major renovation in the 1985, it still holds the same architectural design.

Since the building of the Bellevue Avenue Library, the library has had two floors consisting of an extensive literature collection, audio, and visual files. The lower floor focuses on children's services, including the well-known 'children's place' which holds weekly story time readings and is staffed by community volunteers. The second floor is primarily focused on adult services and literature. Although in a separate location, the Bellevue Avenue Library offers the same range of services as the main library.

As the Bellevue Avenue Library and its staff celebrate their centennial anniversary, they look forward to growing with the community they serve. They look forward to new advancements, new literature, and whatever excitement the future holds.

Mr. Speaker, I ask you and my colleagues to join me in celebrating the 100th anniversary of the Bellevue Avenue Library and to salute the work of the trustees, staff and volunteers of the Montclair Public Library System.

TRIBUTE TO HOOD RIVER BOYS SOCCER CHAMPIONS

HON. GREG WALDEN

OF OREGON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 11, 2014

Mr. WALDEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in recognition of the Hood River Valley High School boys' soccer team, which brought home the title of ''State Champions'' this year in the 2014 Oregon 5A state championship. Hood River is my hometown, and both my son and I are proud graduates of Hood River Valley High School, so this victory is especially sweet.

Led by head coach Jaime Rivera and assistant coach Joe Dolan, the Eagles had a perfect 18–0 season and playoff run that was topped off by a 2–0 victory against Woodburn in the finals. After making it to the state finals last year, this season marks the culmination of willpower and sacrifice displayed by these dedicated young men.

The Eagles' undefeated record illustrates what happens when a team unites under one goal and exhibits the necessary work ethic, team work, and positive attitude to achieve success. I know that these skills have helped prepare these young men to be upstanding citizens of our great state and nation.

I am always proud to see how young men and women can inspire a community, and Hood River certainly rallied around the Eagles. Throughout the season, the community has rallied around and supported this team, game after game. After being engulfed on the field by supporters following their championship victory, the team was escorted by a caravan of police and fire trucks on their way back to Hood River.

I'd like to personally congratulate each member of this team: Travis Running, Marco Cuevas, Danny Romero, Manuel Mozqueda, Uriel Torrez, Joel Garcia, Marcos Trejo, Mario Sandoval, Andres Baeza, Gio Magana, Alex Gutierrez, Angel Sonato, Johnny Villafana, Luis Perez, Noah Noteboom, Antonio Bustos, Jaime Frias, Diego Rueda, Aldo Muro, Noe Magana, Coach Jaime Rivera, and Coach Joe Dolan. As a proud Hood River resident, I look forward to cheering on this year's team as they pursue their goals in the years to come. It is truly a privilege to represent the members of this team in the House of Representatives and my pleasure to congratulate them on their outstanding accomplishment of bringing home the teams' first state title. Go Eagles!

RECOGNIZING JOHN M. SAMUELS

HON. DAVE CAMP

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 11, 2014

Mr. CAMP. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the enormous contributions made by John M. Samuels to the development of sound U.S. tax policy over the last 40 years. John Samuels is retiring from the General Electric Company at the end of this year, where he has been the Vice President and Senior Counsel for Tax Policy and Planning since 1988. Before joining GE, John had a successful career in private practice and spent several years at the U.S. Department of Treasury, as Deputy Tax Legislative Counsel and Tax Legislative Counsel.

Most press articles about John highlight his distinguished career at GE. And while that is important, I want to acknowledge the work he has done behind the scenes to promote sound, effective, pro-growth tax policies for the benefit of the entire U.S. economy. The progress we have made in advancing the cause of comprehensive tax reform has benefited enormously from his efforts.

One example has been his support of academic research into international corporate tax issues through the founding of the International Tax Policy Forum (ITPF). John Samuels has served as the chairman of ITPF since it was founded in 1992. ITPF, which has been called the ''world's leading tax think tank,'' plays a unique and important role in sponsoring nonpartisan academic research, often by young, up-and-coming scholars, and hosting conferences at which such papers are presented, discussed, and debated. This gives tax policymakers in Washington access to a much broader body of research and thought than we would otherwise have, thus informing and elevating the policy discussions taking place in Congress, in the Administration, and at other think tanks.

In 2009, John received the Tax Foundation's Distinguished Service Award for his contributions to tax policy. In announcing the award, the President of the Tax Foundation said, ''John's leadership in facilitating a rational debate on international tax policy is without peer.''

While John is retiring from GE, he is not retiring from the world of tax policy. I know his leadership in ''facilitating a rational debate on international tax policy'' will carry on. I am confident his contributions will continue in the next chapter of his distinguished career. And I know that my colleagues who will push forward in Congress on the extremely important work we started in reforming our tax code will turn to John Samuels again and again for advice, ideas, and wise counsel.

SOLUTIONS TO DAILY STRESS

HON. STEVE STOCKMAN

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 11, 2014

Mr. STOCKMAN. Mr. Speaker, hypnosis may be a useful tool in the field of mental and physical health as well as combatting against those who wish to kick the habit of smoking and substance abuse.

FoxNews Health recently published a column noting the effectiveness of "hypnosis as therapy for anxiety, stress," wherein it noted that "Hypnosis was birthed from the brains of psychologists and researchers, and . . . it's now making its way back into the mainstream." It recommended the National Guild of Hypnotists (the NGH) as one of two national organizations from which to seek referrals. The following is a news report profiling the organization.

MERRIMACK, NH.—(Marketwired—Jan. 21, 2014)—Change is stressful, even when change comes in the form of beneficial technology and social transformation. Too often, the stress of change manifests as overeating and obesity, smoking, substance abuse, aggression and other negative behaviors. Millions are searching for a non-pharmaceutical solution that is effective, long lasting and causes no side effects. The National Guild of Hypnotists has demonstrated through its longevity and documented results that hypnosis provides proven alternatives for reducing and eliminating many of the negative responses to today's stressful world.

The National Guild of Hypnotists, NGH, is the oldest, largest and most respected professional association of hypnotists in the world. The National Guild of Hypnotists, under the leadership of Dr. Dwight Damon, has been instrumental in raising conscious awareness of consulting hypnotism as a separate and distinct profession. Hypnosis now is recognized in the medical and scientific mainstream and its use and acceptance continue to grow.

Founded in Boston in 1950 and now based in Merrimack, NH. with over 14,000 members worldwide, the National Guild of Hypnotists includes trained, certified hypnotists, doctors, dentists and other health professionals and educators from many fields. An international organization serving members in 80 countries, the National Guild of Hypnotists established a strong universal code of ethics for the profession. In 1994, the National Guild of Hypnotists chartered the rapidly growing National Federation of Hypnotists, Local 104, a Union affiliated with the OPEIU, AFL-CIO, CLC. Those knowledgeable of non-clinical hypnosis universally acknowledge Dr. Damon as ''The Father of Consulting Hypnotism as a Separate and Distinct Profession.''

The National Guild of Hypnotists established and maintains a rigorous certification program based on a standardized curriculum. Annually, the National Guild of Hypnotists conducts educational seminars around the country and an international convention and educational conference, held in Marlborough, MA, that attracts over a thousand hypnotists. Under the guidance of Convention Director Elsom Eldridge Jr., the convention is the leading and largest venue for the sharing of best practices within the profession. Each year's convention provides a platform for teaching advanced hypnotic techniques and sharing new information and practical developments from leading members of the profession and legislative and legal updates. The most prestigious awards in the profession are presented during the event. The adjunct faculty, recruited from around the world, provides a distinguished nexus for what Dr. Damon describes as, ''an open forum for a free exchange of ideas concerning hypnotism.''

Dr. Damon says, ''As members of the National Guild of Hypnotists, we have accepted the invitation and have risen to the challenge that the actions we have taken over the years, lay the groundwork for our profession to soar beyond all that has been accomplished and even beyond all we can conceive. We rise to the invitation to leave a legacy of excellence.''

Respectful of licensed health care professionals, the National Guild of Hypnotists encourages its members to make their services widely available as a complementary adjunct to medical, dental and other licensed health professions. The organization's vision is of a time when a visit to a Consulting Hypnotist will be as routine as a trip to the dentist. Consistent efforts by the National Guild of Hypnotists in fostering professionalism has been the decisive factor in bringing about the recognition of hypnosis as a separate and distinct profession.

The non-profit association publishes The Journal of Hypnotism and the Hypno-Gram quarterly, as informative publications for practitioners and recently introduced Hypnosis Today, an annual magazine created for all readers.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. KAY GRANGER

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 11, 2014

Ms. GRANGER. Mr. Speaker, on roll call no. 557 I am not recorded because I was absent due to a previously scheduled meeting. Had I been present, I would have voted Aye.

WELCOME, BABY MARY PARKS NATONSKI

HON. JOE WILSON

OF SOUTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 11, 2014

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, I am happy to congratulate the former communications director of South Carolina's Second District and now Chief of Staff for RICHARD HUDSON (NC–08) Pepper Pennington Natonski, and her husband Dave, who serves as Chief of Staff for KEVIN YODER (KS–03), upon the birth of their beautiful daughter. Mary Parks Natonski arrived into the world at 7:02AM on Thursday, November 27, 2014. Born at Sibley Memorial Hospital in Washington, DC, Mary Parks weighed eight and a half pounds and measured twenty-one and a half inches long. The Thanksgiving Day baby is the first child for the happy couple. I look forward to watching her grow and have no doubt that her talented parents will be dedicated to her well-being and bright future.

I would also like to congratulate Mary Parks' grandparents, Cass and Cindy Pennington of Orlando, Florida, and General Richard and Barbara Natonski of Woodbridge, Virginia. Congratulations to the entire Pennington and Natonski families as they welcome their newest edition of pure pride and joy!

CITY OF SUGAR LAND EMPLOYEE DELIVERS RESULTS

HON. PETE OLSON

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 11, 2014

Mr. OLSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate the City of Sugar Land Risk Manager Norma Martinez for receiving the 2014 Risk Professional of the Year award from the Public Risk Management Association Chapter of Texas.

Martinez's innovative efforts have significantly lowered costs for the City of Sugar Land. As risk manager, Norma decreased the citywide worker's compensations cost by 62% over three years, decreased citywide auto liability costs by 64% over three years, decreased lost city time by 63% over five years, and decreased worker's compensation cost for the fire department by 91% over five years. It's clear that Norma delivers results.

The City of Sugar Land is fortunate to have such a proactive leader in their Human Resources Department. On behalf of the residents of the Twenty-Second Congressional District of Texas, congratulations to Norma Martinez for receiving the 2014 Risk Professional of the Year award.

REFLECTIONS ON CONGRESS

HON. SPENCER BACHUS

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 11, 2014

Mr. BACHUS. Mr. Speaker, as I prepare to retire after 22 years in the House, I feel as I did when I first walked into this chamber as a freshman—it is an extraordinary privilege to be able to serve and being a U.S. representative is a humbling opportunity I never imagined I might have.

As Members of Congress, we see the Capitol Dome every day and I suspect that none of us ever fails to be inspired by its beauty and what it symbolizes. It is the incarnation of words attributed to Alexander Hamilton: "Here . . . the people govern."

In times of peace and war, prosperity and economic crisis, and social consensus and societal change, America stands unique among nations and in history. The phrase that perfectly explains this is "American Exceptionalism," which I truly believe in. You see it in the leadership that America provides to the world, in the service of our troops and veterans, and in the spirit of our people.

In Congress, I have served with three Presidents and five Speakers and been in this institution for the final years of the collapse of the Soviet Union, the tragedy of the 9/11 attacks, the accounting scandals and later the financial crisis of 2008, and many other historic events. Frequently, the concern expressed in our nation was, "Will we make it through?" Each time, America demonstrated its resilience and the reason for that, in my view, is because of our freedom.

It has been my privilege to serve on three great committees: the Financial Services Committee, the Judiciary Committee, and the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee. My colleagues accorded me the honor of selecting me as Financial Services Committee Chairman, the first to come from my home state of Alabama since Representative Henry B. Steagall in the 1930s. Little did I know that my leadership term on the committee would coincide with the most severe financial crisis to test the U.S. since the Great Depression. During the depths of the financial crisis in the fall of 2008, we worked to prevent a repeat of that catastrophe by stabilizing our weakened banking system; I am proud of my advocacy

of the successful capital purchase program as a solution.

However, if asked about my most satisfying achievement, it would be debt relief. The bipartisan agreement that emerged from Congress and the Clinton and Bush Administrations to provide debt relief to the world's poorest nations has reduced hunger, poverty and disease and lifted tens of millions of children and families from despair to hope. It is an example of what this institution is capable of doing at its finest.

As Dean of the Alabama congressional delegation, I have been honored to be part of a group of House Members and Senators that works across party lines to promote the interests of our state as a whole. Some of the projects that stand out to me are the construction of I–22 and the Northern Beltline, the creation of the Cahaba River National Wildlife Refuge, the location of the National Computer Forensics Center in Hoover, and especially the construction of the Alabama National Cemetery in Montevallo, a shrine to our veterans and their families.

One thing that Members of Congress learn quickly is that their effectiveness is greatly enhanced by a high quality staff. Over the years, I have had many talented and dedicated individuals on my personal and committee staffs. In the past on this floor, I have noted the contributions of Larry Lavender, Warren Tryon, and Gerry Cashin. While time does not permit me to name every staff member, I would like to acknowledge loyal staffers who have been with me during my final year in office: Michael Staley, Tim Johnson, Brett Quick, Philip Swartzfager, Thomas Crockett, Summer Bravo, Brooks McClendon, Katherine Runkle, and Blake Lasuzzo in my Washington office and Christian Sanford, Ethan Vice and Pam Cook in my Birmingham office. Both the institution of Congress and bureaucracy of the federal government are large and complex, and experience matters when you interact with them on behalf of your constituents.

One thing I cannot stress enough is that I would not have been able to achieve anything without the support of my family. My wife Linda is my source of comfort, inspiration, and love. We are blessed with five wonderful children—Candace, Warren, Lisa, Stuart, and Elliott—and seven delightful grandchildren—Christopher, Madeline, Olivia, Rayner, Charlotte, Braden and Lillie. With great eagerness, I look forward to having more time to spend with my beautiful family.

In conclusion, I leave with great respect as well as with an abiding fondness for this institution. A departing hope is that while we vigorously debate policy, as we elected to do, we focus on doing so with respect and civility. My father gave me the advice, ''If you can't say anything nice about a person, don't say anything at all.'' That's not an easy thing to do in politics, but it's a good standard to aspire to. A benefit, I believe, would be an increase in public regard for this legislative body, which is vital in a society where consent comes from the governed. We should strive to make the public proud of their Congress; as Members, we should take personal pride in and honor the tradition of this essential institution.

The people of America look to us for leadership and, in turn, the nations of the world look to America for leadership. This is still President Reagan's beloved ''Shining City on the Hill.'' My hope is that during the time the people of Alabama have given me here, brief in the scope of our country's glorious history, I have been able to contribute in some small way to maintaining the Promise of America for our children, grandchildren, and the generations to come.

HONORING THE COURAGEOUS SERVICE AND SACRIFICE OF STAFF SERGEANT MATTHEW R. AMMERMAN

HON. SUSAN W. BROOKS

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 11, 2014

Mrs. BROOKS of Indiana. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in tribute of a true American hero, Staff Sergeant Matthew R. Ammerman. Tragically, on December 3, Sergeant Ammerman was killed when his unit came under fire in the Zabul province of Afghanistan. I, along with people from across the United States, stand in eternal gratitude for the dedication, service and sacrifice of this young man.

A native of Noblesville, Indiana, Ammerman joined the Army in July 2004. He was deployed in 2006 to Iraq, where he served for 14 months. In 2009, he served as an assistant gunner, fire team leader and squad leader in Afghanistan. In 2012, he volunteered for the Special Forces and graduated in 2013 as a Special Forces communications sergeant. Sergeant Ammerman again answered the call of duty in late 2014 in support of Operation Enduring Freedom.

His many awards are a testament to the exceptional character of this incredibly talented and immensely brave young man. His accomplishments include the Army Commendation Medal with two Oak Leaf Clusters, the Army Good Conduct Medal, the National Defense Service Medal, the Afghanistan Campaign Medal with Campaign Star, the Iraq Campaign Medal with Campaign Star, the Global War on Terror Service Medal, the Non-Commissioned Officer Professional Development Ribbon, the Army Service Ribbon, the Overseas Service Ribbon and NATO Medal. He also received the Special Forces Tab, the Ranger Tab, the Combat Infantryman Badge, the Expert Infantryman Badge, the Parachutist Badge and the Driver and Mechanic Badge.

Staff Sergeant Matthew Ammerman will forever be remembered as a man willing to pay the ultimate sacrifice to defend the freedoms that we so cherish. However, I know his wife, Emily, and his mother, Susan, will always remember him as a loving husband, and a courageous son. I join all Americans in praying for their comfort in this time of grief and the safe return of all those continuing to protect the United States abroad.

RECOGNIZING ACHIEVE HUMAN SERVICES OF YUMA ARIZONA AND THE ABILITYONE PROGRAM

HON. PAUL A. GOSAR

OF ARIZONA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 11, 2014

Mr. GOSAR. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Achieve Human Services and the AbilityOne® Program. The AbilityOne Program partners with participating community-based nonprofit agencies that are dedicated to training and employing individuals with disabilities. Organizations like Achieve, located in every state of our great nation, employ nearly 45,000 Americans who are blind or have significant disabilities through this Program.

AbilityOne affiliated non-profit agencies offer people who are blind or who have significant disabilities opportunities to acquire the job skills and training necessary to receive good wages and benefits that ultimately improve their quality of life. The value of these opportunities cannot be overstated as only 21 percent of individuals with disabilities currently have jobs.

Achieve helps Americans with disabilities lead more productive lives, support their families, gain important work experience and share in the same pride that each of us have after an honest day's work. Many of these individuals work in support of our men and women in uniform, doing their part to improve our country and ensure safety and security for us all.

Mr. Speaker, it is with great pleasure that I recognize the AbilityOne Program and to Achieve Human Services. I also want to acknowledge the dedication and commitment of Ms. Carol Carr, the Executive Director of Achieve, and her staff for helping individuals who are blind or have significant disabilities find employment opportunities. Such actions greatly improve the lives of those less fortunate and make our country a better place.

HONORING THE LIFE OF CARY MARIE FAIRCHILD

HON. SUZANNE BONAMICI

OF OREGON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 11, 2014

Ms. BONAMICI. Mr. Speaker, I rise with Congressman EARL BLUMENAUER and Congressman KURT SCHRADER to honor the life of Cary Marie Fairchild, an Oregonian who tragically lost her life as the result of a car accident in October of 2014.

Cary was a force of nature who served her community with kindness, compassion, and joy. Born in New York City, Cary moved with her family, several times before moving to Hammond, Indiana, where she was raised with her three younger siblings. Growing up, Cary was a natural-born leader. She was the center of her family who not only depended on her, but enjoyed the wild ride. Cary graduated from Hammond Morton High School and attended Ripon College, studying language abroad in Lausanne, Switzerland. Cary graduated with honors from Indiana University and went on to receive her Masters in Psychology from Valparaiso University. She also completed the course work required for a Doctorate in Clinical Psychology at the Illinois School of Professional Psychology in Chicago.

After high school, Cary married Terry Luchene. They had two children, Aaron and Ann. Cary was a very devoted mother who adored her children and her grandson, Logan.

Cary met Jim, her husband of over 30 years, when they both worked as therapists in the same mental health center in Valparaiso. In 1989, they moved to Oregon. They sold everything that didn't fit into a rental truck and

set out for Portland. Although they didn't know anyone in Portland and didn't have jobs, they knew where they were meant to be and trusted in their ability to make a new life in a place they loved.

Cary worked at the Oregon State Hospital, where she was employed as a Mental Health Specialist for almost 25 years. She was an outspoken advocate for her patients and fellow workers. Cary championed patient rights and fought to bring the option of alternative care to the hospital. She was instrumental in starting successful yoga and mindfulness meditation programs at OHS. These programs were well-liked and well-attended. Many of Cary's patients sent her notes affirming how very helpful yoga and meditation are to their recovery.

One of Cary's colleagues said, ''Speaking up for alternative care in the workplace can take courage. Cary treated her patients with compassion, dignity and respect, and they loved her for it. She was fierce!'' Cary's family and friends will forever remember her for her caring, compassionate, playful nature and for the joy she brought to all their lives. Cary was loved by everyone who knew her and she is terribly missed.

Cary is survived by her husband Jim, and mother, Eileen Zneimer of Portland; father, Jack Zneimer of Sarasota, FL; son Aaron Luchene of Canby; daughter, Ann Klug of Merrillville, IN; brothers Peter Zneimer of Chicago and John Zneimer of LaCrosse, WI; and sister Maud of Mill Valley, CA.

We send our sincere condolences to her family, and join in the celebration of her life.

TRIBUTE TO JOHN HOWARD

HON. GREG WALDEN

OF OREGON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 11, 2014

Mr. WALDEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor John Howard, an indispensable member of my staff and good friend who will soon retire after ten years of faithful service to me and the people of Oregon's Second District.

John has had a long, dedicated career serving his country. In fact, this actually marks John's second retirement. In 1994, John left his beloved United States Navy after a thirty year career, rising from enlisted seaman to Commander. A passionate Fighting Illini alumnus, John received his commission in 1970 as a graduate of the Navy ROTC program at the University of Illinois. John served on five ships, including command of the USS *Saginaw* (LST–1188) and several shore assignments, including two tours in Washington D.C.

After a few years of retirement—and a brief stint as a dotcom millionaire gone bust with an independent software development company—John and his wife Cathy relocated from Virginia Beach, Virginia to Medford, Oregon in September 2001. In fact, the closing on his home was delayed because of 9/11. He persevered through and settled in to the Rogue Valley getting involved in his community through the United Way and several military organizations. I first met John when he was the president of the Rogue Valley Council of the Navy League where he presented me with an honorary Navy League membership.

A lifelong Republican, John stepped up to volunteer with the 2004 Bush/Cheney presidential campaign in Jackson County, OR. John stayed in touch with my office through similar political and community volunteer efforts. Soon, when a member of my staff decided to return to school part time, I brought John on to share the workload and the following year, John joined my team full time to handle veterans and military casework and provide input on related policy matters.

Bringing John onboard wasn't without issue. John Howard is a pretty common name for one and we already had a John on staff. The communication logistics could have been daunting, yet by chance House IT averted a crisis. John was bestowed with a non-standard email address that had no ''dot'' between his first and last name. Thereafter and forevermore, John was referred to as NoDot amongst Team Walden.

During his ten years on staff, John has handled 4,144 cases for individual constituents and veterans, almost 1/3 of all the cases handled in 16 years by my office. That doesn't include the countless other veterans and other constituents assisted on the side with information and guidance.

Of course, it was hard for him to top the success of one of his first cases on staff where he showed an ability that surprised us all, bringing veterans back to life. John was contacted by a veteran who had received a letter from the VA containing the shocking news that he was deceased. Working with his contacts at the VA, John was able to get the error corrected and brought the veteran back to life in the VA's records. Over the years, John has had a couple other similar cases, all of which he found fascinating to resolve.

As my veterans caseworker, and later as Director of Constituent Services, John worked with veterans organizations across the district to make sure that I heard their concerns and let them know I was available to assist. John was a familiar face at veterans meetings and events in southern Oregon. Further, he was instrumental in developing a presentation for civic groups on what goes on in congressional offices, making my services more known and available to constituents.

A good naval officer is always concerned about the morale of his sailors. John carried that approach with him and became the de facto Morale Officer in my Southern Oregon District Office. Combining this with a firm belief in the importance of quality community outreach in politics, John founded ''Rope Yarn/Veterans Outreach Wednesdays'' which are weekly after hours gathering for staff and local veterans to discuss local veteran's issues and partake in the occasional fermented beverage—as any good sailor would!

During his tenure, John took the reins of my service academy selection process, changing and building it into the strong program it is today. He constructed a board of retired military officers to interview all candidates that was decidedly ''Purple,'' ensuring all service components were fully represented. This system has proven to be highly successful. In fact, nine of the 18 students I nominated last year received an appointment to the class of 2018.

As John heads into retirement, he is looking forward to some increased time with his extensive family, which includes his wife Cathy, his son, five daughters; soon-to-be 13 grandchildren—including two newborn fraternal twin granddaughters—along with 2 foster grandchildren.

Always service oriented, John will continue to volunteer in his community and was recently appointed to the board of the Jackson County Retired Seniors Volunteer Program. In addition, he has been approached to serve on the board of the United Way and the Jackson County Veterans Advisory Committee.

Whether spending time with family, golfing or volunteering it will always be easy to identify John from afar in the University of Illinois characteristic orange and blue, or overhear the words to the Songs of the Illini—from Illinois Loyalty to Hail to the Orange—which he loudly and proudly belt out with the slightest provocation.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring John's 40 plus years of public service and in wishing fair winds and following seas to a true gentleman, shipmate, and friend. Godspeed, NoDot!

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. CHRISTOPHER P. GIBSON

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 11, 2014

Mr. GIBSON. Mr. Speaker, on roll call no. 555, I was unavoidably detained on official business.

Had I been present, I would have voted ''yea.''

HONORING THE LIFE OF JOHN H. KREBS

HON. JIM COSTA

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 11, 2014

Mr. COSTA. Mr. Speaker, I rise with my colleagues, Congressman XAVIER BECERRA, Congressman AMI BERA, Congresswoman JULIA BROWNLEY, Congresswoman LOIS CAPPS, Congressman TONY CÁRDENAS, Congresswoman JUDY CHU, Congresswoman ANNA ESHOO, Congressman SAM FARR, Congresswoman JANICE HAHN, Congressman JARED HUFFMAN, Congresswoman ZOE LOFGREN, Congressman ALAN LOWENTHAL, Congresswoman DORIS MATSUI, Congresswoman GLORIA NEGRETE MCLEOD, Congressman JERRY MCNERNEY, Congressman GEORGE MILLER, Congressman RICK NOLAN, Congresswoman GRACE NAPOLITANO, Congresswoman NANCY PELOSI, Congressman SCOTT PETERS, Congresswoman LUCILLE ROYBAL-ALLARD, Congressman RAUL RUIZ, Congresswoman LORETTA SANCHEZ, Congressman ADAM SCHIFF, Congressman BRAD SHERMAN, Congresswoman JACKIE SPEIER, Congressman ERIC SWALWELL, Congressman MIKE THOMPSON and Congressman HENRY WAXMAN to pay tribute to the life of former Congressman, John H. Krebs.

John Krebs was an honorable man, and a community leader whose unwavering service will be greatly missed. In addition to his two terms in the United States Congress from 1975–1979, Mr. Krebs was a civic and Democratic Party leader in Fresno, California. Additionally, he worked as an attorney for over 30 years, he was an apprentice diamond cutter during his youth in Tel Aviv, and he served in the U.S. Army.

While in Congress, he was best known for his authorship and enactment of legislation incorporating the Mineral King Valley into Sequoia National Park, thwarting Disney developers who wanted to turn the wilderness area into a major ski resort. In 2009, President Obama recognized John for his efforts, and signed legislation establishing the John Krebs Wilderness Area which covers 40,000 acres within the Mineral King Valley.

John Krebs was born on December 17, 1926, in Berlin. His parents fled Germany a few months after Hitler came to power, and he was raised in Tel Aviv. During his adolescence, John embarked on a career as a diamond cutter and joined the Haganah, a Jewish underground organization opposing the British rule, while also preparing to attend college.

In 1946, John moved to the United States to attend the University of California, Berkeley. He graduated in 1950 and became a U.S. citizen in 1952. Following his two years in the Army, he attended the University of California Hastings College of Law and passed the California Bar in 1957. For the next three decades, he practiced law with the Parichan law firm, specializing in civil defense litigation.

John wanted to make a positive difference in the community, and he quickly became an activist and leader for Fresno's Democratic Party, playing a key role in local and statewide campaigns. In March 1970, he was elected to the Fresno County Board of Supervisors, a position he held until his election to Congress in 1974. He was the first foreign-born congressman from California. John fulfilled the American Dream, and he serves as an inspiration for all of us.

John returned to Fresno after his tenure in Congress, and practiced law until his retirement. He served on numerous boards and commissions, and was foreman of the Fresno County Grand Jury for two years. John and his wife, Hanna enjoyed traveling, and loved spending time with their children and grandchildren.

John's strong values, work ethic, and compassion for others were evident to all of those who were fortunate to know him. His loving guidance as a husband, father, grandfather, and friend will be forever cherished.

John will be greatly missed by Hanna, his son, Daniel Krebs, his daughter, Karen, daughter-in-law, Susan, son-in-law, John, and grandchildren, Elizabeth, Caroline, Jack, Clay, and Peter as well as his 90 year old brother, Shlomo.

Mr. Speaker, it is with great respect that we ask the entire House of Representatives to join us in paying tribute to the life of John H. Krebs. We all have an extraordinary role model to look up to, and his presence will be greatly missed, but his legacy will surely live on.

EMPHASIZING IMPORTANCE OF INVESTING IN EVIDENCE-BASED PROGRAMS

HON. ROSA L. DeLAURO

OF CONNECTICUT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 11, 2014

Ms. DELAURO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to highlight the importance of investing in evidence-based programs with proven track records.

As we work to invest our tax dollars in the most efficient manner possible, we need to know which government programs work, which do not, and which could be improved. The Appropriations bill provides a set aside of 0.5% for program evaluations for both the Department of Labor and certain Education programs.

It has recently been brought to my attention, how the moneyball approach to government could help in our spending decisions. We all have heard about Billy Bean and how he used evidence and data to assemble his winning team.

We in Congress can use this same model by examining best practices and evaluating Federal programs.

''Investing in What Works'' is not a partisan issue. This practice dates back to Presidents Clinton and Bush and continues today with President Obama.

Many of you have heard me speak about my disdain for these austere budget times and how we are forced to look at every available avenue to do more with less. Conducting program evaluations and investing in what works can help improve outcomes for children, families and communities across this nation.

RECOGNIZING DISTINGUISHED EAGLE SCOUT BERNARD QUENEAU

HON. CHRIS COLLINS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 11, 2014

Mr. COLLINS of New York. Mr. Speaker, as the Chairman of the Congressional Scouting Caucus, I rise today to honor Bernard Queneau, the oldest Eagle Scout in America, who passed away earlier this week.

Born in Liege, Belgium in 1912, Bernard moved with his family to America and joined Boy Scout Troop 3B in New Rochelle, New York. He received his Eagle Scout award on March 5, 1928 and was subsequently selected as one of four scouts selected to travel the Lincoln Highway from New York to San Francisco on a 34-day Lincoln Highway Safety Tour. During this journey, Bernard and his fellow scouts gave scouting skills demonstrations and set the stage for 3,400 concrete Lincoln Highway markers to be erected by scouts from coast to coast, cementing the memory of President Lincoln onto this national roadway.

At 102 years old, Bernard was the last living member of the 1928 Boy Scout Lincoln Highway Safety Tour. Bernard recently received the Distinguished Eagle Scout Award, the National Eagle Scout Association's highest honor. He was the 2098th recipient of the 45 year old award, which honors Eagle Scouts with at least 25 years of service and exceptional career achievement or recognition.

Bernard was a lifelong scout and true believer in the values of preparedness and doing your best. He lived his life by the scout oath and law and I am honored to recognize such an exemplary man today. I know Bernard's memory will live on through this family and friends, as well as the myriad of scouts of all ages his life touched.

RECOGNIZING PACIFIC NORTHWEST NATIONAL LABORATORY'S 50TH ANNIVERSARY

HON. DOC HASTINGS

OF WASHINGTON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 11, 2014

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in recognition of the Pacific Northwest National Laboratory, which is celebrating a half-century of innovation and achievement in American research and development.

For 50 years, the men and women at PNNL have worked diligently to make the Lab a leader among the scientific foundations of the United States, evolving from a laboratory supporting a nuclear materials development mission to a multi program national laboratory with significant portfolios in science, energy, and nonproliferation.

When America went to the moon in 1969, NASA chose the lab (then called the Pacific Northwest Laboratory, or PNL) as the only Northwest organization to analyze the lunar material from the Apollo program, and their work became critical to understanding the origin and history of the moon. Additionally, their research had many applications outside of the laboratory. In 1974, they developed a data storage technique called optical digital recording, and became the pioneer of a technology still popular with consumers today—CDs and DVDs.

Their commitment to the environment has consistently been a driving force in work they do. When Mt. St. Helens erupted in 1980, PNL was ready. Because of their expertise in environmental sampling and monitoring, researchers were able to collect samples of the ash and assess potential threats to health and the environment. After the 1986 disaster at Chernobyl, they were assigned the lead role in collecting air samples of the fallout using special research aircraft. They also helped to monitor the radiation levels in the plume after it arrived in America. And, in the early 1990s, PNL helped create the Global Change Assessment Model (GCAM). This model is now widely used around the world, and demonstrates the true impact of the laboratory's work on an international scale.

In 1995, they changed their name to the Pacific Northwest National Laboratory—a suitable switch, since they had always been a national lab making national impacts. Two years later, they opened the Environmental Molecular Science Laboratory (EMSL), a national scientific user facility, which narrows the gap between theoretical molecular modelling and practical physical experimentation. Since its opening, EMSL has welcomed scientific users from every state, and nearly 30 countries.

In the early 2000s, PNNL began to focus on updating the infrastructure of the United States' century-old electric grid, and incorporating it into the information age. They continue to be a leader in testing and developing new technology to manage and protect the grid, especially from new cybersecurity threats. Some of their most recent scientific missions include increasing U.S. energy capacity, and reducing dependence on imported oil; preventing and countering terrorism and

the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction; and creating sustainable systems, reducing the environmental effects of human activities.

Closer to home, PNNL created a suite of modern facilities to support its national and international customers using Battelle, federal, State and third party funds . . . a complex unique in the DOE laboratory system. The Consolidated Laboratory complex allowed PNNL to vacate older facilities that were on the Hanford site.

PNNL developed and supported efforts to create a WSU Branch Campus in the Tri Cities, including joint appointments and federal/state partnership for a research laboratory on the WSU campus. PNNL has been a strong supporter of STEM education programs throughout Washington State, including early funding to build the Delta Prep school in the Tri-Cities.

I want to thank the generations of hardworking men and women who helped bring PNNL this far. I am proud of the Pacific Northwest National Laboratory, its work, and the boundless spirit of American innovation that has made it possible for the last 50 years.

IN RECOGNITION OF BLAISE ALAN DENTE FOR RECEIVING THE UNICO MAN OF THE YEAR AWARD FOR 2014

HON. MATT CARTWRIGHT

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 11, 2014

Mr. CARTWRIGHT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor of Blaise Alan Dente for being awarded UNICO's ''Man of the Year'' Award for 2014. Mr. Dente is a lifelong resident of Pittston, Pennsylvania, and graduated from Seton Catholic High School. Mr. Dente received a Bachelor of Science in Hotel, Restaurant and Tourism from East Stroudsburg University of Pennsylvania. Today, he is the owner of Dente's Catering and Rental, which has been voted the Sunday Dispatch's ''Best Caterer of Greater Pittston'' in both 2011 and 2013.

Mr. Dente is a member of the American Culinary Federation, a national organization of chefs, cooks, and culinary students. Through this association, he obtained his certification as a Certified Chef de Cuisine, which he has held since 2003. He was also inducted as an ''honorary fellow'' in the American Academy of Chefs, the prestigious honor society within the American Culinary Federation. In addition, Mr. Dente is a member of the local chapter of ACF, Professional Chefs of Northeast Pennsylvanian. Within this local chapter, he has chaired several committees and has years of service in various chapter offices. Mr. Dente has also held the position of Chapter President and currently serves as the chapter's Chairman of the Board. In 2008, he was named Chapter Chef of the Year.

Mr. Dente is also an active member of the local community. He serves as a Eucharistic Minister, lector, and usher at his church, Our Lady of the Eucharist. Mr. Dente is a member of both the Wilkes-Barre and Greater Scranton Chambers of Commerce and sits on the Executive Board of Directors, Pittston Chamber of Commerce. In addition, Mr. Dente volunteers for the Pittston Tomato Festival Committee and is a Fourth Degree Knight of Columbus Council 372 & Assembly 948. He is also a member of the Color Guard Core Group and serves as Assembly Faithful Scribe. In 2010, Mr. Dente was named one of the ''Top 40 under 40'' Business Professionals. Mr. Dente is also a graduate of Leadership Wilkes-Barre.

It is a great honor to recognize Mr. Dente's many achievements and to congratulate him being UNICO's ''Man of the Year'' for 2014. I wish him continued success with his business and express my gratitude for his involvement in the community.

INTRODUCTION OF AMERICAN SOLUTION FOR SIMPLIFYING THE ESTATE TAX ACT OF 2014 (''ASSET ACT'')

HON. ANDY HARRIS

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 11, 2014

Mr. HARRIS. Mr. Speaker, one area of unfinished business for the 113th Congress is comprehensive tax reform, which would have given us the chance to reduce the burden of the Internal Revenue Code on families and businesses and would have stimulated economic growth.

Recognizing that tax reform is an issue that the 114th Congress should prioritize, I am introducing today a bill that offers a creative solution to the problems associated with the current federal estate tax. I want to note at the outset that I was an early cosponsor of Congressman BRADY's legislation to repeal the estate tax. However, as part of the tax reform process, Members of the Ways and Means Committee have demonstrated a willingness to consider a variety of policy suggestions and thus, in the interest of stimulating discussion, I am introducing the American Solution for Simplifying the Estate Tax Act of 2014, the ''ASSET Act.'' As I will explain further, the ASSET Act is intended to be a revenue-neutral solution that would provide a new voluntary simplified method for Americans with large estates to pay a fair share of taxes but without any of the distortive, inefficient effects created by the current method of collecting the estate tax.

The origins of the current federal estate tax arise out of the need to fund World War I and enactment of the Revenue Act of 1916. In that respect, this law has outlived its original purpose. It might come as a surprise to some that over the past 50 years, the much-debated federal estate tax has generated only around one percent of total federal tax collections and in 2013 brought in $14 billion, or around 4/10th of a percent of total tax revenue. When one considers the distortive effects of the current estate tax and the disproportionately low amount of revenue actually raised, it is incumbent upon us to identify more appropriate policy solutions.

The case for reform is dramatically illustrated by reviewing the data cited by the Joint Economic Committee (JEC) in its May 2006 study and updated in a July, 2012 study issued by the Republican staff of the JEC. The 2006 study indicated that individuals' costs of complying with the estate tax (avoiding wealth transfer taxes) roughly equals the revenue yield of the estate tax for the Treasury. Both studies demonstrated that the costs of the estate tax includes tens of millions of dollars of compliance costs, a substantial reduction in the capital stock of our economy, reduced savings/increased consumption, and the dissolution of family-run businesses. The 2006 study cited the Congressional Budget Office in saying that many estates that owed estate taxes had a tax liability in excess of their liquid assets, which is a key reason why many family-run businesses are liquidated prematurely or sold at firesale prices after the death of the primary owner.

One example of this problem is Maryland resident Jack Fitzgerald. Jack is a successful owner of a number of automobile dealerships. He has explained to me and to many others in Congress that he is kept up at night by concerns that he will pass away and that his heirs will have to liquidate his thriving small businesses in order to pay the federal estate tax. He routinely mentions the 1200 employees whose livelihoods depend to a great extent on him and his managers. To prevent against the risk of a forced liquidation, Jack says that he pays nearly $700,000 annually in life insurance premia so that his estate would have enough funds to cover the IRS tax liability. Those are funds that he could be reinvesting in his business, his employees, or otherwise using productively if the current estate tax were not looming in the distance. We all know of farmers, ranchers, and other family-run businesses that have to consider selling at an inopportune time in order to ensure that the tax man will get his share. One famous example was captured in the film, ''Secretariat,'' when the horse's owner almost has to sell him and the entire horse farm to pay the estate taxes after the patriarch's death, but she creatively developed an innovative syndication scheme to raise the $6 million and to keep the trailblazing horse and the farm within the family

My office has received letters in support of the ASSET Act from a diverse group of Marylanders, including a CPA, the owner of a minority/woman-owned public relations and advertising firm, the president of a general contracting firm, and the Maryland Auto Dealers Association. One gentleman, who is a farmer who also owns an agricultural business, wrote that ''the present federal estate tax law is very detrimental for businesses (whether it be a farm or other operating business) to pass onto the next generation. During my lifetime I have seen many hardworking farmers and business owners' lifetime work be sold upon their death in order to pay for the inheritance tax. This is a bad situation for creating and keeping jobs and it also creates a real hardship on families.''

Responding to their concerns and others I have heard on numerous occasions when meeting with constituents, the ASSET Act offers a new, simplified approach that will solve permanently the problems with the current estate tax. It permits individual taxpayers to opt-in to a new system in which death would no longer be a taxable event. By taking the uncertainty of death out of the question of how and when assets should be liquidated, the ASSET Act will contribute to economic growth and preserve the stability of companies. Small business owners, farmers, ranchers, and others will not have to live their lives fearing the tax liability imposed under the existing estate

tax and will not have to dismantle profitable companies, sell farms and ranches, over-purchase life insurance, and waste their money on lawyers and accountants with sheltering strategies.

Under the ASSET Act, individuals could make a ''down payment'' on their estate taxes during their earning years and then the government would rely upon traditional capital gains taxes to generate revenue from estate assets when sold. In the current draft of the ASSET Act, a taxpayer may ''opt in'' to this approach by agreeing to pay an additional one percent of his/her AGI each year. (If, based on Joint Committee on Taxation revenue estimates, the one percent rate needs to be adjusted to ensure revenue neutrality over time, that would be possible prior to enactment.) Once in the system, these payments must continue through the earning life of the taxpayer, but no tax will be levied against the estate of such a taxpayer at his death. His or her assets remain intact until they are sold, at which time they will be subject to capital gains tax at the then current rate Taxpayers must pay the I percent fee for a minimum of seven years before they can take full advantage of the ASSET Act system.

There are several primary reasons to support the ASSET Act. As noted earlier, owners of small and medium sized businesses could better plan for the orderly succession of their companies and preserve critically needed jobs. This can avoid forcing the heirs to liquidate the company at just the wrong time, destroying the business and eliminating jobs. And, the government can avoid losing significant capital gains tax revenue that it would have realized had the asset been sold at the right economic opportunity in the future. The ASSET Act solves those concerns and ensures stability for vital engines of our economy.

The ASSET Act will help reduce tax avoidance scheming. Current law exempts estates that are worth less than $5 million for an individual or $10 million for a couple. However, it does not solve the liquidation problem for large estates, which will pay 40% on amounts above those levels. Individuals with very large estates or who expect to accrue such large estates now spend a great deal of time and significant money on strategies to shelter their assets from the estate tax. When these strategies are successful, the government receives nothing. That is why, historically, estate tax revenues have comprised only 1% of total federal tax revenues and 2.47% of the AGI of taxpayers earning more than $1 million per year. The ASSET Act eliminates the incentive to hide assets from the IRS and to engage in unproductive strategies and avoidance schemes, so individuals will ''stay within the system'' and contribute their fair share of taxes to the Treasury.

The ASSET Act is intended to be revenue neutral and would offset the revenue loss of eliminating the current estate tax collection methodology for some taxpayers by imposing a very small annual prepayment surcharge and by capturing the benefits of increased capital gains tax revenues that would occur over time as estate assets are sold.

I encourage my colleagues to study the ASSET Act and to work with me to ensure that as the next Congress considers comprehensive tax reform proposals, we leave no stone unturned in the effort to rectify the problems associated with the current estate tax.

IN HONOR OF DALLAS/FT. WORTH INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT'S NEWEST AIRLINE, ETIHAD AIRWAYS

HON. KENNY MARCHANT

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 11, 2014

Mr. MARCHANT. Mr. Speaker, on December 3, 2014, Etihad Airways become the latest new airline to start service at Dallas/Ft. Worth International Airport (DFW), which I represent in Congress. Etihad's new service now connects DFW with Abu Dhabi and the world beyond. Though Etihad is only eleven years old, it has already become a trend setter in the aviation industry for service and onboard product offerings, winning its 6th straight ''World's Leading Airline'' award at the World Travel Awards this year.

Etihad and DFW based American Airlines enjoy codesharing and reciprocal frequent flier mileage agreements, making it easier for frequent fliers of both airlines to earn miles on their airline of choice and make connecting flights at DFW or Abu Dhabi. DFW is Etihad's sixth destination in the United States, further increasing ties between the United States and the United Arab Emirates. Etihad serves the DFW/Abu Dhabi route with a Boeing 777—which will be further complemented by the airline's $40 billion order for additional Boeing aircraft in the coming years equipped with General Electric engines.

I congratulate Etihad and Dallas/Ft. Worth International Airport on this latest expansion of international service which will greatly increase travel options for my constituents and promote economic growth in North Texas.

HONORING THE FORT HILL HIGH SCHOOL SENTINELS

HON. JOHN K. DELANEY

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 11, 2014

Mr. DELANEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the Fort Hill High School football team and Head Coach Todd Appel for winning the Maryland Class 1A State Football Championship for the second year in a row on Saturday, December 6th.

The Fort Hill Sentinels finished a second consecutive perfect 14–0 season with a 40–8 win against Douglass High School. The Sentinels have now won back-to-back state championships, their fourth in school history. They continued last season's dominance, outscoring their opponents 197–64.

Coach Appel has now compiled an impressive 80–11 record through seven seasons. The Sentinels started as the favorite and never looked back, sweeping the regular season and playoffs. I want to thank Coach Appel and his staff for their leadership, as well as all the student-athletes for their hard work and determination to be the best they can be both in the classroom and on the field. The Sentinels success over the last two years has brought pride to both Fort Hill High School and the local community. I also wish the Fort Hill Sentinels the best of luck as they look to win their third straight title next season.

I ask that you and my other distinguished colleagues help me in honoring this significant accomplishment.

HONORING THE LIFE OF DR. STEVEN FRITZ

HON. SUZANNE BONAMICI

OF OREGON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 11, 2014

Ms. BONAMICI. Mr. Speaker, I rise with Congressman EARL BLUMENAUER and Congressman KURT SCHRADER to honor the life and work of Dr. Steven Edward Fritz, an Oregonian whose life was tragically lost in an accident in September of 2014.

Steven Fritz was born in Frankfort, Kentucky on September 21, 1960. His parents are Salvation Army officers and Steven enjoyed moving to various assignments from Maine, Philadelphia, New Jersey, and New York City. Active in the Salvation Army, Steven was a teenager when he got his first job as a dishwasher at Camp Tecumseh, a Salvation Army children's camp in New Jersey. There he met Amanda, his wife, in 1977.

Steven graduated from Geneva College in Beaver Falls, Pennsylvania, and medical school at the University of Rochester, NY. He completed residency training in psychiatry at Oregon Health Sciences University and became a board certified psychiatrist, serving at the Oregon State Hospital (OSH) for 24 years. For several years he was the Chief Medical Officer at OSH, but he preferred taking care of patients so he left administrative work and returned to staffing forensics units. He was also the President of the local chapter of the Association of Federal, State, and County Municipal Employees (AFSCME). Steven was described by his colleagues as a ''compassionate clinician'' who was guided by kindness and what was best for his patients. He often worked with people who would otherwise be incarcerated, and his approach was valued for its philosophy of allowing patient-collaboration in guiding treatments. He was praised frequently by his colleagues, his patients, and their families.

After Steven and Amanda married in May of 1982, they did a nationwide search to choose a place to settle and raise their family. They moved to Portland in 1986. Their three children were born during the four years of Steve's residency training at OHSU. Steve and Amanda worked hard for many years raising their children, who attended Portland's public schools, and exploring natural areas in Oregon and the West Coast together as a family. They all particularly enjoyed camping in the Alvord Desert. Steve relished his relationships with his children, and was a terrific father.

Dr. Steven Fritz is survived by his wife Amanda; their three children, Luke, Maxwell, and Alessandra; his parents, Colonel Edward Fritz and Colonel Emily Fritz of Portland, OR; two brothers and their wives, Samuel and Diana of Amherst, NY and Andrew and Jody of Olympia, WA; his loving in-laws in England, including mother-in-law Pamela and siblings-in-law Peter and Sue; and many nephews and nieces.

We send our sincere condolences to his family, and join in the celebration of his life.

TRIBUTE TO KEITH H. DETERS

HON. JIM JORDAN

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 11, 2014

Mr. JORDAN. Mr. Speaker, I am honored to commend to the House the outstanding service of Keith H. Deters, who is retiring from the Joint Systems Manufacturing Center in Lima, Ohio, after a distinguished 32-year career.

Keith began his time at JSMC as a quality engineer in 1982. For the last 12 years, he has served as plant manager—the longest tenured manager in the modern history of that facility, which is the only remaining heavy combat vehicle production plant on the continent. A hands-on manager, he noted that there has rarely been a day that he did not walk the production floor to interact with the plant's highly skilled workforce, to which he has always paid great tribute for the facility's success.

In the face of challenges to JSMC's future, Keith has been a tireless advocate of the plant and the vital role it plays in our nation's defense industrial base. Under his leadership, JSMC has diversified beyond its traditional Abrams tank refurbishment work for the Army, providing high-quality combat vehicles and other products to other branches of the military and to our international allies.

Keith has been instrumental in the success of Task Force LIMA (Linked in Mutual Alliance), established more than a decade ago to support and promote JSMC and Ohio's other defense facilities. He is well respected throughout our congressional delegation as a man of vision and an industry expert.

Mr. Speaker, the Lima community will gather at Lima's City Club on December 17 to celebrate Keith's many contributions and distinguished record of service. On behalf of the people of Ohio's Fourth Congressional District, I am proud to join in the accolades to him and offer my warmest congratulations on his retirement. He and his wife, Donna, have my best wishes as they enter a new chapter in their lives.

PASSAGE OF THE COAST GUARD AND MARITIME TRANSPORTATION ACT OF 2014: A CRITICAL STEP IN THE REVITALIZATION OF U.S. SHIPBUILDING AND MERCHANT MARINE

HON. JOHN GARAMENDI

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 11, 2014

Mr. GARAMENDI. Mr. Speaker, on December 10th, I was proud to bear witness to the passage, under Unanimous Consent, of the House and Senate compromise language for the Coast Guard and Maritime Transportation Reauthorization Act of 2014. S. 2444, the culmination of months of hard work and diligent analysis by Coast Guard Subcommittee Chairman DUNCAN HUNTER, House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee Chairman BILL SHUSTER, Ranking Member NICK RAHALL, Senator ROCKEFELLER, Senator THUNE, myself, and our staff, is a beacon of the thoughtful compromise and responsible lawmaking we hope to see more of in the coming years.

Notably, S. 2444 contains a provision to ensure that our commitment to U.S. maritime is maintained as America considers the possible exportation of liquefied natural gas (LNG). Existing law, written before the natural gas boom when America was forecasted to be an LNG importer, authorizes the Secretary of Transportation to develop and implement a program to promote the transportation of imported LNG on U.S.-flag vessels. Under the Deepwater Ports Act, the Secretary is also required to give top priority to the processing of licenses for LNG import facilities that will utilize U.S.-flag vessels. S. 2444 includes language from H.R. 5270, the Growing American Shipping Act, to modernize these laws. LNG exports will now be included in the program to promote the use of U.S.-flag vessels in the carriage of LNG, and the Secretary will be required to give priority processing to export applications for deepwater port terminals that would utilize U.S.-flag vessels.

The U.S. shipbuilding industry and U.S. natural gas market are strategic national assets essential to U.S. national security interests. Shipbuilding is critical to the growth and flow of our economy, and to our ability to control the safety and security of the global supply chain. It is also essential to the United States Navy, which relies on a select few remaining shipyards for the construction of new ships and the repair and refitting of existing ships. Despite this importance, our foreign trade fleet has declined from 1,200 ships in the 1950s to less than 100 today, and despite having pioneered gas tanker technology, America no longer manufactures LNG tanker ships. To transport LNG by sea, the world must rely on China, Japan, and South Korea to build the requisite tankers.

Further decline of the U.S. shipbuilding industrial base will continue to erode competitive bidding among shipyards, both for commercial builds and for Navy shipbuilding needs, thus compromising efforts to reduce the deficit and balance the national budget. It will also result in the further loss of marine engineering expertise, preventing the adoption and utilization of the same cutting edge ship construction technologies used by our foreign competitors. Furthermore, tens of thousands of American jobs, both inside shipyards and throughout the U.S. supply chain, depend on the strength of the maritime industry.

The decline of the shipbuilding industry threatens another strategic national asset in reducing key personnel. The U.S. Merchant Marine is a highly trained, militarily-useful labor force, and American merchant sailors are the foundation of our marine transportation system. Further attrition of the Merchant Marine threatens American security because our nation relies on this secure source of labor for the movement of supplies and military cargo and personnel. The explosive nature of LNG strengthens the need to ensure that the transport of LNG, especially through U.S. ports, is done by U.S. seafarers, and not foreign crews that come with an increased potential for sabotage.

The export of LNG is projected to slowly ramp up over the next two or three years and will then quickly accelerate over the next decade or more. This will allow both time and a stable, long-term market demand, which—if given the correct incentives—could spur the U.S. shipbuilding industry to re-tool its infrastructure and processes to ramp up the production of domestic tankers, paving the way for production of vessels for export of this strategic national asset. It is in the U.S. national interest to utilize the emerging LNG coastwise and export trades to provide reliable, long-term markets for U.S. commercial shipbuilding and for U.S.-flag operators, to expand and increase the U.S. shipbuilding industrial base, and to use LNG export trade to strengthen U.S. strategic interests and alliances with LNG trading partners.

Therefore, it is the purpose of this law to enhance the national security and port safety of the United States by encouraging to the maximum extent practicable the transport of LNG on U.S.-built and -flag vessels. This law aims to maintain the technological ability of the United States shipbuilding industry to build and repair vessels for the Navy and the Coast Guard by maintaining the critical industrial infrastructure and skilled human workforce necessary to build such vessels. Further, this law promotes American job creation by encouraging domestic shipbuilding and the use of U.S. mariners in the transport of American LNG.

This provision of the Coast Guard and Maritime Transportation Act of 2014 is supported by the Maritime Trades Department (AFL–CIO); the Seafarers International Union (AFL–CIO); the Transportation Institute; the Shipbuilders Council; the Navy League of the United States; the American Maritime Officers; the Marine Engineers' Beneficial Association (MEBA); the International Association of Masters, Mates and Pilots (MM&P); the Maritime Institute for Research and Industrial Development (MIRAID); the Marine Firemen's Union, Metal Trades Department (AFL–CIO); the Sailors' Union of the Pacific; the American Maritime Officers Service; and the American Maritime Congress. I thank these organizations for their commitment to national security, a strong maritime industry, and the creation of good American jobs so vital to the economic prosperity and future of this nation.

HONORING DAN McCORQUODALE

HON. ZOE LOFGREN

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 11, 2014

Ms. LOFGREN. Mr. Speaker, I rise with my colleagues, Congress members ANNA ESHOO, MIKE HONDA, and MIKE THOMPSON to recognize the four decades of tenacious, dedicated service of Mr. Dan McCorquodale to the County of Santa Clara, the City of San Jose, and the State of California.

For over 40 years, Dan has been a fixture in public service in California after becoming interested in remedying the pervasive, lingering injustices of racial, gender, and disability discrimination. Having served as a Sergeant in the U.S. Marine Corps for four years, attended college, and worked as a teacher, Dan joined the City Council of Chula Vista, California in 1962 as the youngest person in history to ever be elected to the Council. Only four years later, Dan became the City's first Mayor, elected by a broad margin.

Consistent with his lifelong passion for teaching and the cause of individuals struggling with mental health issues, Dan returned to education from 1969 to 1972, teaching

learning-disabled fourth, fifth, and sixth-graders. During this time, Dan initiated the first Educationally Handicapped program for the Evergreen School District. After discovering the need to increase access to mental health centers in Santa Clara County, among other issues, Dan decided to run for the Board of Supervisors there.

In 1972, Dan was elected to the Board, serving as a Chairperson for two of his three terms. As a Supervisor, Dan took local leadership on justice and gender and racial equality, health care access, environment, and transportation issues.

Dan never backed down from his lifelong fight against discrimination and injustice. He worked to bring in women, minorities, and individuals living with developmental disabilities to the workforce. For example, Dan appointed the first woman commissioner to the Fire Commission. He also garnered Board consensus regarding supporting workshops, job training, and a program to ease job access for the developmentally disabled.

During his tenure on the Board, Dan expanded his efforts beyond local leadership, representing Santa Clara County on regional and state-wide governing Boards and Commissions, including becoming a member and Chairperson of the Bay Area Quality Management District, and a member of the Bay Conservation and Development Commission, the Association of Bay Area Governments, the Metropolitan Transportation Commission, and the Advisory Council of the State Office of Planning and Research.

In 1982, Dan was elected State Senator where he served for three terms. As a Senator, Dan authored legislation in a variety of areas including: comprehensive water plans for the State, water reclamation, conservation, consumer protection, people with disabilities, LGBT issues, and humane treatment of animals.

After leaving office, Dan worked as a Commissioner on the California Medical Assistance Commission with the Office of the Governor, working to enhance access to medical care for those in need.

Throughout his career Dan has been known for his stellar work ethic, incredible resilience, professionalism, and commitment to hard work in the best interest of the people. I wish Dan the happiest of birthdays, congratulate him on his impressive career, and commend him for his invaluable service to our community and the State of California. We have been lucky to have him.

HONORING CONGRESSIONAL BLACK CAUCUS CHAIRWOMAN MARCIA FUDGE

HON. TERRI A. SEWELL

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 11, 2014

Ms. SEWELL of Alabama. Mr. Speaker, today I rise with my colleagues to pay tribute to the indelible mark my colleague and friend Representative MARCIA FUDGE has had on the Congressional BLACK CAUCUS during her time as our chairwoman in the 113th Congress.

She has been an outstanding chairwoman to the Congressional Black Caucus and I have been honored to serve under her fine leadership. As the true embodiment of the ''conscience of the Congress,'' Chairwoman FUDGE has been a tireless champion for blue-collar workers, food stamp recipients, students, and communities of color. She has also been a staunch advocate for voter protection, job creation, and fair housing. As a dedicated public servant, she has continuously represented the needs of both her constituents and underrepresented Americans across this country.

Under Chairwoman FUDGE's leadership, 14 members of the Congressional Black Caucus traveled to my district in September 2013 to honor the lives of the four little girls killed in the 1963 bombing of the Sixteenth Street Baptist Church. She has also traveled to my hometown of Selma on multiple occasions to commemorate the Selma-to-Montgomery March and Bloody Sunday.

On a personal note, Chairwoman FUDGE has and continues to serve as a great friend and mentor to me. I am inspired by her work ethic, problem solving spirit, and remarkable insight and knowledge. With these qualities and more, she has proven to be invaluable to not only the Congressional Black Caucus, but to the Congress as a whole.

Mr. Speaker, Chairwoman FUDGE has led the Congressional Black Caucus with great character and an unwavering commitment to ensuring that all Americans are given equal opportunities to reach their full potential. Thank you, Chairwoman FUDGE for your service and astute leadership.

FALLEN MICHIGAN SHERIFF'S DEPUTY

HON. MIKE ROGERS

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 11, 2014

Mr. ROGERS of Michigan. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to Deputy Grant William Whitaker who was killed in the line of duty on Sunday, December 7, 2014 in Stockbridge Township, Michigan. Deputy Whitaker was 25 years old and had been with the Ingham County Sheriff's Office for one and a half years. Deputy Whitaker had previously served as a police officer with Stockbridge Police Department and Waterloo Township Police. Grant grew up with the drive to serve his community and found his calling in law enforcement. A native of Stockbridge, Grant went to Stockbridge High School where he played baseball. He was an avid outdoorsman who hunted deer, waterfowl and turkey. He enjoyed playing pool and golf and spending time with his nephews. It is tragic when any loved one passes, and to lose someone so young and so dedicated to his community is a terrible loss indeed. My thoughts and prayers are with Grant's parents and family during this difficult time.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. BILL HUIZENGA

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 11, 2014

Mr. HUIZENGA of Michigan. Mr. Speaker, I rise today regarding a missed vote on December 10, 2014. Had I been present for roll call vote number 560, H.R. 1204, on the motion to suspend the rules and concur in the Senate amendment for the Aviation Security Stakeholder Participation Act of 2014, I would have voted ''yay.''

CONGO-BRAZZAVILLE

HON. ELIOT L. ENGEL

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 11, 2014

Mr. ENGEL. Mr. Speaker, 2015 will be an important year for the future of African democracy. Many countries on the continent will either hold or prepare for Presidential elections. If recent history is any guide, some long-serving African leaders will be tempted to alter constitutions or take other quasi-legal steps to extend their rule. I strongly encourage these leaders, including President Sassou-Nguesso of Congo-Brazzaville, to resist this temptation and to respect the will of their people.

Congo-Brazzaville has enormous natural resource wealth, including oil, minerals and timber. In 2014, the nation's GDP will be an estimated $12.9 billion. It has also received nearly $2 billion in debt relief since 2010. However, it is ranked 142 out of 186 on the U.N. Human Development Index—in other words, human development is low. Political opposition is repressed, so discussion about governance and how to improve and deliver broader economic growth is limited.

In 2016, when it is time for the people of Congo-Brazzaville to go to the polls and elect a President, they deserve the chance to choose a new leader who will endeavor to deliver equitable growth to their country. According to the constitution, that should be their right—President Nguesso's two 7-year terms will have expired. However, there are indications that he is considering amending that constitution so he is eligible to run again, further extending his 30-year long rule.

The events in Burkina Faso earlier this fall should give pause to any leader considering constitutional changes that would allow them to extend their rule. President Nguesso should allow the voters of Congo-Brazzaville to select a new leader and engage in real democracy—a process that involves a peaceful change in government.

Let 2015 be a year filled with peace and prosperity for the Congolese people. Let a legitimate, democratic transfer of power be the legacy of President Sassou-Nguesso. Let his actions serve as a model and inspiration for other leaders in the region. And let democracy and the rule of law prosper in sub-Saharan Africa.

HONOR AND PRIVILEGE OF SERVING IN CONGRESS FOR THE PAST 18 YEARS

HON. DONNA M. CHRISTENSEN

OF THE VIRGIN ISLANDS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 11, 2014

Mrs. CHRISTENSEN. Mr. Speaker, Like several members before me, as I prepare to depart, I rise to address this body in which I

have had the honor and privilege of serving for the past 18 years.

I thank God for His grace and guidance and for keeping me fit of mind and body, so that I could faithfully serve my constituents and our country.

I thank my constituents, the people of the Virgin Islands for their overwhelming support at every election from 1996 through 2012, and for their advice, counsel and their prayers during my tenure.

I thank the leadership under whom I have served—Republican and Democrat—for their support of legislation and the concerns of the people of the Virgin Islands. But I especially thank my Democratic leaders for their unwavering support and advocacy on my and my constituents behalf.

Special thanks to the leaders and the members of the Congressional Black Caucus from the first Chair MAXINE WATERS, all the way to our most recent Chair MARCIA FUDGE and all in between.

I have been successful in my ability to represent my district and to contribute to their health and wellbeing and that of all of the people of this country and beyond, because of their overwhelming support.

Being named as Chair of the CBC Health Braintrust gave me a national platform that allowed a non-voting member, from a Territory that many members could not locate on a map, the opportunity to influence not only local but national policy. And I thank the leaders and members of our TriCaucus partners—the Hispanic and Asian Pacific Caucuses—and my fellow Delegates for their support as well.

And above all I thank the very best staff anyone could ask for. Without them I could not have accomplished anything and my family who sacrificed so that I could serve.

In these 18 years I served on several committees: Natural Resources where I was a Ranking member on the Parks and Public Lands Subcommittee and chair of the Subcommittee on Insular Affairs, Wildlife, Oceans and Fisheries; the Committee on Small Business, the Committee on Homeland Security and finally with the Support of the CBC, I became the first delegate ever to serve on the exclusive Committee on Energy and Commerce. I particularly thank Chairwoman FUDGE, Assistant Leader CLYBURN and Leader PELOSI for that honor.

I have been blessed to serve in interesting times and during the terms of three presidents—Presidents Clinton, Bush and Obama.

Even without a vote I participated in discussions on every major issue in these 18 years both in Congress and in each White House.

And I have been fortunate with the help and support of the many who I have thanked to have been able through increased rum cover over funds, forgiveness of disaster loans, enabling borrowing and helping to ensure territories were included in the recovery act to help stave off what would have been a far worse impact from the national and global recession.

My staff and I were able to increase funding for roads and provide new funding for wastewater treatment systems and other infrastructure repair. First responder funding reached unprecedented highs.

And even though we were unsuccessful in our efforts to get state like treatment for the territories in the Affordable Care Act, I count as one of my most important legacies is the fact that working with my TriCaucus colleagues I was able to include many provisions for us that will enable coverage, service and protections for the four and a half million of us, as well as health equity and other provisions that benefit all Americans.

I had the privilege of working with others to create and maintain the Minority AIDS Initiative, to improve Ryan White, to expand the Children's Health Insurance, and to create the National Institute on Minority Health and Health Disparities at NIH.

There is more, but most of all I am proud of the individuals and families we have helped in our district and Washington offices.

We helped resolve immigration, veterans, military, TWIC card, VICORP, social security, and Homeland Security issues, some involving saving jobs or getting them thousands of dollars they were owed. We were not 100% successful, but we always pursued the issues on behalf of our constituents to the nth degree.

So again to everyone who voted for me, who supported my efforts and who helped to provide the tools for a better life for the people of the Virgin Islands, thank you.

I will forever be grateful to all of you and will always consider it the highest honor to have been able to serve the people of the U.S. Virgin Islands and my country for 18 wonderful years.

HONORING COMPAÑEROS EN SALUD/PARTNERS IN HEALTH, NFP

HON. BILL FOSTER

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 11, 2014

Mr. FOSTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor Compañeros en Salud/Partners in Health, a not-for-profit grass roots organization in Aurora, Illinois that is celebrating its 15th Anniversary.

Since 1999, Compañeros en Salud/Partners in Health, NFP has provided assistance for members of the Hispanic community and other diverse groups to ensure equal access to health care and other social services in the Fox Valley. I would especially like to recognize Dr. Lulu Blacksmith, Compañeros en Salud's founder, for her dedication and leadership of the organization.

Through programs such as the Latina Health Festival, the Men's Health Festival, and Language Access Healthcare, Compañeros en Salud has become an important resource for our community. Since its founding, the organization has been expanding its focus into areas such as mental health and diabetes, while still offering high quality service to those who need assistance the most.

I would like to offer my sincere congratulations to Compañeros en Salud/Partners in Health, NFP as it celebrates its 15th Anniversary.

RECOGNIZING NIU'S LEADERSHIP ON CAMPUS SAFETY

HON. ADAM KINZINGER

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 11, 2014

Mr. KINZINGER of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, it is an honor to recognize Northern Illinois University from my district for its proactive leadership in creating safe, supportive living-learning communities by protecting all students from sexual assaults.

I commend NIU President Doug Baker for convening a Task Force on the Violence Against Women Act to bring together students, faculty, staff, administrators, public safety officials, and the DeKalb community on this important issue. To illustrate this collaboration, I would like to insert a student perspective into the RECORD offered by the President of NIU's Student Association.

Their hard work resulted in the Task Force Report which contains recommendations that enhance NIU's efforts in the prevention of sexual assault, provide support for sexual assault victims and survivors, and strengthen policies and processes related to student conduct and reporting. I am proud to say NIU is among the first universities in the nation to conduct such a comprehensive and public review.

My constituents' health and safety is a top priority. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the hard work of NIU's Task Force and look forward to continuing to work with NIU on our shared commitment to campus safety.

STUDENT PERSPECTIVE

One of the most memorable days in a parent's life is the one in which they send their child off to college. Parents can only hope the well-being of their child is in good hands. It is our duty as decision makers in the university community to make sure we have a safe environment for our students. This is why as President of the Northern Illinois University (NIU) Student Association, I reached out to groups across campus, from the NIU Police to our Health Enhancement Department, to collaborate on a White House-initiated campaign called ''It's On Us''. The It's On Us campaign mobilizes students and advocates for their awareness of responses to and prevention of campus sexual assaults, a pressing issue facing our nation today. I commend everyone involved with the campaign for making a positive change to our campus culture.

It is exceedingly important to note this student-led movement is the bottom-up companion to a top-down approach by the university administration. I recognize and applaud the efforts of NIU President Doug Baker and his administration for their proactive approach to addressing sexual assaults on campus, embodied in the work of the Presidential Task Force on Violence Against Women Act. This task force and the report created from it will play a crucial role in the health, safety and well-being of our students, faculty, staff and community members. It makes me a proud student to see NIU as one of the national leaders paving the way on such significant issues. Judging by the energy felt around campus, I believe my fellow students agree.

JOE FRASCELLO,
President, STUDENT ASSOCIATION,
Northern Illinois University.

IN HONOR OF RACHEL STANLEY

HON. RON KIND

OF WISCONSIN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 11, 2014

Mr. KIND. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to thank Rachel Stanley for her many contributions to the House of Representatives and specifically to my office. At the end of this year, Rachel will be leaving my office to pursue opportunities away from Capitol Hill.

Rachel joined my staff in the fall of 2011 as my Legislative Assistant handling the tax and financial services portfolio. She hit the ground running and was invaluable from the start. Recognizing her growth in the office, she was promoted to Tax Counsel and will leave my office after serving for the past year as my Legislative Director. Rachel was particularly successful in working on the Cooperative and Small Employer Charity Pension Flexibility Act, which provides flexibility for multiple employer pension plans by allowing them to opt in or out of Pension Protection Act funding rules. This allows for more money to be invested into businesses and communities.

Over the past year, Rachel has served as my Legislative Director. Under her tenure, my office has a number of legislative accomplishments, including awarding the Medal of Honor to Alonzo Cushing, advocating for greater rail safety, and pushing for a tax code that encourages American manufacturing.

Next year, Rachel will join the staff of Principal Financial, where she will continue to work on tax and pension policy. While I am sorry to see her leave my staff, I wish her the best of luck in her new role. Rachel embodies the term public service and has worked tirelessly to make our nation a better place, which has not been easy given the current toxic environment. It is unfortunate that we are losing such a competent and dedicated public servant.

Mr. Speaker, on my behalf, thank you to Rachel for her service and dedication to not only the constituents of the Third District of Wisconsin, but to all Americans.

ORIGINATION CLAUSE

HON. DAVE CAMP

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 11, 2014

Mr. CAMP. Mr. Speaker, I rise to address an important institutional issue. Under the Constitution, it is the prerogative of the House of Representatives to originate revenue measures. Article 1, section 7, clause 1 of the United States Constitution provides that ''All Bills for raising revenue shall originate in the House of Representatives; but the Senate may propose or concur with Amendments as on other Bills.'' This clause is commonly known as the Origination Clause. As chairman of the Committee on Ways and Means, I have a special responsibility in guarding this important House prerogative.

A recent court decision has caused me to come to this floor to re-affirm the House position on the Origination Clause. The rationale used by the D.C. Circuit Court of Appeals in their July 29, 2014 decision in Sissel v. HHS is at odds with consistent House Origination Clause practice. Specifically, the ruling from a three-judge panel of the D.C. Circuit held that because the primary aim of PPACA was not to raise revenue, but rather to ''induce participation in health insurance plans,'' it was not a ''bill for raising Revenue'' within the meaning of the Origination Clause. Sissel v. HHS, Op. at 13 (July 29, 2014).

Although some courts have taken a narrower view of what constitutes a ''a bill for raising revenue,'' the ''primary purpose'' test articulated in Sissel presents heightened challenges in interpretation that not only threaten the constitutional balance in Congress but invite subjective judicial scrutiny of the legislative process. This analysis may lead to confusion between the legislative and judicial branch on measures where the primary purpose is not easily ascertainable, measures that contain multiple, competing purposes, and measures that state a purpose that is in conflict with its content.

The House's traditional provision-by-provision review of a measure and the effect of each on revenue is the more sound approach. This interpretation has served the Congress well when resolving differences between the House and Senate on the Origination Clause.

I offer H.R. 4310, the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2013, as a recent example. H.R. 4310, as passed by the House on May 18, 2012, was a lengthy measure that addressed nearly every aspect of our national defense. The Senate amended it on December 4, 2012 with its own version of the bill. Rather than attempting to assess the purpose of this diverse, multifaceted measure, the Committee on Ways and Means reviewed both the House and Senate measures in their entirety. This review of the Senate amendment revealed a subtitle that included import restrictions on Iran. Import restrictions invoke the revenue jurisdiction of the Committee on Ways and Means and have been the subject of Origination Clause action in the past. In response to this institutional infringement, I offered House Resolution 829, a measure returning H.R. 4310 and the offending amendment to the Senate. House Resolution 829 was adopted by the House unanimously on December 12, 2012. In response to the House action, the Senate, also by unanimous consent, stripped the Iran sanctions content from its amendment, and the measure proceeded to conference. The bill was enacted into law on January 2, 2013.

As chair of the oldest committee in the House, I have strived to protect this venerable institutional prerogative and clarify its application when needed. I am especially grateful to the majority and minority staff of the committee for their vigilance in this area. I hope these remarks will clarify the House position on this important constitutional issue.

HONORING CONGRESSMAN DOC HASTINGS ON HIS RETIREMENT

SPEECH OF

HON. DAVID G. REICHERT

OF WASHINGTON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 10, 2014

Mr. REICHERT. Mr. Speaker, today, I would like to thank my distinguished colleague Mr. DOC HASTINGS for his tireless efforts and inexhaustible service on behalf of Washington State. I had the privilege of working closely with him while he was chairman of the Natural Resources Committee on many projects including my Alpine Lakes legislation which we passed just last week. In all things, DOC stands up for his beliefs and the best interests of his constituents and I think there can be no higher praise for a member of Congress. He will be missed in the Washington Delegation as he has shared with all of us the wisdom he has gathered during his 20 years in office. I wish him all the best in his future endeavors and I know he leaves behind a wonderful legacy for Washington State and for America to remember him by.

HONORING LILLIE G. HENSON

HON. BENNIE G. THOMPSON

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 11, 2014

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor a remarkable hero, Lillie G. Henson.

Lillie G. Dean Henson was born to the late Aaron and Lillian Dean on August 10, 1949 in Sardis, MS Panola County. She is the ninth of eleven children, five boys and six girls. There were many challenges that she faced that seemed to have placed her in the line of the first born. She was blessed to be born in a Christian home where reading and studying the bible were not an option, therefore, her faith in the Lord was well rooted and grounded.

Faced with many challenges of sickness in my family, Lillie learned the application of her faith was the only true anchor. Growing up was very challenging at times. Early in her growing up years her mother was stricken with a severe heart condition which required lots of rest and carefully prepared meals.

At the age of fourteen, much of the responsibility of taking care of the family fell upon Lillie. Cooking breakfast for the family and preparing a special diet for her ailing mom before going off to school was quite an experience.

As a little girl growing up, Lillie's dad would ask her to read the bible to him, and as a child she remembers reading: ''Honor your father and your mother that your days may be long upon the earth.'' This scripture and many others rested in her spirit as she grew into adulthood. Lillie's passion for the word of God grew greater and greater.

By the time Lillie was a junior in high school, she began to make plans for college . . . only to be asked by her ailing mother to stay home to make sure her younger sister, who was then a junior, finish high school. Her plans were shattered but she learned to be obedient to her parents through the studying of the scriptures.

In 1969, Lillie's mother went to be with the Lord, her sister completed her junior year of high school with perfect attendance and completed high school as planned.

In 1970, Lillie moved to Chicago with her older siblings. Lillie was employed at Brachs Candy Company for twenty years. She was among the first few African Americans to hold a manager's position in the Quality Control Department.

In 1990, Lillie's dad at the age of eighty two became ill. Her husband, Otha Henson, Sr., who was also employed at Brachs Candy Company and is from Kilmichael, MS., decided to move back south to care for Lillie's dad and baby sister, Rebecca, who was born with Spinal Bifida. Lillie's dad passed away in 1991 and Rebecca lived ten years after his death.

Since 1996 to present, Lillie has been employed as Program Manager at Youth Opportunities Unlimited, a Youth Development Program located in Lambert, MS.

Lillie continued her education at Northwest Community College, Senatobia, MS., Rust College, Holly Springs, MS., and in 2012, she earned a BA in Ministry and in 2013 she received a Masters in Christian Counseling from Jacksonville Theological Seminary in Jacksonville, FL.

Lillie is happily married, the proud mother of four children, eleven grandchildren and two great grand boys.

You can find her teaching Sunday school on Sunday mornings at Pleasant Green M.B. Church, Sardis, MS, also a praise and worship leader, counseling, and encouraging and nurturing those in need.

Eph. 6:2, ''Honor thy father and mother; which is the first commandment with promise.''

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing Mrs. Lillie G. Henson for she is definitely the epitome of an unsung hero.

ACKNOWLEDGING BERNARD MULLIGAN

HON. JEFF DENHAM

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 11, 2014

Mr. DENHAM. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to acknowledge Bernard Mulligan and to personally thank him for his life-long spirit of public service and his unyielding commitment to the community of Morgan Hill.

Bernie graduated from Red Bank Catholic High School in New Jersey in 1960. He later went on to receive a Bachelor's and Master's degree in Political Science from Temple University in Philadelphia, PA. Following his graduation, he moved to Morgan Hill, CA where he has been an active member of the community for the past 40 years.

Among his many accomplishments, Bernie Mulligan was the Volunteer Coordinator for the community's annual Independence Day celebration. He chaired the Blue Ribbon Task Force on medical needs and is a member of the Board of Trustees for the Morgan Hill Community Health Foundation and the Saint Louise Regional Hospital Foundation. Bernie is the current President of the Morgan Hill Sister Cities program and personally founded the Headford, Ireland and Seferihisar, Turkey Sister City Associations.

Bernie has spent countless hours promoting the values of limited government through several years of service on the Santa Clara County Republican Committee and working on the 1980 and 1984 campaigns for President Ronald Reagan.

Bernie has one son, Sean, who is a programming engineer. Bernie's hobbies include traveling, music, and drinking Irish ales and stouts. He is known by members of the Morgan Hill community as the ''Ambassador of Good Will.''

Mr. Speaker, please join me in honoring and thanking Bernard Mulligan for his exemplary leadership and unyielding service to the community.

TRIBUTE TO COLONEL JAMES W. COOKSEY

HON. MIKE COFFMAN

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 11, 2014

Mr. COFFMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Colonel James W. Cooksey of Aurora, Colorado, who was awarded a Congressional Gold Medal on December 10, 2014, for his service with the Civil Air Patrol during World War II.

Colonel Cooksey began his decorated career in 1943 as a cadet in the Civil Air Patrol. During World War II, Colonel Cooksey served as a Civil Air Patrol Observer, conducting air search and rescue missions.

Colonel Cooksey continued his service with both the Army and, subsequently, the Air Force. It was during his time in the Air Force that he served in Korea, Turkey, and Thailand. Additionally, he worked in the U.S. Air Force Academy Admissions Office and was an ROTC instructor at Michigan State University. After retiring from active duty, Colonel Cooksey taught history for 20 years at Aurora Hills Middle School. Throughout his career, he continued to serve in the Civil Air Patrol and became Vice Commander of the Rocky Mountain Region.

In total, Colonel Cooksey dedicated 71 years to the Civil Air Patrol, and currently remains a dues paying member. It gives me great pride to represent such an exemplary American in Congress. Mr. Speaker, it is an honor to recognize Colonel James W. Cooksey for his service to his country.

RECOGNIZING THE SERVICE OF DR. ERIC RUDENSHIOLD

HON. PETER J. ROSKAM

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 11, 2014

Mr. ROSKAM. Mr. Speaker, I rise today on behalf of my colleague, Congressman DAVID PRICE, and the Members of the House Democracy Partnership (HDP) to recognize a dedicated public servant, Dr. Eric Rudenshiold, who recently concluded his service as staff director for HDP. As chairman of HDP, it has been my privilege to work with Dr. Rudenshiold to engage the legislative bodies of developing democracies around the world.

During his tenure with HDP, Dr. Rudenshiold has been a passionate advocate for democracy building and an expert on global political development. He was instrumental in helping to stabilize HDP after a turbulent post-sequester period and his strategic vision has helped to put HDP on sound footing for the future.

In addition to sewing as a knowledgeable and trusted counselor, Dr. Rudenshiold executed a massive logistical feat with deftness and charm, successfully working with high profile leaders on multiple continents over a period of many months to plan and conduct the HDP curriculum. This past September he helped organize a seminar with Members of Parliament from Afghanistan, Indonesia, Kenya, Mongolia, and Pakistan, which explored ways to strengthen transparency and government oversight. In October, he led a foreign staff training seminar for HDP's partner countries teaching effective legislative oversight, budget analysis, committee operations, and constituent relations. Lastly, in November he developed a workshop for women Members of Parliament from Afghanistan, Albania, Bhutan, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Georgia, Honduras, Kenya, Mongolia and Peru offering tools and resources to grow their capacity as legislators and leaders in their home countries. Through Dr. Rudenshiold's hard work, HDP successfully executed a busy 2014 program and has laid the groundwork for an equally ambitious 2015 agenda.

Mr. Speaker and Distinguished Colleagues, please join me in recognizing Dr. Eric Rudenshiold for his years of service in pursuit of the ideal of effective, representative democracy not just in the United States, but throughout the world, and in wishing him all the best as he embarks on new challenges and a new chapter.

HONORING CONGRESSMAN JAMES MORAN

HON. BETTY McCOLLUM

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 11, 2014

Ms. MCCOLLUM. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to pay tribute to the career of Congressman JAMES MORAN. I had the pleasure of serving alongside JIM on the Appropriations Committee, including both the Defense and Interior-Environment subcommittees. Congressman MORAN's experience and wisdom not only benefited his district and the nation, but myself as well.

Congressman MORAN has always brought passion to his work in Congress and that passion will be sorely missed next year.

Mr. Speaker, please join me in honoring the service of Congressman JAMES MORAN in the United States House of Representatives.

IN HONOR OF TRAVIS ROBEY

HON. RON KIND

OF WISCONSIN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 11, 2014

Mr. KIND. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to thank Travis Robey for his many contributions to the House of Representatives and specifically to my office. At the end of this year, Travis will be leaving my office to pursue opportunities away from Capitol Hill.

Travis first came to Capitol Hill as a Legislative Assistant for Congresswoman Darlene Hooley, focusing on health policy. He joined the staff of Congressman MIKE THOMPSON in April of 2008 as a Legislative Assistant. In 2009, he joined my staff as Legislative Director. From day one in my office, Travis worked tirelessly on health care reform. Through

tough negotiations, he helped me lead the Quality Care Coalition and was successful in getting the Value Modifier for Physician payments included in health care reform. That provision incorporated quality and cost metrics as a factor in physician reimbursements for the first time. Additionally, he helped me successfully advocate for the small business exchanges and small business tax credits in the ACA, which were modeled after legislation that he had worked on.

Apart from his successes during health care reform, Travis was integral on the staff level in negotiating the successful adoption of the SMART Act Secondary Payer Reform into law. Being in the Minority can make legislative successes fleeting, but Travis had the talent to work with the Majority to get meaningful things done in one of the most dysfunctional congresses of all time.

As my Legislative Director, Travis effectively cultivated junior staff into successful Legislative Assistants who continue to be an asset to my team. Over the past year, Travis has served as my Chief of Staff in Washington, D.C. Under his tenure, my office was legislatively successful, despite being in the Minority in a very polarized Congress. I am proud that he has helped my staff to remain legislatively productive despite great challenges.

Next year, Travis will join the staff of the American Hospital Association, where he will continue to work on important health policy challenges. While I am sorry to see him leave my staff after almost 6 years, I wish him the best of luck in his new role. Travis embodies the term public service and has worked tirelessly to make our nation a better place, which has not been easy given the current toxic environment. It is unfortunate that we are losing such a competent and dedicated public servant.

Mr. Speaker, on my behalf, thank you to Travis for his service and dedication to not only the constituents of the Third District of Wisconsin, but to all Americans.

GLOBAL FOOD SECURITY ACT OF 2014

SPEECH OF

HON. ANDER CRENSHAW

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 10, 2014

Mr. CRENSHAW. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to join my colleagues in strong support of H.R. 5656, the Feed the Future Global Food Security Act of 2014, on the eve of passage of the Fiscal Year 2015 Omnibus that provides just over $1 billion to the Feed the Future Program. The passage of this bill would authorize this USAID program for one year at just under Fiscal Year 2014 level, bringing stability to this successful program while giving Congress future oversight.

Feed the Future through its whole-of-government approach has been successful in promoting both agricultural-based and market-based development and in improving the nutrition of women and children. This creates healthy populations and gives livelihoods to these families, both of which grow these developing economies.

The focus on food security and agriculture development of Feed the Future started during the Bush Administration and has continued through today.

But, Mr. Speaker, today more than 800 million people around the world still suffer from chronic hunger. Many of the world's poor live in rural areas and rely on agriculture for a living, and growth in the agriculture sector is one of the best ways to spur the kind of economic growth that reduces poverty.

In 2013 alone, Feed the Future reached more than 12.5 million children with nutrition interventions to help ensure a stronger and more successful future. It has helped nearly 7 million farmers and food producers use new technologies and management practices. And it has leveraged more than $10 billion through complementary efforts in private sector commitments in African agriculture—the majority from African businesses.

With broad support from U.S. universities, NGOs, faith-based organizations, the private sector, and beneficiaries, Feed the Future authorization offers an opportunity for Congress to put its stamp on this program and ensure that we have the appropriate oversight measures in place.

Passage of this legislation will demonstrate that we are serious about finding commonsense solutions to one of the world's greatest challenges—hunger—creating economic stability overseas that will benefit the American people as well.

Mr. Speaker, I urge the passage of H.R. 5656, the Feed the Future Global Food Security Act of 2014.

ADDITIONAL FUNDING FOR ALZHEIMER'S RESEARCH

HON. TONY CÁRDENAS

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 11, 2014

Mr. CÁRDENAS. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to speak in support for increased funding for Alzheimer's research.

There is no other way to put it: Alzheimer's is a terrible disease. It destroys your memory and thinking skills, and eventually even the ability to carry out the simplest of tasks.

In the United States, more than 5 million Americans currently have Alzheimer's, and about half of those with the disease do not know they have it. In fact, every 67 seconds, someone in this country develops Alzheimer's—a staggering statistic, no doubt—but by 2050, it will be every 33 seconds. To make matters worse, Alzheimer's is the only cause of death in the top 10 in America without a way to prevent, treat, or slow the progression of the disease. In other words, there is no cure.

It should not be a surprise that Alzheimer's is the most expensive disease in America. In 2014, caring for people with the disease and other dementias will cost the United States an estimated $214 billion. Medicare and Medicaid spending will shoulder the majority of the care cost, an estimated $150 billion this year alone. This means that roughly 1 in 5 Medicare dollars are spent on someone with Alzheimer's. And unless something is done, the costs of Alzheimer's to Americans will total $1.2 trillion, in today's dollars, including an over 500% increase in Medicare and Medicaid spending on Alzheimer's.

Congress has already taken action to address this very serious issue. Specifically, Congress unanimously passed the National Alzheimer's Project Act (NAPA) in 2010, calling for the creation of a National Alzheimer's Plan. That plan has resulted in some notable accomplishments, including the NIH creating a blueprint for Alzheimer's research. However, for the progress this disease requires, scientists need additional funds to carry out the blueprint.

While Congress provided a much needed addition of $100 million in Alzheimer's research, a chronic underinvestment in Alzheimer's research persists. Congress must continue its commitment to the fight against Alzheimer's by increasing funding for Alzheimer's research in Fiscal Year 2015 by $200 million.

Democrats and Republicans alike should be united in tackling Alzheimer's. After all, it is a disease that affects individuals regardless of party preference, a disease that affects our very own constituents and loved ones, and a disease that we, as elected officials, have a responsibility to do something about.

HONORING DR. MICHAEL WAHL, MD

HON. PETER J. ROSKAM

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 11, 2014

Mr. ROSKAM. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Dr. Michael Wahl, who I am pleased to nominate for the Wave Maker Award for the 5th Annual Unsung Heroes of Public Health Campaign. This award recognizes individuals for their work on a major regional or national program that has had a significant positive impact on an important public health issue.

Dr. Wahl has devoted his life to improving public health and safety in Illinois. Since 1998, he has served as the Medical Director for the Illinois Poison Cente—the oldest poison center in the United States. During his tenure, Dr. Wahl initiated the Poison Center Hotline, which currently treats over 90% of incoming accidental poisoning calls at home without a trip to a medical facility. The Hotline saves the State of Illinois $52 million in unnecessary health care costs each year and has prevented thousands of severe medical emergencies. Building on this successful model, Dr. Wahl has set up similar state hotlines for H1N1, Middle Eastern Respiratory Syndrome (MERS), and currently Ebola, which provide the general public and health care providers with vital information during infectious disease outbreaks.

Dr. Wahl and the Illinois Poison Center have also done important work in conjunction with the Office of the Illinois Attorney General and law enforcement to observe trends in synthetic drug use and provide local officials with data and surveillance on these chemicals. Because of these initiatives, synthetic drug use in Illinois has not reached the high prevalence experienced by other states. Finally, Dr. Wahl lends his time and experience to the Illinois Department of Public Health Work Group to reduce the alarming rate of heroin use by prescription drug abusers. In these many challenging endeavors, Dr. Wahl brings an unparalleled passion for service and a commitment to improve lives throughout the State of Illinois.

Mr. Speaker and Distinguished Colleagues, please join me in honoring Dr. Michael Wahl

for his dedicated work in expanding access to health care and his innovative efforts to strengthen public health for the people of Illinois and congratulating him on his nomination for the Wave Maker Award.

SUPPORTING AMERICA'S CHARITIES ACT

SPEECH OF

HON. SUZANNE BONAMICI

OF OREGON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 10, 2014

Ms. BONAMICI. Mr. Speaker, I rise in opposition to H.R. 5806, a bill that seeks to extend three tax provisions that I strongly support.

Despite my interest in seeing the tax provisions before us extended permanently, I am concerned that doing so in a package without so many other important tax provisions might jeopardize our ability to achieve comprehensive reform of our tax code next Congress. Across the district I represent, my constituents support changing the tax code to make it fair and simple. This will be a difficult process that will require significant work and compromise. Accordingly, I am opposing the bill before us today, but I will seek a permanent extension of these provisions through broader tax reform next Congress.

I am committed to policies that support our social safety net, particularly as our constituents continue to recover from the effects of the economic downturn. But by passing individual extensions, we are leaving important provisions on the table that will benefit our middle-class families. What they need is comprehensive tax reform that levels the playing field and allows everyone to have a fair opportunity to succeed.

I urge my colleagues to oppose this bill.

FAREWELL TO THE HONORABLE ENI FALEOMAVAEGA

HON. MICHAEL M. HONDA

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 11, 2014

Mr. HONDA. Mr. Speaker, I rise to say a fond farewell to our esteemed colleague, the Honorable ENI FALEOMAVAEGA.

Since 1989, ENI has honorably represented the people of American Samoa in this chamber with a no-nonsense attitude and approach to legislating.

He brought the issues that affect Asia and the Pacific regions here to Congress.

He led the first delegation of Asian American members of Congress to Asia. There he saw firsthand the devastating impact that the Vietnam War's unexploded ordnances had on Southeast Asia, especially Laos where about 2.5 million tons of bombs were dropped between 1964 and 1973.

As the Chair of the Subcommittee on Asia and the Pacific, this experience led him to chair the first-ever hearing on UXOs.

As a Vietnam veteran himself, ENI takes pride in being a strong voice for his fellow Samoans who serve in our military.

This passion led his efforts to help establish the first VA clinic in Samoa.

American Samoa, the Asian Pacific Region, Congress, and all of America have been well served by Congressman ENI FALEOMAVAEGA. Today, I say "thank you" for your work, and your friendship. We will miss you. Tofa soifua.

HONORING THE LIFE AND DEDICATED SERVICE OF CHARLES HUTTON ''BULL'' RIGDON, JR.

HON. JEFF MILLER

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 11, 2014

Mr. MILLER of Florida. Mr. Speaker, it is with profound sadness that I rise today to recognize the life and service of my friend, Northwest Florida's beloved Charles Hutton "Bull" Rigdon, Jr. Throughout his long and distinguished life, Bull was a devoted family man, a patriotic veteran and civil servant, committed civic leader, an exceptional elected official, and a great friend. The entire Northwest Florida community mourns the passing of a truly remarkable man.

Bull Rigdon was born in Portland, Florida on September 29, 1929, and he spent the majority of his childhood years growing up in beautiful Northwest Florida. A true patriot, Bull served with honor and distinction in the United States Army, where he served in both World War II and the Korean War. After leaving the Armed Forces, Bull continued his service to our Nation as a civil engineer working at Eglin Air Force Base, Florida. Thanks to his hard-work and commitment to excellence, Bull's 43-year career as a civil servant at Eglin Air Force Base was marked with wide-spread success and acclaim.

Both during and after his extremely successful civil service career, Bull was also deeply involved as a leader in Northwest Florida's civic society. He was an active member of First Presbyterian Church, where he served as a church elder, as well as a Mason and Shriner, serving as Past Potentate of Hadji Temple and Master Mason of Alpha Lodge #172. In these capacities, he helped touch the lives of countless individuals in Northwest Florida, and he served as a true example of selfless community service.

Bull was also a dedicated local official, serving for decades in various electoral capacities. In 1964, he won a seat on the Fort Walton Beach City Council, where he served until 1981. During this stint on the City Council, Bull also served numerous times as Mayor Pro-Tem of Fort Walton Beach. Bull rejoined the City Council briefly in 1985, when he was asked to fill a temporary vacancy, before returning to the City Council full time in 2010, where he continued to serve the people of Fort Walton Beach until his passing.

In addition to his exceptional service on the City Council, Bull also served for three decades on the Okaloosa County Gas Board, representing the people of Okaloosa County. He played an integral role helping to attract businesses and promote economic development in Northwest Florida, as evidenced by his election to serve as the first Chairman of the West Florida Regional Planning Council, as well as his service on the Tourist Development Council Board. On top of these impressive civic duties, Bull also served as CEO of the Northwest Florida Fair until his death. In recognition of his impressive leadership and dedication, the Fort Walton Beach City Council voted in 2009 to name the fairgrounds in his honor.

To some, Bull Rigdon will be remembered as a patriot, who answered the call to serve this great Nation with honor and distinction, first in the Armed Forces and then for more than four decades of exceptional civil service at Eglin Air Force Base. To others, he will be remembered as a man of great faith, who took on important positions at his church, and as a long-time elected official who went above and beyond the call of duty to serve the residents of the community that he called home. To his family and those of us who were fortunate enough to get to know him, Bull will always be remembered as a loving husband, father, grandfather, and friend.

Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the United States Congress, I am proud to recognize the life and legacy of Charles Hutton "Bull" Rigdon, Jr. My wife, Vicki, and I extend our deepest prayers and condolences to his wife Helen Hunt Rigdon; children, Karen Rigdon Hughes and Charles William Rigdon; grandchildren Charles William Lamkin, Lauren Ashley Rigdon, Blake William Rigdon and Montana Dodson; sister, Ouida Rigdon Miller; stepson, Michael B. Dodson; and the entire Rigdon family.

RECOGNIZING ORLANDO REGIONAL MEDICAL CENTER AIR CARE TEAM

HON. DANIEL WEBSTER

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 11, 2014

Mr. WEBSTER of Florida. Mr. Speaker, it is an honor to recognize Orlando Regional Medical Center's Air Care Team as they celebrate 30 years of critical-care service.

Since 1984, the helicopter transport team has flown nearly two million rescue miles and transported more than 29,000 patients to Orlando Regional Medical Center (ORMC) and other Central Florida medical facilities. The elite crew's service area encompasses a 100-mile radius that includes Orange, Lake, and Polk counties. Highly trained and experienced medical personnel, communications specialists, pilots and mechanics comprise the team that provides emergency medical care on the scene and in flight. The commitment and expertise that the team brings to Central Florida truly saves lives, reaching patients within the critical first hour of injury.

I thank the Air Care Team for their extraordinary work in providing care for the people of Central Florida.

HONORING MS. SARAH DEER

HON. KEITH ELLISON

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 11, 2014

Mr. ELLISON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor of Sarah Deer to congratulate her on receiving the 2014 MacArthur Foundation Fellowship. This grant is given to individuals who show extraordinary dedication and originality in their field, as well as exceptional promise for continuing their work in the future. Ms. Deer demonstrated these qualities through her advocacy and knowledge of tribal and federal

law to develop policies and legislation that empower tribal nations to protect Native American women from sexual and domestic violence.

Ms. Deer is a nationally recognized activist and expert in the movement to end violence against Native American women, a professor of law, and co-director of the Indian Law Clinic at William Mitchell College of Law. As a member of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation, she works with grassroots and national organizations to protect Native American victims of violence.

Receiving the MacArthur Foundation Fellowship is a testament to Ms. Deer's outstanding work. This includes membership on the American Bar Association (ABA) Commission on Domestic Violence and the board of the National Alliance to End Sexual Violence. In 2007, Ms. Deer led Amnesty International's report, Maze of Injustice, which cast domestic violence as an international human rights problem. Her efforts were instrumental in passing the 2013 Violence Against Women Act, giving tribal courts the power to prosecute non-Native Americans who assault Native American spouses or dating partners, or violate a protection order on tribal lands.

Ms. Deer has exhibited exceptional devotion to a worthy cause and continues to improve countless lives. I appreciate all that she has done to serve our nation, and I thank her for her exemplary work. She deserves this honor.

HONORING MS. DOROTHY JOHNSON-SPEIGHT

HON. CHAKA FATTAH

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 11, 2014

Mr. FATTAH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to one of Philadelphia's greatest luminaries, Ms. Dorothy Johnson-Speight, Founder and Executive Director of Mothers In Charge, Inc. She is a respected leader, solid advocate and inspirational speaker against the war to end senseless acts of violent crime. Her work, though rooted in Philadelphia, has led to national appearances and presentations across the United States and abroad.

A licensed family therapist, Dorothy actively engages in championing the rights of children and families. She has a distinguished career in victim advocacy. In 2001, her life was forever changed following the tragic murder of her son Khaaliq Jabbar Johnson over a parking space dispute. That tragic incident left Mrs. Johnson-Speight needing the support of others. She reached out to other grieving mothers and together they founded the non-profit organization Mothers In Charge, Inc., a grassroots organization whose mission is violence prevention through education. Mothers In Charge engages in proactive intervention with children, young adults, families and community organizations.

The work of Mothers In Charge under the direction of Mrs. Johnson-Speight has motivated mothers from around the country who have suffered the indescribable loss of a child. Chapters of this extraordinary organization have been founded in Wilmington, DE, San Francisco, CA, Los Angeles, CA, Kansas City, MO, Atlantic City, NJ, Brooklyn, NY and Harrisburg, PA.

The extraordinary work of Dorothy Johnson-Speight and Mothers In Charge has been appreciated and acknowledged by some of the nation's most influential publications and organizations. Dorothy has been the recipient of numerous awards, including the Best Philadelphia Award from the Philadelphia Magazine; the Philadelphia Eagles identified her as one of the 75 Greatest Living Philadelphians; in 2012, the Philadelphia Tribune chose her as one of Philadelphia's Most Influential African American Leaders, and the Philadelphia Inquirer named her Citizen of the Year in 2013. The recognition doesn't stop there as Mothers In Charge has also received numerous organizational awards and recognitions. The organization was the focus of a special feature on the OWN Network's "Our America" with Lisa Ling. Villanova University produced a documentary, No Greater Pain which journal's Dorothy's unspeakable loss and her arduous and unexpected journey to victim advocacy.

Organizational awards include the Federal Bureau of Investigation's Director of Community Service Award, the Wells/Fargo/Wachovia Community Service Award, and the School District of Philadelphia Humanitarian Award.

I am pleased to lead the Congress in honoring Dorothy Johnson-Speight—founder of Mothers In Charge—for her unceasing efforts and outstanding progress in victim advocacy. Her legacy in Philadelphia and her mark on the national stage for victim advocacy will leave a legacy on generations to come.

HONORING PASTOR E.L. KING

HON. BENNIE G. THOMPSON

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 11, 2014

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Pastor E.L. King, who is a former Educator in the Greenwood Public School District, Extraordinary and public servant.

Mrs. Ethel King was born in Leflore County on June 8, 1959 to Robert and Ethel L. Lawrence. At the age of thirteen, her mother died and she was nurtured by her grandfather, Mr. Willie James Lawrence, along with her seven siblings.

Mrs. King attended Greenwood Public School. She dropped out of school in the twelfth grade in 1976 because she had her first child. She was very independent and determined to make an easier life for her child. She immediately went to work at Rocky Manufactory at the age of eighteen. She remained there 3½ years. She left Rocky Manufactory to work for Irvin Industry Automobile & Parts for 3½ years. After seven years of working in a factory environment, she felt life had more to offer her. She went on to take her GED and attended Mississippi Valley State University in 1986. Before completing college in November, 1989, her daughter fell ill and later died with Leukemia in December, 1990. While at the University Hospital, she volunteered as a coordinator to help parents cope with their children's illness. She later volunteered with a candidate for a supervisor position in the 2nd District in Greenwood.

Mrs. King was called into the Ministry in 1992. She completed her Bachelor of Science Degree in Criminal Justice in 1993. After completing her degree, her health failed. She continued to fight on in 1996. She went to work as a volunteer permanent substitute teacher at Dickerson Elementary School under the leadership of Mrs. Vivian Redmond. Later she was hired as a full-time substitute teacher. Mrs King was very dedicated to educating children.

In 1998 she was hired at Bankston Elementary School as an assistant teacher until her health failed again. She retired in 2006. After retiring from the school system, Mrs. King worked as a Notary Public of the State of Mississippi under Governor Haley Barbour. She also volunteered with the Fannie Lou Hamer Foundation in Leflore County. Later, she became Pastor of Monument of Grace Church II in Lexington, MS for three years under the leadership of Bishop L.J. Johnson.

Pastor Ethel L. King has made an impact on the lives of many children and adults alike, encouraging them through the scripture, ". . . but seek ye first the kingdom of God, and His righteousness; and all things shall be added unto you."

Pastor Ethel L. King is married to Edward E. King and they are the proud parents of two beautiful daughters and eight precious grandchildren.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing Pastor Ethel L. King, a Former Educator, a Pastor who is yet inspiring others and often giving of herself to make many lives better.

SUPPORTING AMERICA'S CHARITIES ACT

SPEECH OF

HON. EARL BLUMENAUER

OF OREGON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 10, 2014

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, it is with some degree of frustration that I voted no on H.R. 5806. I strongly support some of the individual provisions; indeed, I am the leading Democratic cosponsor of the provisions relating to charitable contributions from individual retirement accounts.

I have been a leading supporter of land trusts, working closely with them to fix challenges raised by application of the estate tax for instance, and broadly supporting their work across the country to protect and preserve our nation's heritage and open spaces. I have worked hard to improve resources for Oregon's food banks and to end hunger both at home and abroad.

Today, we are abandoning any semblance that this Congress is going to work on major accomplishments before we adjourn.

With this and similar tax extender votes, Congress appears to have given up on deficit reduction, despite my colleagues otherwise voracious appetite for it—an appetite that led to House Republicans attempting to cut nutrition assistance to poor Americans by $39 billion last year. Section five of this bill, in fact, specifically strikes the Republican's own PAYGO rules. Budget-busting proposals are roaring through here with no semblance of honoring the Republicans' own budget rules or their budget resolution.

With this and similar tax extender votes, Congress appears also to have given up on tax reform because we are not going to be

able to have meaningful tax reform if we are just willy-nilly going to rush all these provisions through.

My colleague, Chairman CAMP, worked for years to produce a deficit-neutral tax reform, which had much to commend it, and I commend him for his hard work. All of these provisions of tax extenders were addressed in his tax reform, but they were dealt with differently. Not all were extended permanently. Some were modified and some were repealed, as part of a deliberative process to evaluate their impact and to not break the bank. This vote—like similar unpaid for permanent tax extender votes—abandons that effort.

This bill is not going to be enacted into law as the President's veto threat makes clear, and Congress will pick up where it left off—and frankly, where Mr. CAMP left off—as we work with our colleagues in the other body and our constituents to move forward on the things that we are all committed to in a way that is fiscally responsible, is bipartisan and thoughtful, to get the outcomes we all share.

RECOGNIZING 2015 ILLINOIS TEACHER OF THE YEAR STEVE ELZA

HON. PETER J. ROSKAM

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 11, 2014

Mr. ROSKAM. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Mr. Steve Elza, the 2015 Illinois Teacher of the Year.

Mr. Elza is an Applied Technology teacher at William Fremd High School in my district who teaches Automotive Technology classes and is the sponsor of the school Auto Club. He has worked in School District 211 and Fremd High School for over 7 years and strives to create an educational environment where students learn real-world skills they can take with them after graduation.

I think we can all agree that teachers are in a unique position to mold their students, and good teachers can guide and inspire students to achieve. Speaking to his students and peers, it is clear that Mr. Elza is a great teacher. Day in and day out he goes above and beyond to create a classroom environment where students can pursue projects they are passionate about, an approach that energizes his students, expands their skillsets, and reminds them that learning can be fun. Teaching students to explore their interests, and consider their career prospects, Mr. Elza has had an outsized impact on the success of his students as they go out into the workforce as young adults.

Evidence of his unique approach isn't hard to find. Through the Auto Club, students participate in various extracurricular activities like practicing maintenance repairs on cars of faculty members and competing in a national automotive competition held annually in Las Vegas. By engaging students to enjoy and apply what they are learning, Mr. Elza has broken through the bustle of busy young lives to really leave a mark on students. It's proven to be a winning formula.

Mr. Speaker and Distinguished Colleagues please join me in recognizing Mr. Steve Elza for his outstanding service and congratulate him on being named the 2015 Illinois Teacher of the Year.

HONORING THE LIFE OF KELLY KNOTT

HON. JOHN KLINE

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 11, 2014

Mr. KLINE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life of Katherine ''Kelly'' Marjory Krauser Knott. Kelly fought a courageous battle against breast cancer, which sadly took her life on December 3.

As demonstrated at a memorial service earlier this week, Kelly touched many lives. The gathering held in her memory overflowed with love and grief shared by her many friends, colleagues, and family members.

Kelly was a graduate of New Canaan High School and St. Mary's College in Notre Dame, Indiana. She earned a master's degree from George Washington University.

She began her career in the nation's capital as an aide to our former colleague, Rep. Mel Hancock of Missouri. She worked in and around policy with true grace and professionalism. She held various positions throughout her distinguished career and was universally respected and admired.

I met Kelly my first week as a new Member of Congress and was struck by her knowledge of both policy and politics. She had a great understanding of the Hill and worked tirelessly to advance the goals of her members. I not only considered her a colleague but a friend.

As important as her professional achievements were, they do not compare to the success she enjoyed in her personal life. Kelly was a devoted wife to her husband Stewart and beloved mother to Carson, Halle, and Kendall.

I ask the House to join me in offering condolences to the Knott family and keep them in your prayers as they mourn the loss of a remarkable woman.

OUR UNCONSCIONABLE NATIONAL DEBT

HON. MIKE COFFMAN

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 11, 2014

Mr. COFFMAN. Mr. Speaker, on January 20, 2009, the day President Obama took office, the national debt was $10,626,877,048,913.08.

Today, it is $17,997,912,502,715.74. We've added $7,371,035,453,802.66 to our debt in 5 years. This is over $7.3 trillion in debt our nation, our economy, and our children could have avoided with a balanced budget amendment.

HONORING MARVIS HOOD, JR.

HON. JEFF DENHAM

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 11, 2014

Mr. DENHAM. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life of the Marvis Hood, Jr., who, after proudly serving his country, passed away on December 8, 2014, from complications related to pneumonia.

Marvis ''Big Daddy'' Hood, Jr. was born in Marlin, Texas to Marvis and Jewelene Hood with one sibling, Graham Hood. In 1960, Mr. Hood joined the United States Air Force and later re-enlisted in the United States Army 52nd Sig BN, performing 22 years of military service. He voluntarily served three tours in Vietnam and eventually retired on Oct 6, 1984 as a Staff Sergeant. During his service, he earned five Good Conduct Medals, the National Defense Service Medal, the Vietnam Service Medal (5 campaigns), the Vietnam Campaign Medal, the Vietnam Cross of Gallantry w/Palm, and Expert on Rifle and Pistol awards. He earned the nickname ''Big Daddy'' playing football during a duty station assignment in Naples, Italy where he earned MVP as an Offensive tackle.

While in the military, he married Vera Mae Touchstone, a childhood friend. They had three sons, Roderick, Marcus, and Marvis III. Mr. Hood remarried on March 18th, 1977, to the love of his life Dora Jean Taylor. Having moved to Modesto for the remainder of his military career, he also served as a Reserve Officer with the Stanislaus County Sheriff Department.

Being a resident of Modesto for 37 years, Mr. Hood was involved in many charitable endeavors that benefited many in and outside the community of Modesto. Because of his appreciation for the opportunities his military career provided, which helped shape the man he became, Mr. Hood was deeply concerned about veteran issues; especially the health and welfare of homeless veterans. He established a yearly ''Standown'' for homeless veterans, that was modeled after the concept established during the Vietnam War, to help provide health services, winter clothing, food, and a warm safe place for the night.

Wanting to provide service for more than a few days a year, Mr. Hood was looking for a long term solution that led him to establish the Central Valley Homeless Veterans home. He provided a support system to aid many veterans in getting back on their feet. The Stanislaus County chapter of the American Red Cross awarded the Good Samaritan Senior Hero award to Marvis Hood, Jr. for his work helping veterans

Mr. Marvis Hood Jr. is survived by his wife Dora; his three sons Roderick Hood, Marcus Hood and Marvis Hood III; his brother Graham Hood; and half-brothers Dwight Hood and Mike Wallace. He is loved and remembered by a host of family, friends, and the many he helped.

Mr. Speaker, please join me in celebrating the life of Marvis ''Big Daddy'' Hood, Jr. and all of his excellent contributions to veterans and the community. Anyone who knew Marvis saw a gregarious and sometimes larger than life personality which at times hid a teddy bear heart of gold which was always willing to lend a helping hand or timely words of wisdom.

HONORING TRINA GEORGE

HON. BENNIE G. THOMPSON

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 11, 2014

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Trina George, who is a Director, Leader and Public Servant.

Trina George was appointed on June 29, 2009, by President Barack Obama to serve as Mississippi's Director of the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Rural Development. She has made history by being the first woman appointed in this position for the State of Mississippi. In her new role, she is charged with assisting residents of rural Mississippi with a range of programs such as: Affordable Housing, Water Systems Upgrades, and Economic Development Efforts. Rural development also provides grant and loan assistance to local governments and non-profit organizations for fire and police protection as well as health clinics, libraries and other facilities for public use. She is an advocate for rural communities throughout the state to assist with their growth, development and sustainability.

Prior to this appointment, Mrs. George served for 15 years as a Special Project Coordinator for Congressman BENNIE THOMPSON where she resolved community and constituency issues by thinking inside, outside and around the box. Her hands-on experience in the Congressional Office served as an ideal prerequisite for her role in rural economic development and community participation for the State of Mississippi.

Mrs. George served on many civic organizations, including education and volunteer groups. She is actively involved in the community where she is: a Board Member for the Heart of the South Girl Scouts Council, which serves Northern Mississippi and Southern Tennessee; and a Member of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc, and PI Alpha Alpha Honor Society. She holds a Bachelor's Degree from Mississippi Valley State University and a Master's Degree from Mississippi State University. She is currently a Ph.D. Candidate in Public Policy and Administration at Walden University. Also, she holds a Professional Certificate in Management and Leadership from the NeighborWorks Training Institute of America in Washington, DC.

Mrs. George is an important advocate for rural communities throughout the state. She administers and manages over 40 programs which include: housing; business and cooperative programs; community programs; and community facilities which are designed to improve the quality of life in rural America. Rural Development is an agency that the Obama Administration wants to see in the forefront of efforts to promote renewable energy and conservation of natural resources while ensuring a safe, sustainable, nutritious food supply through the Agency's cooperatives for present and future users.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing Trina George, a director, leader and advocate, who is improving the quality of life for rural America.

CONGRATULATING SARAH KAPLAN

HON. RON KIND

OF WISCONSIN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 11, 2014

Mr. KIND. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to thank Sarah Kaplan for her many contributions to the New Democrat Coalition. At the end of this year, Sarah will be leaving the New Dem staff to continue graduate school full-time.

The New Democrat Coalition, which I have the pleasure to lead as Chair, is a group of 55 pro-growth, innovative solutions oriented Members of the House Democratic Caucus. The New Dems are committed to a growth agenda that speaks to Americans' hopes for a brighter economic future. Whether it's revolutionizing the ways we prepare people for the jobs of the future, encourage a spirit of innovation and entrepreneurship, or maintaining America's competitiveness in a rapidly-shifting global economy, the New Dems continue to work to advocate these priorities and modernize the policy and messaging of the Democratic Caucus.

Sarah joined the New Dem staff in May 2013 as a staff assistant and research associate. She hit the ground rolling and was valuable at the start to the Members and staff of the Coalition. Recognizing her growth in the office, she was promoted to Policy & Member Services Aide where she assisted the New Dem Leadership Team and the Executive Director in strengthening the cohesion of the Coalition and advancing our policy priorities. Sarah was particularly valuable in working on the Coalition's innovation, education, national security, and trade policy priorities.

Next year, Sarah expects to earn a Masters in Security Studies with a focus on Terrorism and Substance Violence from Georgetown University. After earning her graduate degree, she plans to continue serving our nation by rejoining government in national security policy.

Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the Members of the New Democrat Coalition, thank you Sarah.

TRIBUTE TO KAREN L. DAILY

HON. TODD ROKITA

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 11, 2014

Mr. ROKITA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and salute a truly amazing Hoosier, Mrs. Karen L. Daily, who passed from this world to the next on December 7, 2014. I wish to express my heartfelt gratitude and appreciation for her leadership and service to our community, state, and country.

Karen served for many years as Deputy Clerk before her election by the people of Benton County to three non-consecutive terms as Clerk of the Circuit Court. As a member of the Association of Clerks of the Circuit Courts of Indiana, Karen was chosen several times by her peers to serve as Treasurer. She was actively involved in the organization, devoting time to advocate on behalf of her profession while also serving on the Legislative Committee.

Though I had known Karen for many years, it was not until after my election as Secretary of State that I realized how truly blessed the people of Indiana were to have such a tireless and professional public servant. She used her talents as a voice for rural communities on the Statewide Voter Registration System Steering Committee, a group tasked with the responsibility to develop and implement a single voter file for the State of Indiana. Each month, her leadership was evident in the actions taken by the committee to integrate the system statewide. Through her leadership, the system came online on time, worked well from the beginning, and saved Indiana millions of dollars.

Karen leaves four children, seven grandchildren and ten great-grandchildren to carry on her legacy of community service and joins her late husband Larry, in eternity. I am a better leader and public servant because of the lessons learned and advice received from Karen. She was a true friend and mentor.

On behalf of all Hoosiers, I am humbled to honor Karen here today. She will be missed for her friendship, leadership and most of all, her character. God bless you, Karen.

SPEECH OF

HONORING CONGRESSMAN HENRY WAXMAN AND CONGRESSMAN GEORGE MILLER ON THEIR RETIREMENT

HON. BETTY McCOLLUM

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 10, 2014

Ms. MCCOLLUM. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to pay tribute to the long and distinguished career of Congressman HENRY WAXMAN.

Congressman WAXMAN's career speaks for itself. He has been at the forefront of many of the most important legislative and policy battles of the past four decades. From combating Big Tobacco to championing the Affordable Care Act, HENRY has been an indispensable voice in the House. It was an honor to serve with him and I commend his long and storied career.

I had the privilege of serving alongside Congressman WAXMAN on the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform. During our time together on the Oversight Committee, we focused on investigations into cost overruns and money wasted on reconstruction in Iraq.

Mr. Speaker, please join me in honoring the service of Congressman HENRY WAXMAN in the United States House of Representatives.

HONORING SHERIFF PATRICK B PEREZ

HON. BILL FOSTER

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 11, 2014

Mr. FOSTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor of Patrick B Perez and his tenure as the Sheriff of Kane County.

Sheriff Perez retired on Sunday, November 30th, 2014 after over 22 years of service to Kane County. Since becoming the first Hispanic sheriff of Kane County in 2006, Sheriff Perez had many successes, including his efforts to combat gang violence, heroin and other substance abuse problems in Kane County. During his tenure, the city of Aurora saw a 13-month period from 2012–2013 of no reported murders. Sherriff Perez oversaw the creation of the agency's website, which sees more than one million visitors a year, and the construction of a new shooting range for the 244 officers who must show competence with their weapons twice a year. He also led successful charitable efforts and community outreach programs, such as the citizens' police academy and the annual car show.

He served with professionalism, a strong work ethic, and a sense of duty to the officers under his command and the community they

serve. I congratulate Sheriff Perez on his retirement and thank him for his service to Kane County.

RECOGNIZING DONALD E. GRAHAM

HON. ELEANOR HOLMES NORTON

OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 11, 2014

Ms. NORTON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing Donald E. Graham for his outstanding contributions to the nation and to the people of the nation's capital. Don Graham is best known for his unique contributions to the field of journalism, but he is also greatly admired in the District of Columbia, his hometown, as a citizen and leader.

For more than four decades, Don Graham has played a significant role in the life of the nation and here in the District of Columbia. Don served his country for two years during the Vietnam War, prior to returning to the District of Columbia and joining the D.C.'s police department, the Metropolitan Police Department (MPD). At MPD, Don courageously dedicated himself to serving the residents of the District as a patrol officer in the Ninth Precinct in the Northeast section of the District of Columbia. Only after charting his life with these experiences, life changing in themselves, did Don begin his career in professional journalism, in 1971, when he joined the family business as a reporter. Don Graham proceeded to come up through the ranks of the Washington Post and eventually became Publisher of the paper and then Chairman and Chief Executive Officer of the Washington Post Company. During his tenure, Don Graham shepherded a historic era at the Post. Under his leadership, the Post not only won more than 20 Pulitzer Prizes, it entered into the digital age, launched a website, and began printing in color.

Beyond his stellar accomplishments in journalism, Don Graham also has made notable contributions to the District of Columbia and its residents. He has continued a family tradition of service to the District with special attention to secondary education and higher education. Don was the driving force behind the D.C. Tuition Assistance Grant program (DCTAG), not only in our ability to achieve federal funding for higher education unique to the District, but in what it has taken to maintain it for 15 years. DCTAG has doubled college attendance in the District of Columbia, allowing D.C. students, who have no state university system, to attend any state university in the country with up to $10,000 per year in assistance. Moreover, Don has gone even further in pursuit of higher education opportunities for D.C. residents. He is a co-founder of the D.C. College Access Program, which has assisted over 13,000 D.C. students and provided over $18 million in scholarships. Most recently, Don has formed TheDream.US, a new scholarship program that seeks to assist undocumented students, who cannot qualify for federal financial aid programs. Don sold the Post to engage in other pursuits, leaving the paper in good hands to continue its distinctive contributions. However, Don Graham's dedicated public service as a private citizen continues to this day.

Mr. Speaker, I could only summarize Donald E. Graham's achievements. Even so, it should now be clear why I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring Donald E. Graham for his service to American journalism and for his continuing service to the residents of the District of Columbia.

HONORING WEE CARE NURSERIES AND LEARNING CENTERS, INC.

HON. BENNIE G. THOMPSON

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 11, 2014

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor a landmark establishment within the City of Tchula that provides one of the most critical and essential services for all working parents: Wee Care Nursery and Learning Center, Inc.

Tchula's Wee Care Nursery and Learning Center began as Tchula Day Care. Tchula Day Care opened its doors on September 3, 1991. The name was later changed to Tchula's Wee Care Nursery and Learning Center, Inc. On May 15, 1995, Wee Care Nursery and Learning Center #2 opened its doors in Lexington, MS.

Tchula's Wee Care capacity is 142 and Lexington's is 169. Current enrollment is 77 and 54 respectively.

At Wee Care Nurseries and Learning Centers, their mission is to provide child care that meets the needs of each child and family in a safe, educational environment.

They take pride in the Centers and focus on the individual needs of each child, while providing quality, reliable and safe child care.

The goals of At Wee Care Nurseries and Learning Centers are: 1) To provide affordable, convenient, dependable child care services; 2) To create a child care setting for social, cognitive, and physical development; 3) To provide a nurturing environment; 4) To provide learning experiences for children; and 5) To provide a preschool program, readying children for lifelong learning.

Wee Care Nurseries and Learning Centers, Inc. believe that a high quality early childhood program provides a safe and nurturing environment that promotes the physical, emotional, social, and cognitive development of young children while responding to the needs of families. They believe in promoting an anti-bias, pro-social curriculum that teaches children to value and respect themselves and others for their own unique individuality. Each child is considered unique in temperament and rate of development. Curriculum is planned to enhance and challenge particular, distinct individual needs, interests and abilities. The curriculum includes: manipulatives, art, music, games, and outdoor play. They believe child-initiated, child-directed, teacher-supported play is an essential component of developmentally appropriate practice. Activities and relationships occur in a healthy, positive and relaxed environment in which well-qualified staff—provide personal attention, guidance and nurturing to each child.

Wee Care Nurseries and Learning Centers, Inc. strives to maintain continuity and consistency throughout the program by conducting helpful staff planning, training and a variety of joint activities involving various groups of children. In this context, all caregivers at Wee Care Nurseries and Learning Centers are encouraged to express their individual educational strengths as they work with children and in their cooperative efforts with other staff members.

When you come to Wee Care Nurseries and Learning Centers, your child will receive the best care the industry has to offer. All you need to do is "expect more." They have been fortunate to get special recognition from: Greenwood Voters' League, Mississippi State University, The Cities of Tchula and Lexington, Mississippi Building Blocks and The Delta Foundation.

Wee Care Nurseries and Learning Center is able to care for children ages 6 weeks to 12 years. Along with regular childcare services, they also provide before and after school care and a summer reading and math enrichment program.

Wee Care Nurseries and Learning Centers, Inc. have a Motto/Slogan: Building a better world one child at a time. Learning Today . . . . Leading Today!

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing Wee Care Nurseries and Learning Centers, Inc. for its past and present dedication to providing impeccable, dependable childcare services in an effort to help families of all backgrounds within the Tchula community.

NIGERIA WILLIAMS HONORED AS TRAINEE OF THE YEAR BY THE GERMAN AMERICAN CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

HON. JOE WILSON

OF SOUTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 11, 2014

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, it is my great pleasure to rise today to recognize the accomplishment of Nigeria Williams, a senior at South Aiken High School in the Second Congressional District of South Carolina, who was recently named Trainee of the Year by the German American Chamber of Commerce.

Established in 2012, the apprenticeship program at the MTU Aiken Plant in Graniteville, South Carolina, provides high school students in the Palmetto State the opportunity to participate in the first-ever registered vocational apprenticeship program in the state of South Carolina. This two year program, developed in partnership with Aiken County Schools, Aiken Technical College, and Apprenticeship Carolina gives high school juniors and seniors a chance to experience hands on vocational learning opportunities in a real manufacturing environment. Graduates of the program earn an Industrial Mechanic-Basic certification.

Ms. Williams is the first female participant in the MTU Aiken Plant apprenticeship program. I congratulate her on this achievement and offer my best wishes for continued success.

I ask that my colleagues join me in recognition of Ms. Williams's accomplishments.

JOE BRESSI, 2014 PENNSYLVANIA SPORTS HALL OF FAME INDUCTEE

HON. LOU BARLETTA

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 11, 2014

Mr. BARLETTA. Mr. Speaker, I am proud to recognize Joe Bressi for his recent induction into the Pennsylvania Sports Hall of Fame.

Mr. Bressi has had a long and successful career as an athletic coach, where he has demonstrated an exceptional ability to lead his teams to victory. His career highlights include:

Ten seasons as the head coach of the Bishop McDevitt High School girls basketball program, finishing with a 238–40 record, eight conference titles, five District 3 titles, and appearances in two state championships.

Eight years with the Bloomsburg University women's basketball program, where he finished with a 175–47 record and led the team to seven PSAC East titles, one PSAC playoff title, and four NCAA Division II tournaments. During the 1988–1989 season, his team became the first NCAA Division II women's team to go undefeated.

Six years with the Lycoming College men's basketball program, where the team had a record of 97–53 and reached the NCAA Division III tournament twice.

For his hard work and dedication, Mr. Bressi was inducted into the Pennsylvania Basketball Hall of Fame, two regional chapters of Pennsylvania's Sports Hall of Fame, and the Hall of Fame at East Stroudsburg where he attended college. During his time at Lycoming, he received the Middle Atlantic Conference Coach of the Year award twice. He also coached three Freedom Conference Players of the Year, two rookies of the year, and nine all-conference picks.

In 2000, Mr. Bressi left Lycoming College to become the director of athletics for Central Dauphin High School, where he worked for 11 years. Mr. Bressi retired, but shortly returned to coaching in 2013 as the head girl's basketball coach at Bishop McDevitt High School.

Mr. Speaker, Mr. Bressi has shown outstanding athletic achievement and coaching ability, leading his teams over 500 victories. Therefore, I commend him on his induction into the Pennsylvania Sports Hall of Fame and wish him the best in his future endeavors.

HONORING CONGRESSMAN HENRY WAXMAN AND CONGRESSMAN GEORGE MILLER ON THEIR RETIREMENT

SPEECH OF

HON. BETTY McCOLLUM

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 10, 2014

Ms. MCCOLLUM. Mr. Speaker, I rise to pay tribute to the career of Congressman GEORGE MILLER.

I had the pleasure of serving on the Education and Workforce Committee with GEORGE. During his time in Congress, Congressman MILLER has been an outspoken leader on issues related to health care, workers' rights, and quality education. His leadership, knowledge, and mentorship will be sorely missed in Congress.

Congressman MILLER's legacy spans many issues facing Americans including raising the minimum wage, improving conditions for workers, fighting for equal pay for women, protecting the environment and bettering our education system. His 40 years of tireless service have undoubtedly positively improved the lives of countless Americans.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring the service of Congressman GEORGE MILLER.

RECOGNIZING THE WEBB CITY CARDINALS

HON. BILLY LONG

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 11, 2014

Mr. LONG. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the Webb City football team for winning their fifth straight state football championship.

The Webb City Cardinals clenched their fifth consecutive state title by defeating the Cape Central Tigers 48–21. Through their hard work and excellence on and off the field, the Cardinals have developed into a truly great championship team.

I also want to commend Head Coach John Roderique for a job well-done on developing such a strong football program. In his 18 years of coaching the Cardinals, his teams have won ten of the school's 13 state titles.

The Webb City community is rightly proud of this astonishing group of young and talented student-athletes. I urge my colleagues to join me in congratulating the Webb City Cardinals as they celebrate their fifth consecutive State Championship.

FAREWELL REMARKS

HON. MIKE McINTYRE

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 11, 2014

Mr. MCINTYRE. Mr. Speaker, what a blessing it has been to serve in the United States Congress! Indeed, it has been a dream come true—an opportunity to make a positive difference in the lives of the people back home and the communities in which we live, work, worship, retire, and play.

Over the course of 18 years in Congress, we have been blessed to have accomplished a great deal together with the citizens of the Seventh Congressional District.

This job could not have been done without the people, purpose, and partnerships that have been integral to our work.

Indeed, none of this would have been possible without the strong support of my family—my wonderfully amazing, astute and astounding wife Dee, without whose wisdom, counsel, inspiration, analysis, steadfast partnership, and love I would have never been able to run—much less survived—in public service; and my two sons, Joshua and Stephen, whose imagination, intelligence, and insight, as well as their proclivity for the pragmatic, practical, and positive aspects of politics and public service (not to mention patience with having to eat a lot of barbecue and chicken bog!) always kept our serious perspective for the future balanced with laughter and common sense.

And I would like to extend a personal token of my appreciation to my wonderful staff throughout these years. These individuals have graciously given their very best in the service of their country and our district, and I am grateful for their work and their friendship. Indeed, through teamwork and loyalty, they have demonstrated what it truly means to answer the high calling of public service.

I owe a special thanks to my colleagues here in Congress who have worked diligently with us, reaching across the aisle to find real solutions to our nation's greatest challenges and to help our great state to prosper.

It has been a blessing to serve alongside these men and women who have devoted their lives to public service.

Thank you especially to my friends in the Congressional Prayer Caucus and in the Congressional Prayer Breakfast for the friendships that have transcended party labels and focused on answering the call that the good Lord has laid upon our hearts to help the people back home and across the nation.

Second, it has been the purpose which has guided our actions:

My favorite Old Testament verse is from the Book of Proverbs (29:18 a): "Where there is no vision, the people perish."

During my 18 years here, we have sought to pursue a vision that offers hope to others and a bright future for our next generation.

It was in June of 1973, as rising high school senior, that I attended a student leadership seminar, the Washington Workshops Congressional Seminar.

I had just visited my then-freshman Congressman, Charlie Rose, and I meandered over to the Senate side to find the senior Senator for North Carolina, a white-haired gentleman who quoted Scripture as an old country lawyer, Sam Ervin, Jr.

He was conducting something called the "Watergate hearings."

All three national TV networks were there.

I waited in line and stood in the back of the hearing room on the day that John Dean began his testimony, which was the beginning of the end of the Nixon White House—a day I'll never forget.

I went home for my senior year of high school and came back to DC the next summer, 1974, as an intern for my Congressman. That was the summer that Nixon resigned.

I decided to major in political science as I headed off to the University of North Carolina that August, thinking that, "maybe someday I'll get to come back to this place."

And 22 years later, that dream came true.

"How could you be interested in politics?" everyone asked. "It's so dirty, so corrupt," they said.

I gave them the same answer then that I gave people when I first ran 18 years ago, that I still give today: "If all the people with the right motives stay out of politics, then who's left to run our government?"

"If we who are serious about our faith and our vision don't become involved, then by definition, there is going to be a void."

We should remember that so many times the world says, "you must be successful," but the key to success is first being faithful.

We must be faithful to our calling—answering the call that God has laid upon our hearts.

"He who is faithful in little will be faithful in much."

If we are faithful in the opportunities we have, then God will grant success in His timing; after all, isn't that what really counts—how we are using our time during the time we have on this earth?

Third, it has been the partnerships:

In eastern North Carolina, we have demonstrated that public service is a partnership between constituents and the representative they entrust to speak on their behalf.

For us, this steadfast partnership has been forged by putting policy over politics, issues over ideology, dialogue over dollars, and cooperation over campaigning.

This partnership has transcended politics and allowed us to accomplish monumental tasks, such as quadrupling the number of veterans' clinics in our area, passing the tobacco buyout, expanding our military bases, establishing an economic commission to promote jobs and fight poverty—and ensuring that the North Carolina coast will continue to be an economic engine and environmental treasure.

We also have built new fire and police stations, town halls, and workforce development centers; opened new farmers' markets and senior centers; improved airports and the Wilmington Port; and expanded educational and recreational opportunities for our children and youth.

We have helped thousands of constituents from all walks of life in ways that have significantly impacted their lives. None of this could have been accomplished without the strong commitment of my family, the hard work of my staff, and—especially—the willingness of people throughout our region to put partisanship aside and work together to get things done for the betterment of eastern North Carolina.

Indeed, I am grateful to all of the Democrats, Republicans, and Independents with whom we have successfully worked through nine general elections over 18 years.

People, purpose, partnerships: if we all remember these three ingredients and remain faithful to our calling, then we will have the recipe for success.

I close with the words of Adlai Stevenson, former UN Ambassador and Presidential candidate whom I quoted on the night of my first election in 1996, and which are a reminder of what has been a solemn and exciting duty:

"Trust the people, trust their good sense, their decency . . . their faith. Trust them with the facts. Trust them with the great decisions. And fix as our guiding star the passion to create a society . . . where no American is held down by race or color, by worldly condition or social status, from gaining what his character earns him as an American citizen, as a human being and as a child of God."

May God grant us the wisdom and the will to find the way to be moving always to an even better and brighter day. And by His grace, we will!

TRIBUTE TO EDWIN J. SIMCOX

HON. TODD ROKITA

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 11, 2014

Mr. ROKITA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and salute a remarkable Hoosier, Mr. Edwin (Ed) J. Simcox, for his retirement as CEO of the Indiana Energy Association. I wish to express my heartfelt gratitude and appreciation for his leadership and service to our community, state, and country.

Ed was born in LaPorte, Indiana and holds an A.B degree in Government and Economics from Indiana University and a J.D. degree from the Indiana University School of Law. Ed served as President of the Indiana Electric Association and helped guide a merger with the Indiana Gas Association in 2004 to form the Indiana Energy Association, where he served as CEO from 2010 to 2014. He currently serves as the President Emeritus of the Indiana Energy Association.

Ed has served Hoosiers in numerous capacities at the state level, including as Secretary of the State Highway Commission, Secretary of the Indiana Public Service Commission, and legal deputy of the office of the Reporter of the Indiana Supreme Court.

Hoosiers might look at my early public service career and rightfully assume it is comparable to Ed's. We were both on staff before serving as Indiana Secretary of State for two terms. We were both among the youngest elected secretaries of state at the time we took office. We also earned our J.D. from Indiana University School of Law. As someone who followed a similar career path as me, I frequently sought his counsel, and continue to do so as a Member of Congress.

Ed has also served on many other boards and commissions over the years for both public and private entities. He has dedicated his professional life to serving Hoosiers and improving the quality of life in Indiana. On behalf of all Hoosiers, thank you Ed, for all you have done and continue to do for the people of Indiana. Enjoy your well-deserved retirement.

HONORING CLEOTHA SADDLER

HON. BENNIE G. THOMPSON

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 11, 2014

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor a remarkable hero, Cleotha Saddler.

Cleotha Saddler was born on February 1, 1945 in Illinois to Garfield Allen and Viola Orr. She grew up in a home with six other relatives until her father decided he would raise her in Memphis, TN. Cleotha attended Mississippi Valley State University where she earned multiple degrees in elementary education. She later married Frank Saddler, Jr., settled in Marks, MS, and gave birth to nine children.

Today, Cleotha, also known as "Cleo" or "Lou", is the rock of her family. She continues to care for her children, and take care of her grandchildren. Over the course of her life, she has contributed to her community tremendously. Her name has become one so common for helping others that the desire from others to want to help even her grandchildren has increased. She is most known in her efforts for raising money for those in need.

In 2005, she stood at the main intersection in Marks, MS tirelessly to gather donations from townspeople to send to Louisiana for Hurricane Katrina victims. In addition to that, she is never been reluctant to gather donations in that same way for families who cannot afford to pay for the funerals and burials of their loved ones. She comforts those families, not just with funds but with endless visits and "check-in" calls. She also helps organizations to decorate and/or cook for different events in the community. She is one that is very supportive of the school system, in reference to achieving adequate education. Cleotha is never hesitant to help anyone in any way that she possibly can.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing Mrs. Cleotha Saddler for she is definitely the epitome of an unsung hero.

FAREWELL STATEMENT

HON. MICHAEL H. MICHAUD

OF MAINE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 11, 2014

Mr. MICHAUD. Mr. Speaker, as my time as a Member of Congress is coming to an end, I want to thank the people of Maine's Second District for allowing me the privilege of representing them here in the People's House.

From Fort Kent to Lewiston and Franklin County to Washington County, Mainers have shared with me their lives, their hopes and their concerns. We have worked together to improve our transportation infrastructure—which is pretty important when you represent the largest geographic district east of the Mississippi. We've worked together to stop bad trade deals from taking away good jobs; and to attract new businesses to Maine's increasingly diverse and innovative economy. I've been down on the clam flats, hiked our new and growing recreational trails and walked the floors of our mills. I couldn't have asked for better "bosses" than the men and women of the Second District.

I'm proud of everything we have accomplished together. We've helped support innovative small businesses across Maine through the Northern Border Regional Commission. We've protected and created new jobs in places like DFAS at Limestone. We've expanded access to affordable quality healthcare. We've taken steps to strengthen manufacturing in Maine by ensuring that our service members wear American-made footwear.

I'm particularly honored by the work I've been able to do with our veterans. During my time in Congress and with the support of our local veterans' organizations, we expanded access to care—making it easier for veterans in the County to get care at Cary Medical Center, so they don't have to take time off from their jobs and travel hundreds of miles, round-trip, to Togus. Working together, we ensured that aging veterans could always access affordable and quality healthcare at state veterans homes. We secured additional resources to confront the very serious problem of veterans' homelessness. We strengthened the GI Bill, making it easier for veterans to access important education and training opportunities.

I'd like to thank my fellow delegation members—Representative CHELLIE PINGREE, and Senators ANGUS KING and SUSAN COLLINS. It's been a pleasure partnering with them over the years on a number of issues critical to Mainers. I'd also like to thank my staff, who have helped me always meet the needs of my constituents. They include Peter Chandler, John Graham, Diane Smith, Jane Calderwood,

Gene Allen, Dan Rafter, Daniel Walls, Ben Goodman, Mac Routh, Andrea Quaid, Chris Winstead, Matt Dubois, Barbara Hayslett, Susan Cerini, Brandon Smith, Rachel Smith, Cassie Doyle, Rosemary Winslow, Brian Zimmerman, Nora Todd, Ed Gilman, Kim Glas, Monica Castellanos, Nancy Dolan, and the staff on the House Committee on Veterans' Affairs. I'd also like to thank all of those who have been on my staff in the past, and who worked so hard for the residents of the Second District.

Despite the partisan gridlock we see all too often here in Washington, Mainers are known for our tenacity and our willingness to roll up our sleeves and get things done. We have a proud history of well-respected lawmakers who have done just that, from Margaret Chase Smith to George Mitchell to Olympia Snowe. I am confident that if Maine's representatives continue to be guided by a commitment to partnership over partisanship, we can continue to achieve great things.

I return home honored by the time I spent serving the Second District in Congress, grateful for the people I met and the experiences I had, and optimistic for our future. Working together, we've made Maine a better place.

HONORING CONGRESSWOMAN CAROLYN MCCARTHY

HON. BETTY McCOLLUM

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 11, 2014

Ms. MCCOLLUM. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to pay tribute to the career of my good friend, Congresswoman CAROLYN MCCARTHY.

I had the privilege of serving alongside CAROLYN on the Committee on Education and the Workforce, where we began developing a close, personal friendship.

Congresswoman MCCARTHY's courage and leadership on the issue of gun violence has been a hallmark of her time in the House. Arising from tragic circumstances, CAROLYN's passionate commitment to preventing gun violence has inspired others and made a real difference. The power of her voice on this critical issue will be greatly missed in the next Congress.

Mr. Speaker, I honor the distinguished career of my dear friend, CAROLYN MCCARTHY.

HONORING CONGRESSMAN HENRY WAXMAN AND CONGRESSMAN GEORGE MILLER ON THEIR RETIREMENT

SPEECH OF

HON. FRANK PALLONE, JR.

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 10, 2014

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, it's an honor today to rise and celebrate the accomplishments of two of my friends, and two of the most distinguished leaders to have ever served in the House of Representatives: HENRY WAXMAN and GEORGE MILLER. Their names have become synonymous with statesmanship and a deep commitment to public service.

These two giants leave behind legislative records that are unmatched in scope and length. When HENRY WAXMAN served as Chairman of the Energy and Commerce Committee—I had the good fortune of working closely with him on so many of the issues we care about. Whether it was expanding access to affordable healthcare, or ensuring that our environment is protected, HENRY was at the forefront of so much important progress. His leadership on the Affordable Care Act and his championing of Medicare and Medicaid improvements will be remembered as some of his greatest accomplishments in this body. While he has certainly been a friend to us, he has also been a friend to so many who he has never met: the elderly, the infirmed, and those most vulnerable to whom he has dedicated his career.

Few people in this country have done more for America's children than GEORGE MILLER. With a special focus on children from underserved and low-income communities, GEORGE fought tirelessly to fight economic inequalities and to expand opportunities for young people who otherwise would not have had them. From fighting for a stronger k–12 education law to ensuring that people can live on a meaningful minimum wage, GEORGE MILLER has dedicated his career to giving voice to the American worker.

Both of these leaders are proud sons of California, and throughout their careers they have truly lived up to the term ''Representative.'' I look forward to seeing how they will continue to use their talents, knowledge and passions to better serve our nation in the years ahead. Thank you for all of your leadership; it has been an honor to serve with you.

LEGISLATIVE RECORD OF STEVE STOCKMAN IN 113TH CONGRESS

HON. STEVE STOCKMAN

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 11, 2014

Mr. STOCKMAN. Mr. Speaker, as the 113th Congress comes to a close, it is my pleasure to note all of the legislative actions that I have taken in my tenure in this Congress.

In the 113th Congress, I introduced the following legislation:

H.R. 4587—Fifth Amendment Restoration Act. This bill sought to stop the Federal Government from stealing people's property by abolishing the use of civil asset forfeiture.

H.R. 5777—Cryptocurrency Protocol Protection and Moratorium Act. This bill sought to protect cryptocurrencies by imposing a five year moratorium on new cryptocurrency regulations.

H.R. 5755—Safer American Streets Act. This bill sought to withhold certain highway funds from a State that uses an automated traffic enforcement system on a Federal-aid highway.

H.R. 5756—Heller Public Firearms Range Act of 2014. This bill sought to restore a public firearms range to the District of Columbia.

H.R. 5757—Honoring Workers' Rights Act. This bill sought to rename the headquarters of the Department of Labor in honor of right to work activist Reed Larson.

H.R. 5734—Right of Return Act. This bill sought to establish a lasting peace in the Middle East by defunding UNRWA, defunding the Palestinian Authority, and directing the Secretary of State to call for Israel to extend sovereignty of Judea, Samaria, and Gaza with the Arab population residing in those territories to be given a right of return to the countries who controlled those territories from 1949 to 1967.

H.R. 5726—Freedom From Foreign Influence Act. This bill sought to direct the Secretary of the Interior to issue promptly permits allowing energy resources exploration and extraction in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge.

H.R. 5718—Stockman Effect Act. This bill sought to direct the National Science Foundation to commission a study on the potential impact of a polar magnetic shift on the weather.

H.R. 5717—Report the Costs Act. This bill sought to require annual reports from agencies detailing the cost of multilingual services, to end speculation about the cost of multilingual services provided by the Federal Government, and for other purposes.

H.R. 5473—James Boulet National Language Act of 2014. This bill sought to make English the official language of the United States, require that official U.S. government functions be conducted in English, and require the U.S. government to preserve and enhance the role of English as the official language of the United States.

H.R. 5472—To designate the facility of the United States Postal Service currently located at 16281 U.S. Highway 59 in Moscow, Texas, as the ''Anna Stepanovna Politkovskaya Memorial Post Office''. This bill sought to name the post office in Moscow, Texas in honor of Anna Stepanovna Politkovskaya, an American journalist who was assassinated in Moscow, Russia as a result of her coverage of the human rights abuses committed by the regime of Vladimir Putin.

H.R. 5433—Stop Funding Terrorism Act. This bill sought to prohibit any direct U.S. assistance, loan guarantee, or debt relief to the Palestinian Authority.

H.R. 5316—Safely Exacting Cautious Useful Rules for Immigration This Year (SECURITY) Act. This bill sought to secure the border between the United States and Mexico.

H.R. 5202—Personal Information Notification Act. This bill sought to require notification when personally identifying information is disclosed by a Government agency.

H. Amdt. 1033. This amendment to H.R. 4923, the Energy and Water Development and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, 2015, sought to prohibit funds made available by this Act from being used for the Department of Energy's Loan Program Office.

H. Res. 664—Providing for the arrest of Lois G. Lerner to answer the charge of contempt of Congress.

H. Res. 649, 648, 647, 646, and 645. This series of resolutions sought to direct various federal agencies to disclose emails transmitted by Lois Lerner.

H. Amdt. 941. This amendment to H.R. 4870, the Department of Defense Appropriations Act, 2015, sought to prohibit the use of funds for any activity that would grant de jure or de facto support of territorial, maritime, or airspace claims made by the People's Republic of China on the international waters or territories of other sovereign nations in the South China, East China, and Yellow Seas.

H. Amdt. 940. This amendment to H.R. 4870, the Department of Defense Appropriations Act, 2015, sought to prohibit the use of

funds for the procurement of weapons systems that contain rare earth materials, metals, magnets, parts, or components that are produced in Cuba, North Korea, the People's Republic of China, or Venezuela.

H. Amdt. 939. This amendment to H.R. 4870, the Department of Defense Appropriations Act, 2015, sought to prohibit the use of funds to destroy Department of Defense equipment or ammunition in Afghanistan without such equipment or ammunition first being offered to independent states of the former Soviet Union and major non-NATO allies that are willing to pay for transportation of such equipment or ammunition to such states or allies.

H. Res. 635—Expressing the sense of the House of Representatives that the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) must allow taxpayers the same lame excuses for missing documentation that the IRS itself is currently proffering.

H.R. 4883—National Rare-Earth Cooperative Act of 2014. This bill sought to provide for the establishment of a National Rare-Earth Refinery Cooperative.

H. Res. 612—Expressing the sense of the House of Representatives that the Government of Mexico should forthwith repatriate Sgt. Andrew Paul Tahmooressi from Mexican prison(s) and expressing the sense of the House of Representatives that the President of the United States should take actions to impose sanctions on Mexico until such time as Sgt. Tahmooressi is released.

H.R. 4774—Veterans' Health Accountability Act. This bill sought to improve the quality of care offered by the Veterans Health Administration.

H. Res. 602—Recognizing the 96th anniversary of the founding of the Democratic Republic of Azerbaijan.

H.R. 4651—To designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 601 West Baker Road in Baytown, Texas as the "Specialist Keith Erin Grace Jr. Memorial Post Office". This bill sought to name a post office in Baytown, Texas in honor of Keith Erin Grace Jr.

H.R. 4650—European Union Religious Freedom Act. This bill sought to recognize the prohibition of homeschooling, religious methods of meat production, circumcision, or wearing of religious garb as being infringements on religious freedom.

H.R. 4602—Virtual Currency Tax Reform Act. This bill sought to change the status of virtual currencies from property to foreign currency.

H.R. 4581—Prohibiting Discrimination Against Israel Act. This bill sought to prohibit federal funds from going towards international projects that discriminate against Judea and Samaria.

H.R. 4520—Aircraft Positioning Modernization Act. This bill sought to require passenger aircraft to transmit GPS location data.

H.R. 4518—Parental Protection Act. This bill sought to protect the constitutional rights of parents and children.

H.R. 4380—Gun Confiscation and Registration Prevention Act. This bill sought to prohibit gun confiscation and registration.

H.R. 4381—Biometric Information Privacy Act. This bill sought to prohibit firms from selling personal biometric information to third parties.

H.R. 4343—Write the Laws Act. This bill sought to end the unconstitutional delegation of legislative power which was exclusively vested in the Senate and House of Representatives by article I, section 1 of the United States Constitution, and to direct the Comptroller General of the United States to issue a report to Congress detailing the extent of the problem of unconstitutional delegation to the end that such delegations can be phased out, thereby restoring the constitutional principle of separation of powers set forth in the first sections of the United States Constitution.

H.R. 3199—Safe Military Bases Act. This bill sought to safeguard military and civilian personnel on military bases by repealing bans on military personnel carrying firearms, and for other purposes.

H.R. 3156—Responsible Implementation of Flood Insurance Reform Act of 2013. This bill sought to reform the Biggert-Waters Flood Insurance Reform Act of 2012 to responsibly protect homeownership.

H. Res. 333—Expressing the firm conviction of the House of Representatives that any continuing resolution or debt ceiling increase it may approve for the duration of the 113th Congress shall affirmatively include a provision specifically prohibiting the expenditure of any federal funds in support of or in implementation or effectuation or enforcement of any provision of the Affordable Care Act ("ObamaCare").

H. Amdt. 397. This amendment to H.R. 2397, the Department of Defense Appropriations Act, 2014, sought to prohibit funds appropriated or made available in this Act from being used for United States military exercises which include any participation by the People's Republic of China.

H.R. 2764—Sanctity of Life Act of 2013. This bill sought to declare that human life shall be deemed to exist from conception.

H. Res. 306—Providing for the consideration of the resolution (H. Res. 36) establishing a select committee to investigate and report on the attack on the United States consulate in Benghazi, Libya.

H.R. 2625—Student Protection Act. This bill sought to prohibit the use of appropriated funds for any educational institution which punishes a child for brandishing food which is partially consumed in such a way that the remnant resembles a gun; possessing a toy gun two inches or less in length or made of plastic snap together building blocks; using a finger or hand to simulate a gun; vocalizing imaginary firearms or munitions; wearing a T-shirt that supports Second Amendment rights; drawing a picture of, or possessing an image of, a firearm; or using a writing utensil to simulate a firearm.

H.R. 2606—Stabilization and Reconstruction Integration Act of 2013. This bill sought to establish the United States Office for Contingency Operations.

H.R. 1815—Union Coercion Prevention Act. This bill sought to protect workers from the corrupt and coercive "Card Check" system of organizing labor unions.

H.R. 1144—Alabama-Coushatta Tribe of Texas Equal and Fair Opportunity Settlement Act. This bill sought to restore an opportunity for tribal economic development on terms that are equal and fair.

H.R. 1143—Federal Correctional Workers Safety Act of 2013. This bill sought to amend the federal criminal code to require the Director of the Bureau of Prisons to ensure that each prison facility provides a secure firearms storage area for use by all employees who are authorized to carry a firearm, or allow such employees to store their firearm in a Bureau-approved vehicle lockbox.

H.R. 577—Veterans Second Amendment Protection Act. This bill sought to prohibit, in any case arising out of the administration of laws and benefits by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs, considering any person who is mentally incapacitated, deemed mentally incompetent, or experiencing an extended loss of consciousness from being considered adjudicated as a mental defective for purposes of the right to receive or transport firearms without the order or finding of a judicial authority of competent jurisdiction that such person is a danger to himself or herself or others.

H.R. 576—Save Endangered Species Act of 2013. This bill sought to require the Secretary of the Interior to allow for the taking, export or reimport, delivery, receipt, carrying, and transport, shipment, or sale in interstate or foreign commerce, in the course of a commercial activity, of U.S. captive-bred live scimitar-horned oryx, addax, or dama gazelle, including embryos, gametes, and sport-hunted trophies, as long as certain criteria are met, including that the purpose of such activity is associated with the management or transfer of live wildlife or sport hunting in a manner that contributes to increasing or sustaining captive numbers or to potential reintroduction to range countries.

H.R. 575—Second Amendment Protection Act of 2013. This bill sought to prohibit the United States from providing any funding to the United Nations (U.N.) for a fiscal year unless the President certifies to Congress that the U.N. has not taken action to infringe on the rights of individuals in the United States to possess a firearm or ammunition, or abridge any of the other constitutionally protected rights of U.S. citizens.

H.R. 410—Restore the Constitution Act of 2013. This bill sought to provide that any executive action infringing on the Second Amendment has no force or effect, and to prohibit the use of funds for certain purposes.

H.R. 35—Safe Schools Act of 2013. This bill sought to amend the federal criminal code to repeal provisions making it unlawful to possess or discharge a firearm in a school zone.

H.R. 33—Audit The Fed Act of 2013. This bill sought to repeal the authority of the Comptroller General (GAO) to carry out an onsite examination of an open insured bank or bank holding company only if the appropriate federal regulatory agency has consented in writing.

RICHARD "DICK" KNOEBEL, 2014 INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF AMUSEMENT PARKS AND ATTRACTIONS (IAAPA) HALL OF FAME INDUCTEE

HON. LOU BARLETTA

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 11, 2014

Mr. BARLETTA. Mr. Speaker, I am proud to recognize Richard "Dick" Knoebel for his induction into the International Association of Amusement Parks and Attractions (IAAPA) Hall of Fame, which honors legends and pioneers for their significant contributions to the

growth and development of the attractions industry.

Mr. Knoebel's parents founded Knoebel's Amusement Park in Elysburg, Pennsylvania in 1926, and as a result, he grew up surrounded by the attractions industry. As an adult, Mr. Knoebel pursued his passion for amusement parks, becoming president of the Pennsylvania Amusement Parks Association in 1971. In 1984, he was a key player in the development and adoption of the Pennsylvania Ride Inspection Act.

Since 1988, Mr. Knoebel has served as the president of the family business. In this role, he has shown a strong dedication to preserving and restoring vintage rides including ''The Phoenix'' roller coaster from Texas and ''The Twister'' from Colorado, both of which currently operate at Knoebel's. He has also constructed first-of-their-kind attractions such as a flume ride with wood supports and the ''Flying Turns,'' the only wooden bobsled-style roller coaster in existence which was modeled after a ride from the 1930s. Mr. Knoebel has been an active IAAPA volunteer and has made many significant contributions to the organization, including serving as a member of the Board of Directions from 1999 to 2002.

Mr. Speaker, on the occasion of Dick Knoebel's induction into the IAAPA Hall of Fame, I commend him and thank him for all of his hard work and lasting contributions to the attractions industry, and I wish him well in his future endeavors.

SUPPORTING SECTION 206 OF H.R. 647, THE ABLE ACT

HON. PETER J. ROSKAM

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 11, 2014

Mr. ROSKAM. Mr. Speaker, I was pleased to advocate for and support the recently passed H.R. 647, the ABLE Act, for the important benefits it offers to the disabled, and because of the additional clarity and equity it will provide for employers dealing with the IRS.

Section 206 addresses an issue under current law and the interpretation of the IRS for employers that use the services of professional employer organizations (PEOs). For example, any PEO that qualifies as a statutory employer under the Internal Revenue Code is eligible to claim the Tip Tax Credit, instead of the restaurant for which the wait staff who directly perform the services and therefore earned the qualification for it.

Under this system, some PEOs claim the credit themselves as the statutory employer, others administer the credit for the restaurants which they serve, and some restaurants claim the credit directly—only to be challenged in IRS audits.

This provision of the ABLE Act provides important tax clarity for small businesses working with PEOs. I am pleased to have been able to help secure the passage of this legislation in the House of Representatives, and I urge its prompt consideration in the Senate.

HONORING UNDER SHERIFF DERRICK CUBIT

HON. BENNIE G. THOMPSON

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 11, 2014

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor a remarkable enforcement officer and community servant, Under Sheriff Derrick Cubit.

Derrick Cubit was born on a warm, sunny day of September 1, 1970 in Jackson, MS. As a youngster, he lived in Hazlehurst, Mississippi with his mother, Bobbie, his brother, Travis, and his late grandmother, Sarah.

Derrick Cubit started school when he was six-years-old. He went to kindergarten through fifth grades at Hazlehurst Elementary, attended Hazlehurst Middle School, and graduated from Hazlehurst High School in 1988. He continued his education by attending Hinds Community College and Jackson State University where he majored in Criminal Justice.

''Life has been a means of friends and family who you can trust and who trusts you.'' says Mr. Cubit. He is pretty happy with what life brings and is accustomed to being around primarily adults, those who he received wisdom from. He met lots of people who invested and took time with him, and helped him to excel at most of his many and various hobbies. He did well in school because of this and fortunately, self-awareness was something that was learned later on in his years.

Under Sheriff Cubit is a member of the Phi Beta Fraternity and of the Golden Square Lodge #88. There was always an interest in being a public servant, and he finally got an opportunity to work for the Copiah County Sheriff Department in October of 1997. He gives all thanks to the late Chief Deputy Joe L. Young, who gave him the opportunity to become a Deputy Sheriff with the Copiah County Sheriff Department. The trend was set by just meeting his potential, and taking on new challenges when someone brought it to his attention that he'd be perfect for the opportunity to work through the ranks at the Sheriff Department. He started out being a Deputy Sheriff, later was promoted to Juvenile Officer, after that he was promoted to Captain of Patrol, and now he serves as the Under Sheriff for the Copiah County Sheriff Department.

Under Sheriff Cubit always assumed he'd never get married because he was a hard worker and thought that if he was tied down by the constraints of a wife and kids his work might hinder family growth. But then, he met the beautiful Ms. Semekia Jones in 1994 and they agreed to marry in 2001. He had one son before this union and now his new family role suits him as being a father and husband. He's driven to spur his son on to even greater accomplishments.

Despite a lifetime of challenges and accomplishments Under Sheriff Cubit has held on to a quote by James Baldwin: ''The world is before you, and you need not take it or leave it as it was when you came in.'' His goal is to achieve what James Baldwin speaks about. Although he would question, ''How?'' he believes that the moment his son entered this world, he then knew that he had achieved it.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing Under Sheriff Derrick Cubit for his dedication to serving our great Country and his community.

DAVE CONNER TRIBUTE

HON. MIKE COFFMAN

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 11, 2014

Mr. COFFMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life of Assistant U.S. Attorney Dave Conner, who recently passed away after a long fight with cancer. Dave is survived by his wife Teri, son Gavin, and daughter Ashton.

Dave Conner dedicated his life to public service, serving for over thirty-two years in the state and Federal courts. And throughout that time, he served our state and country with both honor and integrity.

Dave's career as a public servant dates back to 1982, when he graduated law school and began working as a Deputy District Attorney in Denver. After six years, he became an Assistant U.S. Attorney. In 1996, he took a position as a public defender, and after four years in that capacity, he returned to the U.S. Attorney's office.

I have had the honor of meeting Dave and discussing possible ways we could curb the trend of mass shooting incidents that our nation, and Colorado, in particular, has experienced in recent years. Dave was dedicated to public safety and I found his insight and advice on gun violence to be very helpful as we discussed this extremely important issue.

An active member of the Smoky Hill United Methodist Church, Dave Connor was dedicated to his family and community and his life should serve as an example of the positive effect that dedicated public servants can have on those around them. My heartfelt prayers go out to his family, friends, and loved ones as they grieve the loss of a dedicated public servant and a great man.

ABD AL-BASET AZZOUZ

HON. MARC A. VEASEY

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 11, 2014

Mr. VEASEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in order to commend the recent intelligence partnership between the United States and the country of Turkey that led to the apprehension and eventual transfer into U.S. custody of a senior Al Qaeda operative, Abd al-Baset Azzouz.

The State Department of the United States listed Azzouz as a ''Specially Designated Global Terrorist'' pursuant to Executive Order 13224 on September 24, 2014. Additionally, the State Department states that Azzouz ''has had a presence in Afghanistan, the United Kingdom, and Libya. He was sent to Libya in 2011 by al-Qa'ida leader Ayman al-Zawahiri to build a fighting force there, and mobilized approximately 200 fighters. He is considered a key operative capable of training al-Qa'ida recruits in a variety of skills, such as IED construction.''

I am encouraged by this positive development between Turkey and the United States and hope that this event indicates a growing partnership between our countries that will result in a common military strategy against hostile elements in Iraq and Syria. While no international relationship is perfect, there is already

a large amount of cooperation that exists between the U.S. and allies like Turkey and it is critical that we continue to grow our existing partnerships in this important region as well as forge new ones.

It is important that we recognize and commend this very positive incident of counterterrorism cooperation between the U.S. and Turkey, as well as do all that we can to encourage these efforts to continue.

Finally, I submit the recent articles from the Washington Post and International Business Times.

[From the Washington Post, Dec. 5, 2014]

SUSPECTED AL-QAEDA MEMBER HELD IN JORDAN AS U.S. INVESTIGATES POSSIBLE BENGHAZI LINK

(By Adam Goldman and Karen DeYoung)

A suspected member of al-Qaeda who had recently been designated a global terrorist by the United States has been detained in Jordan. The United States is also investigating whether he played a role in the September 2012 attacks on U.S. facilities in Benghazi. U.S. officials, who spoke on the condition of anonymity to discuss an ongoing investigation, identified the man as Abd al-Baset Azzouz, a Libyan national. Details about his capture and what charges he could face in the United States remain unclear. Turkish news media reported that Azzouz was captured Nov. 13 in an operation in Yalova, which is about 100 miles south of Istanbul, and that he was later deported to Jordan.

Turkey's Daily Sabah newspaper said the CIA provided the tip that led to his arrest. The CIA declined to comment.

In recent years, the Obama administration has brought a number of alleged terrorists to this country after capture by the U.S. or through extradition. Azzouz has not been named in any public statements or reports about those sought in connection with the Benghazi attacks. Although the State Department designated Azzouz as a terrorist, it is not known if there are any criminal charges against him that would facilitate his extradition to the United States.

A likely venue for any criminal proceedings would be federal court in New York. FBI spokesman Peter Donald in New York declined to comment. One official stressed that U.S. intelligence was still examining whether Azzouz had a role in the Benghazi attacks that killed U.S. Ambassador J. Christopher Stevens and three other Americans.

In September, the State Department designated Azzouz a global terrorist. The State Department said he has also lived in Afghanistan and Britain.

As part of the designation, the United States said Azzouz was sent home by al-Qaeda leader Ayman al-Zawahiri in 2011 to build a fighting force in Libya, mobilizing about 200 fighters.

''He is considered a key operative capable of training al-Qaeda recruits in a variety of skills, such as IED [improvised explosive device] construction,'' according to the State Department.

Seth Jones, an analyst at the Rand Corp., said Azzouz probably has minimal information about where Zawahiri is hiding but could provide a clearer picture of the terrorist groups operating in Libya.

''He's got a lot of information that could be useful on how al-Qaeda is structured, its broader strategy and operations,'' he said.

Azzouz isn't the first known al-Qaeda operative suspected of going to Libya in recent years.

Officials said there was intelligence that Thirwat Shihata, an Egyptian who was Zawahiri's deputy at one point, traveled to Libya after he was allowed to leave Iran, where he had been since 2003.

Azzouz lived in Britain and was known to police but left the country in 2009 for Pakistan and Afghanistan. Authorities in Britain had briefly detained Azzouz before letting him go, according to news reports.

[From International Business Times, Dec. 4, 2014]

AL QAEDA LEADER ABD AL-BASET AZZOUZ, ACCUSED OF PARTICIPATION IN BENGHAZI ATTACK, REPORTEDLY AWAITING TRIAL IN US

(By Alessandria Masi)

A senior al Qaeda leader accused of participating in the attack on the U.S. embassy in Benghazi, Libya, was arrested in Turkey last month. The Libya-based terrorist leader was transferred to Jordan and subsequently to the U.S., where he is now awaiting trial, according to the Turkish Hurriyet Daily News.

A joint CIA and Turkish intelligence operation led to Abd al-Baset Azzouz's capture when he attempted to enter Turkey with a fake passport, according to a report from Turkish daily Milliyet. Azzouz is a senior member of al Qaeda's branch in Libya and allegedly had a role in the bombing that killed U.S. Ambassador to Libya Christopher Stevens and U.S. Foreign Service Information Management Officer Sean Smith on Sept. 11, 2012.

The CIA declined to comment on its alleged involvement in the operation and the Department of Defense did not immediately confirm Azzouz's continued presence in the U.S.

A man by that name was put on the U.S. State Department's Designated Terrorist List in September and described as a ''key operative capable of training al Qaeda recruits in a variety of skills, such as IED [improvised explosive device] construction.'' Azzouz's name was also presented to the House Committee on Foreign Affairs last year on a list of people it did not ''make sense to consider anything but 'core' al Qaeda members.''

Azzouz was detained for nearly 10 months in the U.K. in 2006. Upon his release, he moved to Libya at the request of al Qaeda leader Ayman al-Zawahiri, according to Hurriyet. Al-Zawahiri reportedly sent him to Libya to open a training camp and recruit fighters, a move that ''indicates that senior al Qaeda leaders trust him to carry out the strategic task of establishing an al Qaeda network in Libya,'' according to a 2012 report from the Federal Research Division of the Library of Congress.

Libyan jihadist group Ansar al-Sharia has been widely held accountable for the deadly Benghazi attack, but the group said in a statement that it ''didn't participate as a sole entity.'' Ansar al-Sharia has a strong presence in Benghazi and is ''ideologically aligned'' with al Qaeda, according to the State Department. The group also has a branch in the Libyan port city of Derna, where Azzouz allegedly set up his training camp.

Derna has long been a jihadist battleground and is home to several groups, including the Islamic Youth Shura Council, which recently pledged allegiance to the Islamic State group.

HONORING THE SERVICE OF MAYOR BRENDA LAWRENCE TO THE CITY OF SOUTHFIELD

HON. GARY C. PETERS

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 11, 2014

Mr. PETERS of Michigan. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the service of Brenda Lawrence, Mayor of the City of Southfield, who will be leaving office at the end of this year to represent Michigan's 14th Congressional District in the United States House of Representatives.

Mayor Brenda L. Lawrence is a long-time resident of the City of Southfield. A product of Michigan's public school system, Mayor Lawrence is an alumna of Pershing High School and received her BA in Public Administration from Central Michigan University.

Ms. Lawrence was elected Mayor of the City of Southfield in November of 2001. She is the first African American and first woman Mayor of Southfield, a city with a population of over 78,000 residents, a budget of $143 million, and 833 employees. Mayor Lawrence is committed to diversity, fiscal responsibility, education, and keeping a clean and safe city.

Mayor Lawrence has been a community advocate for many years, both as an elected official and a private citizen. She has served on the Southfield City Council, where she was elected president in 1999. As a Councilwoman, Ms. Lawrence gained experience in managing a multi-million dollar budget and demonstrated fiscal responsibility. Ms. Lawrence has also served on the Southfield Public School Board of Education as President, Vice-President, and Secretary. Her love for community involvement has been evident through her previous service as a volunteer in various capacities on the Parent Youth Guidance Commission, Oakland County United Way Advisory Committee, and Oakland County AIDS Council.

Since becoming Mayor, Ms. Lawrence has initiated the following community programs: The Mayor's Walk community health program; Mayor's Roundtable—a citizen driven forum where residents can discuss one-on-one topics of concern; Southfield Reads!—a program designed to promote reading literacy in the City of Southfield; Annual Flower Day; Citywide Blood Drive; and Today's Woman—a cable show featuring respected women in and around Southfield. As a result of her initiative to create a more environmentally friendly community, Mayor Lawrence joined over 600 other Mayors in signing the Mayors Climate Protection Agreement, and with Council support has created the Southfield Green Committee.

Mayor Lawrence has received many honors for her leadership skills. She was recognized in October 2007 as one of Crain's ''2007 Most Influential Women.'' She is the recipient of the ''2004 Wand Award'' for breaking new frontiers for women and minorities, the Jewish War Veterans-State of Michigan ''Brotherhood Award,'' the Leadership Detroit ''Challenging the Process'' award, the ABWA Millennium Chapter ''Woman of the Year Award,'' the Detroit Historical Society's ''Enterprising Women'' award, Leadership Oakland's 2004 Distinguished Leadership & Future Leaders Award for Exemplary Leadership, and the ''Black Women Achiever Award.'' Mayor Lawrence

has also been named to the Women's Informal Network "List of the Most Influential African American Women in Metropolitan Detroit" and CORP Magazine's "95 Most Influential Women in Michigan."

Mayor Lawrence is a member of the Oakland County Chapter of the NAACP, a member of the Michigan Association of Mayor's Advisory Board, the U.S. Conference of Mayors Advisory Board, the American Heart Association's "Go Red For Women," the Michigan Suburbs Alliance Executive Board, Women Officials Network Board of Directors, Birmingham YMCA Advisory Board, the Pepsi Community Advisory Board, MBN TV, Radio Advisory Board and the Board of Governors of the Renaissance/Skyline Club.

Mr. Speaker, as a former city councilman, I know first-hand how communities benefit from dedicated elected leaders. Brenda's years of dedicated service to the residents of Southfield is a testament to her character and I know that her experience will serve her well as a member of this legislative body. As I close, I can say with confidence that our community is a better place thanks to the ongoing, selfless service of people like Mayor and now Congresswoman-Elect Brenda Lawrence.

SUPPORTING AMERICA'S CHARITIES ACT

HON. BRAD SHERMAN

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 11, 2014

Mr. SHERMAN. Mr. Speaker, I voted against suspending the rules and adopting the "Supporting America's Charities Act." I think there are strong arguments in favor of this legislation and arguments of roughly equal weight that we should not at this time make these tax incentives permanent when they are not paid for.

As I have stated in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD on many occasions, I believe that controversial matters should come up under regular order, allowing adequate debate time and preferably allowing for amendments from the floor. This legislation is controversial enough to warrant that attention.

Under these circumstances I could not vote to suspend the rules. I might well vote for this legislation if it came to the floor of the House through regular order, particularly if members were allowed to offer amendments.

HONORING CONGRESSMAN JIM MATHESON

HON. BETTY McCOLLUM

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 11, 2014

Ms. MCCOLLUM. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to pay tribute to the career of Congressman JIM MATHESON. JIM and I were both elected to the House in 2000. It has been a privilege to work with him over the course of the past fourteen years.

JIM has been a tireless advocate for the people of his district and his voice in Congress will be sorely missed.

Mr. Speaker, please join me in honoring the service of Congressman JIM MATHESON in the United States House of Representatives.

HONORING SERGEANT MILTON MOORE

HON. BENNIE G. THOMPSON

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 11, 2014

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor a remarkable veteran and community servant, Sergeant Milton Moore. Sergeant Moore has shown what can be done through hard work, setting goals, and aiming high.

Sergeant Moore attended the Southern Regional Public Safety Institute in Long Beach, MS where he graduated with honors in 2000. He has completed training in: Clandestine Lab Investigations, Interview and Interrogation, Psychological Response to Active Shooter, and numerous other training courses, including, FEMA Incident Command System ICS200, IC5300, IC5400, and IC5700.

Sergeant Milton Moore was hired with the City of Vicksburg in September 1999, as a firefighter. Deciding to follow the footsteps of his father, he became an employee of the Vicksburg Police Department in March 2000. Since that time, he has served as a Patrol Officer and Field Training Officer.

Sergeant Moore was promoted to the rank of Sergeant in February 2010, scoring the highest of all candidates. Sergeant Moore is presently serving as a shift commander, where he currently has 9 officers under his command.

Sergeant Moore was only 6 years old when his father joined the Vicksburg Police Department in 1975. Being around law enforcement all of his life, Sergeant Moore gained interest and respect for the duties of law enforcement. He knew that one day he would be able to wear the uniform and follow his father's footsteps and become an officer at the Vicksburg Police Department. Most of the traits and values that Sergeant Moore's father instilled in him he still practices daily. These attributes have helped Sergeant Moore become a model officer.

February 19, 2014, Sergeant Milton Moore was honored as Officer of the Year by the Vicksburg Homecoming Benevolence Club. Being a recipient of this award, was a very humbling experience for Sergeant Moore. The award is named the "Artel Moore Award" after Sergeant Moore's deceased father.

Sergeant Moore is a member of the Mississippi Homeland Security Task Force. Sergeant Moore is a veteran of the United States Armed Forces, serving in the U.S. Navy during the first Iraq war, Desert Storm, in 1991.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing Sergeant Milton Moore for his dedication to serving our great Country and his community.

THE HONORABLE JOHN D. DRIGGS

HON. KYRSTEN SINEMA

OF ARIZONA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 11, 2014

Ms. SINEMA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to ask my colleagues to join me in remembering the Honorable John D. Driggs, former Mayor of Phoenix and a member of one of the early pioneering families of Arizona. Mayor Driggs passed away on December 11, 2014, surrounded by his wife Gail and his devoted family. He leaves behind a history of public service to Phoenix that will be remembered for generations to come. His family and everyone who had the opportunity to work with John Driggs will miss him beyond description because he was a man of integrity, with a strong belief in civic responsibility.

In addition to serving as Phoenix Mayor from 1970–1974, John Driggs was a passionate Arizona historic preservationist, and in 2005 was named "Arizona History Maker" by the Arizona Historical Society. In 1969, John Driggs spearheaded the successful Phoenix Growth Committee Bond Elected, which provided funding for the Phoenix Public Library and other cultural venues. He then ran for Mayor of Phoenix and served for two terms. During his time in office, the Phoenix Mountain Preserve was established, which he later described as one of his most important accomplishments.

John Driggs served in the U.S. Navy during World War II, he started the Second Harvest National Food Bank Network, and he was the cornerstone of the 2012 Arizona Centennial Commission. Arizona State Senator Adam Driggs is one of Mayor Driggs' five sons, and I had the honor of serving with Adam in the Arizona Legislature from 2005–2012. The dedication and commitment to service that John Driggs instilled in Adam is apparent in everything that he does as a legislator, and I am proud to call Senator Adam Driggs my friend and colleague. Members, please join me for a moment of silence as we extend our deepest condolences to the Driggs family and as we remember the remarkable life of John Driggs—one of Arizona's great leaders.

HONORING MONROE COLLEGE'S WOMEN'S AND MEN'S SOCCER TEAMS

HON. JOSÉ E. SERRANO

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 11, 2014

Mr. SERRANO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate both the women's and men's soccer teams at Monroe College, based on Jerome Avenue in my district in the Bronx.

On November 22nd, the women's soccer team won the National Junior College Athletic Association (NJCAA) Division 1 Championship in Melbourne, Florida, defeating defending champion Iowa Western. That same weekend, the men's team reached the finals of the men's championship, and fought valiantly before losing in overtime to the Tyler (TX) Community College team.

Monroe College first opened in the Bronx in 1933, and over the years has expanded educational opportunities for thousands of Bronxites. Many of the beneficiaries are from my district, although with a campus in New Rochelle, the College has students from all over the New York metropolitan area.

The time, dedication, and effort of these student-athletes to both their academic and athletic pursuits is truly impressive, and I have no doubt that the values they have gained through this experience will serve them well in the future. I congratulate these young men

and women on their achievements. They have made the Bronx proud.

INTRODUCTORY REMARKS ON RESOLUTION ''COMMEMORATING THE 100TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE WORLD WAR I CHRISTMAS TRUCE OF 1914''

HON. JOSEPH CROWLEY

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 11, 2014

Mr. CROWLEY. Mr. Speaker, today I have introduced a resolution commemorating the centennial anniversary of the World War I Christmas Truce of 1914.

One hundred years ago this month, soldiers on the Western Front came together to unofficially pause hostilities and celebrate the Christmas holiday without regard for country lines or battle lines. The truce gave armies on both sides an opportunity to bury their fallen comrades, as well as share some festive cheer while far away from their homes and families.

Reports from soldiers on the front lines were that soldiers engaged in singing carols, sharing food and other provisions, and even lighthearted games. One of the most well-known aspects of the Christmas Truce is the impromptu football game that took place among the men. Many football clubs to this day recognize the Christmas Truce by holding commemorative games, and this year's historic anniversary will feature a number of recognitions in the sporting world.

The Christmas Truce has always inspired me as a reminder that it is possible for opponents to look beyond their differences and see each other as people, but I have a more personal connection as well. My great-grandfather was one of the soldiers present during the Christmas Truce, and his story and his experiences have been passed down as family lore.

I've also been drawn to this year's commemorations by my good friend Don Mullan, an Irish author who has been championing worldwide celebrations of this proud moment in world history. Don has been developing a Christmas Truce and Flanders Peace Field Project in Messines, Belgium in partnership with the United Nations Office on Sport for Development and Peace and UNESCO. This project has gained the support of Nobel Peace Prize laureate Archbishop Desmond Tutu, and will help ensure that the Christmas Truce, and more importantly, the lessons it has taught us, will always be remembered.

I hope that this holiday season, wherever we are, we can all take a moment to remember the Christmas Truce and to remind ourselves of a time when soldiers laid down their weapons and recognized how essential it is to value humanity. The Christmas Truce is a symbol of the triumph of the human spirit over adversity, and reminds us that even in the darkest times, we should always strive toward peace.

HONORING THE 50TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE ADMINISTRATIVE CONFERENCE OF THE UNITED STATES

HON. JOHN CONYERS, JR.

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 11, 2014

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today, together with my colleagues—the Honorable BOB GOODLATTE, Chairman of the House Judiciary Committee; the Honorable SPENCER BACHUS, Chairman of the Subcommittee on Regulatory Reform, Commercial and Antitrust Law; and the Honorable HENRY C. ''HANK'' JOHNSON, JR., Ranking Member of the Subcommittee on Regulatory Reform, Commercial and Antitrust—to recognize the 50th anniversary of the Administrative Conference of the United States.

Every year, federal agencies issue thousands of regulations that concern the food we eat, the air we breathe, and the autos we drive. Although regulations play a role in myriad aspects of our daily lives, there is no independent, nonpartisan entity—other than the Administrative Conference of the United States—that exists specifically so that Congress can call upon it to evaluate ways to improve the regulatory process.

This year marks the 50th anniversary of the Administrative Conference of the United States, an independent federal agency tasked by Congress to make recommendations intended to improve the administrative process and to provide nonpartisan expert advice. Over the course of its existence, many of these recommendations have been enacted into law or voluntarily implemented by federal agencies and the federal judiciary. As a result of the Conference's excellent work, our Nation's federal administrative procedures are not only looked to as a standard around the world, but constantly in the course of additional improvement.

From its inception in 1964, the Conference has provided invaluable guidance to all three branches of government, including federal agencies, Congress, and the federal judiciary—about how to make the regulatory process more responsive, efficient, and cost-effective. Members of the Conference are drawn from executive and judicial branches of the federal government, academia, as well as from the private sector.

Congress has assigned the Conference important responsibilities in the implementation of the Administrative Dispute Resolution Act, the Negotiated Rulemaking Act, the Equal Access to Justice Act, the Congressional Accountability Act, and the Magnusson-Moss Warranty-Federal Trade Commission Improvement Act. In addition, the Conference has facilitated judicial review of agency decisions and helped eliminate various technical impediments to such review. And, the Conference helps save taxpayer dollars. Just one agency alone—the Social Security Administration—estimated that the Conference's recommendation to change that agency's appeals process would result in approximately $85 million in savings.

In recognition of its many accomplishments, the Conference has enjoyed broad bipartisan and bicameral support over the years. President Lyndon Baines Johnson signed the initial legislation creating the Conference into law in 1964, and President George W. Bush reauthorized the Conference in 2008. Similarly, the Conference is supported by the private sector and advocacy groups across the political spectrum.

United States Supreme Court Justices Stephen Breyer and Antonin Scalia have testified before the House Committee on the Judiciary in support of the Conference and its work on not just one, but two highly historic occasions. Justice Breyer, for example, cited the Conference's ''unique'' role in identifying ways to improve the federal regulatory process. He explained in 2004, prior to the Conference's revival in 2010:

> Given the Conference's rather low cost (a small central staff, commissioning academic papers, endless amounts of volunteered private time, and two general meetings a year), it is indeed a pity that by abolishing this Conference, we have weakened our federal government's ability to respond effectively, in this general way, to the problems of its citizens.
>
> I have not found other institutions readily available to perform this same task. Individual agencies, while trying to reform themselves, sometimes lack the ability to make cross-agency comparisons. The American Bar Association's Administrative Law Section, while a fine institution, cannot call upon the time and resources of agency staff members and agency heads as readily as could the Administrative Conference. Congressional staffs cannot as easily conduct the technical research necessary to develop many of the Conference's more technical proposals. The Office of Management and Budget does not normally concern itself with general procedural proposals.

Justice Scalia also described the Conference's ''unique'' characteristics. Citing its ''combination of talents from the academic world, from within the executive branch . . . and, . . . from the private bar, especially lawyers particularly familiar with administrative law,'' he observed, ''I did not know another organization that so effectively combined the best talent from each of those areas.'' In sum, Justice Scalia said that ACUS was ''obviously . . . a worthwhile organization'' and that it was ''an enormous bargain.''

Accordingly, we are pleased to mark the 50th anniversary of the Conference and to express our continued support for its very important work.

FINANCIAL VICTIMIZATION

HON. SCOTT GARRETT

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 11, 2014

Mr. GARRETT. Mr. Speaker, for approximately the past six years, innocent customers of three failed broker-dealers—the securities firms of Bernie Madoff, Allan Stanford, and McGill, Smith, have been unfairly victimized time and time again despite the existence of remedial legislation enacted by Congress for the specific purpose of protecting such customers.

Initially these customers were victimized by the nefarious fraudsters, whose Ponzi schemes caused the failure of several securities firms and resulted in financial devastation for so many. Next, these customers were victimized by the Securities Investor Protection

Corporation (SIPC) and their henchmen, whose antics, behavior, and positions were the antithesis of investor protection—financial self interest and preservation clearly appeared to be their guiding mantra. Finally, when SIPC sought the Court's blessing for its wrongful conduct and breach of trust, the court's bizarre deference to SIPC and their blatant misapplication of the Securities Investor Protection Act (SIPA) resulted in a perverted process and erroneous interpretations of SIPA, which, further victimized these customers by depriving them of the financial protections and benefits mandated by SIPA and exposed them to draconian claw-back lawsuits seeking to strip them of what few remaining assets they might still possess.

Examples abound supporting these conclusions. If someone walked into a securities firm and purchased a stock or a bond, who would believe that such a person would not be considered a ''customer'' and would be denied basic Congressionally created customer protections? Why would a customer of a failed securities house, one who had no knowledge of a Ponzi scheme operated by the broker-dealer, be subjected to costly litigation to defend the returns their account statements told them they had earned from their investments? Why would a customer of a broker-dealer receive a monthly ''account statement'', purporting to evidence their financial position at the firm, and later the parties charged with protecting the rights of those customers be allowed to disregard those statements and eliminate all stated returns in the account? And who could have ever anticipated that this same entity would elect to adopt a ''valuation'' methodology patently designed to provide the lowest values to the customers in order to maximize its own bank accounts and resources? While these results seem fanciful and far fetched, they are the realities that innocent customers of these three broker dealers have had to endure.

While the courts are charged with the responsibility of interpreting statutes, that function properly involves determining Congressional intent. If, as here, the Courts have misinterpreted that intent, it is then the role of Congress to reaffirm what it actually meant and to clarify how Congress meant to achieve the desired results. Thus the Garrett-Maloney bill is not an attempt to rewrite SIPA retroactively. Rather it is intended to reaffirm what Congress meant all along—the protection of innocent customers who have been defrauded by a dishonest broker-dealer.

When Congress reconvenes in January, we will expeditiously address these important issues—victims have been victimized for too long. Victims will receive what they are due. Victims who had no actual knowledge of the frauds will be extricated from the harassing ''claw back'' lawsuits. Much progress was made on these issues during the past two years—numerous hearings were held and support for the Garrett-Maloney bill is now robust and bipartisan. Addressing these issues, and providing appropriate remedies for the victims, will be a top priority in January, indeed an urgent one.

IN PRAISE OF CONGRESSIONAL STAFF

HON. NICK J. RAHALL II

OF WEST VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 11, 2014

Mr. RAHALL. Mr. Speaker, throughout my tenure in the House of Representatives, I have been continually impressed by the legions of staffers who eagerly sign up to serve in the ranks of Congressional aides.

Having started my own career of public service as a staffer in the U.S. Senate, I know a little about laboring behind the scenes, answering the phones, responding to the mail, enduring the long hours of sometimes mundane, often utterly thankless tasks that keep this place running for the people we were elected to serve. These eager, bright minds come to this place looking to make a difference in the world. They sacrifice higher paying jobs in the private sector, and precious time with their family and friends, in order to work without applause for the betterment of our Nation.

These members of our staffs do their work anonymously and generally do their work exceedingly well, putting their heart and soul into fighting for the people we were elected to serve. Frankly, they put up with a lot and Members of Congress ought to do more to defend these loyal employees. When the slings and arrows of public anger are aimed at this institution, these staffers have demonstrated, time and again, a selfless willingness to stand silently as their jobs and benefits are slashed in some ill-conceived sacrificial exercise. They are not our political shields. It is the lot of a leader—a true leader—to take the hits.

Before retiring this year, I want to acknowledge and express my deep gratitude to the staff members who have been by my side throughout my career. And I take this moment to express my undying thanks to those who stayed with me until the very end—never wavering in their loyalty to me and the constituency we served together. These are outstanding and dedicated individuals who deserve the highest praise for their selfless sacrifice and service in behalf of the people of southern West Virginia.

David McMaster, my Chief of Staff

Kent Keyser, my longtime aide and trusted advisor

Kate Denman, my Deputy Chief of Staff

Diane Luensmann, my Communications Director

Carol Wallace, my Projects Director

Josh Sutherland, my Legislative Correspondent

Megan Price, my Staff Assistant

Andy Mollohan and Rachel Meyer, my Legislative Assistants,

Kelly Dyke, my District Director, and Greg Crist, Kim McMillion, and Larone Alexander, who worked in the Congressional Office in Beckley

Debrina Workman, Teri Booth, and Debbie Stevens—my longtime district aides who staffed the Congressional Offices in Logan, Huntington, and Bluefield

Jim Zoia, Ann Adler, Ward McCarragher, Ed Gilman, Lisa James, and Luke Strimer on my Transportation and Infrastructure Committee staff.

HONORING SHERIFF OLIVER PARKER, JR.

HON. BENNIE G. THOMPSON

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 11, 2014

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor an extraordinary community leader, Sheriff Oliver Parker, Jr.

Sheriff Oliver Parker, Jr.'s life began in Duncan, MS. Sheriff Parker's mother, Mrs. Eddie Mae Parker, relocated to Hinchcliff, MS when he was 10 years old. Sheriff Parker has resided in Quitman County for over 50 years. He is a graduate of Quitman County High School, Northwest Junior College, and the Mississippi Law Enforcement Training Academy. Parker completed the Mississippi Fire Investigation Training Academy as a requirement to become an Arson Investigator. He has one daughter, Fatina Parker Elliott; one granddaughter, Ashley-Faith Elliott; and one goddaughter, Detra Foster-Webb.

Sheriff Parker has never been a stranger to hard work. He worked assiduously as a teenager to help his single mother provide for his siblings. He has always had a desire to help others. He knew at an early age that he wanted to make a difference in the lives of the citizens of Quitman County. He pursued his dreams of helping the citizens of Quitman County by beginning a career in law enforcement. He served in the capacity of Deputy Sheriff for the Quitman County Sheriff's Department for 23 years. In 1999 he pursued his life-long dream of becoming the Sheriff of Quitman County. He was elected the first African-American Sheriff of Quitman County in November of 1999 and took the Oath of Office on December 9, 1999. He began his responsibilities as Sheriff of Quitman County on January 1, 2000. He has humbly served as Sheriff of Quitman County for 14 years.

Since the beginning of his career as Sheriff of Quitman County, Sheriff Parker has instituted change in a variety of ways and made major contributions to the Quitman County Sheriff's Department. Jailed youth are offered a variety of programs designed to help them avoid returning to jail, as well as GED tutoring and testing. The elderly are assisted via the TRIAD Program. Sheriff Parker also initiated the employment of a full-time School Resource Officer at Madison Shannon Palmer High School. Under Sheriff Parker's leadership, a full-time detective and additional deputies and dispatchers were hired to assist with protecting and serving the citizens of Quitman County. Sheriff Parker's leadership has proven to be successful, as there were no unsolved murders in Quitman County until February 8, 2013.

Sheriff Parker was present at a major milestone in the history of Quitman County which was the unveiling of the Mule Train sign at the city limits of Marks, Mississippi.

Sheriff Parker possesses sound judgment; he has a great sense of accountability to the citizens of Quitman County; and he has an irreproachable professionalism. Sheriff Parker constantly seeks to establish relationships with the community that ensures continued trust and dependability. He is a God-fearing individual who seeks to serve the citizens of Quitman County with the utmost respect, dignity and honesty.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing Sheriff Oliver Parker, Jr. for his dedication in being a respected community leader.

MOTOR TRANSPORTATION COMPANY 100TH ANNIVERSARY

HON. LOU BARLETTA

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 11, 2014

Mr. BARLETTA. Mr. Speaker, I congratulate the Motor Transportation Company as they celebrate their 100th anniversary.

The Motor Transportation Company, founded in 1914 by Leon Dotter, began with a mail route from Lehighton to Stroudsburg. Leon also hauled coal from the Harwood Mines to bins in the Hazleton Steam Heating Co. and transported coal miners throughout local coal mining villages. Following the economic devastation of the Depression and the decline of the coal industry, Herman Dotter, a veteran who served in the U.S. Marine Corps, shifted the company's focus to school busing while still ensuring residents of the Hazleton area had access to first-class transportation. In 1959, Motor Transportation achieved national recognition by winning Fleet Owner Magazine's color design award, no doubt due in part to the company's signature ''orange wheels.'' In 1978, Herman developed Hazleton Area Transit, providing service from Hazleton to the surrounding areas, and he also promoted tourism into the region's historic coal mining area. Currently, third generation Lee Dotter and Lori Dotter Yanuzzi run the company and maintain the organization's commitment to providing quality service, mainly focusing on tourism.

Mr. Speaker, on the 100th anniversary of its founding, I thank all of the members of the Motor Transportation Company, past and present, for their hard work and continued efforts to provide quality transportation services and tours for the people of Northeast Pennsylvania, and I wish the organization many more years of successful service.

IN RECOGNITION OF STATE REPRESENTATIVE VICKI BARNETT FOR TWENTY YEARS OF SERVICE TO THE PEOPLE OF FARMINGTON HILLS AND MICHIGAN

HON. GARY C. PETERS

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 11, 2014

Mr. PETERS of Michigan. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize a valued public servant to the people of Michigan, my dear friend, State Representative Vicki Barnett. After twenty years of service to the residents of the Greater Farmington area at both the local and state level, Vicki is preparing to embark upon new endeavors.

Prior to her embarking upon her journey of public service, Vicki worked as a financial planner, helping her clients realize their goals through making sound investments, a profession she has continued during her tenure as an elected official. Vicki is also a licensed accident, life and health insurance agent.

As a person who cares deeply for the well-being and vitality of her community, Vicki sought to make a difference in Farmington Hills, one of Oakland County's most populous and diverse cities, and was elected to the Farmington Hills City Council in 1995. She went on to serve as a Councilwoman for eight years before the voters of Farmington Hills elected her their mayor in 2003. While serving as mayor, Vicki worked to revitalize her community by creating a long-term economic master plan that focused on encouraging mixed-use developments and increasing commercial density—plans which put Farmington Hills at the forefront of these efforts. In recognition of her strong record of service and results, she was named the President of the Michigan Municipal League from 2006 to 2007 and was named one of Detroit's most influential women by Crain's Magazine in 2007.

Following her time in city government, Vicki went on to continue the legacy of another great Farmington Hills Mayor in Lansing and public servant, Aldo Vagnozzi, a man who also served as her mentor. I know it was a great honor for Vicki to be entrusted to succeed Aldo both as Mayor and later as Farmington and Farmington Hills' voice in Michigan's House of Representatives in Lansing. In that role, she has continued her exemplary commitment to public service, working across the aisle as an advocate for strengthening public schools, leveraging Michigan's resources to draw new industries to the state, and protecting communities' abilities to provide essential services to their residents. In recognition of her outstanding leadership, she was named the 2012 Legislator of the Year by the Police Officers Association of Michigan.

I have been so fortunate to have a partner at the state level like Vicki, who has been a strong voice and valuable resource for the people of Michigan. With experience that transcends multiple levels of government, her advice on the issues affecting the state of Michigan has been invaluable.

Mr. Speaker, as a public servant, I know that our local elected officials are dedicated to the communities they serve. Vicki has demonstrated this throughout her tenure of service to the people of the Greater Farmington area and Michigan. I know her passion and reason will be greatly missed by her colleagues in the Michigan Legislature, but as someone who cares deeply for her community, I know Vicki will continue to be involved in endeavors that seek to strengthen the City of Farmington Hills and other municipalities across Michigan. I wish her success in her new endeavors and look forward to continuing to work with her for the people of Michigan.

HONORING CONGRESSMAN RUSH HOLT

HON. BETTY McCOLLUM

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 11, 2014

Ms. MCCOLLUM. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to pay tribute to the career of Congressman RUSH HOLT.

During his time in the House, Congressman HOLT has been a leader on protecting the environment and his voice on this important issue will be sorely missed. A research physicist by training, his constituents are known to boast bumper stickers proclaiming ''My Congressman IS a Rocket Scientist.'' I know we have all benefited from RUSH's intelligence and wisdom during his time in office.

I was fortunate to have the opportunity to work with RUSH on protecting our environment. His perspective as a scientist has enriched the debate over conserving our natural resources and seeking clean sources of alternative energy. I wish him the best in his new role as CEO of the American Association for the Advancement of Science, a cause that is close to his heart.

Mr. Speaker, please join me in honoring the service of Congressman RUSH HOLT in the United States House of Representatives.

HONORING CHARLES MCLIMANS AND LOAVES AND FISHES COMMUNITY SERVICES

HON. BILL FOSTER

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 11, 2014

Mr. FOSTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor of Charles McLimans, the President and CEO of Loaves & Fishes Community Services in Naperville, Illinois.

Loaves & Fishes is a nonprofit community organization that has become an institution for Naperville and DuPage County for both the population it serves and the over 1,500 volunteers that help every year. The Loaves & Fishes Community Pantry provided aid to over 18,000 people in 2012–2013, handling over 3 million pounds of groceries. Additionally, the organization's Pathways to Empowerment program assists people in accessing vital community services and training courses.

Mr. McLimans is stepping down as President and CEO on January 9, 2014 after seven years leading the organization. Under his leadership, Loaves & Fishes has moved to a new home, added additional services such as healthcare counseling and computer classes, and expanded its coverage to serve all of DuPage County.

I would like to thank Charles McLimans for his service to our community and for his tireless efforts in the fight against hunger.

TRIBUTE TO JOHN KNOCHEL

HON. TODD ROKITA

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 11, 2014

Mr. ROKITA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and salute a notable Hoosier, Mr. John Knochel, who after years of service to Tippecanoe County, Indiana, will be retiring on December 31, 2014. On behalf of the citizens of Tippecanoe County, I wish to express our heartfelt gratitude and appreciation for his leadership and service to our community, state, and country.

John is a lifelong Hoosier and Tippecanoe County resident. He served as District 1 Tippecanoe County Commissioner since 1997. During those 17 years, he oversaw the construction of the County Parking Garage and organized the development of the Tippecanoe

County Community Corrections Center. Previously, he served the people of Tippecanoe County as a member of the County Council for two terms. During his time on the council, he oversaw the remodel and renovation of the Tippecanoe County Office Building and the unique and historic County Courthouse. His past service on the Tipmont REMC Board of Directors helped keep energy affordable to Hoosier families. He also shared his love of literature with younger generations while a member of the Tippecanoe Library Board.

I have known John and his family since the very beginning of my public service career. He has always been willing to share advice on a variety of good government measures. He is a role model for his friends, family, leaders in the community, and the citizens of Tippecanoe County.

I am honored to congratulate him on his retirement and thank him on behalf of the people of Tippecanoe County for his years of service to his community, his goodwill, and dedication in helping make Indiana a better place to live. John, thank you for sharing your talents and generosity in service to the Greater Lafayette area.

A TRIBUTE TO THE PEOPLE OF THE THIRTY-SIXTH DISTRICT OF TEXAS

HON. STEVE STOCKMAN

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 11, 2014

Mr. STOCKMAN. Mr. Speaker, as I deliver my last speech as a Congressman for the 36th District of Texas, I want to begin by once again thanking the people of Southeast Texas for giving me the honor of representing them.

Our oil produces everything from the gas you put in your car to the PVC in an antifracking bumper sticker. We build the spacecraft that explore the stars and the freighters that serve every port in the world. The 36th District's powerful economic reach goes around the world and even into space.

But we in Southeast Texas aren't just known for giving birth to NASA and the world's oil industry. We are also known for fighting for what we believe in no matter the odds.

I first came to Congress in 1995. The man I defeated was a 42-year incumbent, the Chairman of the Judiciary Committee and the most senior Democrat in Congress in one of the most heavily Democrat districts in America. The district had never in 100 years elected a Republican, and he remains the most senior member of Congress to have been defeated in a general election.

I overcame similar odds to return here in 2012. We defeated the President of the Texas Senate in a district he had drawn for himself and was supposed to win without a runoff. We forced a runoff, without him in it, where I defeated a millionaire who outspent me 15 to 1.

My election to this Congress had the lowest dollar-per-vote of any winning federal campaign in America, despite having to face three elections, two of which I was not favored to win.

Those two victories over improbable odds prove anything is possible, if you know how to fight for it.

I bring this up because this Congress faces a monumental fight. The very survival of our constitutional republic is in question.

Will this Congress allow Barack Obama to centralize authority in the White House under an imperial Presidency, or will we take back our Constitutional Republic?

Too many in this chamber are perfectly happy to let Obama render them irrelevant.

I am not one of them. I didn't come here to settle in. I came here to upset things.

I introduced several measures that would restore our congressional oversight and our constitutional republic.

When Barack Obama used Executive Orders to violate the Second Amendment, I fought back. Working with Senator RAND PAUL, I introduced the Restore the Constitution Act, which would nullify any executive action and prohibit funding of any action that oversteps the President's constitutional authority.

I also introduced the Second Amendment Protection Act of 2013 to prohibit all UN funding as long as they continue to target peaceful gun owners, as well as the Safe Military Bases Act to allow our soldiers to carry firearms to stop terrorists.

I introduced the first-ever Sanctity of Life Act in 1995, and brought it back to this Congress, to declare that life begins at conception and to end the tragedy of abortion.

I introduced H. Res. 306, which would have forced a vote on establishing a Select Committee to investigate President Obama's bungled response to the terrorist attacks on our consulate in Benghazi, Libya. The public pressure created by that eventually led to a House investigation of the terrorist act.

I introduced the Virtual Currency Tax Reform Act and the Cryptocurrency Protocol Protection and Moratorium Act to protect the emerging technologies of alternative currencies, which will eventually lead to greater prosperity and economic opportunity for all.

And I introduced the Audit the Fed Act, to require transparency and accountability in the Federal Reserve System.

I helped lead the battle against amnesty for illegal aliens in every possible way. I was able to block the 2013 Senate amnesty bill—which was on a fast track to passage—with the 'blue slip' procedure, resulting in the Chairman of the House Ways and Means Committee declaring the bill in violation of the Constitution.

This year I inspected and reported my findings about our porous border and the inhumane facilities which were used to house illegal alien children. In addition, my SECURITY Act would build the 2,000 mile border fence and eliminate many of the so-called magnet benefits, which would dramatically reduce if not halt illegal immigration.

I also filed five resolutions seeking to force the President, Attorney General, Treasury Secretary, FEC Chairman and Defense Secretary to turn over all emails in their or in the NSA's possession which were sent to or from former IRS official Lois Lerner. Since then, the supposedly lost emails have been uncovered.

The IRS' actions amount to a crime, and one that the highest official should be accountable for.

These acts and resolutions are needed now more than ever, because these next two years will be among the most perilous in American history.

As we saw in the ongoing IRS scandal, the left in America seems intent to use the government to target citizens who speak out.

They did it to Ted Stevens. They did it to Tom DeLay. They're doing it to Rick Perry. And they will do it to you.

This Congress and the next must rein in those activists who weaponize the government to target opponents.

From the IRS to the EPA to the FEC, politicians are perverting the mission of federal agencies. Instead of administering laws passed by Congress, federal agencies are now used to target those whose ideas differ from those in power.

This perversion of power extends to the targeting of law-abiding gun owners by political activists in the Justice Department, the targeting of landowners by political activists in the Interior Department and EPA, and the targeting of people of faith by virtually all federal agencies.

Liberals are building an America where government is used to settle scores and stifle opposing ideas.

Congress must fight back.

We must protect, and restore the Second Amendment by repealing anti-gun laws and reining in a rogue Justice Department.

We must protect the right to life by passing a Human Life Amendment to the Constitution and repealing Obamacare.

We must protect a free economy by passing a REINS Act to take away the power of bureaucrats to make up and enforce their own laws, and by repealing all laws and government agencies not explicitly spelled out in Article I, Section 8 of the Constitution.

And this Congress and the next must restore a Constitutional Presidency by taking back powers usurped by the White House and repealing all Executive Orders that defy the Constitution.

Just because I won't be here in the well doesn't mean I won't continue to fight.

And we must fight more ferociously than ever if we are to save this constitutional republic.

It has been an honor to serve with you all. Thank you for this opportunity to speak, and I pray that the members of the 114th Congress will fight with fire in their bellies for the life of our Republic.

HONORING LAMBS OF GOD, INC.

HON. BENNIE G. THOMPSON

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 11, 2014

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor a landmark establishment within the Clinton community that provides one of the most critical and essential services for all working parents: Lambs of God, Inc.

Lambs of God, Inc., formerly known as Agape' Childcare, was established on August 1987 by Jessie and Shirley Burns of Bolton, Mississippi. Over the past two decades, the establishment has changed ownership and name twice, but the quality of childcare and nurturing has continued to grow for over 20 years. In 1998, Victor and Cantrell Keyes, also of Bolton, Mississippi, became the new owners and changed the name to Agape Christian Academy. In June 2005, Kenneth and Vickie Lewis of Clinton, Mississippi became the establishment's present day owners and renamed the business Lambs of God, Inc.

Over 1000 children have been served and ministered to through Lambs of God, Inc.

Founded in reference to John 21:15. The business is currently licensed to serve 57 children and is dedicated to developing and nurturing the physical, cognitive, emotional, and social growth in a safe Christian learning environment.

In addition to providing childcare, the establishment also offers summer camp, preschool, afterschool, before school drop-off, A'Beka tutorial and two well-balanced meals and two afternoon snacks. The overall mission of Lambs of God, Inc. is to interactively engage a child's educational needs while promoting professionalism in the field of childcare.

The vision and inspiration for Lambs of God, Inc. manifested via the encouragement given by Mrs. Daisy Johnson, owner of Kids Are Kids Learning Center in Brandon, Mississippi. Her insight in the field of childcare gave Mr. and Mrs. Lewis the inspiration and the tools needed to encourage and redirect families and single parents. Childcare became the perfect opportunity to lay a strong spiritual/educational foundation, build character and exemplify love, all while strengthening the community and establishing lifelong relationships.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing Lambs of God, Inc. for its' past and present dedication to providing impeccable, dependable childcare services in an effort to help families of all backgrounds within the Clinton community.

LEGISLATIVE RECORD OF STEVE STOCKMAN IN 104TH CONGRESS

HON. STEVE STOCKMAN

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 11, 2014

Mr. STOCKMAN. Mr. Speaker, as the 113th Congress comes to a close, it is my pleasure to note all of the legislative actions that I have taken in my tenure in my first term in Congress. In the 104th Congress, I introduced the following legislation:

H.R. 4222—Educational Freedom Act of 1996: This bill sought to amend the Internal Revenue Code to allow a tax credit of up to $3,000 per student per year for tuition and related expenses at nonpublic elementary and secondary schools. Subjects such credit to adjusted gross income limits.

H.R. 4221—Stephen E. LeNoir Malpractice Accountability Act of 1996: This bill sought to amend the Federal Tort Claims Act to make the United States liable in an action brought by a member of a uniformed service for personal injury caused by the provision of health care by a health care professional in a uniformed service, except where such injuries were sustained during a declared state of war.

H. Con. Res. 179—To express the sense of the Congress that Buddhist monks and civilians and Roman Catholic monks and priest unlawfully detained by the government of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam should be released: This bill called for the Government of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam to release all Buddhist monks and civilians and all Roman Catholic monks and priests currently being unlawfully detained.

H.R. 3446—Regulatory Relief and Job Preservation Act of 1996: This bill amends the Clean Air Act to repeal the authority of the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to require enhanced monitoring and submission of compliance certifications.

H. Con. Res. 161—Authorizing the use of the Capitol Grounds for the Washington for Jesus 1996 prayer rally: This bill sought to permit One Nation Under God, Inc., to sponsor a free public event on the Capitol Grounds on April 29 and 30, 1996.

H.R. 2749—Child Protection and Ethics I Education Act of 1995: This bill sought to direct the Comptroller General to conduct a study to determine whether programs, lectures, texts, or other pedagogical materials involving sexuality used by agencies, universities, or elementary and secondary schools (institutions) that receive Federal funds for educational purposes significantly or particularly rely on the scholarship of, directly or indirectly consisting of, or based on the studies entitled ''Sexual Behavior in the Human Male'' and ''Sexual Behavior in the Human Female'' authored by Alfred Kinsey and his team of researchers, published in 1948 and 1953 (Kinsey reports).

H.R. 2470—Second Amendment Reaffirmation Act of 1995: This bill sought to repeal the Brady Handgun Violence Prevention Act and the Assault Weapon Manufacturing Strict Liability Act of 1990.

H.R. 2469—Wanda Boughton Social Security Original Intent Act of 1995: This bill sought to amend title II (Old Age, Survivors and Disability Insurance) (OASDI) of the Social Security Act to permit an individual entitled to both OASDI and to widow's and widower's insurance benefits to receive both without reduction in the amount of the widow's or widower's insurance benefit by the amount of the OASDI benefit.

H.J. Res. 107—Proposing an amendment to the Constitution of the United States regarding congressional pay and pensions: This bill sought to require Members of Congress to receive compensation for their services or to be reimbursed for expenses incurred with respect to such services only from the treasury of the State which they represent in Congress in an amount to be determined by an act of the State's legislature.

H.R. 2328—Jeramy's Act: This bill sought to direct the Secretary of Transportation to withhold specified percentages of Federal-aid highway funds apportioned to States that permit the sale of alcoholic beverages to persons who are less than 21 years old.

H.R. 2250—Community Development Act of 1995: This bill sought to amend Federal customs law to require the Secretary of the Treasury to promulgate regulations providing for the return of one percent of customs duties assessed on a commodity to the port or airport of entry that is a public corporation in which the commodity was located at the time of assessment.

H. Res. 210—Providing for the consideration of the bill (H.R. 464) to repeal the prohibitions relating to semiautomatic assault weapons and large capacity ammunition feeding devices: This bill sought to repeal prohibitions on semiautomatic assault weapons and large capacity feeding devices.

H. Res. 199—Amending clause 2 of rule XXII of the Rules of the House to prohibit the introduction or consideration of legislation designating a building or any other structure in honor of a person who is serving or has served as a Member of Congress, a Federal judge, or an officer of the executive branch before the date that is 5 years after the person has retired from that office: This bill sought to amend rule XXII of the Rules of the House of Representatives to prohibit the introduction or consideration of legislation designating a building in honor of a person who has served as a Member of Congress, a Federal judge, or an officer in the executive branch until at least five years after the person's retirement from that office.

H.R. 2087—Sanctity of Life Act of 1995: This bill sought to amend the Federal criminal code to declare that the Supreme Court and district courts shall not have jurisdiction over any case arising out of any statute, ordinance, rule, regulation, or practice on the grounds that the statute, ordinance, rule, regulation, or practice protects the rights of human persons between conception and birth or prohibits, limits, or regulates the performance of abortions or the provision of public funds, facilities, personnel, or other assistance for the performance of abortions.

H.R. 1849—Chinese Human Rights Act of 1995: This bill sought to amend the Trading with the Enemy Act to define China as an enemy for purposes of the export of military products to such country until the Congress determines that China does not engage in any significant violation of human rights and poses no significant threat to the United States. Amends the Immigration and Nationality Act to provide that a person who has been forced to abort a pregnancy or to undergo involuntary sterilization, or who has been persecuted for failure or refusal to undergo such a procedure, shall be deemed to have been persecuted on account of political opinion and entitled to political refugee status under such Act.

H.J. Res. 87—Proposing an amendment to the Constitution of the United States regarding citizenship in the United States: This bill sought to grant U.S. citizenship to only those persons: (1) born to a parent who is a U.S. citizen; (2) born within the United States to a parent lawfully in and subject to the jurisdiction of the United States at the time of that parents' entry into the United States; and (3) naturalized according to U.S. law. Sets forth provisions relating to: (1) restrictions on services or payments to non-U.S. citizens; (2) English language requirement for naturalization; and (3) apportionment of Representatives based on number of citizens of each State.

H.R. 807—Taxpayer Protection Act of 1995: This bill sought to prohibit funds appropriated or made available under any law from being used for the purpose of any swap, loan, loan guarantee, or grant to Mexico until the Congress has affirmatively approved such assistance.

HONORING MURIEL ELLIS

HON. BENNIE G. THOMPSON

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 11, 2014

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Mrs. Muriel Ellis, who has been blazing through Mississippi's legal system.

Mrs. Ellis, 54, became the first African American clerk of Mississippi's Supreme Court and Court of Appeals on July 1 this year, after being the first African American Supreme Court deputy clerk and chief deputy clerk.

Mrs. Ellis worked her way through the clerk's office for 23 years after beginning as a legal clerk in 1991. The Callaway High School alumna, who graduated in 1977, became chief deputy clerk in 2009 after being named a team leader in 2000 and deputy clerk in 2007.

The Jackson native said she is blessed and honored to accept her new position. "I am just going to lead the clerk's office forward," she said. Mrs. Ellis took courses at Phillips Business College and worked as a ward secretary for St. Dominic Hospital from 1979–1987.

Mrs. Ellis has seen many changes since working in the clerk's office. Along with Ms. Kathy Gillis, former Mississippi Supreme Court Clerk of 33 years, Mrs. Ellis supervised the office's transition to electronic filing. Since the office's mandatory e-filing for briefs and motions began on Jan. 1, 2014, she continues to work on the electronic transition through implementing emailed orders and clerk's notices, as well as e-filing transcripts and records from other trial courts.

The clerk became interested in a career in the legal system when she was serving as an alternate juror in the Hinds County Circuit Court. While working in the billing edits department at the City of Jackson Water Department, she said she drove past the Supreme Court building all the time on her way to the Water Department office, which is also located on High Street. "I never knew what this building was, but I used to say: "That is a pretty building. I would love to work there someday," Mrs. Ellis said.

Mrs. Ellis has three children: Karen Ellis Evans, Kimberly Ellis and Leonard Ellis; three grandchildren: Madison Evans, Leonard Ellis, III and Bryson Williams—and is married to Mr. Leonard Ellis, Sr.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing Mrs. Muriel Ellis.

COMMENDING JOYCE LEONARD FOR HER DEDICATION TO HOMEOWNERSHIP IN AMERICA

HON. GARY G. MILLER

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 11, 2014

Mr. GARY G. MILLER of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise to give special recognition to Joyce Leonard for her 35 years as a real estate issue advocate for private property rights and the preservation of the American Dream of homeownership.

In addition to a successful career as a Realtor, Joyce has dedicated her time and talents to serving her fellow Realtors at the local, state, and the national levels. Joyce was the President of the Tri-Counties Association of Realtors in 1999. Currently a Pacific West Association of Realtors member and director, she has served various Committees at the state and local level. She has been a California Association of Realtors Director for over 20 years. On the national level, Joyce has been a National Association of Realtors Director for four years and served as a member of the Conventional Lending and Finance Committee.

Joyce is passionate about homeownership, and she is committed to ensuring that elected officials understand the impact of policies under consideration on the ability of Americans to own, buy, and sell real property. Joyce has been a Federal Political Coordinator (FPC) for the National Association of Realtors since 1996. During my time in Congress, Joyce served as my FPC, and she did a tremendous job of always ensuring that I was apprised of the issues of concern to the National Association of Realtors.

Joyce cares about her local community, and her service extends to serving on various boards and commissions. Joyce worked with the MAC Council to help Diamond Bar become a City. She was instrumental in developing the Diamond Bar General Plan. She served on the Traffic and Transportation Commission and Chaired the School of Safety Studies & Offsite Parking Task Force for the City of Diamond Bar.

For these important contributions to her community and for her dedication to the American Dream of homeownership, I ask my colleagues to join me in thanking Joyce Leonard for her service. Joyce, we know that you will continue to positively impact our community and country for many years to come.

IN SUPPORT OF H.R. 2901 "SEN. PAUL SIMON WATER FOR THE WORLD ACT"

HON. SHEILA JACKSON LEE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 11, 2014

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of H.R. 2901, the Paul Simon Water for the World Act of 2014, which makes the provision of safe water and sanitation a stated goal of U.S. foreign assistance policy and requires the President, through the State Department, to develop and implement a strategy to further such efforts in developing countries.

Safe drinking water, sanitation and hygiene are among the most basic needs a person can have, yet 748 million people in the world do not have access to safe water; roughly 1/10 of the world's population.

In countries such as Ethiopia, Madagascar, Mozambique, Niger and Papua New Guinea, less than 50% of the population has access to safe water.

More than 2.5 billion people in the world lack access to adequate sanitation, which is approximately 35 percent of the global population.

The lack of clean water and basic sanitation facilities leaves millions trapped in a cycle of poverty and disease, costing the lives of around 500,000 children per year—dying from diarrhea caused by unsafe water and poor sanitation.

The Senator Paul Simon Water for the World Act will make better use of existing WASH ("Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene") funds, strengthen accountability for WASH programs already underway, and ensure the greatest impact on communities worldwide without spending new money or creating new bureaucracy.

For every $1 invested in WASH, $4 is returned in increased economic productivity, making WASH one of the most effective and efficient choices we can make for global child health, nutrition, resource conservation, women's empowerment and education.

Specifically, H.R. 2901, the Water for the World Act, will:

1. Institutionalize existing capacity in the U.S. government to ensure WASH remains a political priority and expertise is available at USAID and State Department headquarters to guide strategic implementation of effective and sustainable WASH programs

2. Enhance criteria for choosing high-priority countries to ensure that limited funds are directed to the countries and communities most in need

3. Advance best practices of effective aid, such as improved monitoring and evaluation and a focus on leveraging non-Federal partnerships and funds

4. Improve the strategic approach to international safe water, sanitation, hygiene, and water resources management by providing smart guidance that builds off USAID's own strategy

The bill before us today also provides for a Global Water Coordinator to be designated to oversee water, sanitation, and hygiene assistance, and to develop a complementary strategy to further the U.S. foreign assistance objective to provide affordable and equitable drinking water, sanitation, and hygiene in developing countries.

Mr. Speaker, H.R. 2901 will provide effective, long-term, sustainable impacts by improving coordination and oversight of safe water, sanitation, and hygiene projects and activities.

By voting in support of this act, we have the power to improve the well-being, education, economic opportunity, safety and dignity of the 2.5 billion people in the world who live without a basic latrine every day.

I strongly encourage my colleagues to join me in supporting the passage of the Water for the World Act to save lives, reduce poverty, and help drive economic growth by bringing safe drinking water and improved sanitation and hygiene to those most in need.

Mr. Speaker, access to clean, potable water will be one of the world's most pressing problems over the next century and further contribute to instability within and between nations as is the case in the Darfur conflict.

In the developing world, water-related diseases kill 5,000 children every day.

Sick children miss nearly 300 million school days a year from water-related causes, and an estimated 320 million productive work days are lost to illness—with much of the burden carried by girls and women.

Mr. Speaker, I agree with Senator RICHARD DURBIN of Illinois, Senator Paul Simon's successor and the lead Democratic sponsor of the Senate companion to H.R. 2901, that:

> Water access is no longer simply a global health and development issue; it is a mortal and long-term threat that is increasingly becoming a national security issue. The United States needs to do much more to ensure that global water access is protected and expanded.

Passing H.R. 2901 is an essential first step in ensuring that global water access is protected and expanded.

I urge all members to join me in supporting this important legislation and fitting memorial to the late great Senator from Illinois, Senator Paul Simon.

PREVENTING EXECUTIVE OVERREACH ON IMMIGRATION ACT OF 2014

SPEECH OF

HON. YVETTE D. CLARKE

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 4, 2014

Ms. CLARKE of New York. Mr. Speaker, I stand today to urge my colleagues to affirm the best of our traditions as a nation, rather than our worst partisan inclinations and oppose H.R. 5759, the Preventing Executive Overreach on Immigration Act of 2014. After several years of delay and obstruction on the matter of comprehensive immigration reform, President Obama acted to protect American immigrant families from the threat of forcible separation under immigration laws that are inadequate in the Twenty-First Century, by permitting parents living in the United States whose children are citizens or legal permanent residents to avoid deportation and receive authorization to work.

This legislation, H.R. 5759, exists only to allow the Republican-controlled House of Representatives to perpetuate the status quo that has done greater harm to immigrants who have been a part of our communities and criticize President Obama and the families and children he is seeking to protect. The enactment of this legislation would repudiate our commitment to the value of families.

H.R. 5759 would nullify and block implementation of the President's executive actions. If indeed the House majority were to act on the bipartisan Senate immigration reform bill. There would have been no need for the President to Act through his Executive Authority. We, in Congress, must legislate actually solutions. Congress has an obligation to pass commonsense immigration reform that offers meaningful solutions to the broken system.

It is also important to note that every president during the past 50 years has taken executive action on immigration and granted temporary immigration relief. Like his predecessors, this president has the legal authority to take these actions under the Constitution and the Immigration and Nationality Act. Unfortunately, the partisan divide in our nation's capital has created this legislation of discord.

The constituents of my district and across the United States understand that families are the foundation of our civil society. They want reform of our immigration laws that protects the interests of American immigrant families and supports the development of our nation and its people.

President Obama's executive action would provide protection to millions of immigrants, keep families together and expand our economy. I urge the rejection of this legislation. H.R. 5759 fails to uphold the ideals on which this nation was established. I urge the defeat of this bill.

CONGRATULATING RICK VIOLETT FOR RECEIVING THE 2014 CALIFORNIA DISTINGUISHED REALTOR AWARD

HON. GARY G. MILLER

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 11, 2014

Mr. GARY G. MILLER of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise to congratulate Rick Violett, who has received the 2014 California Distinguished Realtor Award from the California Association of Realtors.

A licensed Realtor for the past 40 years, Rick Violett began his real estate career at Horvath Realty in Fullerton, California. He later started his own company, Investment Brokers of Orange County, in 1977. But Rick was not selected for this distinguished award because of his company's success. The 2014 California Distinguished Realtor Award is awarded to an individual who has been a California Realtor for 20 years and has demonstrated outstanding service to the California Association of Realtors for no less than 15 of the 20 years of service. The honoree also must have achieved the California Association of Realtors' designation of Director-for-Life.

Aside from growing his own business, Rick has devoted his time and skills to serving as an active participant in the Pacific West Association of Realtors, the California Association of Realtors, and the National Association of Realtors. Rick has contributed countless hours and hard work to preserving the American Dream of homeownership for future generations, not only in California but across the nation. Rick served as President of the Greater North Orange County Association of Realtors and as merger chairman for the formation of the Pacific West Association of Realtors. He has been a California Association of Realtors Director since 1993, chaired numerous committees, and has served as a member of the California Association of Realtors' Executive Committee. At the national level, Rick has served the National Association of Realtors' most prestigious committees and he has also chaired various workgroups and task forces. Rick always kept me apprised of how the issues that were being considered in Congress impacted my district's housing market.

A true public servant, Rick is active in his community. He has served as a board member of the Placentia Rotary Club, a member of Placentia-Yorba Linda School Demographic Advisory Council, and the President of Southern California Leadership Education Foundation for 6th Grade Outdoor Camps.

I am so pleased that Rick has been recognized for his many years of dedicated service to the Realtors. Please join me in congratulating Rick Violett for being awarded the highest recognition that the California Association of Realtors can bestow on a member. Rick, we thank you for your commitment to strengthening the ability of Americans to own, buy, and sell real property.

NEW YORK DELEGATION FAREWELL

HON. LOUISE McINTOSH SLAUGHTER

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 11, 2014

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Mr. Speaker, I thank the Gentleman, Mr. RANGEL, our dean of the House New York State delegation for yielding me the time.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor and bid farewell to four colleagues who have served this institution, this country, their constituents, and the Great State of New York admirably and well.

From a nurse to a captain in the United States Navy, my four colleagues, Representatives OWENS, MAFFEI, MCCARTHY, and BISHOP, have brought diverse backgrounds to our chamber, enriched us with their insight, and stood by us through our Nation's most pressing debates.

Mr. Speaker, today, the New York delegation is losing four pillars, four leaders, four friends. I have worked late into the night with each one of them on issues vital to the health of our Nation, such as stemming the tide of gun violence, ensuring an affordable college education, updating our Nation's crumbling infrastructure, and providing health care through the Affordable Care Act.

While they will no longer be serving their constituents in this body, I am confident that whichever way their paths lead them, they will continue their legacies of service to their communities any way that they can.

Mr. Speaker, I join my colleagues in the New York Delegation and the House as a whole in wishing BILL, DAN, CAROLYN, and TIM the best of everything in the next chapter of their lives and careers.

HONORING CHERIE SLAYTON ON HER RETIREMENT

HON. COLLIN C. PETERSON

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 11, 2014

Mr. PETERSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the dedicated service of my Chief of Staff, Cherie Slayton. After more than 30 years of government service, Cherie will be retiring at the end of this Congress.

Cherie started her career as an elevator operator. She went on to work for former Senator Frank Church and Congressmen Norm Dicks and Larry LaRocco before joining my staff in 1995.

Cherie began as an Executive Assistant in my office and, in 2011, was named Chief of Staff. Throughout this time, Cherie has been a calm and steady voice in a sometimes-chaotic environment, offering good judgment and trustworthy service. Quite frankly, I don't know if I would have made it through some days without her.

But more important than the day to day work here in Washington, Cherie has served the people of Minnesota's Seventh Congressional District. Over the years she has developed numerous personal relationships—listening to the concerns of our constituents—and it is these friendships that have made Cherie an

invaluable member of my team as well as a staunch advocate for Minnesotans. It is also part of the reason it is so difficult to see her go.

After so many years of dedicated public service I know that she is looking forward to spending more time with her husband Tom, children Tom and Kate, and her granddaughter Ellie.

So again, Mr. Speaker, I am proud to recognize Cherie's service to the House of Representatives and her dedication to Minnesota's Seventh District. I wish her all the best in her retirement.

CYBERSECURITY ENHANCEMENT ACT OF 2014

HON. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 11, 2014

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of S. 1353, the Cybersecurity Enhancement Act of 2014.

I want to commend several Members on both sides of the aisle and both chambers who have worked on this bill for many years. I want to thank Representatives LIPINSKI and MCCAUL and Senators ROCKEFELLER and THUNE for their longstanding, bipartisan leadership on this critical topic of cybersecurity research and development.

This bipartisan bill is overall a very good bill that contributes in essential ways to any comprehensive effort to keep our nation, our businesses, and our citizens safe from malicious cyber attacks.

S. 1353 incorporates a number of pieces from H.R. 756, the Cybersecurity Enhancement Act of 2013 that moved on a bipartisan basis through the Science, Space, and Technology Committee, and then was passed overwhelmingly on the House floor last April.

While S. 1353 is a good bill and I will be supporting it, I want to talk about what is not in this bill but was in H.R. 756. I hope that as we continue to discuss actions our government can take to better secure our cyberspace, we keep these topics on the table.

The first of these topics is human factors. The fact is that people, not software or hardware, remain the weakest link in our cybersecurity. Whether it's weak passwords, or falling victim to phishing, or using corrupted thumb drives, people unwittingly compromise their own security and that of large networks and companies every day. To truly secure our cyberspace, it is vital that we understand how and why people make the decisions they do, and how we might develop better policies and technologies to reduce risky behaviors. Unfortunately, a section contained in H.R. 756 to direct just this type of research was not incorporated into S. 1353. I hope we continue to make human factors a priority going forward.

The second topic is workforce. The federal government and private sector alike is suffering from a lack of adequately trained cybersecurity professionals. Unfortunately, women and underrepresented minorities are still significantly underrepresented in computer and information sciences. We can't expect to fix the shortage of skilled cybersecurity professionals with much less than half of our brain power. I wish S. 1353 included more language on how our agencies can help address this shortage. As I see it, our only option is to continue to make this a priority.

Finally, Mr. Speaker, I want to address a concern that NIST had about some of the language in this bill. In one of the opening paragraphs of the bill, paragraph (e)(1), NIST is directed to prevent duplication of regulatory processes and prevent conflict of regulatory requirements. I just want to clarify two things. First, by definition, NIST's processes are nonregulatory. Second, NIST cannot be held responsible for regulatory actions or processes at other agencies.

The language is ambiguous on this second point so I just wanted to make sure we are clear in our expectations for NIST. To address a second concern that NIST raised, I hope that limitation clause in paragraph (e)(2) does not prevent regulatory agencies from using information gained through the processes in this bill to fix duplicative or outdated regulations.

With that Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support this bill.

HONORING OUTGOING CONGRESSIONAL BLACK CAUCUS CHAIRWOMAN, CONGRESSWOMAN MARCIA FUDGE

HON. YVETTE D. CLARKE

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 11, 2014

Ms. CLARKE of New York. Mr. Speaker, I am proud to stand with my colleagues today to honor the Chairwoman of the Congressional Black Caucus (CBC), Congresswoman MARCIA FUDGE, my sorority sister and friend as she nears the completion of her term as the 23rd Chair of the CBC. Congresswoman FUDGE is only the seventh woman to serve as the Chair of our Caucus and she has led the way in our fight to tackle difficult issues during her two–year term as Chairwoman.

She is an attorney, a businesswoman, former president of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc., a former mayor and has been an outstanding leader of the conscience of the Congress.

Chairwoman FUDGE has an exceptional record of achievements as the Chairwoman of the CBC. Under her leadership, the CBC has continued to be the voice of people of color and the underrepresented throughout our great nation and the world. Whether it was civil rights, voting rights, job creation, comprehensive immigration reform, health care, fighting poverty, or education, Chairwoman FUDGE reached across the aisle to build coalitions to work on behalf of all people.

I want to personally thank MARCIA FUDGE for being not only a friend but also my mentor. She has been an invaluable resource to me and I truly appreciate her.

I agree with our former colleague, the great Shirley Chisholm who once said, "You don't make progress by standing on the sidelines, whimpering and complaining. You make progress by implementing ideas." Chairwoman FUDGE embodies this sentiment as the leader of the CBC.

I look forward to working with Congresswoman FUDGE in the future and the rest of my Colleagues in the CBC during the 114th Congress as we continue to be the conscience of the Congress.

THANK YOU FOR THE HONOR OF SERVING 18 YEARS IN CONGRESS

HON. CAROLYN McCARTHY

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 11, 2014

Mrs. MCCARTHY of New York. Mr. Speaker, since 1997, I have had the privilege to serve New York's 4th congressional district in the U.S. House of Representatives. Earlier this year, I announced that I would not be seeking reelection; in January of 2015, I will step down from the post that has brought me so much professional and personal happiness and enabled me to serve the District to the best of my ability.

Who can say that life follows the script we imagine for ourselves when we are young? I was a nurse from Mineola living the life I wanted. But fate intervened: I went to Washington as an advocate against the scourge of gun violence, and I fought for legislation including the 2007 National Instant Background Check System Improvements Act (NICS). I worked tirelessly during this chapter of my life, but I remained in so many ways, a nurse from Mineola. I never forgot where I came from or the people I grew up with. I have treasured those relationships. I became a Representative to better their lives through legislation. As I look back now, I know that together we have done this and laid the groundwork for a brighter future.

Through my work with gun violence legislation, I acquired a reputation as a "one-issue" candidate. But, as I like to say, what woman has just one issue? I've authored three pieces of legislation written into law: The Civil Rights History Project Act of 2009, which helped preserve historical artifacts from the Civil Rights era; the Serve America Act of 2009, which greatly expanded vital service programs such as AmeriCorps; and the aforementioned NICS act. In addition, I've worked on various legislative efforts, including acts that bolstered our science and math education. Working on the Dodd-Frank Wall Street Reform and Consumer Protection Act, I championed the creation of an entity within the Consumer Financial Bureau that focused on financial empowerment by giving consumers the tools to be financially literate. While I went to Washington as a crusader against gun violence, I grew over the years into a candidate for all issues.

Most elected officials accomplish what they do thanks to the people who supported them along the journey. I am no different, and I am forever grateful. My staff and I worked to provide programs and enact legislation that benefited Long Island. We led the Small Business Relief Forum in the aftermath of Superstorm Sandy, held numerous job fairs to help Long Islanders manage the difficult economy, and ran blood drives and Medicare prescription drug seminars. We've closed over 30,000 constituent cases—ranging from social security and IRS issues, to veterans affairs and USCIS concerns. In these initiatives, the chief goal was always the same: better the lives of the 4th Congressional District.

No one reaches this point in life without accumulating a long list of people to thank. I am indebted to the entire 4th District for allowing me to represent them in Congress, and to my

staff, volunteers and supporters who have been by my side on this journey. I owe a thank you to my colleagues in the House of Representatives; their compassion for the job has continuously inspired me. And, of course, I am forever grateful for the support of my family, particularly my son Kevin, whose attitude and toughness is a towering display of bravery.

As I enter my last few weeks in office, I feel confident that all we've accomplished has prepared us for what is ahead. However, while my role as a U.S. Representative is ending, my job is not yet done. Although I no longer have a voice in Congress, I will always have a voice for the community. To everyone who has supported me, I'd like to say thank you. But I am not saying goodbye. I remain, as a wonderful chapter of my life comes to an end, very excited to see where we will go together next.

THE CYBERSECURITY ENHANCEMENT ACT OF 2014

HON. LAMAR SMITH

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 11, 2014

Mr. SMITH of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I thank Representatives MCCAUL and LIPINSKI for introducing the Cybersecurity Enhancement Act in the House last year. I am pleased to be an original cosponsor.

In April 2013, the Cybersecurity Enhancement Act was favorably reported out of the Science, Space, and Technology Committee and later passed the House by a bipartisan vote of 402–16.

The bipartisan, bicameral agreement on the legislation before us today is based on the House-passed bill.

Throughout the 113th Congress, the Science Committee has remained committed to advancing the basic research necessary to strengthen our Nation's cyber infrastructure.

Cyber attacks against the U.S. government and private sector networks are on the rise. Scarcely a day passes without a report of a new cyber attack on critical parts of our nation's cyber infrastructure, government agency, or business.

As our reliance on information technology expands, so do our vulnerabilities. New technological advances bring new avenues from which foreign countries can attack our networks.

Protecting America's cyber systems is critical to our economic and national security.

The Cybersecurity Enhancement Act is the work of a bicameral bipartisan compromise. S.1353 promotes much-needed research and development to help create new technologies and standards that better protect America's information technology systems.

The legislation before us today will coordinate research and development activities to better address evolving cyber threats.

Keeping our cyber infrastructure secure is a responsibility shared by several Federal agencies, including the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) and the National Science Foundation (NSF).

To improve America's cybersecurity abilities, this bill strengthens:

Strategic planning for cybersecurity research and development needs across the federal government;

NSF scholarships to improve the quality of the cybersecurity workforce; and

Research, development and public outreach organized by NIST related to cybersecurity.

S. 1353 maintains language from the House passed Cybersecurity Enhancement Act. This language will strengthen NIST's role in cybersecurity automation and checklist creation for government systems, strategic planning for cloud computing, and identity management research and development.

The bill also includes language from the legislation introduced last year by Senators ROCKEFELLER and THUNE. These provisions will encourage competitions and challenges that focus on the security of information technology and support public-private collaboration on cybersecurity.

The threat of cyber-attacks is immediate. To address our vulnerabilities as quickly as possible, America needs a solution that invokes the cooperation of many public and private sector entities. We must develop a rigorous scientific foundation for cybersecurity. This legislation helps foster such an effort.

I again thank my Science Committee colleague, Representative MCCAUL, for his initiative on this issue. He has led the charge on this legislation over the last several Congresses. I look forward to this bill becoming law.

NATIONAL CYBERSECURITY PROTECTION ACT, S. 2519

HON. JAMES R. LANGEVIN

OF RHODE ISLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 11, 2014

Mr. LANGEVIN. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of the National Cybersecurity Protection Act and the Senate Amendment to the Cybersecurity Workforce Assessment Act. I applaud my friend and fellow co-Chair of the Congressional Cybersecurity Caucus, MIKE MCCAUL, as well as Chairman CARPER in the Senate and Ranking Member THOMPSON here in the House, for their efforts to bring this legislation to this point.

I believe that cybersecurity is one of the defining national security challenges of our time. No other issue affects our national defense, our economic well-being, and our individual lives as cybersecurity does. With each day's news rife with stories of cyberattacks and data breaches that target our agencies, companies, citizens and allies, we as policymakers have a responsibility to act.

I have made no secret of the frustration I have felt for the past several years as Congress has failed to act to shore up our cybersecurity. This week, with these bills and others, we are making a down payment on what must be a sustained level of attention and effort. The challenge we face demands no less.

But so very much more needs to be done—and soon. I am extremely disappointed that the Senate has failed to pass information sharing legislation that was approved by the House, legislation that the private sector and government agencies agree is long overdue. And while the bills before us and others that Congress has passed in recent days are important, even these measures are limited in scope. In particular, they do not address any organizational changes within the executive branch that I firmly believe are necessary, such as the creation of a National Office for Cyberspace within the Executive Office of the President, with budgetary oversight powers, able to coordinate and oversee the security of agency information systems and infrastructure across government.

Still and all, these pieces of legislation move the ball forward in key areas, and above all ends the inaction on cybersecurity issues that has gripped this Congress for far too long. I applaud my House and Senate colleagues for their efforts, and urge support of these measures.

A LIFE OF SERVICE AND SHARING

HON. CORRINE BROWN

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 11, 2014

Ms. BROWN of Florida. Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the constituents of the Fifth Congressional District of Florida, I rise now to offer my heartfelt condolences and pay tribute to the life of Rev. Thomas A. Wright, a leader, humanitarian, activist and friend.

I am moved and encouraged when recalling the life achievements of this giant in the field of religion and social activism. As a champion for the marginalized and disenfranchised, we remember Rev. Wright for his many achievements, which among them include; creating a scholarship for disadvantaged youth, helping his church acquire an affordable apartment complex for low-income residents and promoting economic development for east Gainesville.

As a man who served his country, Rev. Wright distinguished himself on the field of battle in World War II.

As a community activist, he gave of himself and his talents to benefit both the individuals and the many organizations he served. From being President of the Alachua County NAACP for 17 years to pastoring Mount Carmel church for over 45 years.

These and many other civic activities were distinctive and the accolades received for all his good works.

The life of Rev. Thomas A. Wright was one of accomplishment, service and sharing. And now in his passing we pay tribute to the man and his life of service to all of us. My prayer is that the life he lived serves as an example to each of us.

Rev. Wright is survived by his children, son Philoron Wright of Gainesville; daughters Dr. LaVon Wright Bracy (Rev. Dr. Randolph Bracy) of Orlando and Patricia Wright Murray of West Palm Beach; 16 grandchildren; 41 great-grandchildren; and nine great-great-grandchildren.

HONORING HOWARD WELINSKY

HON. LINDA T. SÁNCHEZ

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 11, 2014

Ms. LINDA T. SÁNCHEZ of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Howard Welinsky on the occasion of his 65th birthday on December 14, 2014. Through his involvement in various public service organizations,

Mr. Welinsky has proved to be a tireless advocate for his state and community.

As a fellow UCLA Bruin, Mr. Welinsky is active within the UCLA Alumni Association and serves on the Board of Governors for the UCLA Foundation. His involvement with the University is representative of his advocacy on behalf of higher education in California.

He served on the California Postsecondary Education Commission for over a decade and later went on to co-found the California Coalition for Public Higher Education, an organization dedicated to prioritizing higher education in the state by fighting rising tuition costs, larger class sizes, and budget cuts.

Earlier this month, he was recognized by the California League of Conservation Voters for his support of environmental policies and pro-environment candidates in Los Angeles and California.

Mr. Welinsky is also involved with the Jewish community on a local, state, and national level. He has served as Chair of Democrats for Israel, Los Angeles since 1992 and used his position to advocate for Israel within the Democratic Party. His advocacy has led him to be a key participant in other organizations like the Los Angeles Jewish Federation and the American Israel Public Affairs Committee.

He finds time to be civically involved, despite his demanding job as Senior Vice President for Warner Brothers. For his commitment to public service and giving back to causes near and dear to him, I congratulate Mr. Howard Welinsky on his 65th birthday. We look forward to many more years of his tireless advocacy.

RECOGNIZING NANCY GILMORE FOR HER SERVICE TO THE PACIFIC WEST ASSOCIATION OF REALTORS AND WISHING HER WELL IN HER RETIREMENT

HON. GARY G. MILLER

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 11, 2014

Mr. GARY G. MILLER of California. Mr Speaker, I rise to honor, commend, and congratulate Nancy Gilmore, who after 35 illustrious years of serving the real estate industry, is transitioning from her role as the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of the Pacific West Association of Realtors (PWR).

Nancy has been the CEO of PWR since its establishment in 1997, through the merger of several Southern California Realtor associations. Nancy previously served as Association Executive for the Azusa-Glendora Board, Whittier Board and Greater Long Beach Association of Realtors and is one of the most respected Association Executives in the state and the nation.

During Nancy's tenure, PWR has grown to become the largest local real estate association in California and one of the largest and most respected in the United States.

Nancy's commitment to Realtors and their business success has been the driving force in her career.

At the recent California Association of Realtors Expo, Nancy was recognized and celebrated for her service and commitment to the industry and the members of the Pacific West Association of Realtors.

I am sure that many of my colleagues will join me today in extending our heartfelt gratitude for Nancy Gilmore's contributions throughout her remarkable career. We wish Nancy much success and happiness in her future endeavors. She will be missed.

HONORING CONGRESSMAN JOHN DINGELL

SPEECH OF

HON. YVETTE D. CLARKE

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, December 9, 2014

Ms. CLARKE of New York. Mr. Speaker, I stand with my colleagues, Democrats and Republicans, to commend the Honorable JOHN D. DINGELL, JR., Dean of the House of Representatives, on his lifetime of service to the American people.

The people of his district in Michigan believed in him have sent him to Capitol Hill in a record twenty-nine consecutive elections, which is 59 years in this august body.

On issue after issue, Congressman DINGELL was a leader in the effort to secure civil rights for all Americans, to protect the quality of our air and water, to allow children and older Americans to afford health care, to protect the rights of our workers to bargain collectively for fair wages and benefits, to support the auto industry and the Great Lakes and to build the manufacturing sector of our economy. He has impacted virtually every piece of legislation to be signed into law during the last half century, including the Clean Air Act, the Clean Water Act, the Endangered Species Act, and the Affordable Care Act.

A veteran of the Second World War, who was awarded nation's highest civilian honor—the Presidential Medal of Freedom by President Obama in 2014, Congressman DINGELL remained committed to supporting the men and women of our armed forces, both on the field of battle and on their return home to the United States.

History will record his dedication to the belief that every American should have the ability to access comprehensive health care at an affordable cost. Continuing a tradition started by his father, Congressman John D. Dingell, Sr., every session of Congress he introduced a bill to provide for universal health care. With the Affordable Care Act, of which Congressman DINGELL was a proud co-sponsor, he achieved that high purpose to which he dedicated himself.

Congressman DINGELL's contribution to this institution will remain forever an example of public service in the public interest. When we honor him, we honor our shared faith in the promise of the American Dream and our commitment to extend the blessing of freedom to the generations who will follow us.

RECOGNIZING LIEUTENANT COMMANDER ERIC H. BROMLEY, UNITED STATES NAVY

HON. ROBERT J. WITTMAN

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 11, 2014

Mr. WITTMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize those men and women who have served this great Nation with honor, men such as Lieutenant Commander Eric H. Bromley, United States Navy. For the past year, Lieutenant Commander Bromley, a proud naval aviator and graduate of the United States Naval Academy Class of 2000, served on my staff as a Congressional Defense Fellow. Eric is the type of aviator that I hold near and dear to my heart, for it is his responsibility to not only provide logistics and cargo to the aircraft carrier as a C–2A Greyhound pilot, but it is his job to safely transfer passengers to and from the carrier . . . to include Congressional Delegations filled with members of Congress. It is quite a ride, one that I have had the pleasure of taking many times when I have had the opportunity to visit our Sailors and Marines in action at sea. This is a mission that Eric has executed safely numerous times and we are forever thankful to him and his shipmates for their professionalism and service.

During his assignment, he served as a senior member of my staff responsible for defense, veterans, foreign affairs and intelligence matters. Lieutenant Commander Bromley executed his work as a liaison to the constituents of the First District and the numerous defense installations in the First District with distinction. Furthermore, he provided exceptional support to me as my staff liaison to the House Armed Services Committee, in my role as a Subcommittee Chairman and as the Co-Chair of the Congressional Shipbuilding Caucus.

Lieutenant Commander Bromley directly contributed to my goal of providing excellent constituent service to the people of the First District during the 113th Congress. He was responsible for bringing numerous constituent inquiries to a successful conclusion and he was able to leverage his personal and operational experience to respond to the most challenging inquiries.

In addition to his efforts on behalf of the First District, Lieutenant Commander Bromley took on projects with regional, state and national implications, demonstrating his ability to view a challenge from many angles and develop innovative solutions often requiring collaboration across many levels of government. Lieutenant Commander Bromley's work ethic, duty to mission, and commitment to servant leadership is without equal. I believe that his personal drive to achieve excellence in his work has and will set a very high standard for his peers.

I would also like to thank Lieutenant Commander Bromley for the service and sacrifice he has made, and continues to make, for our nation and our great Navy. His keen sense of honor, impeccable integrity, quick wit, intelligence, boundless work ethic, and loyal devotion to duty earned him the respect and admiration of my staff and the First District of Virginia. After spending the last 14 years as a COD pilot in California and Virginia and completing numerous deployments, which included flying support missions throughout the Middle East, Lieutenant Commander Bromley and his family are headed to Colorado Springs, Colorado where he will work at United States Northern Command. It is my sincere hope that Lieutenant Commander Bromley, who has been selected for the rank of Commander, is given the opportunity to return to the fleet to help lead and train our Sailors and continue to "Fly Navy". I have no doubt that Lieutenant Commander Bromley will continue to serve the United States Navy honorably and with distinction.

I wish him, his wife Jenny . . . a former naval aviator, and his children Charlie and Louise the best of luck as they continue their journey together as a Navy family. It was an honor and a pleasure having him serve on my staff. We all can sleep soundly at night knowing that men and women like Lieutenant Commander Eric Bromley are members of our all-volunteer force and they stand ready to defend our country and take the fight to our enemies; far away from their families and the comforts of the United States of America. I wish you the best of luck to you and may God bless you, your family, and all the Sailors you are charged with leading. Eric, you will be missed, thank you for a job well done! Fair winds and following seas!

RECOGNIZING THE PUBLIC SERVICE OF DAVID SCHNITTGER

HON. JOHN A. BOEHNER

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, December 12, 2014

Mr. BOEHNER. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to pay tribute to a dedicated public servant, David M. Schnittger of the Commonwealth of Virginia.

David will be leaving the Office of the Speaker shortly after two decades of distinguished service to the people's House. He has performed his duties with unparalleled skill and devotion. I am honored to have this opportunity to record his service for posterity.

Like me, David was born and raised in Southwest Ohio and graduated from Archbishop Moeller High School. He volunteered on my first campaign for Congress in 1990 while he was attending the University of Dayton, where he graduated with a degree in economics and political science.

Since officially becoming a member of my staff in 1994, David has served as both press secretary and chief of staff for my office serving Ohio's Eighth District. In addition, he served as communications director for the House Committee on Education and the Workforce during my tenure as chairman.

Since 2006, he has served as deputy chief of staff in the Office of the Majority Leader, Office of the Minority Leader, and Office of the Speaker. As one of my most trusted advisers, he has overseen communications, speechwriting, outreach, and special events operations.

This biography, while impressive, does not do justice to the sheer breadth of David's contributions. It is not enough to say he enjoys the respect and admiration of his colleagues. He has inspired generations of staff who will always cherish his wisdom and strive to emulate his example of loyalty and integrity to the last. He has served as the beating heart of this operation he helped build. These are irreplaceable things.

On behalf of the people's House—and on behalf of Boehnerland, from West Chester to Springfield to Troy to Washington, DC—I thank David for his service. I send our love to his wife Stephanie, and their five beautiful children: Ella, Kayla, Julia, Andrew, and Cecilia.

This House, especially this Speaker, owes an immeasurable debt of gratitude to the Schnittger family.

INSULAR AREAS AND FREELY ASSOCIATED STATES ENERGY DEVELOPMENT

SPEECH OF

HON. DAVID W. JOLLY

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, December 9, 2014

Mr. JOLLY. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of this important appropriations measure to keep our government funded and open, but I also rise to encourage my colleagues on our side of the aisle and address many of the concerns I have heard.

In July of this year, this House, our side of the aisle, passed a border security bill focused on protecting our borders from illegal entries, building facilities at the border to hold illegal entrants at the point of crossing, increasing the amount of immigration law judges and tele-courtrooms that allow undocumented individuals to be adjudicated close to the border instead of being provided travel to courts around the nation, and authorizing our National Guard to respond to the spike in illegal border crossings.

This House passed that measure. The Senate refused to consider it. The President would not sign it.

Last week, this House, our side of the aisle, passed legislation declaring null and void the President's recent Executive Order granting temporary amnesty to millions who have broken our laws. I was proud to be a cosponsor of that legislation.

This House passed that measure. The Senate refused to consider it. The President would not sign it.

After the President's Executive Order, dozens of us, including myself, sent a letter asking the leadership of the House Appropriations Committee to attach a provision to this bill declaring that none of the funds provided to the Administration may be used to implement the President's amnesty order. But the Senate refuses to consider it. The President will not sign it.

The numbers today are simply not on our side. And our only remaining recourse is to shut down the government—a tactic that I cannot support, that I said I would not support when I was elected, and I intend to keep my word. This is a tactic that I believe is terribly wrong for our country, for our economy and for private sector jobs throughout the country.

And so today we should say to the American people, ''The President, the Senate, they must own their legacy. And this House must own ours.''

So what is our legacy today on this side of this aisle? It is a legacy of fighting for Constitutional principles, adherence to the rule of law and separation of powers ordained by our founders, and it is a legacy that today includes a good appropriations bill that is right for the country, and frankly, right for conservatives.

The bill we pass today:

1. Prohibits any funding for the president's Race to the Top Education program, better known throughout the country as Common Core;

2. Slashes the budget of the Internal Revenue Service and prohibits the agency from targeting non-profit groups based on political or ideological affiliations;

3. Reins in the Environmental Protection Agency's plans to reach further into our local communities with regulations opposed by mayors, homeowners, businesses, and agriculture interests;

4. Maintains critical pro-life protections preventing tax dollars from being used for abortion related services;

5. Cuts Obamacare's Independent Payment Advisory Board which uses price controls to impact available care to patients;

6. Prohibits the transfer of Guantanamo Bay prisoners to prisons here in the United States; and,

7. It prohibits Department of Justice programs like Fast & Furious.

And most importantly, this bill represents a continued dramatic rollback of our federal budget. This bill spends approximately $1.1 trillion on federal activities, down from approximately $1.4 trillion just five years ago. This budget is lower than we have seen in years and represents a historic downturn in spending—all at the hands of Republicans in Congress. Recall that the President submitted his budget proposal at the beginning of this year and it was resoundingly rejected by both the House and the Senate, including rejection by many members of his own party. This is our budget now, and it is a budget we should support.

This budget prioritizes the right programs for federal spending. It funds our men and women in uniform with the tools and technology they need to safely combat threats around the globe. It provides increased funding to the Veterans Affairs Administration to decrease wait times for benefit applicants. It wisely invests in targeted medical research to address Alzheimer's, cancer, and pediatric sub-specialties.

Finally, and let's be very clear here, this legislation allows us to combat the President's Executive Order on amnesty from a much stronger position in a matter of weeks.

We don't have the votes today in the Senate to overturn the President's amnesty order. That is the reality. There is no means to get a measure even to the President's desk for him to veto. We simply don't have the votes in the Democrat-controlled chamber on the other side of this Capitol. It would be shortsighted for us to convince ourselves otherwise and proceed listlessly down a path to what would only lead to a government shutdown—a shutdown that would break the faith of the American people who have entrusted us with the responsibility to govern.

But we will, beginning January 6. In mere weeks, we will have a Senate controlled by conservatives who can join with this body, this side of the aisle, and continue our legacy of fighting for Constitutional convictions over Constitutional compromise.

Let us today embrace these critically important incremental conservative successes in this appropriations bill—successes that reflect our view of government—and let us then return to this body in only a few weeks with our new Senate colleagues to continue the fight on behalf of the American people. We can then lay on the President's desk legislation that challenges his Executive Order and asks him to defend what we all believe is an intellectually dishonest interpretation of his authority under Article II of the Constitution.

Colleagues, I urge your support.

CLAY HUNT SUICIDE PREVENTION FOR AMERICAN VETERANS ACT

SPEECH OF

HON. MICHAEL G. FITZPATRICK

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, December 9, 2014

Mr. FITZPATRICK. Mr. Speaker, as our nation continues to welcome home a new generation of veterans from the battlefield, it is vital that we address the challenges faced by these men and women. The effects of combat are not always left behind for our soldiers, and the transition into civilian life all too often is not an easy one.

Right now, our nation is struggling to combat the impact of PTSD on veterans, and statistics from the VA show that each day 22 American veterans take their own life. This epidemic must be dealt with—the lives of those who protected our freedoms are on the line.

This week, the House passed legislation named after Clay Hunt, a Marine veteran who, after working as an activist drawing attention to the struggles of returning veterans, took his life at the age of just 28.

The Clay Hunt Suicide Prevention for American Veterans Act will take meaningful steps to ensure veterans like Clay have the resources and treatment they need when they return home. That means increasing access to, boosting accountability for and removing the stigma of potentially-life saving mental health care.

I stand in support of this legislation with my colleagues on both sides of the aisle. I also stand with veterans' advocacy organizations across America—including the Travis Manion Foundation, based in my district—who work daily to engage and empower veterans and their families throughout their individual journeys.

This week, the Travis Manion Foundation will recognize veteran Jake Wood with the group's annual 'If Not Me, The Who Award' for his work to support military veterans upon their return home. This is not the first time the Travis Manion Foundation has recognized Jake—back in 2010, the group gave a fellowship to 'Mission Continues' and 'Team Rubicon', organizations Jake was involved with alongside Clay Hunt. Together, Jake and Clay performed over 500 service hours in humanitarian support with other veterans.

It is fitting that we recognize Jake at this time as we honor Clay with the passing of this bill. The time is now for Senate and president must act on the 'Clay Hunt Suicide Prevention for American Veterans Act'.

Twenty-two lives lost a day are too many. One is too many. Let's work together—Congress, advocacy groups, and veterans—to put an end to the epidemic of veteran suicide.

INSULAR AREAS AND FREELY ASSOCIATED STATES ENERGY DEVELOPMENT

SPEECH OF

HON. EARL BLUMENAUER

OF OREGON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, December 9, 2014

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, it's inexcusable that the least productive Congress in history has waited until the final hour to produce an appropriations package this flawed. The bill fails to take advantage of opportunities to save money, ranging from defense to agricultural reforms, and has instead chosen to make indefensible reductions across critical programs.

In most areas, from health reform to education, the resources committed are insufficient to keep up with inflation let alone tackle the problems that confront America's families.

I have deep concerns regarding a policy rider snuck into the bill that would allow wealthy campaign donors to contribute ten times as much money as the current individual caps allow, further flooding our political system with dark money. Campaign finance provisions are completely non-germane to this bill, and the last thing America needs is to make it easier to spend more money on campaigns.

Instead of making difficult choices about how to fund the Department of Defense, and our sprawling nuclear arsenal, we've chosen an "all of the above" approach, providing the Pentagon with everything it wants, and then some. Managed to at once give it too much for wrong things and refuse to begin reforms the DOD knows it needs and wants to carry out.

The bill commits the U.S. to rebuilding our nuclear triad of ground-based missiles, bombers, and submarines, an effort that could cost over $1 trillion dollars over the next 30 years and ensure nuclear weapons remain a foundation of U.S. defense planning.

Nothing epitomizes this self-destructive urge than the dramatic cuts to the Internal Revenue Service (IRS). The $10.9 billion in funding for the IRS represents a cut of $350 million from last year. Since fiscal year 2010, Congress has cut IRS funding by almost $1.2 billion—10 percent—forcing the agency to slash its full-time, permanent workforce by 13,000 employees. This occurred even as the country added approximately 7 million new taxpayers. As a result, the IRS's current staffing level is 26 percent below the number of employees it had 18 years ago.

Among these cuts, the IRS has lost 5,000 enforcement personnel, such as revenue agents and criminal investigators. This leaves billions of dollars in tax revenue uncollected. Every dollar that we invest in the IRS generates $7 in return. Compliance with our tax code is largely voluntary and these cuts make it much harder for taxpayers to navigate the system. The IRS was already predicting that only 53 percent of taxpayers who call for help would get through to an IRS agent during the 2015 tax season. Even then, the caller would have an average wait of 34 minutes—while the other half would be left to fend for themselves. This is no way to run a government.

I've met with IRS employees reduced to tears by their frustration being unable to help taxpayers in a timely manner. If someone can get through, they then get a taxpayer who is frustrated, probably angry, as well as confused.

The Homeland Security appropriations bill was one of the most bipartisan this year. Holding up full-year funding for this agency, and in turn national security, in an effort to undermine the Administration's executive order on immigration reform is a reckless, maybe even dangerous game.

The bill includes a number of problematic environmental provisions.

Moving away from the scientific consensus, it continues to bar the Department of Energy from enforcing important standards for light bulb efficiency. It prohibits the EPA from regulating lead ammunition. It prohibits the Fish and Wildlife Service from issuing any Endangered Species Act listing rules for sage grouse species. It cuts important farm bill conservation programs. It also maintains ever lower funding for the EPA, while environmental challenges mount. Since 2010, that agency's budget has been cut by more than $2 billion dollars, or 21 percent.

The bill also includes a very problematic rider that interferes with the direct will of the voters in the District of Columbia. The language is ambiguous, and I share the sentiments of Representatives NORTON and SERRANO that this amendment should not be interpreted as halting the DC measure entirely. Regardless of the interpretation, it is very troubling that Congress interferes with the DC Council's ability to govern to make the city safer and reflect the wishes of its citizens.

America cannot afford to roll the dice on financial reform. This bill rolls back Section 716 of Dodd-Frank, which attempts to deal with the dangerous liability stemming from derivatives trading in taxpayer-insured banks. America cannot afford to risk another taxpayer bailout for Wall Street, while we are still recovering from the last meltdown.

These and many other provisions are deeply concerning and more bad provisions will emerge as people finally have time to read the bill. Nonetheless, in more than 1,000 pages and over a trillion dollars of spending, there are some bright spots.

For more than a decade, I've worked to increase access to clean drinking water and sanitation for the world's poorest populations. The cornerstone of this effort has been through the implementation of my legislation, the Paul Simon Water for the Poor Act of 2005. This is funded in this bill at its highest level ever. This demonstrates a significant commitment from the U.S. to prioritize this type of development assistance and is an example of what is possible with bipartisan cooperation.

I am pleased the bill makes it clear that Congress believes the Department of Transportation should develop separate performance measures for non-motorized traffic injuries and fatalities. It's past time to put bicyclists and pedestrians on equal footing with motorists when it comes to distributing safety money.

This bill also includes two amendments that I cosponsored and worked closely on to create a more rational drug policy. One amendment, led by Mr. ROHRABACHER, would stop DOJ and DEA from interfering with state medical marijuana laws. This represents a historic shift by the federal government in marijuana policy. This suggests that Congress may finally catch up with how most Americans think and behave.

Another amendment, led by Mr. MASSIE, would ensure that the DEA cannot intervene in legal hemp research by universities and state departments of agriculture. This is the final step in a process that we began almost two years ago, by first passing an amendment to the farm bill allowing the research. This additional language should finally protect those programs.

As the Co-Chair of the Congressional Animal Protection Caucus, I am pleased to see a

few key provisions in this legislation that set the stage for future productive efforts, such as animal welfare enforcement funding and language restricting funding for horse slaughter.

These and other positive provisions, however, in no way offset the harm caused by the many destructive elements and the horrible precedent set for future action. A Republican House majority that campaigned on promises to reform and respect the process has instead abased it. A massive bill released too late to read, let alone understand, makes a mockery of their promises and I refuse to support it.

INSULAR AREAS AND FREELY ASSOCIATED STATES ENERGY DEVELOPMENT

SPEECH OF

HON. JOHN CONYERS, JR.

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 11, 2014

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Speaker, I rise in opposition to H.R. 83, Consolidated and Further Continuing Appropriations Act, 2015, and to set forth my views on certain matters concerning or relating to the jurisdiction of the Committee on the Judiciary. While the bill does fund many agencies and programs within the Judiciary Committee's jurisdiction at the 2014 enacted level or higher through September 2015, H.R. 83 funds the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) only through February 27, 2015 because of the Republican Leadership's opposition to the President's actions on immigration. By restricting funding to DHS to a highly limited duration, this measure is not only short-sighted and irresponsible, but potentially harmful to all Americans.

H.R. 83, by providing short-term funding to DHS, makes it nearly impossible for the agency to pursue long-term strategies to ensure the safety and security of our Nation. The bill jeopardizes many critical functions of DHS, including developing technologies to prevent future terrorism attacks and securing the Internet to fight various cyber crimes such as identity theft and financial fraud. It also undermines the agency's Disaster Relief Fund that FEMA uses to fund response and recovery efforts associated with major disasters. Other affected DHS components include the Secret Service, which protects the President and the White House from attack, and the U.S. Coast Guard, which provides essential operations, training, and equipment to those who guard our Nation's waters.

Essentially, the Majority has bundled with must-pass year-end appropriations legislation a short-sighted measure intended to lash back at the President's humanitarian efforts to deal with a major immigration crisis. As a result, H.R. 83 now puts at risk the ability of the DHS and its thousands of dedicated employees to protect all Americans from terrorism, disaster, and crime.

With respect to other agencies and programs that fall within the Judiciary Committee's authorization jurisdiction, H.R. 83 appropriates funding in most instances above 2014 enacted levels. Nevertheless, I am disappointed that the bill reduces funding for the COPS Program—a very effective initiative to reduce crime by putting more police on the streets and promoting community policing—by $6 million.

The bill also extends the Internet Tax Freedom Act till October 1, 2015, which is a moratorium on state and local taxation of Internet access and on multiple or discriminatory taxes on electronic commerce, and which includes grandfather protections.

In addition, the bill includes various riders, some of which are harmful. Fortunately, the final version of H.R. 83 does not include numerous House-proposed riders that would have impeded the Environmental Protection Agency's regulatory authority to ensure the safety of our Nation's air and water.

Further, H.R. 83 attempts to prevent the implementation of an initiative legalizing recreational use of marijuana in the District of Columbia by prohibiting the use of any funds to ''enact any law, rule, or regulation'' for such purpose. It is my understanding, however, that as this initiative has already been enacted, no further funds are needed for it to go into effect. Thus, the bill's restriction has no legal effect on the initiative.

The following summarizes the bill's principal provisions pertaining to the Judiciary Committee's jurisdiction:

JUDICIARY

Funding: $6.7 billion for the Judiciary, which is $182 million more than the 2014 enacted level; the $182 million increase is $1 million less than the Judiciary's request.

Riders: 10 temporary district judgeships were extended for 1 year; no funding for new courthouse construction until the General Services Administration completes a feasibility study.

U.S. PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

Funding: $3.5 billion for the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office (USPTO), which is equal to CBO's projection of USPTO's FY 2015 fee revenue collections, and $434 million above the 2014 enacted level.

DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

Funding:

—$8.44 billion for the Federal Bureau of Investigation, which is $93.3 million more than the 2014 enacted level.

—$2.03 billion for the Drug Enforcement Agency, which is $15.3 million more than the 2014 enacted level.

—$1.2 billion for the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives, which is $22 million more than the 2014 enacted level.

—$6.82 billion for the Bureau of Prisons, Salaries and Expenses account, which is $46 million more than the 2014 enacted level.

—$376 million for Byrne-JAG grants, which is the same as the 2014 enacted level.

—$208 million for the COPS program, which is $6 million less than the 2014 enacted level.

—$430 million for Violence Against Women Prevention and Prosecution Programs, which is $13 million above the 2014 enacted level.

—$125 million for the ongoing DNA Initiative program which funds the testing of sexual assault kits, which is the same as the FY 2014 enacted level and $25 million above the request. In addition, $41 million is included for the new Community Sexual Assault Kit Backlog Reduction program.

—$73 million for the National Instant Criminal Background Check System (NICS), which is $14.5 million more than the 2014 enacted level and $18 million more than the request.

Riders:

—The agreement rejects House policy riders to: 1) block reporting requirements on multiple sales of rifles/shotguns to the same person, and 2) make permanent two annual riders related to firearms.

—The agreement rejects a House rider to defund grants to state or local law enforcement on the basis of local immigration policy.

—The agreement rejects a House rider prohibiting the Department of Justice from enforcing certain parts of the Fair Housing Act.

LEGAL SERVICES CORPORATION

Funding: $375 million, which is $10 million above the enacted 2014 level.

FEDERAL TRADE COMMISSION

Funding: $293 million, which is $5 million below the 2014 enacted level but reflects one-time moving expenses for 2014.

ADMINISTRATIVE CONFERENCE OF THE UNITED STATES

Funding: $3.1 million, which is $.1 million above the 2014 enacted level.

OTHER MATTERS

Abortion

—The agreement does not include a House rider prohibiting funds to subsidize abortion services in connection with a multi-state plan offered under the Affordable Care Act exchanges negotiated by OPM.

SURVEILLANCE

—The agreement does not include significant House-passed reforms on government surveillance activities conducted by the National Security Agency, but instead retains current law.

HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENTAL REGULATORY CONCERNS

—The agreement does not include a House policy rider prohibiting EPA's Clean Power Plan Proposed Rule.

—The agreement does not include a House policy rider prohibiting EPA's rule clarifying which waters are protected by the Clean Water Act.

—The agreement does not include a House policy rider prohibiting EPA from changing the way discharge of fill material is regulated.

—The agreement includes a House policy rider prohibiting regulation of lead in ammunition.

—The agreement includes a House policy rider prohibiting the issuance of final and proposed rules related to Sage Grouse under the Endangered Species Act.

—The agreement does not include a House policy rider prohibiting EPA from ensuring mining companies are financially capable of cleaning up pollution rather than taxpayers, but includes report language on the matter.

—The agreement does not include a House policy rider prohibiting EPA from enforcing a rule on safe removal and renovation of lead paint, but includes report language on the matter.

—The agreement does not include a House policy rider prohibiting funding for the development or revisions of regulations regarding imported ivory.

THE FALSE ECONOMICS OF THE CROMNIBUS BILL

HON. STEVE STOCKMAN

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, December 12, 2014

Mr. STOCKMAN. Mr. Speaker, in the 11th Century, King Canute proved his humility by ordering the tides from not coming in, yet the tides came in without respect to his royal majesty. Last night I thought we were experiencing another King Canute moment. The

House passed a bill that was to rational economics what King Canute's order was to the rising tides.

Perpetuating the overspending and compounding the debt burden on future generations is not only immoral, it is plain dumb policy.

One would have thought that a lesson was learned when in August of 2011, the United States' credit rating was downgraded. But massive deficits have continued and the bill adopted last night will continue those deficits. Today's projections say that in the future the annual deficit will continue to rise—topping the trillion dollar mark in under ten years.

Now we know that these deficits are ultimately unsustainable and a crunch will come. One scenario is that much of the federal debt will be wiped away by inflating the dollar. Meaning that a dollar of debt today could be paid off with a penny of real money. This would have some rather serious side effects such as the destruction of much of the wealth of the U.S. and every other nation. It would mean economic collapse and the destruction of world trade.

Other side effects that the Congress risks by passing legislation like the bill we considered last night are the collapse of the social safety net on which our elderly and disabled population depends. I have a one-hundred trillion dollar bill—and it can't buy a loaf of bread. It is a Zimbabwe bill and that nation's economic policies are what we seem to be trying to emulate.

But my listing of the effects of fiscal (and monetary) incontinence is not the first in this Chamber. And that is the great tragedy. It is like the captain of the *Titanic* knew about the iceberg the previous day and continued his course which he knew would end in catastrophe.

I hope and pray that the members of the next Congress will change course. I have done my work to change that course, and I will continue to work to change U.S. economic policy from outside these walls. God bless America, and God help us.

RECOGNIZING THE LAO AND HMONG-AMERICAN COMMUNITY

HON. JIM COSTA

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, December 12, 2014

Mr. COSTA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and express my appreciation to the Lao and Hmong-American community in California's 16th Congressional District and across the country, especially the veterans and their families. It is important to note their historic and positive contributions to California's San Joaquin Valley and their critical sacrifices in support of the United States during the Vietnam War.

This year, my Congressional office was pleased to once again attend the memorial ceremonies held this past May in Arlington National Cemetery to honor those who served during the Vietnam War as well as their refugee families who were resettled in America following the end of the conflict.

Each year, since May 1997, constituents from my district in the San Joaquin Valley travel a very long distance to Washington, D.C., to help organize and host this memorial service. Colonel Wangyee Vang, President of the Lao Veterans of America Institute, of Fresno, and Philip Smith, Washington Director of the Lao Veterans of America, worked closely with members of the U.S. Congress, Arlington National Cemetery, the U.S. Army and Department of Defense, and others, to coordinate the memorial service at the ''Laos Memorial'' in Arlington. A joint U.S. Armed Services Color Guard, the ''Old Guard,'' and a U.S. Marine Corps Honor Guard provide additional support for the events, which are attended each year by a delegation of Lao Hmong veterans from the Central Valley. A U.S. Army wreath-bearer and bugler contribute additional meaning to this moving ceremony. These important events, which my office has attended over the years, seek to honor the Lao and Hmong veterans and their U.S. Special Forces and CIA clandestine advisers.

As always, I am grateful and proud of the historic and ongoing contributions of the Laotian- and Hmong-American community in the San Joaquin Valley and across the United States. We must not forget how Hmong veterans have sacrificed and struggled to help the United States during and after the war. These brave individuals have truly made the San Joaquin Valley a better place.

Many of my colleagues in the U.S. House and Senate have been supportive of my steadfast efforts to introduce and advance the Hmong Veterans' Service Recognition Act (H.R. 3369), which continues to gain strong bipartisan support in Congress. I wish to thank the many Senators and Members of Congress for standing alongside me in this worthy effort. I must also thank the Hmong veterans and Hmong-American community, who seek to honor their veterans and historic legacy. It is my hope that this legislation will continue to progress as more of my colleagues in the Congress and the public become aware of the unique and important contribution that the Hmong people have made, and continue to make, to our nation.

TRIBUTE TO MIKE FAHEY

HON. GREG WALDEN

OF OREGON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, December 12, 2014

Mr. WALDEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize my very good friend, Mike Fahey, for his many years as a leading Oregon business executive and advocate of forest health. Mike is retiring this month as CEO of Columbia Helicopters, where he has loyally served in numerous executive roles for nearly 40 years. As his career at Columbia Helicopters winds down, I'd like to take a moment to pay tribute to his significant contributions to Oregon and the aerospace industry.

A native Oregonian, Mike was born in Oregon City and attended local public schools. He graduated from Portland State University in 1966 with a Bachelor of Arts degree in Accounting, with Honors. His studies emphasized economics and finance, subjects that would prove to be crucial later in life when he took the helm of a company with global operations.

In 1966, Mike began working for the accounting firm of Arthur Young & Company, and in 1968 he began a three-year project, auditing the books of a rapidly growing, young company called Columbia Helicopters. That audit introduced him to the company's founder, Wes Lematta, a pioneer in the helicopter operations industry. In 1975, Mike joined Columbia Helicopters full time as the company's first Director of Finance. He later was named Vice President of Finance, and became Executive Vice President in 1997.

For the majority of his employment with Columbia Helicopters, Mike has been involved with contract negotiations for both foreign and domestic operations, as well as assisting with the purchase of aircraft to expand the company's fleet of heavy-lift helicopters. One of Mike's happiest memories was when the company purchased two Chinook helicopters from tycoon businessman Donald Trump in 1993. Mike always felt the company got the best end of the bargain because he'd read Trump's book ''The Art of the Deal'' and anticipated a negotiating tactic that Trump attempted to use. Mike won that deal, Donald.

In the late 1990s and throughout the 2000s, Mike took an active role in promoting legislation that would improve forest health. Like most of us from the West, Mike believes that proper forest management is key to maintaining good forest health. The company's ''selective harvesting'' system uses Columbia's helicopters to remove only a portion of the timber, creating natural forest spacing and improving the overall health of the forest.

In 1999, Mike was named President of Columbia Helicopters, a position he held until 2013 when he was named CEO. Perhaps his greatest achievement during that period was the acquisition of the Type Certificates for the Boeing 234 commercial Chinook helicopter, and for the Boeing Vertol 107–II helicopter. This is the equivalent of Chevrolet selling the engineering and manufacturing rights to the Corvette to a small business. Today these heavy-lift helicopters are identified as the Columbia Model 234 Chinook and the Columbia 107–II, and Columbia Helicopters is the world leader in commercial heavy-lift helicopter operations. The company currently has aircraft working around the world: supporting military operations in Afghanistan, moving petroleum exploration equipment in Peru and Papua New Guinea, logging and construction projects in Canada and domestic operations in the western United States.

Throughout the years, Mike has always been a dedicated supporter of numerous charities and organizations, whether local, national or global in scale. He has supported Lines for Life, a non-profit organization dedicated to preventing substance abuse and suicide in youths and the military; Medical Teams International, a global health organization working to provide care to people affected by disaster, conflict and poverty; the Providence Medical Foundation and Providence Child Care; and the American Heart Association. He also currently serves on the Board of Directors for the Oregon Forest Industries Council.

More than anything else, Mike is a devoted and loving family man. He married his wife Penny in 1964 in Lake Oswego, Oregon, where they still maintain a home. They have three children, Michael Fahey II, Holly Bellavara and Elizabeth Tobin, and they have six grandchildren. Mike will finally get to spend more time with his family in retirement, but I expect he will still find time to hit the links with

his clubs—he got his first hole in one in August 2013, and he is making a valiant effort at his second.

Mr. Speaker and my colleagues, please join me in recognizing and thanking my good friend, Mike Fahey, for his many years of exemplary leadership as an Oregon businessman and caring member of his community. I wish Mike and Penny many more years of good health and true happiness.

RECOGNIZING LES McCABE

HON. JIM COSTA

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, December 12, 2014

Mr. COSTA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor of Hebert Leslie McCabe, Jr., who honorably served our nation in the United States Navy during World War II and was employed by Merced College for more than 30 years.

Les was born in Upper Lake, California, on April 9, 1927. Twenty years later he married the love of his life, Elizabeth, with whom he raised five children. After serving in the United States Navy during World War II, Les returned to California to attend college. He earned a bachelor's degree from UC Davis in 1950, his master's degree from UC Davis in 1956, and his doctorate from Nova-Southeastern University in 1977.

Les was employed by Merced College for more than 30 years, working as an Agriculture Business instructor, Career Programs coordinator, and Work Experience coordinator. Les also assumed the roles of Director of Financial Aid and Career Placement and Dean of Vocational Education. Les has the honor of being a charter member of the California Agriculture Teachers Association Hall of Fame as well as a member of the Academic Senate and President of the Faculty Association. Les served honorably on the Merced College Board of Trustees for 16 years and the Merced County Farm Bureau Board of Directors for 15 years. He was also appointed by Governor George Deukmejian to serve on the State Council on Vocational Education.

Les and his family have lived in Merced since 1967. He has been active in the community as a member of many organizations, including the American Legion Le Grand Post, Disabled American Veterans Atwater Post, the Masonic Order, and the Scottish Rite. Not one to shy away from leadership, he also served as President of the Kiwanis Club of Greater Merced and President of the Merced County Chamber of Commerce.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to join me in honoring the service of Les McCabe. He has earned the respect of his peers and the admiration of all who know him.

HONORING WAYNE McCLAIN

HON. ROBIN L. KELLY

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, December 12, 2014

Ms. KELLY of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I submit the following resolution honoring the life and career of University of Illinois Associate Head Basketball Coach Wayne McClain.

Whereas, Over a 37 year career as a teacher, school administrator, and basketball coach at the high school and college level Wayne McClain touched the lives of countless players, students, and families; and

Whereas, Wayne McClain led the Peoria Manual High School Rams to four straight AA State Championships from 1994 to 1997. with his 1997 squad being named National High School Champions; and

Whereas, Wayne McClain was named the Illinois Basketball Coaches Association Coach of the Year in 1995, 1996, and 1997, and the National High School Coach of the Year in 1997; and

Whereas, Wayne McClain coached for 11 years at the University of Illinois, first as an assistant coach, and then as associate head coach; and

Whereas, Following a successful collegiate career, Wayne McClain returned to coach High School basketball last season at Champaign Central High School, seeing it as an opportunity to make a more meaningful and direct impact across his entire community; and

Whereas, Wayne McClain passed away this Fall, and is survived by his wife Robin, his son and former player Sergio, a member of the state champion Rams and four year letterman for the Illini, his daughter Brindeshie, his grandson Sergio Jr., and his granddaughter Brindisi;

Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, by the House of Representatives of the United States of America, That the life and career of Wayne McClain be honored and remembered, and that he be recognized for his nearly four decades of service to student athletes across the state of Illinois.

HONORING THE CAREER OF DR. JOAN L. VORIS

HON. JIM COSTA

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, December 12, 2014

Mr. COSTA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the work and career of UCSF Fresno Associate Dean Dr. Joan L. Voris, and to congratulate her on her retirement from the UCSF Fresno Medical Education Program on January 5, 2015.

Dr. Voris has decided to retire, leaving her most recent post as the associate dean of the UCSF Fresno Medical Education Program, a position she has held since 2002. Prior to her appointment as associate dean, she was a faculty member for 24 years. In her position as associate dean Dr. Voris provided leadership and oversight to residency programs in eight specialties, 17 sub-specialties, undergraduate medical education, the UCSF Fresno Latino Center for Medical Education and Research, the California Area Health Education Center, the UCSF Fresno Alzheimer's and Memory Center, and various pipeline programs within the community.

Dr. Voris has made incredible changes to the UCSF Fresno medical education program as associate dean. During her tenure, the program has seen an increase in the number of core faculty from 77 to 229, and the number of residents and fellows trained on an annual basis increased from 172 to 293, a 70% increase. To add to her long list of accomplishments, all but one of the 14 fellowship programs was established under her leadership.

Prior to working at UCSF Fresno, Dr. Voris attended prestigious Stanford University where she earned both her bachelor's and medical degrees. Afterwards, she completed her pediatrics residency training at UCSF Fresno. During her 36 years working as a pediatrician in Fresno, Dr. Voris has served on a medical team which brings health care to communities in Mexico during the summer, working to provide health care to those who live in areas which have access to little to no medical services.

Due to her amazing contributions to the medical community and her expertise in child abuse issues and childhood obesity, Dr. Voris was named by the Marjaree Mason Center in 2010 as one of their Top 10 Professional Women. Additionally, in 2012, she received the ''Physician Community Service Lifetime Achievement Award'' from the Fresno-Madera Medical Society.

Her colleagues have nothing but praise for Dr. Voris, expressing their appreciation at her tireless efforts to improve health care in the San Joaquin Valley and to increase awareness of UCSF Fresno.

Mr. Speaker, it is with utmost respect that I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring the career of Dr. Joan L. Voris. Her outstanding work in pediatrics, her improvements at the UCSF Fresno Medical Education Program, and her extensive contributions to the community have all led to her to be regarded as one of the best doctors in the Central Valley. It is my hope that she continues to have a happy and fulfilling life in retirement.

H.R. 83

HON. MATT CARTWRIGHT

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, December 12, 2014

Mr. CARTWRIGHT. Mr. Speaker, last night, I voted ''no'' on H.R. 83 (The Continuing Resolution/Omnibus bill) despite adequate funding levels in several areas because it contained far too many poison pills. The best way forward would have been to compromise on a bill that did not include policy riders and would have funded the government without jeopardizing our financial security, the environment, our retirees, and our election system. I fully support the provisions in H.R. 83 that provide robust funding for our military, provide a 1% pay raise for military and civilian employees, and would provide additional funding for Tobyhanna Army Depot. However, I ultimately voted ''no'' because the legislation places the interests of greedy Wall Street investment bankers ahead of regular American working families. The Continuing Resolution/Omnibus bill, which passed by a narrow 219–206, guts important Dodd-Frank safeguards against a repeat of the $700 billion taxpayer bailout of Wall Street financiers. It also exponentially raises the limits on campaign contribution cash that wealthy individuals (like Wall Street bankers) can donate to federal political parties. In one bill, House Speaker JOHN BOEHNER has managed both to jeopardize the American economy and further weaken the foundations of our American democracy itself. We should have been able to vote on a bill

that focused on funding our government, instead we had to vote on a bill that contained numerous giveaways to private interests and that is why I voted "no."

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. ROBERT HURT

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, December 12, 2014

Mr. HURT. Mr. Speaker, I was not present for Roll Call vote #564, a recorded vote on H.R. 5699. Had I been present, I would have voted "yea."

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. TIM MURPHY

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, December 12, 2014

Mr. MURPHY of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, on roll call no. 564 had I been present, I would have voted YEA.

FREEDOM OF THE PRESS

HON. STEVE STOCKMAN

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, December 12, 2014

Mr. STOCKMAN. Mr. Speaker, I would like to discuss today a very important and serious issue that is seemingly taking hold within our nation and that is an "assault on our freedom of the press". Mr. Speaker, I would like to submit a recent article in Roll Call entitled "Congress: Support Higher Level of Press Freedoms, End Propaganda". In particular, the article opines "that administration officials have gone to great lengths to control media messages and the President's refusal to grant free and easy access for photographers and reporters". Mr. Speaker, clearly, restricting or controlling media messages is without a doubt—propaganda.

[From Roll Call, Dec. 10, 2014]

CONGRESS: SUPPORT HIGHER LEVEL OF PRESS FREEDOMS, END PROPAGANDA—COMMENTARY

(By Maayan Jaffe)

It seems that recently, U.S. media took a turn for the worse. In 2013, Reporters Without Borders noted a profound erosion of press freedom, which included a year of attacks on whistleblowers and digital journalists, and revelations about mass surveillance. The U.S. plunged 13 spots on the group's rankings to No. 46.

Simultaneously, reports continue to surface that administration officials have gone to great lengths to control media messages. Associated Press editors have decried the president's refusal to grant free and easy access for photographers and reporters and equated his actions as tantamount to propaganda.

It's striking that with what the Obama administration is doing—and is only getting away with it because the media use the handout copy and photographs—that America's closest allies are regularly maligned. In the last month, for instance, it was reported with sensation and disdain that a top U.S. official referred to Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu as "chicken----" and that U.S. ally Azerbaijan, apparently, is trying to promote its relationship with the U.S., instead of supporting radicals around the world like some others.

All this, while arch enemies—or countries that pose a risk to national security, sponsors of the murderous ISIS to the Mullahs of Iran—are given a free ride . . . even by state-sponsored media. The Washington Free Beacon reported that Congress was calling for an investigation into Voice of America's Persian language news service as a result of the station's systemic pro-Iran bias and cozy ties to the anti-American ruling regime, according to a letter sent recently to Secretary of State John Kerry.

The Free Beacon wrote, "Lawmakers and Iranian dissidents have long accused VOA's Persian News Network (PNN) of producing sympathetic coverage of the Iranian regime and blacklisting prominent Iranian opposition voices . . . The call from Congress for an investigation into these alleged practices comes just a month after the Washington Free Beacon revealed that PNN had banned a prominent Iranian opposition member and placed him on a so-called 'black list' after he attacked Iran's ruling regime for sponsoring terrorism."

Earlier this year, I penned a piece in Roll Call about the tragedy of Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty's bias against Azerbaijan. I asked Congress why it allows $750 million of American taxpayers' money to fund a media outlet that is attacking our allies. That report—which found that in a one-month period RFE/RL had managed to publish 30 articles and videos about Azerbaijan (not one celebrating Azerbaijan's accomplishments), while it ran nothing of pressure against America's adversary, Armenia—was met with an explosion of Twitter fury.

Americans don't want to face up to what the media has become: a propaganda machine, pandering to the special interests, superficial stereotypes, personal agendas and money, and fear of reprisal by extremist regimes.

Azerbaijan and Israel are attacked not only because attacks sell, but because they are two of the few Middle Eastern/Muslim countries with pro-Western, anti-terrorist governments and societies and therefore journalists are less afraid to come out against them. Israel is accused of war crimes for protecting itself from a daily barrage of rocket attacks and trauma, while the world is silent to Egyptian action recently taken against Gaza, a country which clearly understands the difference between Palestinian civilians and the terrorists of Hamas.

Israel and Azerbaijan take this pressure because the alternative is siding with extremism and neither country is willing to compromise their democratic, open ideals. But Congress needs to pay attention to this growing trend because good friends can only take so much bullying.

Israel and Azerbaijan—or any U.S. ally—are not without challenges and growth opportunities. Iran is a rogue regime developing nuclear weapons that could shift the world's balance, and we are supporting a media outlet that panders to that regime. The media, with the support of Congress, needs to be bold about what is really happening on the ground. A truthful report here and there is not enough. We need to regain a top level of freedom of the press and be confident that if we tell the full truth, then truth will prevail.

Congress has an obligation to retain American freedom of the press. I hope this new Congress will see access to information as a fundamental freedom and strength. If we lose that right, I don't want to think about what will be next . . .

IN MEMORY OF GERALD "JERRY" HOGAN

HON. GREG WALDEN

OF OREGON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, December 12, 2014

Mr. WALDEN. Mr. Speaker, it is with great sadness that I rise today to honor the memory of Gerald Hogan, who passed earlier this week at his home in McLean, Virginia. Jerry, as everyone called him, was a longtime outstanding advocate for the telecommunications industry, most recently with AT&T. Jerry is very well known throughout this Chamber and many of us regarded him as a close personal friend.

Jerry was always interested in you as a person and would ask about your family. He genuinely cared and would remember what you told him. If he learned it was your birthday, you could expect a phone call the next year. If you recounted a tale of your child, he would offer tips from a lifetime of parenting his children. Humble, generous, genuine, caring, funny and smart. . . . Jerry was all of these to his broad range of friends.

Jerry will be sorely missed for so many wonderful personal attributes, not least of which was his love for his children and their endeavors. The last few years Jerry and I had a fun gentleman's bet as his youngest son played against my beloved Oregon Ducks. On a few big occasions my Ducks came out on the losing side of the contest but Jerry, always the funny and classy act, would see me with a twinkle in his eye and deliver some well-deserved ribbing. Our business meetings in the past were never quick as we'd joyfully spend the first portion of our time swapping stories about all of Jerry's children and family and mine too before we'd get down to the official business matters. I will really miss all of my interactions with Jerry.

I am very privileged to have known Jerry and will always remember him very fondly. On behalf of many of my colleagues and my staff I want to let Jerry's dear friends and family—especially his wife Donna, his two sons, Brian and Kevin, and his daughter, Kelly—know that all who knew Jerry always felt that he brought high respect and honor to his work. Our prayers are with you during this time of sadness, and may the luck of the Irish be with you always.

Mr. Speaker, a number of my colleagues have asked me to include their following comments.

Congressman FRED UPTON said: "My condolences go out to Jerry's wife, Donna, and their wonderful children. We will miss Jerry's bright smile, wit, and warmth. Jerry was one who, virtually every minute of his all too short life, truly lived the words of the poem 'I shall not pass this way again.' 'I shall pass through this world but once. Any good therefore that I can do or any kindness that I can show to any human being, let me do it now. Let me not defer or neglect it, for I shall not pass this way again.' Thanks for all the love and laughs, Jerry. Godspeed."

Congressman F. JAMES SENSENBRENNER, Jr. said: "The world will be a little less full now that Jerry Hogan is no longer a part of it. Jerry was a truly wonderful person and I was blessed to call him a friend. I wish his wife Donna and his children the very best during this difficult time."

Congressman TOM MARINO said: "I am deeply saddened by the loss of Jerry Hogan. He was a close friend and trusted advisor and we all feel the void of his passing. My condolences go out to his friends and family during this time of sadness."

Congressman PETER KING said: "Jerry put up a terrific fight against his illness over the past four years and exemplified the term Fighting Irish. I admired his dedication and loyalty and will miss my good friend."

Former Congressman Dan Lungren said: "Jerry was a great friend and a special person. Even during his time of need, fighting his own battle, he heard of a challenge that a member of my family was once again taking on and he informed me that he awoke that morning at 4 AM and said the Rosary in her honor. That is how he lived his life thinking of others and giving to others to the very end. God Bless you Jerry and God Bless your wonderful family during this sad time."

HONORING FRAN ROEHM

HON. JANICE D. SCHAKOWSKY

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, December 12, 2014

Ms. SCHAKOWSKY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Frances "Fran" Roehm, a librarian extraordinaire at the Skokie Public Library in my district who is retiring after 18 years of remarkable service to our community.

Fran graduated from the University of Illinois and received a Bachelor's degree in History. As a single mom, she was awarded a scholarship from the then Secretary of State Jim Edgar. This scholarship allowed Fran to return to school and earn her Master's Degree in Library of Sciences, also from the University of Illinois.

Fran Roehm has worked as the Skokie Net Librarian and Community Liaison with distinction and has guided consumers to resources in the community. Fran is a leader in the library community who works hard to bring the best resources to patrons at the Skokie Public Library. She shines a bright light on our community and the rich resources available at the Skokie Library. Her compassion and leadership inspire the people around her to advocate for others.

She was nominated by State Senate President John Cullerton to serve on the "Eliminate the Digital Divide Committee" and has proudly served on that committee, which distributed $4,000,000 in grants to organizations that serve low-income populations. This important grant program seeks to provide access to computers, telecommunications technologies and related training to disadvantaged communities—a major interest of Fran.

Fran also offered a wonderful form of outreach to my office. She realized that the library would be a perfect location for neighborhood office hours and from there, we began bringing our constituent services to the Skokie Library in the evenings, once a month, for constituents who cannot meet with our staff during the day for help. This service also allows the public to become more civically engaged. In addition, Fran helped make our annual Artistic Discovery high school art event, which we hold every year at the Skokie library, an extremely successful and welcoming event. Fran is masterful at putting resources and people together. She has been a great advocate and ally to our office.

Fran is the proud mother of son, Christopher, who lives in California and a proud grandmother to 5-year-old Twyla. Fran is a warm, kind, generous person who has touched and enriched countless lives.

I join others in the Skokie area and in Illinois in offering my deep gratitude and appreciation of Fran's decades of work and lifelong commitment to providing equal access to community resources. Although she is leaving the Skokie Library, she will remain a leader in our community advocating for the underserved. I wish her well and ask this body to do the same.

ANTI-SEMITISM AND ETHNIC CLEANSING

HON. STEVE STOCKMAN

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, December 12, 2014

Mr. STOCKMAN. Mr. Speaker, I would like to discuss today an issue that continues to haunt ethnic and religious minorities throughout our world and in particular, a rise in anti-Semitism and ethnic cleansing in Armenia. Mr. Speaker, in other words, Armenia, throughout its history continues to practice anti-Semitism and ethnic cleansing of the Azerbaijani minority. Mr. Speaker, I would like to submit an article written by Arye Gut, a board member of the Israeli-Azerbaijani International Organization entitled "Anti-Semitism in Armenia: A Clear and Present Danger". Mr. Gut clearly articulates the issues of anti-Semitism and ethnic cleansing in Armenia.

ANTI-SEMITISM IN ARMENIA: A CLEAR AND PRESENT DANGER

(By Arye Gut/JNS.org)

The conflict in Syria has forced millions to leave their homes, among them many of the country's Armenian minority. Many have fled and returned to Armenia, a safe haven for ethnic Armenians—much as Israel is for Jews around the world. So it is ironic, given this shared need for a homeland free of religious intolerance, that Armenia's own Jewish community has been pressured and intimidated since the country attained independence.

Anti-Semitism in Armenia is an unfortunate and little-acknowledged fact. Since the fall of the Soviet Union, the country's Jewish minority and Jewish heritage—the products of a more tolerant time—have shrunk dramatically. The end of Soviet rule removed constraint, and anti-Semitic attacks rose dramatically. That, and Armenia's ongoing economic collapse, drive the Jews of Armenia to flee the country. In just 20 years, Armenian Jewish population has shrunk from more than 5,000 to just a few hundred.

And the cultural violence has continued. Anti-Semitic books are published and TV programs aired, and the Holocaust memorial in the capital of Yerevan has been repeatedly defaced. Of course, many countries have suffered such unfortunate incidents, the product of an ignorant populace. But in Armenia such views have been espoused even by mainstream politicians and media personalities. In 2004, a pro-government radio presenter expressed anti-Semitic views for months on end. A nationalist politician was also allowed to freely make lurid slurs against Jews before public pressure forced the government to arrest him.

The dwindling Jewish community in Armenia has complained about these attacks—the head of the Jewish community expressed her concern that "this [anti-Semitism] has the backing of people in power." But appeals have fallen on deaf ears, which is hardly a surprise when such attitudes are shared by much of Armenian society. The Anti-Defamation League's latest survey in June 2014 showed that the rate of anti-Semitism in Armenia (at 58 percent) was the third-highest in all of Europe, and the highest in all of the former Soviet Union and Eastern Europe. Thus, around 1.3 million out of 2.2 million adults in Armenia expressed anti-Semitic attitudes. Armenia's closest comparisons were with virulently hostile countries in the Middle East.

Sixty-three percent of Armenians surveyed believe that Jews are hated "because of the way Jews behave;" 60 percent claimed that "Jews don't care what happens to anyone but their own kind;" 45 percent think that "Jews still talk too much about what happened to them in the Holocaust;" and 38 percent consider that "Jews are responsible for most of the world's wars."

Also disturbing, and of concern to Jews around the world, is that in 1988 some 49,928 families (250,000 Azerbaijanis) were forced to flee their places of origin in 172 Azerbaijani inhabited villages, 89 villages with mixed ethnic population, and six cities from Armenia. During the deportation, 226 Azerbaijanis were killed by Armenians and scores horrifically injured. Their houses and properties were burned as well.

The Khojaly massacre, committed by current Armenian leadership with incredible brutality, was one of the worst tragedies of the 20th century. It is a historical fact that the Armenian armed forces and gunmen spared none of the Khojaly residents, who had not managed to leave the city and its surroundings. As a result of the atrocities of the Armenian armed forces, 613 people were killed, 487 people were crippled, and 1,275 people—the elderly, children, and women who were captured—were subjected to unprecedented torture, abuse, and humiliation.

In addition, Armenia, the aggressor, illegally occupied 20 percent of Azerbaijan, including Nagorno-Karabakh and seven adjacent districts. This caused a refugee crisis numbering nearly 1 million innocent Azerbaijanis, as they attempted to ethnically cleanse the region. Today, this remains a threat to peace and security in the South Caucasus region. Encouraged by intense Armenian lobbying efforts in the U.S. and other key nations, as well as by strong and ongoing Russian military, economic, and political aid, Armenia has ignored four United Nations Security Council resolutions associated with the occupation of Azerbaijani lands and treatment of civilians.

Perhaps this is not so surprising considering that one of Armenia's closest allies is theocratic Iran, which has always opposed Israel's right to existence. This strange relationship has been very beneficial for Iran, which has used Armenia as a conduit for smuggling and other illicit activities, often with serious consequences for U.S. national security.

The last point also has unnerving overtones for Armenia's Jewish community, which has never forgotten the participation of the brutal 20,000-strong Armenian Legion as part of Wehrmacht in the Second World War. The Legion, led by the nationalist warlord known as General Dro, was tasked with rounding up Jews and other "undesirables" behind the German army as it swept across Russia, and organized their death marches to the concentration camps.

In such an environment, it is hardly surprising that most of Armenia's Jewish population has either fled or intermarried to

avoid attracting attention. Regrettably, the government of Armenia does almost nothing to curb the growing anti-Semitism in the country. Until Armenia realizes that narrow-minded nationalism and blaming the country's economic and political problems on outsiders will never solve anything, the Jews of Armenia will continue to suffer.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. TAMMY DUCKWORTH

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, December 12, 2014

Ms. DUCKWORTH. Mr. Speaker, on December 9, 2014, on Roll Call #552 on the Democratic Motion to Recommit H.R. 5781, I am not recorded because I was absent for medical reasons. Had I been present, I would have voted YEA.

On December 9, 2014, on Roll Call #553 on Passage of H.R. 5781—California Emergency Drought Relief Act 2014, I am not recorded because I was absent for medical reasons. Had I been present, I would have voted NAY.

On December 10, 2014, on Roll Call #554 on H. Res. 775 Providing for consideration of S. 2244, the Terrorism Risk Insurance Program Reauthorization Act of 2014; and for other purposes, I am not recorded because I was absent for medical reasons. Had I been present, I would have voted NAY.

On December 10, 2014, on Roll Call #555 on the Motion to Suspend the Rules and Pass S. 1000—Chesapeake Bay Accountability and Recovery Act of 2014, I am not recorded because I was absent for medical reasons. Had I been present, I would have voted YEA.

On December 10, 2014, on Roll Call #557 on Passage of S. 2244—Terrorism Risk Insurance Program Reauthorization Act, I am not recorded because I was absent for medical reasons. Had I been present, I would have voted YEA.

On December 10, 2014, on Roll Call #558 on Motion to Suspend the Rules and Concur in the Senate Amendment to H.R. 4681, I am not recorded because I was absent for medical reasons. Had I been present, I would have voted YEA.

On December 10, 2014, on Roll Call #559 on Motion to Suspend the Rules and Concur in the Senate Amendment to H.R. 2719, I am not recorded because I was absent for medical reasons. Had I been present, I would have voted YEA.

On December 10, 2014, on Roll Call #560 on Motion to Suspend the Rules and Concur in the Senate Amendment to H.R. 1204, I am not recorded because I was absent for medical reasons. Had I been present, I would have voted YEA.

On December 11, 2014, on Roll Call #561 on H. Res. 776, Providing for Consideration of the Motion to Concur in the Senate Amendment with an Amendment to H.R. 83—Consolidated and Further Continuing Appropriations Act, 2015, I am not recorded because I was absent for medical reasons. Had I been present, I would have voted NAY.

On December 11, 2014, on Roll Call #562 on the Motion to Suspend the Rules and Pass H.R. 5806—Supporting America's Charities Act, I am not recorded because I was absent for medical reasons. Had I been present, I would have voted NAY.

On December 11, 2014, on Roll Call #563 on the Motion to Concur in the Senate Amendment with an Amendment to H.R. 83—Consolidated and Further Continuing Appropriations Act, 2015, I am not recorded because I was absent for medical reasons. Had I been present, I would have voted YEA.

On December 11, 2014, on Roll Call #564 on the Motion to Suspend the Rules and Pass, as Amended H.R. 5699—John Muir National Historic Site Expansion Act, I am not recorded because I was absent for medical reasons. Had I been present, I would have voted YEA.

Daily Digest

HIGHLIGHTS

Senate agreed to the motion to concur in the amendment of the House of Representatives to the amendment of the Senate to H.R. 3979, Carl Levin and Howard P. "Buck" McKeon National Defense Authorization Act.

Senate

Chamber Action

Routine Proceedings, pages S6699–S6794

Measures Introduced: Nine bills and two resolutions were introduced, as follows: S. 3009–3017, and S. Res. 600–601. **Page S6788**

Measures Reported:

Special Report entitled "Further Revised Allocation to Subcommittees of Budget Totals for Fiscal Year 2015". (S. Rept. No. 113–312)

S. 2055, to allow for the collection of certain user fees by non-Federal entities, with amendments. (S. Rept. No. 113–309)

Report to accompany S. 1014, to reduce sports-related concussions in youth. (S. Rept. No. 113–310)

Report to accompany S. 2581, to require the Consumer Product Safety Commission to promulgate a rule to require child safety packaging for liquid nicotine containers. (S. Rept. No. 113–311)

Report to accompany S. 2922, to reinstate reporting requirements related to United States-Hong Kong relations. (S. Rept. No. 113–313)

Report to accompany S. 2482, to implement the Convention on the Conservation and Management of the High Seas Fisheries Resources in the North Pacific Ocean, as adopted at Tokyo on February 24, 2012. (S. Rept. No. 113–314)

Report to accompany S. 2484, to implement the Convention on the Conservation and Management of the High Seas Fishery Resources in the South Pacific Ocean, as adopted at Auckland on November 14, 2009. (S. Rept. No. 113–315)

Report to accompany S. 2485, to implement the Amendment to the Convention on Future Multilateral Cooperation in the Northwest Atlantic Fisheries, as adopted at Lisbon on September 28, 2007. (S. Rept. No. 113–316)

Report to accompany S. 2442, to direct the Secretary of the Interior to take certain land and mineral rights on the reservation of the Northern Cheyenne Tribe of Montana and other culturally important land into trust for the benefit of the Northern Cheyenne Tribe. (S. Rept. No. 113–317)

Report to accompany S. 2140, to improve the transition between experimental permits and commercial licenses for commercial reusable launch vehicles. (S. Rept. No. 113–318)

Report to accompany S. 429, to enable concrete masonry products manufacturers to establish, finance, and carry out a coordinated program of research, education, and promotion to improve, maintain, and develop markets for concrete masonry products. (S. Rept. No. 113–319)

Report to accompany S. 2022, to establish scientific standards and protocols across forensic disciplines. (S. Rept. No. 113–320)

Report to accompany S. 2777, to establish the Surface Transportation Board as an independent establishment. (S. Rept. No. 113–321)

Report to accompany S. 2799, to extend the authority of satellite carriers to retransmit certain television broadcast station signals. (S. Rept. No. 113–322) **Page S6788**

Measures Passed:

Enrollment Correction: Senate agreed to H. Con. Res. 121, providing for a correction in the enrollment of the bill H.R. 3979. **Page S6739**

Enrollment Correction: Senate agreed to H. Con. Res. 123, directing the Clerk of the House of Representatives to make a correction in the enrollment of the bill H.R. 3979. **Page S6739**

House Messages:

Carl Levin and Howard P. "Buck" McKeon National Defense Authorization Act: By 89 yeas to 11

nays (Vote No. 325), Senate agreed to the motion to concur in the amendment of the House of Representatives to the amendment of the Senate to H.R. 3979, 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, by the order of the Senate of December 11, 2014, 60 Senators having voted in the affirmative, after taking action on the following motions and amendments proposed thereto: **Pages S6701–39**

Rejected:

By 18 yeas to 82 nays (Vote No. 323), Coburn Motion to refer the message of the House on the bill to the Committee on Armed Services, with instructions to report back forthwith with changes to strike Title XXX, the nondefense-related lands portion of the bill. (A unanimous-consent agreement was reached providing that the motion, having failed to achieve 60 affirmative votes, the motion was not agreed to.) **Page S6738**

Withdrawn:

Reid motion to concur in the amendment of the House to the amendment of the Senate to the bill, with Reid Amendment No. 3984 (to the amendment of the House to the amendment of the Senate to the bill), to change the enactment date. **Page S6738**

During consideration of this measure today, Senate also took the following action:

By 55 yeas to 44 nays (Vote No. 324), Senate sustained the ruling of the Chair that under precedent set by the Senate on October 6, 2011, such a motion is dilatory post-cloture and not in order. Subsequently, Senator Coburn motion to suspend Rule XXII for the purpose of proposing an amendment was rejected. **Page S6738**

Reid Amendment No. 3985 (to Amendment No. 3984), of a perfecting nature, fell when Reid motion to concur in the amendment of the House to the amendment of the Senate to the bill, with Reid Amendment No. 3984, was withdrawn. **Page S6738**

Consolidated and Further Continuing Appropriations Act—Agreement: Senate began consideration of the amendment of the House of Representatives to the amendment of the Senate to H.R. 83, to require the Secretary of the Interior to assemble a team of technical, policy, and financial experts to address the energy needs of the insular areas of the United States and the Freely Associated States through the development of energy action plans aimed at promoting access to affordable, reliable energy, including increasing use of indigenous clean-energy resources, taking action on the following motions and amendments proposed thereto: **Pages S6740–67**

Pending:

Reid motion to concur in the amendment of the House to the amendment of the Senate to the bill. **Pages S6740–41**

Reid motion to concur in the amendment of the House to the amendment of the Senate to the bill, with Reid Amendment No. 4100 (to the amendment of the House to the amendment of the Senate to the bill), to change the enactment date. **Page S6741**

Reid Amendment No. 4101 (to Amendment No. 4100), of a perfecting nature. **Page S6741**

Reid motion to refer the message of the House on the bill to the Committee on Appropriations, with instructions, Reid Amendment No. 4102, to change the enactment date. **Page S6741**

Reid Amendment No. 4103 (to (the instructions) Amendment No. 4102), of a perfecting nature. **Page S6741**

Reid Amendment No. 4104 (to Amendment No. 4103), of a perfecting nature. **Page S6741**

A motion was entered to close further debate on the motion to concur in the amendment of the House to the amendment of the Senate to the bill, and, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, a vote on cloture will occur on Sunday, December 14, 2014. **Page S6741**

A unanimous-consent agreement was reached providing for further consideration of the motion to concur in the amendment of the House to the amendment of the Senate to the bill, at approximately 12 noon, on Saturday, December 13, 2014. **Page S6794**

Nominations Confirmed: Senate confirmed the following nominations:

Mark Gilbert, of Florida, to be Ambassador to New Zealand, and to serve concurrently and without additional compensation as Ambassador to the Independent State of Samoa. **Pages S6739–40, S6794**

Robert C. Barber, of Massachusetts, to be Ambassador to the Republic of Iceland. **Pages S6739–40, S6794**

By 62 yeas 35 nays (Vote No. EX. 326), David Nathan Saperstein, of the District of Columbia, to be Ambassador at Large for International Religious Freedom. **Pages S6739–40, S6794**

Amy Jane Hyatt, of California, to be Ambassador to the Republic of Palau. **Pages S6739–40, S6794**

Virginia E. Palmer, of Virginia, to be Ambassador to the Republic of Malawi. **Pages S6739–40, S6794**

Donald L. Heflin, of Virginia, to be Ambassador to the Republic of Cabo Verde. **Pages S6739–40, S6794**

Arnold A. Chacon, of Virginia, to be Director General of the Foreign Service. **Pages S6739–40, S6794**

Michael W. Kempner, of New Jersey, to be a Member of the Broadcasting Board of Governors for a term expiring August 13, 2015.

Pages S6739–40, S6794

Leon Aron, of Virginia, to be a Member of the Broadcasting Board of Governors for a term expiring August 13, 2016. **Pages S6739–40, S6794**

Messages from the House: **Pages S6785–86**

Enrolled Bills Presented: **Page S6786**

Executive Communications: **Pages S6786–88**

Additional Cosponsors: **Pages S6788–89**

Statements on Introduced Bills/Resolutions: **Pages S6789–90**

Additional Statements: **Pages S6783–85**

Amendments Submitted: **Pages S6790–94**

Privileges of the Floor: **Page S6794**

Record Votes: Four record votes were taken today. (Total—326) **Pages S6738–40**

Adjournment: Senate convened at 10 a.m. and adjourned at 10:53 p.m., until 12 noon on Saturday, December 13, 2014. (For Senate's program, see the remarks of the Majority Leader in today's Record on page S6794.)

Committee Meetings

(Committees not listed did not meet)

No committee meetings were held.

House of Representatives

Chamber Action

Public Bills and Resolutions Introduced: 4 resolutions, H.J. Res. 131; H. Con. Res. 125; and H. Res. 782–783 were introduced. **Page H10318**

Additional Cosponsors: **Page H10318**

Reports Filed: Reports were filed today as follows:

H.R. 875, to provide for a comprehensive assessment of the scientific and technical research on the implications of the use of mid-level ethanol blends, and for other purposes, with an amendment (H. Rept. 113–667, Part 1);

H.R. 2750, to amend title 41, United States Code, to require the use of two-phase selection procedures when design-build contracts are suitable for award to small business concerns, and for other purposes, with an amendment (H. Rept. 113–668);

H.R. 3345, to amend title 31, United States Code, to consolidate suspension and debarment offices, and for other purposes, with amendments (H. Rept. 113–669);

H.R. 3674, to amend the National Telecommunications and Information Administration Organization Act to provide incentives for the reallocation of Federal Government spectrum for commercial use, and for other purposes (H. Rept. 113–670, Part 1);

H.R. 4253, to permanently withdraw, reserve, and transfer Bureau of Land Management lands used for military purposes in Alaska, Nevada, and New Mexico to the appropriate Secretary of the military department concerned (H. Rept. 113–671, Part 1);

H.R. 5094, to amend title 38, United States Code, to authorize the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to recoup certain bonuses or awards paid to employees of the Department of Veterans Affairs, with amendments (H. Rept. 113–672, Part 1);

H.R. 5401, to impose limitations on the immigration status and immigration benefits for Libyan and third country nationals acting on behalf of Libyan entities, (H. Rept. 113–673);

H.R. 1773, to create a nonimmigrant H–2C work visa program for agricultural workers, and for other purposes, with an amendment (H. Rept. 113–674, Pt. 1); and

H.R. 4874, to provide for the establishment of a process for the review of rules and sets of rules, and for other purposes (H. Rept. 113–675, Part 1).

Pages H10317–18

Speaker: Read a letter from the Speaker wherein he appointed Representative Messer to act as Speaker pro tempore for today. **Page H10313**

Making further continuing appropriations for fiscal year 2015: The House agreed to discharge from committee and pass H.J. Res. 131, making further continuing appropriations for fiscal year 2015. **Page H10314**

United States Anti-Doping Agency Reauthorization Act: The House agreed to take from the Speaker's table and pass S. 2338, to reauthorize the United States Anti-Doping Agency. **Page H10314**

Foreclosure Relief and Extension for Servicemembers Act of 2014: The House agreed to take from the Speaker's table and pass S. 3008, to extend temporarily the extended period of protection

for members of uniformed services relating to mortgages, mortgage foreclosure, and eviction.

Pages H10314–15

United States-China Economic and Security Review Commission—Reappointment: Read a letter from Representative Pelosi, Minority Leader, in which she reappointed the following individual to the United States-China Economic and Security Review Commission: Mr. Michael Wessel of Falls Church, Virginia. **Page H10315**

Medal of Valor Review Board—Appointment: Read a letter from Representative Pelosi, Minority Leader, in which she appointed the following individual to the Medal of Valor Review Board: Mr. Brian Fengel, Chief of Police, Bartonville, Illinois.

Page H10315

Adjournment Resolution: The House agreed to H. Con. Res. 125, providing for the sine die adjournment of the second session of the One Hundred Thirteenth Congress. **Page H10315**

Meeting Hour: Agreed by unanimous consent that when the House adjourns today, it adjourn to meet at 12 noon on Tuesday, December 16th, unless it sooner has received a message from the Senate transmitting its concurrence in H. Con. Res. 125, in which case the House shall stand adjourned pursuant to that concurrent resolution. **Page H10315**

Senate Messages: Messages received from the Senate by the Clerk and subsequently presented to the House today appear on page H10314.

Senate Referral: S. 2983 was held at the desk.

Quorum Calls—Votes: There were no Yea and Nay votes, and there were no Recorded votes. There were no quorum calls.

Adjournment: The House met at 3 p.m. and at 3:10 p.m., the House stands adjourned until 12 noon on Tuesday, December 16, 2014, unless it sooner has received a message from the Senate transmitting its concurrence in H. Con. Res. 125, in which case the House shall stand adjourned pursuant to that concurrent resolution.

Committee Meetings

No hearings were held.

Joint Meetings

No joint committee meetings were held.

NEW PUBLIC LAWS

(For last listing of Public Laws, see DAILY DIGEST, *p. D1093)*

H.J. Res. 130, making further continuing appropriations for fiscal year 2015. Signed on December 12, 2014. (Public Law 113–202)

COMMITTEE MEETINGS FOR SATURDAY, DECEMBER 13, 2014

(Committee meetings are open unless otherwise indicated)

Senate

No meetings/hearings scheduled.

House

No hearings are scheduled.

Next Meeting of the SENATE

12 noon, Saturday, December 13

Senate Chamber

Program for Saturday: Senate will continue consideration of the motion to concur in the amendment of the House to the amendment of the Senate to H.R. 83, Consolidated and Further Continuing Appropriations Act.

Senators should expect roll call votes throughout the day.

Next Meeting of the HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

12 p.m., Tuesday, December 16

House Chamber

Program for Tuesday: To be announced.

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