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Senate

The Senate met at 11 a.m. and was called to order by the President pro tempore (Mr. HATCH).

PRAYER

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

Let us pray.

God of grace, glory, and power, the battle belongs to You. We are grateful that even though storms rage, we can continue to anchor our hopes in You. Forgive us for sometimes painting a caricature of the many because of the pathology of the few.

Inspire our lawmakers to keep their eyes fixed on You. Imbue them with wisdom that they may know the road to take. Lord, rescue them from danger, as You carve tunnels of hope through mountains of despair.

Let the peace we seek in our world be first conceived in our own hearts.

We pray in Your merciful Name. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

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

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

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. The majority leader is recognized.

MEASURE PLACED ON THE CALENDAR—H.R. 1191

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I understand there is a bill at the desk due for a second reading.

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

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (H.R. 1191) to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to ensure that emergency services volunteers are not taken into account as employees under the shared responsibility requirements contained in the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act.

Mr. McCONNELL. In order to place the bill on the Calendar under the provisions of rule XIV, I object to further proceedings.

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. Objection is heard.

The bill will be placed on the calendar.

HUMAN TRAFFICKING LEGISLATION

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, throughout the Democratic filibuster of the antislavery legislation, this is basically what they have been telling us: We don't read legislation we vote on. Even so, it was always a stretch to believe that not a single one—not one—of the 13 original Democratic cosponsors of this bill, nor the many Democrats who voted for this bill in committee, nor their well-educated staffs could not have been bothered to make it to page 4 before deciding to support it—well, support it at least until far-left lobbyists told them they could not support it anymore.

So yesterday's revelation that the Democratic side was indeed aware of the language in question could hardly have surprised anyone. It also makes clear that Democrats decided to yank their support for an antislavery bill for one simple reason: Because far-left lobbyists said they needed to—not because the American people said so.

Nearly 70 percent of Americans support the kind of bipartisan provisions Democrats now claim they object to, and many Democrats have voted for similar bipartisan Hyde language many times before in both appropriations and authorizing legislation. They voted for it many times before in other bills, most recently just this past December.

So our Democratic colleagues obviously lack a rationale for this contin-

ued filibustering of the antislavery legislation. If Democrats are truly sincere about wanting to move to an Attorney General vote as soon as possible, then they should consider some of the recent advice from the Chicago Tribune.

Here is what the Tribune said. "Democrats on the Judiciary Committee have endorsed" the same bill they are now filibustering, the Tribune noted. So "all they have to do is allow a vote" on the same bill to move to another vote they claim to want to have.

Yet, as the Tribune also noted, Democrats do not "want to go on the record against a bill aimed at combating the evils of human trafficking. So they are blocking a vote—yes, blocking a law to combat human trafficking—in hopes that they can get their way."

Here is how the editorial concluded—and this is the part our Democratic friends should listen to: "Democrats... vote to move forward with the human trafficking bill. Then the Senate can get on with approving a new attorney general. And Democrats can resolve never again to vote for a bill they haven't read."

Just resolve to never again vote for a bill you haven't read. It seems pretty simple. Ignore the lobbyists and vote to give hope to the victims of slavery instead. That is the right thing to do, and today we will give our friends another chance to show where they stand in this debate over modern slavery.

(The remarks of Mr. McCONNELL pertaining to the introduction of S. 799 are printed in today's RECORD under "Statements on Introduced Bills and Joint Resolutions.")

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. RUBIO). The Democratic leader is recognized.

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



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S1637

HUMAN TRAFFICKING
LEGISLATION

Mr. REID. Mr. President, in a few hours, the Senate will vote for a third time on whether to end debate on human trafficking. The result will be the same the third time as it was the second time and the first time, which indicates to me that this week was a waste of time.

I indicated that the vote will fail, and it will fail because the debate is such that this is an important issue. We are determined to fix this bill, and we will fix it by removing the unrelated abortion provision from the pages of this legislation. I hope we can do that soon.

My friend the majority leader referenced reports that Democratic staffers should have—it should not have been plural—a Democratic staff member knew about the abortion provision prior to the legislation coming to the floor. Perhaps that is true, but I don't really know how the abortion language got in the bill for sure. I think I know. But it got in the bill. I think I know who put it in there, but it really doesn't matter. The fact of the matter is it is in the bill, and I am more concerned about getting the bill out.

We have had some columnists make fun about the fact that we should have read the bill more closely. I will not go into a lot of detail, but page 4 of the original bill—the section to which a lot of people love to point—was eliminated. If you look at it, it is crossed out.

If you go to page 50 or 51, it is stuck back in that part of the bill, and this is where the controversy gets pretty interesting. A Republican Senator who was responsible for this bill in the committee sent out a notice to all Senators, including Democrats, saying that we made some changes in the bill that passed last year—one, two, three, four, five, six changes that were made. The problem is he didn't indicate that they put the abortion language back in. It was really misleading, as was indicated on the floor yesterday by Senator FEINSTEIN.

We can go into why the language is in the bill. I have indicated I think I know who put it in and why they put it in. But they did put it in the bill. It is in the bill. We can have all of these accusations about paper trails and why it is in the bill, but it is in the bill, and it needs to come out.

Remember, Speaker BOEHNER, who has good qualifications for being the protector of abortion rights, as seen by the Republicans, was able to pass a version of this legislation without the abortion language. No one can question BOEHNER's qualifications for being anti-abortion. If they passed it in the House, why can't we do the same thing here?

Were the House Republicans wrong to pass the bill? I don't think so.

So before we embark upon a third iteration of the vote today, which is going to fail, I ask the Republican lead-

ership: Are you interested in working toward a solution on this human trafficking legislation? If so, take this language out.

My friend the Republican leader was talking about leftwing lobbyists. The leftwing lobbyists are women, who—as indicated on the floor yesterday by Senator FEINSTEIN—are concerned about protecting their bodies and reproductive rights. They are interested in protecting themselves, as they should be, and they are protecting women all over America.

So are they only interested in scoring political points by forcing these show votes or are they interested in reaching a solution? If they are interested in a solution, we are willing to work with them, but the abortion language is going to come out of this legislation.

For the first time in the history of our country, we are now focused on not doing what has been done with the Hyde amendment for 30 years, and that is making sure there are no government taxpayer dollars spent for performing abortions. Now they have moved beyond that to private funding. It is wrong and we are not going to go there.

Would the Chair announce the business of the day.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

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

JUSTICE FOR VICTIMS OF
TRAFFICKING ACT OF 2015

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will resume consideration of S. 178, which the clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 178) to provide justice for the victims of trafficking.

Pending:

Portman amendment No. 270, to amend the Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act to enable State child protective services systems to improve the identification and assessment of child victims of sex trafficking.

Portman amendment No. 271, to amend the definition of "homeless person" under the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act to include certain homeless children and youth.

Vitter amendment No. 284 (to amendment No. 271), to amend section 301 of the Immigration and Nationality Act to clarify those classes of individuals born in the United States who are nationals and citizens of the United States at birth.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the time until 12 noon will be equally divided between the two leaders or their designees.

The Senator from Arizona.

Mr. MCCAIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to address the Senate as in morning business.

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

LYNCH NOMINATION

Mr. MCCAIN. Mr. President, I come to the floor today to address a very se-

rious accusation leveled yesterday against Republican Members of this body by the Democratic whip, the Senator from Illinois. I do so with some regret. The Senator from Illinois and I have been friends for many years. We served in the House together and here in this body, and we have worked together. That is why I was so surprised and disappointed in the comments he made yesterday on the floor of the Senate—comments that are totally inappropriate to be made on the floor of the Senate.

My colleague from Illinois said:

The Republican majority leader announced . . . that he was going to hold this nomination of Loretta Lynch until the bill which is pending before the Senate passes, whenever that may be.

Then he went on to say:

So Loretta Lynch, the first African-American woman nominated to be Attorney General, is asked to sit in the back of the bus when it comes to the Senate calendar. That is unfair. It is unjust. It is beneath the decorum and dignity of the U.S. Senate.

What is beneath the decorum and dignity of the U.S. Senate, I would say to the Senator from Illinois, is for him to come to this floor and use that imagery and suggest that racist tactics are being employed to delay Ms. Lynch's confirmation vote. Such inflammatory rhetoric has no place in this body and serves no purpose other than to further divide us.

Perhaps my colleagues, and the Senator from Illinois in particular, need to be reminded of their own record when it comes to the treatment of African-American women whose nominations were before this body. In 2003, Janice Rogers Brown—an African American—was nominated to serve on the U.S. Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia—a court that had never included an African-American woman judge. The Senator from Illinois voted to filibuster her nomination in 2003 and again in 2005. When she was finally confirmed, after waiting 684 days, the Senator from Illinois voted against the historic nomination. I would never suggest—even with veiled rhetoric—that Judge Rogers Brown's race was the reason for the opposition to her nomination by the Senator from Illinois. And he should extend, I say to my colleague from Illinois, that same courtesy to me and my colleagues.

I would also like to remind the Senator from Illinois about how we were able to fill vacancies in the U.S. District Court of Arizona last year—effectively alleviating a judicial emergency. With tremendous bipartisan support of the nomination of Senator FLAKE and myself, we confirmed a diverse and historic slate of six nominees which included an Hispanic, an African American, and the first Native American woman ever to serve on the Federal bench. But their race had nothing to do with their successful confirmations, just as the race of Ms. Lynch should have no impact on her consideration in this body. Those six judges were approved by this body because each of

them had shown a commitment to justice, public service, and the people of Arizona. Each had also demonstrated the judicial temperament and the professional demeanor necessary to serve with integrity.

I further point out to the Senator from Illinois that at no time has the majority leader ever indicated that he would not bring the Lynch nomination to the floor; in fact, the opposite is true. We have made it very clear time and again that we will consider the Lynch nomination once we have disposed of the bipartisan trafficking bill. Had the Senator from Illinois and my colleagues on the other side of the aisle not filibustered this bill over a manufactured crisis, we could have considered the Lynch nomination this week. They chose otherwise.

I deeply regret that the Senator from Illinois chose to come to the floor yesterday and question the integrity and motivation of myself and my Republican colleagues. It was offensive and unnecessary. I think he owes this body, Ms. Lynch, and all Americans, an apology.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The assistant Democratic leader.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I am glad I heard the comments of my colleague firsthand and I wish to respond to them directly.

As of today, Loretta Lynch, who is the President's nominee for Attorney General, has had her nomination pending before the U.S. Senate for 131 days. How does that compare to previous nominees for Attorney General? It is three times longer than the period of time that Attorney General Ashcroft was pending before the U.S. Senate, 2½ times longer than the time taken to confirm Attorney General Mukasey, and twice as long as the time taken to confirm Attorney General Holder.

Why? In some cases, these nominees had questions that were raised by Members of the Senate—questions about their political views, their background; legitimate questions requiring time to answer.

I sat in the Senate Judiciary Committee hearing for this nominee, Loretta Lynch. There were no questions raised of any nature, of any kind, questioning her ability to serve as Attorney General. None.

When my colleague from Arizona notes the fact that I have voted against African-American women nominees in the past, it is true. I am not arguing that every Member of the Senate should vote for Loretta Lynch simply because she would be the first African-American woman to serve in that capacity. All I am saying is she deserves the same fair treatment we have given to other nominees for this job.

She has now been pending before the Senate longer than any nominee for Attorney General in the last 30 years. She has been on the calendar now—for a longer period of time than the last five

nominees for Attorney General combined. Why? It has nothing to do with her qualifications for the job, which are the very best.

Why in the world are we taking this important post—Attorney General of the United States of America—why are we taking this important civil rights moment, when the first African-American woman in history is being given an opportunity to serve, and entangling it in the politics of the Senate?

A week ago, the majority leader, Senator McCONNELL, said right outside this Chamber he was going to call her nomination this week. We breathed a sigh of relief; she has been waiting so long. Then, over the last weekend, he announced she wouldn't be called until a bill pending on the floor is passed.

Yes, I am upset and frustrated on her behalf to think that she is being treated in this manner. I am not going to use any pejorative terms other than to say I believe it is insensitive for the Senate to hold her up for such a lengthy period of time with no objection to this woman's character, fitness, and ability to continue to serve the United States.

She has served. She is currently in a position as a U.S. attorney in New York. She has the support of the following organizations: the National District Attorneys Association, the Federal Law Enforcement Officers Association, the International Association of Chiefs of Police, the Major Cities Chiefs Association, the Association of Prosecuting Attorneys, the FBI Agents Association, and a long list of Republican- and Democratic-appointed former U.S. attorneys, including Patrick Fitzgerald and Scott Lassar from the Northern District of Illinois. She has the support of former FBI Director Louis Freeh and former Deputy Attorney General Larry Thompson from the George W. Bush administration.

Under ordinary circumstances, this would have been an easy ask for the President to bring a person of this quality to the Senate for confirmation. She had three votes supporting her on the Judiciary Committee from the Republican side. I don't understand the objections of the others, but I respect whatever their reasoning.

All I am asking for—all the President is asking for and all the Senate is asking for—is a vote. Bring her off the pages of the calendar, before the Senate, for a vote. Don't make it contingent on some bill or some political agreement in the future. Let this woman, who has led such an extraordinary life, have her chance to continue to serve the United States of America. That, to me, is only fair and only just and would be in keeping with the traditions of the Senate to follow.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the time during the quorum call be divided equally between both sides.

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

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

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

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, we find ourselves in the unusual posture of being stuck on a piece of legislation that had 12 Democratic cosponsors and was supported unanimously by all Republicans and all Democrats on the Senate Judiciary Committee, and which uncharacteristically was brought to the floor without having to jump through the regular procedural hoops that legislation usually has to jump through that requires consent by all 100 Senators.

So when you think about combating human trafficking and particularly the targeting of 12- and 14-year-old girls who are of the typical ages and gender of the people who are victims of human trafficking, you would think that if there is anything that ought to be able to avoid the partisan wars here in Washington, DC, and the divisions that seem to separate us, it ought to be the subject of human trafficking. Well, I guess to say I was disappointed is an understatement. But I am determined to keep our focus on the victims of human trafficking, the people this would help rescue and help heal and get on with their lives. Yes, I am also determined to make sure we can demonstrate that we can function, something I thought Senators wanted to do.

After this last election there were a number of people who said: Gee, we would really like to change the Senate to restore its reputation as the world's greatest deliberative body, where we actually treasured and valued solutions more than we did scoring partisan political points.

I come here today in the spirit of trying to offer a solution that will help us get unstuck from where we have found ourselves. I see my friend, the Senator from Maine, who has been working tirelessly to try to help us get unstuck, and perhaps this will help.

Just to recap: The way this bill was structured is it would deal with the demand side of human trafficking; in other words, it would take the fines and penalties from the people who purchased these services and it would create a crime victims compensation fund, which in essence would be used to help provide the money to faith-based and other organizations that help rescue and help heal these victims of human trafficking. Then we heard from some of our colleagues on the other side that they wanted to change the way this was structured so that it was subject to the routine appropriations process and didn't enlarge the way the traditional limitations on appropriations were treated under the so-called Hyde amendment.

Just to refresh everybody's memory: Since 1976, all funding, all appropriations bills, and many authorization bills, including the Affordable Care Act and the Defense authorization bills, have been subjected to a limitation on the use of tax dollars for abortions except in the case of rape and in the cases where a physician certifies the health of the mother is at stake. The bill we introduced that was passed out of the Judiciary Committee unanimously and has 12 Democratic cosponsors has a reference to an appropriations bill that had that same limitation. The idea was that we wouldn't try to change the status quo; we would try to maintain the status quo which has existed for 39 years. But then some of our colleagues on the other side said, when offered an opportunity to vote on an amendment stripping that language out, they would not even vote. They wanted to obstruct and filibuster this legislation instead.

I, for one, am more interested in getting to a solution than I am engaging in this partisan point scoring. I believe there is a sufficient number of Members of the Senate who are sick and tired of the dysfunction and who don't want to be distracted by the politics but want to focus on how to help those 100,000 victims of human sex trafficking who are estimated to exist on an annual basis.

What I have come to the floor to do is to say let's make this fund subject to the annual appropriations process that will preserve the money for the victims and it cannot be used for any other purpose, but it will be subject to the Appropriations Committee and the usual riders that have existed for 39 years. It won't represent an expansion of the Hyde amendment, as some of our colleagues have expressed concerns about. It would, basically, again, maintain the status quo.

I came to the floor yesterday and my friend, the Senator from California, was here. I pointed out that not only did she cosponsor this legislation, she voted for it in the Judiciary Committee. But she now feels so strongly—and I know it is a matter of good faith and true conviction for her, but she feels like this is the place where we ought to fight this fight—we ought to relitigate the scope of the Hyde amendment. I don't think we have to do that. I am proudly pro-life and I believe the Hyde amendment represents one little island of consensus in the wars over abortion that we have. That is why for 39 years we have had a limitation on tax dollars. Indeed, fines paid into this fund would be public dollars. It wouldn't be generated from revenue, but it is not private money; once they are paid into this fund they are public dollars under my proposal, subject to appropriation on an annual basis by the Appropriations Committee. So now the money will flow from the victims fund through the relevant appropriations bills. It will be preserved for the victims and cannot be used for any

other purpose, and all spending limitations that have routinely applied to those bills would apply to these funds as well.

So the question is, Can our friends who have been obstructing and filibustering this legislation take yes for an answer? Can they take yes for an answer? I think this will also be very revealing, because we will find out whether people are actually interested in a solution or are they trying to shut down the Senate and prevent us from functioning on anything. As I said before, if we can't get the yes on an antitrafficking bill, Heaven help us on issues where there is not consensus, where there are genuine policy differences.

I believe we can do exactly, for example, what Senator LEAHY, the ranking member of the Judiciary Committee, asked for on the floor on March 10. He said "but let's have it on things it should be on—appropriations bills." So I would say yes, my proposal would give what Senator LEAHY asked for.

Then the minority whip, Senator DURBIN, the Senator from Illinois, said on March 16:

Henry Hyde authored the Hyde amendment that said no Federal funds should be used to pay for abortion procedures except in very limited circumstances: rape, incest, and life of the mother. That has been put in appropriations bills every year since—without question, without challenge.

That was stated by the minority whip, Senator DURBIN from Illinois. My proposal would facilitate exactly what he is arguing for. Can he say yes, take yes for an answer?

The minority leader, Senator REID, said on the 11th: I served in the House of Representatives with Henry Hyde; a very fine man. He has had his name affixed to an anti-abortion bill, anti-abortion legislation for almost three decades. And it's been continued year after year in appropriations bills.

That was spoken by Senator REID, the Democratic leader.

As I pointed out, what has perplexed me so much about all of this is that our Democratic friends have routinely voted for appropriations bills that contain the same restriction. When it was said, well, now you are extending it to an authorization bill, I pointed out that they voted for this very similar restriction in the Affordable Care Act and the Defense authorization bill, so that argument doesn't hold water; but I am giving them a chance to say yes, and, in essence, trying to find a way to break this impasse that has existed now for the last couple of weeks.

So that is the question. Now that we have made a proposal to them to give them what they have asked for and still preserve the 39-year limitation on the use of public dollars for abortion, can they take yes for an answer? I can't wait to hear what their response is to that proposal.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Maine.

Ms. COLLINS. Mr. President, let me first commend the senior Senator from Texas for his efforts to work out a compromise that I hope will allow this bill to go forward. Senator HEITKAMP and I also have been working with the senior Senator from Texas to try to come up with a solution that is similar to what he has outlined, and we will have more to say about that after the vote.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that I be permitted to proceed as in morning business for the purpose of a bill introduction, unless someone else is seeking the floor to speak on this bill.

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

Ms. COLLINS. Thank you, Mr. President.

(The remarks of Ms. COLLINS pertaining to the introduction of S. 804 are printed in today's RECORD under "Statements on Introduced Bills and Joint Resolutions.")

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Vermont.

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, I thank the distinguished senior Senator from Maine, my neighbor in New England.

We actually still have some debates on this floor. We had an important one yesterday. Someone called it a "C-SPAN moment." It was a focused and memorable discussion of a significant issue now before the Senate. It was an honest discussion about what is at stake in the debate we are having right now. The core question is how we are going to support the survivors, in what every Senator agrees is a heinous and deplorable crime.

Late yesterday, Senator FEINSTEIN spoke with powerful clarity about why the Hyde amendment has no place in what we are trying to do here, particularly when this legislation we are debating does not involve taxpayer funds. The Domestic Trafficking Victims' Fund included in S. 178 is funded by a special assessment fine collected from convicted sex traffickers. It is intended to help survivors rebuild their lives.

Now, whether taxpayer dollars should be used to ensure the full range of health care options available to this very vulnerable population is an important debate. We will have that another day. But the application of the Hyde amendment when zero taxpayer dollars are involved is unprecedented. It represents a very significant change in Federal policy.

When asked why the Hyde amendment has resulted in such an outcry, Senator FEINSTEIN said simply but powerfully:

Because of what this legislation is. This legislation is about the raping . . . of young girls.

Senator FEINSTEIN is right. I encourage everyone to go back and watch her moving remarks that got right to the heart of this debate.

These are children who have been bought and sold like animals. They have had every choice taken away from

them. Now, if they survive, if they escape, we should not put limits on what health services they can seek. I stand with the survivors of these crimes. I stand with Senator FEINSTEIN.

This is a line we should not cross. Human trafficking victims are often not treated as rape victims. Too often these young girls are treated as prostitutes, even though they had no choice in it. That is a fact we are trying to change, but we cannot ignore the reality that many of these girls are put through our juvenile justice system and prosecuted as criminals, rather than treated as victims.

It is easy for some to claim that there is a so-called "rape exception" to the Hyde restriction but the reality is that for the survivors of this terrible crime, the rape exception feels more like an overwhelming bureaucracy. In many States, victims are forced to jump through hoop after hoop to qualify for the exception. They have to obtain police reports or certifications from State agencies. They have to relieve the details of their trauma again and again. One State even requires the Governor to approve any exception. Another State refuses to recognize the rape exception at all.

The easiest, most appropriate solution here is to simply remove the Hyde restriction so that survivors can make their own health care decisions. That is what the survivors are asking us to do. That is what the professionals who work with human trafficking survivors are asking us to do.

Yesterday, my friend, the senior Senator from Texas, argued that the inclusion of the language was routine, that this does not change the status quo at all. Well that is simply not accurate. The Hyde amendment is about keeping taxpayer dollars out of the abortion debate. We may have different opinions on the issue, but that is not what we are talking about here.

The money at issue in this bill is not taxpayer dollars, it is money collected from sex traffickers. The bottom line is that the offender-financed fund created in this bill relies on zero taxpayer dollars.

So if you want to maintain current practice, you have to remove this provision. The House bill, that passed unanimously almost 2 months ago, does not contain this expansion of the Hyde amendment's reach. It does not apply the Hyde amendment to nontaxpayer dollars. If Speaker BOEHNER could find a way to bring the House together and pass this bill without injecting abortion politics into the discussion, then why can't we do that in the Senate?

Senator FEINSTEIN is right. We have amendments we need to consider if we can simply get past this stalemate, but she is also right that the issue at stake is too important to turn our back on. This is not a provision we can just ignore and dismiss as the status quo. But I believe, as Senator FEINSTEIN and others have said, we can find a path

forward. The path forward should not be one that expands restrictions on the health care choices of human trafficking survivors.

These survivors—many are 12 or 13 years old—let's not put further hurdles in front of them. Let's not push for a political agenda on either side. The Hyde amendment will appear on taxpayer-funded matters, as it usually does. That is one thing the Appropriations Committee will face. We are not talking about taxpayer dollars here. We are not talking about taxpayer dollars.

This would be like reaching into a State and saying: Oh, by the way, you have people who have raised money for a particular organization, not taxpayer dollars, but we in Congress are going to restrict what you can use that money for. Well, we do not do that. The reason we do not do it is because our involvement is with taxpayer dollars. If we want to go and appropriate money in this area, that is the time to bring up the issue.

The Appropriations Committee—I have served on that Committee for almost 40 years—we handle that issue there, but not here.

What is the pending parliamentary situation?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senate is on consideration of S. 178, with the time until 12 noon equally divided between the two leaders or their designees.

Mr. LEAHY. Is there a vote scheduled?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. At 12 noon.

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to yield back all time and ask unanimous consent that the vote begin now.

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

CLOTURE MOTION

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

The 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, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on the committee-reported substitute amendment to S. 178, a bill to provide justice for the victims of trafficking.

Mitch McConnell, John Cornyn, Tom Cotton, James Lankford, David Vitter, Richard Burr, Chuck Grassley, Joni Ernst, Pat Roberts, Mike Rounds, James E. Risch, Daniel Coats, James M. Inhofe, Shelley Moore Capito, Mark Kirk, Cory Gardner, Thom Tillis.

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

The question is, Is it the sense of the Senate that debate on the committee-reported substitute amendment to S. 178, a bill to provide justice for the victims of trafficking, shall be brought to a close?

The yeas and nays are mandatory under the rule.

The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk called the roll.

Mr. CORNYN. The following Senator is necessarily absent: the Senator from Tennessee (Mr. ALEXANDER).

Further, if present and voting, the Senator from Tennessee (Mr. ALEXANDER) would have voted "yea."

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from California (Mrs. BOXER) is necessarily absent.

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

The yeas and nays resulted—yeas 56, nays 42, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 75 Leg.]

YEAS—56

Ayotte	Ernst	Murkowski
Barrasso	Fischer	Paul
Blunt	Flake	Perdue
Boozman	Gardner	Portman
Burr	Graham	Risch
Capito	Grassley	Roberts
Casey	Hatch	Rounds
Cassidy	Heitkamp	Rubio
Coats	Heller	Sasse
Cochran	Hoeven	Scott
Collins	Inhofe	Sessions
Corker	Isakson	Shelby
Cornyn	Johnson	Sullivan
Cotton	Kirk	Thune
Crapo	Lankford	Tillis
Cruz	Lee	Toomey
Daines	Manchin	Vitter
Donnelly	McCain	Wicker
Enzi	Moran	

NAYS—42

Baldwin	Hirono	Peters
Bennet	Kaine	Reed
Blumenthal	King	Reid
Booker	Klobuchar	Sanders
Brown	Leahy	Schatz
Cantwell	Markey	Schumer
Cardin	McCaskill	Shaheen
Carper	McConnell	Stabenow
Coons	Menendez	Tester
Durbin	Merkley	Udall
Feinstein	Mikulski	Warner
Franken	Murphy	Warren
Gillibrand	Murray	Whitehouse
Heinrich	Nelson	Wyden

NOT VOTING—2

Alexander	Boxer
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The PRESIDING OFFICER. On this vote, the yeas are 56, the nays are 42.

Three-fifths of the Senators duly chosen and sworn not having voted in the affirmative, the motion is rejected.

The majority leader.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Madam President, I enter a motion to reconsider the vote.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The motion is entered.

CLOTURE MOTION

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

The 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, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on S. 178, a bill to provide justice for the victims of trafficking.

Mitch McConnell, John Cornyn, Tom Cotton, James Lankford, David Vitter, Richard Burr, Chuck Grassley, Joni Ernst, Pat Roberts, Mike Rounds, James E. Risch, Daniel Coats, James M. Inhofe, Shelley Moore Capito, Mark Kirk, Cory Gardner, Thom Tillis.

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

The question is, Is it the sense of the Senate that debate on S. 178, a bill to provide justice for the victims of trafficking, shall be brought to a close?

The yeas and nays are mandatory under the rule.

The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. CORNYN. The following Senator is necessarily absent: the Senator from Tennessee (Mr. ALEXANDER).

Further, if present and voting, the Senator from Tennessee (Mr. ALEXANDER) would have voted "yea."

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from California (Mrs. BOXER) is necessarily absent.

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

The yeas and nays resulted—yeas 56, nays 42, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 76 Leg.]

YEAS—56

Ayotte	Ernst	Murkowski
Barrasso	Fischer	Paul
Blunt	Flake	Perdue
Boozman	Gardner	Portman
Burr	Graham	Risch
Capito	Grassley	Roberts
Casey	Hatch	Rounds
Cassidy	Heitkamp	Rubio
Coats	Heller	Sasse
Cochran	Hoeven	Scott
Collins	Inhofe	Sessions
Corker	Isakson	Shelby
Cornyn	Johnson	Sullivan
Cotton	Kirk	Thune
Crapo	Lankford	Tillis
Cruz	Lee	Toomey
Daines	Manchin	Vitter
Donnelly	McCain	Wicker
Enzi	Moran	

NAYS—42

Baldwin	Hirono	Peters
Bennet	Kaine	Reed
Blumenthal	King	Reid
Booker	Klobuchar	Sanders
Brown	Leahy	Schatz
Cantwell	Markey	Schumer
Cardin	McCaskill	Shaheen
Carper	McConnell	Stabenow
Coons	Menendez	Tester
Durbin	Merkley	Udall
Feinstein	Mikulski	Warner
Franken	Murphy	Warren
Gillibrand	Murray	Whitehouse
Heinrich	Nelson	Wyden

NOT VOTING—2

Alexander	Boxer
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The PRESIDING OFFICER. On this vote, the yeas are 56, the nays are 42.

Three-fifths of the Senators duly chosen and sworn not having voted in the affirmative, the motion is rejected.

The majority leader.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Madam President, I enter a motion to reconsider the vote.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The motion is entered.

Mr. MCCONNELL. I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mrs. ERNST). Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. BLUNT. Madam President, I wish to speak about the bill that I would have thought a few days ago would have passed by now—the bill before the Senate and the bill that addresses this topic of modern-day slavery. This bill came out of the Judiciary Committee in a unanimous fashion before it came to the Senate floor. Then, there was no dissent; we agreed we should get right to the bill and pass it.

I am pleased to cosponsor the Victims for Justice of Trafficking Act, which includes sexual trafficking and labor trafficking. This bill would help innocent victims of trafficking by creating grants for State and local governments to develop comprehensive systems to address these problems in every State, we are told, and certainly in almost every city—if not every city—where this is a problem.

This bill allows law enforcement to deal with the problem by giving them the tools they need to hold the people accountable who are forcing these violent crimes and violent living conditions and the abuse of people's dignity in so many ways on others. Apparently, approximately 100,000 American children each year are victims of commercial sex and child prostitution and child trafficking, according to the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children. It is like so many numbers that we think of. I would encourage everybody to think of any city they can think of that has 100,000 people. Most of us would see that as a big community and a lot of people—100,000 children every year—100,000 children every year, not every decade or every century—every year, in the United States of America, not all over the world.

I would guess most Americans would assume if this is a problem, it has to be a bigger problem in any other country, but 100,000 children here among us are victims of this tragedy.

The Justice Department says there are more human trafficking cases prosecuted by Federal attorneys in Missouri's Western District, the district where the U.S. Attorney's office is in Kansas City, MO, than anywhere else in the country. I hope that means the people in the Western District of Missouri who run that office are doing an extraordinary job, but I think it would be foolish for me to think that this isn't also an extraordinary problem. My house in Springfield, MO, is in that district, as are Springfield, Joplin, and Kansas City. These are places one wouldn't think, what is the No. 1 prostitution area for victims of human trafficking in the country? The Western District of Missouri.

St. Louis, MO, is also one of the top 20 cities, we are told, for human trafficking, according to the Department of Justice. These are bad statistics, as every single statistic any of us could look at in our State could be. Of course, one case of human trafficking

is one case too many, but we are not, unfortunately, just talking about one case; we are talking about lots of cases.

Earlier this month the FBI arrested a person in my State who was charged with transporting a minor across State lines with the intent to engage in prostitution. The FBI reported the man involved was physically abusive, verbally abusive, emotionally abusive, and sexually abusive to this young person he was using for himself and offering to others. This modern-day slavery should not be allowed to continue.

The bill that is before the Senate right now, the Justice for Victims of Trafficking Act, has been endorsed by 200 different advocacy groups, including the NAACP, the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children, Exodus Cry, a Grandview, MO, group, Rights4Girls, the National Association to Protect Children, the Fraternal Order of Police, and the National Conference of State Legislatures. We can't vote on it here on the Senate floor? We can't get this bill on the President's desk? Why is that?

Why again today did the minority refuse to provide the votes we needed to get from where we are to 60? We did have a few Members from that side join us this week, but we are still short.

Let's deal with this problem. They say it is because there is a section of the bill that deals with the Hyde amendment. OK, the Hyde amendment has been around now for part of four decades. What does the Hyde amendment do? It bans taxpayer-provided abortions.

One of the things we have done in this country is to say because there is vast disagreement on this—we understand there is vast disagreement. Surely we are not going to take money from some taxpayers who are totally opposed to this and use it to pay for something they are totally opposed to. There is a provision in this bill. It was there when the bill was voted out of committee. It was there when everybody voted to move to the bill. Suddenly, it is a provision that nobody was aware of before. In fact, in committee, there was at least one amendment that amended the sentence right below this sentence. So are we not doing our job? Are we not reading these bills, or, are we just looking for a reason not to get anything done? Surely the Senate in the last half dozen years has proven to the country that the Senate can be dysfunctional. Surely we don't need to continue to make that case.

So let's get to work. Let's get down to business. Let's look at what needs to be done here. Let's see what we could do to set an example for the world. Frankly, there were colleagues who had amendments that could have been at least debated that would have talked about what could be done to carry this beyond our borders to deal with this modern-day slavery—whether for labor or for sex—in ways this issue should be dealt with.

I would love to see the President step forward and encourage the leaders of

his party to get together and get the votes needed to pass this. Let's move to a conclusion and put this on the President's desk. I think without the language that some people now suddenly find objectionable, this bill wouldn't pass the House. But the bill will pass the House as reported out of committee, if the Senate would pass it, and it would be on the President's desk. There is nothing new here.

I hope we get this done. I think people are ready to see the Senate work. Let's get this done.

Let's get on with a budget for the first time in 7 years, if we could join with the House of Representatives and say, OK, let's present a plan to the country of how we are going to get back to a balanced budget and what our priorities are.

But one of our priorities should be to end the nightmare for victims of human trafficking, and we can't do that unless we face reality and get on this bill.

LETTER ON IRAN NEGOTIATIONS

Also, Madam President, while I am here, I want to talk a little bit about the letter I signed along with Senator COTTON and 45 others a few days ago. I thought the interesting thing about that letter is that the letter was essentially addressed to the Foreign Minister of Iran but released to every newspaper in America. In many ways it was an idea that is important that the American people understand.

I am sure the Iranian Foreign Minister, by the way, already understood it. If one had any interest in reading the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD or watching C-SPAN or reading any newspaper in the last 6 months, you would have seen that the Senate was very concerned in a bipartisan way that the President was negotiating an agreement with another country and was refusing to come to the Senate and ask for the approval that the Constitution anticipates should be there.

I was surprised by the Iranian Foreign Minister's response, which was: Well, really, when you are dealing with this kind of situation, it is international laws that prevail. The laws of any individual country don't matter. Well, we all take an oath when we are sworn in to the Senate that the law and the Constitution of the United States do matter and it is our job to uphold and defend the law and the Constitution of the United States. There was nothing I saw that suggested the Iranian Foreign Minister or anybody else should interpret that for me. The Constitution is pretty clear, by the way, that there is an advise-and-consent responsibility. Frankly, advise means to talk to the Senate while you are negotiating.

I read somewhere the other day that, well, it is so presumptuous for the Senate to want to give advice to the President before he has negotiated an agreement. Well, the Constitution says that we are in a position to do that. The traditions of the country say if the

President doesn't keep at least the right people in the Senate informed—the chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee, the minority senior person of that committee, the chairman of the defense committee, the Armed Services Committee—if they aren't kept informed, you are not going to bring people along as you should. That is obviously part of trying to make the government work.

No matter what the President thinks, the Senate is not just an inconvenience; the Congress is not just an inconvenience. There is a reason for these branches of government.

Actually, in another interesting response, the Secretary of State said: Well, obviously this agreement is not binding on anybody but the person who signs it. That is what I have been saying for about a year, but it was interesting that it took this letter for the Secretary of State to say that. This agreement really doesn't bind anybody. If the President signs this agreement, it is an agreement, not a treaty. What does that mean? It means if it is not a treaty, then the government of the United States hasn't agreed to it. Only the President of the United States has agreed to it. President after President have brought agreements about nuclear weapons to the Senate—the START treaty, all the treaties which were approved by the Senate. It would have been unthinkable just a few years ago that one would even think about committing our country to something that involves nuclear weapons potential and not involve the U.S. Senate.

So I think getting these issues on the table is a good thing. Frankly, I think a nuclear-weapons-capable Iran is the most destabilizing thing that could happen in the world today. Not only our great ally and friends in Israel, but countries all over the Middle East will immediately be concerned. Countries within reach of those potential future weapons in Europe and other places would soon be concerned. We are headed down a bad path here, negotiating not that Iran will never be allowed to have nuclear weapons but apparently negotiating how long it will be from the moment they start until they can have the enriched material it would take to have a nuclear weapon.

There are many countries in the world today that have nuclear power that don't enrich in a way that would allow them to ever have a nuclear weapon. Iran, if it wanted to, could have added itself easily to that list. Iran, one of the most energy-rich places in the world, could easily have added itself to that list, if it wanted to add to all that nuclear energy power. I think it is obvious the shadow that Iran would like to cast over the next decade in the region they are already dominating in a handful of capitals is a shadow of nuclear weapons capability. The United States should be very concerned, and this discussion at the highest levels is the right kind of discussion for the country to be having.

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

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

Mr. TILLIS. Mr. President and colleagues, in my professional life I always considered myself to be a numbers guy. As I have sat back and listened to the debate over these past 17 days since the Justice for Victims of Human Trafficking Act was reported out of the Judiciary Committee, I decided I would maybe try a different take on the numbers we should be concerned about.

As I said, it has been 17 days since the bill we are considering came out of the Judiciary Committee—56 days since the bill was first introduced on January 13th. Now, some of my colleagues on the other side have said that somehow between when the bill was introduced on January 13th and when it was reported out of Committee on March 10th, there was a provision placed in the bill that they were not made aware of. This is simply not the case. My colleagues had days to review this bill, but unfortunately, some of them are in the habit of passing something and then finding out later what they were actually voting for.

It has been 39 years since the Hyde language we are currently discussing was first passed into law. It was so long ago I was even young—16 years old. The Hyde language was first enacted in 1976, and since then, has become known, well-settled law. Obviously, this is not some sort of new concept. It is language that everybody who is in this body—and every staffer who has served somebody in this body—should know about.

Now, with the Hyde amendment being around for some four decades, I was trying to figure out: Well, maybe we are talking about Members who are familiar with the Hyde language, but never voted for it.

So I decided to go back to my numbers and take a look at the voting history of the Senators in this Chamber today, many of whom—all of whom, actually—on this graphic are now preventing this very important human trafficking legislation from moving forward.

The minority leader has voted in support of the Hyde amendment 14 times, and all these other Senators on my chart at least a dozen times, with the exception of Senator BOXER who has voted in support of the Hyde language 10 times. Senator BOXER stood on the floor last week and said it was offensive language. However, Senator BOXER has voted for this language 10 times, most recently this past December when they passed the fiscal year 2015 omnibus bill.

So one wonders what they are really trying to accomplish here. I hear them. My Democrat colleagues are very sympathetic to the content of the bill. I hear them say that human trafficking is horrible, and we need to do something about it. But their words do not fit their actions. Their words say we ought to move forward and end these horrible situations—and I will talk a little bit more about those numbers later—but their actions are just burning time in this body preventing us from moving on to the many other important things we need to address—such as our national security, our economic security, and our energy security. But no, we have spent 17 days on a bill that my colleagues in the Democratic caucus say we should act on, but are at the same time impeding the process.

Now, as confusing as these numbers are, as confusing as it is to hear so many Senators say that this language is offensive and needs to be taken out—despite the fact that they have regularly voted for it in the past—the very sad result of their actions are what we are not getting done, and that is getting the human trafficking bill passed so we can end the horrible conditions that are imposed on the many people who are enslaved on a daily basis.

I'm going to give my colleagues a couple of numbers to think about. The State Department and other agencies estimate that there are 600,000 to 800,000 people trafficked across global borders each year. That is about 1,600 to 2,200 boys, girls, men, and women being enslaved every single day in this world.

Now, in our country, it is estimated that 17,500 people are trafficked across our borders into the U.S. sex trade every year and that there are about 100,000 people already here.

Think about that in terms of the numbers. Every day that goes by, there are another 50 victims from overseas trafficked into the U.S. for sex trade—every single day another 50 people.

This week, we have had five votes on this bill. This means, another 250 young girls, young boys, women, and men will have been trafficked into our country for sex trade.

This is a good bill, and it works to stop the growth of human trafficking and free those who are currently enslaved.

Colleagues, I am a freshman. I have been here fewer than 70 days. When I read the human trafficking bill, I knew that the Hyde amendment was in it. Anybody who is doing their job in the Senate should have been able to figure that out.

So it raises a very interesting question—how could we come out of the Judiciary Committee, which I serve on, with a unanimous vote? As a matter of fact, there are 12 Democrat cosponsors of this bill. Certainly, those Members of the Democratic Caucus read the bill and their staffs had time to read the bill in the months that the language has been public.

So, colleagues, I wonder if it is really about the human trafficking bill and the language or if it is about a strategy just to slow the process down, but what I think is so sad is the human consequences of this inaction, and we need to move forward.

I just came from the Senate steps to take a picture with about 100 students from my great State of North Carolina.

While I had time before the photographer arrived to let them ask me few questions, I said: I am going to have to go to the Senate floor soon and speak. They said: What are you going to speak on?

I was really at a loss for words. I was wondering how I was going to tell them I am trying to help pass legislation that makes them safer, but we are having a petty fight in the Senate over process.

So I really ask Members of the Democratic caucus to look into their hearts and to understand the human tragedy this legislation is attempting to correct and join with us to pass this bill and move on to the many other things we need to do for this great Nation.

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

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

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, we have had a lot of discussion regarding the pending bill. I thought again I would emphasize what Senator FEINSTEIN said earlier, which was so good, and I hope people will listen to her words. I would just follow on to that to say my good friend—and he is my friend—the distinguished senior Senator from Texas has suggested that we make the funds collected from traffickers subject to the appropriations process to get around this impasse, but that does not solve the problem.

The pending legislation came out of the Senate Judiciary Committee, an authorizing committee that does not appropriate funds. We should be telling appropriators that we believe services to trafficking victims are important by authorizing funds. As the most senior member of that Appropriations Committee I can tell you that this is an important process that results in real money for victim services.

It is a process that works well. Under Democratic leadership of the Senate Appropriations Committee, total appropriations for trafficking victims' services more than doubled from \$28.1 million in FY2014 to \$58.1 million for FY2015.

Senator CORNYN's proposal to simply funnel fees collected from traffickers through the appropriations process still presents the same problem—this is not taxpayer money, and subjecting it to the Hyde amendment would expand

the amendment's reach to an offender-financed fund meant for women and children who should have all options available to them when it comes to health services after being sexually exploited.

I would quote what the House Republican author of this bill, Congressman POE, said today:

We passed a bill. The Senate should take it up and pass it.

That could be done immediately. I don't think there would be anybody trying to block it. The Republican House of Representatives passed this bill unanimously. We could take up and pass it, and not waste 2 weeks of having this dance on the floor, vote after vote, which both sides know isn't going anywhere. The easiest and best thing to do is to remove the Hyde restriction so survivors can make their own health care decisions.

I will not do it again today, but I put into the RECORD letters and statements from hundreds of people—survivors' organizations and the people they represent—and they have said: Let us make our own health care decisions.

Now, to argue what my friend from Texas says, that the inclusion of this language is routine and it does not change the status quo at all, is not accurate. In fact, that is probably why, I suspect, a majority of the Members of the House of Representatives—who support the Hyde amendment—did not include it in the House version of the bill. The Hyde amendment is about keeping taxpayer dollars out of the abortion debate. Now, we can have different opinions on the issue, but that is not what we are talking about here. The money at issue in this bill is collected from sex traffickers.

The bottom line is the offender-financed funds raised in this bill rely on zero taxpayer dollars. Maintaining the current practice, if that is what you want to do, means removing the provision. Maybe we ought to listen to some of the leadership on the Appropriations Committee and how they feel about this. They are not the ones asking to do this. The Appropriations Committee is not asking us to turn them into some kind of a superauthorizing committee, and we should not put them in that position.

I hope cooler heads will prevail and come together on this. I think it will be very easy for both sides who do want to stop sex trafficking to come together, and pass this bill.

Then, let us also take the steps to correct what has been a shameful position in the U.S. Senate and confirm Loretta Lynch as Attorney General. She has waited on the floor much longer than the four men who preceded her put together. This woman has waited longer than those four men before her put together, and yet everybody applauds her as a superb prosecutor. We talk about sex trafficking, and she is about the only person we have seen in here as a nominee who has actually prosecuted sex traffickers. Let's get on with the job.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I saw on television my friend from Vermont, the ranking member of the Senate Judiciary Committee, talking about the virtues of the House human trafficking bill, and I thought it would be worthwhile for Members and whoever else is listening to understand the difference between the two bills.

First of all, our bill, the one that is being filibustered by our Democratic colleagues—I should say, all but four of them—contains a \$30 million fund that is financed through criminal funds. This is analogous to a crime victims compensation fund. For example, when I was attorney general of Texas, we administered one, and we were able to make grants to various organizations. That is what this \$30 million fund would be. The bill on the House side actually has no fund. It is an authorization. It is a \$5 million authorization. It has no money. It has no mechanism to generate funds like ours does.

Our bill contains language increasing restitution for trafficking victims by using criminal assets to satisfy these needs and allowing law enforcement to pay witness-assistance award money to victims.

The bill in the House does nothing. In other words, we have an asset-forfeiture provision in our bill to take the people who profit from human trafficking and to forfeit those funds and use that to add to the fines and use that money to help rescue and heal the victims. The House bill has nothing in it in that regard.

Our bill requires law enforcement agencies to file regular reports of human trafficking case totals as part of the Uniform Crime Reporting Program. That is important because so much of the human trafficking damage is never reported to law enforcement.

First of all, many victims of human trafficking are children who may or may not actually consider themselves victims. They may be runaways. They may find some adult who has taken them under their wing, only to turn them out on the streets as prostitutes and the like. They may not actually consider themselves victims, at least initially, which they are.

Our bill would make sure the statistics and reports of human trafficking totals are reported in the Uniform Crime Reporting Program so we would actually have a better objective record about the number of cases and so people could appreciate the severity of this problem. The bill in the House has nothing in that regard.

Next, our bill clarifies that child pornography producers are engaged in

commercial sex acts. The bill on the House side does nothing in that regard.

Our bill requires persons indicted for human trafficking to be treated as violent criminals for purposes of pretrial, in terms of the availability of bail. The bill on the other side of the Capitol, in the House, does nothing in that regard. Our bill requires prosecutors and judges to undergo training to improve restitution in traffic cases. Again, our friends on the other side of the Capitol—their bill does nothing in that regard.

Finally, our bill requires human traffickers to remain under supervision for at least 5 years after they are released from prison. On the House side, it doesn't touch on that.

I don't say that to criticize the House bill, because I think they have done some good work. But it is important to recognize that the bill over here, which is being filibustered by our Democratic minority, does a lot more and a lot of different things, and things that I think are going to be a lot more helpful to the victims of human trafficking, which I can only imagine should be our collective goal.

I came to the floor this morning, and I said that we would be willing to work with our Democratic colleagues to try to address some of their stated concerns with the original bill. I said that notwithstanding the fact that 12 Democrats cosponsored the bill, the original bill that is now being filibustered. Nine Democrats, along with all of the Republicans on the Judiciary Committee, voted to pass the bill out of the Judiciary Committee. Literally all 100 Senators had to consent for the bill to come to the floor without going through the typical procedural hurdles with which we are all very familiar.

Imagine my surprise, when in the middle of last week, these objections came up. What was the nature of the objection? The objection was that this bill contained a reference to an appropriations bill that was passed in 2014 and for which all of our Democratic colleagues voted. But that reference was to a restriction on the use of taxpayer dollars to fund abortions, known as the Hyde amendment. Then after they saw that or after they claimed that this was something new and unbeknownst to them, they objected.

I just simply cannot accept this argument that a provision that colleagues on that side of the aisle have routinely voted for on appropriations bills, that they routinely voted for on Defense authorization bills, and one they voted for on the Affordable Care Act, restricting the use of taxpayer funds under these circumstances—why they would pick this vehicle to object to that very same provision.

I accept at face value that some of our colleagues said that this is something they perhaps should have read more closely but they failed to do. I personally find it a little hard to believe, given the nature of the professional staff we have here in the Senate,

that Members did not know that this restriction, known as the Hyde amendment, was part of the underlying bill. But assuming that is the case, what we are now offering them is a middle ground—to say that instead of this fund being a separate pool of money outside of the appropriations process, we would agree that the Appropriations Committee would appropriate money out of this fund in the same manner as they do all appropriations, with the exception that the money would be specifically designated to help the victims of human trafficking and not be able to be used for any other purpose.

So the reports are—after we made this proposal trying to address some of the concerns on this side of the aisle—that they would not be happy unless we stripped out all reference to the Hyde amendment in the bill. That is unacceptable. That is unacceptable for the same reason that they would object to a change in the status quo by an expansion of the Hyde amendment. We have now brought the Hyde amendment back within the appropriations process where it has been for 39 years. But to say we are going to eliminate any reference to those restrictions, which have been the law of the land for 39 years, would be viewed as an erosion of the Hyde amendment—hardly a status quo.

I don't know how long this is going to take. I appreciate the perseverance and commitment of the majority leader who, as you know, determines what bills come to the floor and when and who says we are going to stay on this bill until it passes. We have had a number of votes, and four of our Democratic colleagues have joined us to get to a place where we could actually pass this legislation. We just need a handful more—two or three more—to help us.

I know that a number of Senators are going to be hearing from their constituents back in their States because 200 different organizations—law enforcement organizations and victims' rights organizations that are very concerned about this human trafficking plague—are going to be lighting up the phone lines, sending emails, and communicating with their elected officials—as they should.

There is no reason we cannot get to “yes” on this bill unless this whole debate is a phony debate, and what the leadership on the Democratic side is more concerned about is trying to make the Senate as dysfunctional in the 114th Congress as they did in the 113th Congress.

I suspect, unfortunately, because of the phony issues saying take out language we voted for time and again—yes, it was contained in a bill we cosponsored. Yes, it was contained in a bill we voted for already. Now we are going to come to the floor, and we are going to block it.

We know who pays for this political gamesmanship. Sadly, it is the very same victims whom our colleagues

here on the floor say they want to help—the children—the 100,000 children who are subjected to human trafficking each year. Other people who need our help and deserve our help are among the most vulnerable people we can possibly imagine.

All of us are mothers and fathers, sisters and brothers. We all understand this could happen to anybody's family. Why in the world would we want to indulge in this sort of gamesmanship and phony objections to provisions that have been voted for time and again by the same Members who now object to them on this legislation and say to these victims of human trafficking that we don't care and we are not going to help?

I don't believe for a minute that is why Members of the Senate come here. I know virtually all 100 Senators, and I believe that most Senators—if not all Senators—come here because they actually want to do something. They actually want to solve problems. They actually want to help people who need the help. I cannot think of anybody more deserving than the victims of human trafficking.

I see the distinguished Senator from Colorado here. I will yield for him momentarily.

I wanted to come to the floor and respond to the comments made by the distinguished Senator from Vermont, the ranking member of the Judiciary Committee, that all we need to do is take up and pass the House bill. The House bill doesn't appropriate any money. It is an authorization bill. It authorizes \$5 million in appropriations.

The great thing about our bill is it doesn't take any tax dollars. These are all fines and penalties and asset forfeitures from people engaged in the criminal enterprise, and this takes some of the profit out of this terrible crime.

It also does a number of other things, which I mentioned earlier. But the idea that we can somehow just take up and pass the House bill and avoid this bogus objection and somehow solve the problem, I think, just misses the point.

I yield the floor.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Colorado.

Mr. BENNET. Mr. President, through the Chair, I would like to thank the senior Senator from Texas for his courtesy in allowing me to speak this afternoon.

LYNCH NOMINATION

Mr. President, I rise today to discuss the nomination of Loretta Lynch to be our next Attorney General. It has been 131 days since President Obama nominated her for this position. By Monday, she will have waited longer on the Senate floor than the last seven Attorney General nominees combined.

When it comes to Ms. Lynch's nomination, it seems as if we are setting records—but for all of the wrong reasons. The irony of that is that she is probably one of the most qualified and least political Attorney General nominees that this Chamber has seen in decades.

She has spent a significant portion of her career as a Federal prosecutor in the Eastern District of New York, having twice served as the U.S. attorney. There she took on corrupt public officials and expanded the office's national security practice. She has also worked in private practice at one of the country's top law firms, where she specialized in commercial litigation, white-collar criminal defense, and corporate compliance.

In 2011, she was recognized as the Federal Law Enforcement Officers Association Foundation honoree of the year. In 2014, she was honored as the recipient of the Women in Federal Law Enforcement Foundation President's Award. She has received support—no surprise—from all across the political spectrum.

Just this week, even former New York Mayor Rudy Giuliani—hardly a great friend of the President—wrote that she was “balanced, professional and a dedicated public servant.” He went on to write that he can “further attest that her skill set seems very appropriate to the tough tasks she would face as attorney general.”

The Major Cities Chiefs Association, which represents the 67 largest law enforcement agencies in the country, wrote this to the Senate: “Ms. Lynch has overseen many important criminal prosecutions for terrorism, organized crime, corruption, drug and gang related cases. It is clear that her familiarity with the Department, managing a fast-paced and high profile office as well as her integrity and private sector legal experiences make her a qualified candidate.”

What are we waiting for?

Some 25 former U.S. attorneys who worked in both Democratic and Republican administrations wrote to this body saying: “Ms. Lynch has the experience, temperament, independence, integrity, and judgment to immediately assume this critically important position.” They should know. They should know. These are the folks with whom she has worked closely, and will continue to work as Attorney General. Both as a Federal prosecutor and in private practice, they have seen firsthand her character, intellect, and her integrity.

I myself once worked for the Deputy Attorney General of the United States at the Department of Justice. I know how close the collaboration is when things are working well between the Attorney General and the U.S. attorneys all throughout the United States of America, and it is something to see.

I know it has become fashionable around this place to continually criticize our Federal employees, but I recommend that our new colleagues, if they ever have the chance, go see the investiture of a new judge in their State, as I have had a chance to do in my State. When you see how the U.S. attorney's office, the Federal public defender's office, the Drug Enforcement Agency, the FBI, and the U.S. Marshals

Service are all represented, you will say to yourself: Thank God I live in a country that is committed to the rule of law. Thank God I live in this country instead of most of the countries around the world where they don't even know what the rule of law is.

That is what we have in the United States, and the chief law enforcement officer of this country is our Attorney General.

Everybody who has looked at this nomination from the outside has said she would be an excellent Attorney General. So given all of that, it is awfully difficult to understand why she has had to wait so long just to receive a simple up-or-down vote. Has anyone challenged her qualifications? Come to the floor today and do it. Has anyone questioned her character or integrity? Of course not. Has she failed to provide necessary information to the Senate? It is my understanding that she testified for almost 8 hours and responded to about 900 questions for the record. Is her nomination delayed just to make political points on completely unrelated issues?

I have gotten to the point now that when people come to my office after they have been nominated to be a judge or have been nominated to do something in the Federal Government, the first words out of my mouth are not “Congratulations” anymore; the first words to come out of my mouth are “Don't take it personally. Don't take this process personally.”

We are losing talented people who want to serve the United States of America in these important and in many cases nonpolitical jobs because the Senate cannot confirm them. It is because we tell somebody like Loretta Lynch: Sorry, it is going to be zillions of days before you have a chance to even serve this country.

It is not right. I am amazed at the capacity of people in this place to waste their own time, but we should not waste other people's time.

Unfortunately, the delay in confirming Ms. Lynch is having real-world consequences. Earlier this week, the former Deputy Attorney General expressed his concern that the protracted nomination process is adding unnecessary uncertainty to the Department of Justice. He highlighted the importance of having continuity in undertaking long-term investigations or in developing national security policy and how it is harder to facilitate continuity the longer Ms. Lynch's nomination is delayed.

As I said, this has become in many ways the new norm in our politics where these fights in Congress are having real-world consequences on the people we represent. It is incredibly counterproductive to the people we represent, whether it is shutting down the Department of Homeland Security or running the government on continuing resolutions or passing 2-week tax extender bills, for goodness' sake. There is not a mayor or county commissioner

in the entire State of Colorado who could get away with governing like this, and neither should we. It is obvious to everybody watching the Senate that we have not been productive. We have not really been productive for a long time but certainly not for the last 90 days. We barely managed to keep the Department of Homeland Security open for another 6 months. We passed a resolution of disapproval that the President will veto.

At the very least, we should be able to find the time to confirm Loretta Lynch as the Nation's next Attorney General. Her experience, temperament, and independence make her abundantly qualified for one of the most important positions our country has, and she has waited too long to receive an up-or-down vote.

I am not worried about her; she will be fine no matter what she does. I am worried about the Department. I am worried about our homeland security. I am worried about the willingness of other Americans to put their hand up and say "Let me serve" for fear that they will get caught in the crazy politics of the Senate.

I look forward to supporting Ms. Lynch's nomination. I hope we will have the opportunity to consider that nomination in the coming days.

With that, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. CASIDY). The Senator from Arkansas.

Mr. BOOZMAN. Mr. President, this is an important subject. For many, it is a matter of life and death. So I am pleased that we are taking up this bill so early in the session.

The Justice for Victims of Trafficking Act can save lives, it can restore dignity to the victims of these heinous crimes, and it can help end modern-day slavery. I believe, without a doubt, every Member of this body wants to see this bill become law. I hope we can overcome this delay and send the bill to the President so we can make it a reality.

As the father of three girls and as a grandfather of granddaughters, I support the bill. I cosponsored it. I am eager to see it become law. By doing so, we will build on our previous efforts that have dramatically reduced instances of human trafficking around the globe.

Since the passage of the landmark Trafficking Victims Protection Act of 2000, the United States has been a leader in the international community's fight to end modern-day slavery. This law ushered in a new strategy that addressed human trafficking on multiple fronts.

Combining strong protection for victims, including shelter and asylum, with tough punishments for traffickers, including long jail sentences and asset confiscation, and, most importantly, sanctions for offending governments, the law has enabled us to crack some of the biggest international human smuggling rings.

The most recent statistics show that during the 12-year period from 2000 to

2012, over 1,100 traffickers were charged in the United States, resulting in 755 successful convictions. The Justice for Victims of Trafficking Act can replicate these successes in combating international trafficking by helping us take on the traffickers here at home.

This is an effort by my colleagues that we can all agree is worthwhile, which is clear by how easily this passed in committee and by the level of bipartisan cosponsorship it maintains. So I am not quite certain I understand what the Democratic leadership's strategy aims to accomplish. The language they now find objectionable has been in the bill all along. It is standard language that has been around for decades.

On top of that, the majority leader offered a vote to strip the language. Yet the minority continues to block this bill from floor consideration. Not only can they offer an amendment to strip that language, but Members of the minority can offer any amendment they want, any amendment they believe will make the bill stronger. That is the amazing thing about regular order. I know some Senate Democrats are still getting used to the idea after years of being forced to the sidelines by their own leadership, but this is a good change which we should all embrace.

I believe this particular bill was strong from the onset, but I have offered a couple of amendments to make it even stronger and better. Both of these amendments make improvements to our efforts to address trafficking on the global stage.

The first one deals with countries that try to game the system to avoid sanctions. The State Department's tier system for ranking offending countries is an excellent tool for ferreting out the problem governments and prompting positive change. By utilizing the threat of sanctions, we can effect change for the better.

Regrettably, some countries have abused the system and taken advantage of the "special watch list" designation that is supposed to be reserved for troubled nations making good-faith efforts to actually change. These nations have been able to get this designation without ever attempting to address human trafficking and, in turn, avoiding the sanctions that they deserve. China is a perfect example.

With this amendment, we can put an end to the games. It will close the loopholes that allow governments to retain the "special watch list" designation without making immediate progress to reduce human trafficking or face quick removal. This will force governments to take real action, not just a nod and a wink to the problem to buy sanctions relief.

The second amendment aims to put more teeth in the State Department's Office to Monitor and Combat Trafficking. This amendment seeks to rename it and elevate it to the status of bureau to increase its effectiveness so that those responsible for this essential

diplomatic tool are heard within the State Department.

These two amendments will help our overall strategy to combat trafficking, but again, this bill, as it was introduced, would be a huge help in our efforts to save lives.

The bill has the support of 200 advocacy groups, many of which are law enforcement organizations. These advocacy groups are voicing the same concerns we hear on the local level in our communities back home—that this is a real problem with real victims—and our local officials want this bill passed for that exact reason.

Just last week, I was visiting with some of my State's mayors who were in Washington for the Arkansas Municipal League fly-in, and the issue came up. The mayor of Hot Springs, AR, Ruth Carney, said that this is an issue which is really close to her heart and highlighted that Garland County has a task force to tackle human trafficking. She said: "It's a great thing to see that Congress is working to help with this situation because I feel like it's very important for our country." I imagine that the Senators holding up this bill hear the same thing from their State and local officials. Perhaps they should listen to them about the importance of getting this done.

So why drag this on longer? We could pass this bill within hours if the Democrats would drop this manufactured outrage over language that has been in the bill since its introduction. This language has literally been applied to similar legislation for decades.

The senior Senators from Texas and Minnesota came together in a bipartisan manner to draft this important legislation. It was passed by the committee, in regular order, in a similar bipartisan manner.

I urge my colleagues to stand with the victims, pass this bill, get them help, and get our communities the resources they need to save thousands more from becoming victims.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

Mr. HATCH. Mr. President, today, we are continuing our consideration of the Justice for Victims of Trafficking Act. I should note from the outset this is a bill that essentially every Senator—every single one of us—supports. How could we not? Right now in this country there are thousands of human beings living as slaves—stolen from their homes, stripped of their God-given rights, and robbed of their human dignity. A disproportionate number of these victims are women and children, often forced into sex slavery. These are crimes that shock the conscience, and every single one of us

should do everything in our power to stop this scourge and help make the victims whole again.

The legislation we are currently considering makes important steps toward achieving those goals. It treats children trapped in these horrible circumstances for what they are—victims, not criminals. It imposes stiff penalties on traffickers, exactly the sort their despicable crimes merit. It establishes an effective means of restitution for the victims, helping them to begin to rebuild their lives in the wake of enormous suffering.

I applaud the majority leader for his commitment to getting this bill passed. It is exactly the sort of legislation the Senate should be considering. While this may seem an obvious point, it is worth spelling out why this is true.

The majority leader's traditional right to be recognized first gives him control over what sort of legislation we consider. There is always a temptation to bring up partisan bills, so-called messaging bills. These bills are not designed to actually pass; after all, we all know we need 60 votes for cloture and 67 votes to override a veto. Instead, the goal of these messaging bills are to make a political point for the next election or even just for the next news cycle.

In the last Congress, the Democratic leadership called up these sort of messaging votes week after week. They repeatedly moved to bring up highly partisan bills that they refused to let us attempt to amend, with full knowledge that many of us would therefore have to vote against them and in most cases have to make them get at least 60 votes.

In last fall's election, the American people showed just how fed up they were with partisanship and gridlock by voting in a new Republican majority that promised a return to productive legislating through regular order. The majority leader's commitment to passing this human trafficking bill demonstrates how those of us in the new majority are trying our hardest to keep our promise to get the Senate back to work for the American people. This is not about partisan messaging votes doomed for failure. This is about getting a bill with broad bipartisan support passed into law that makes meaningful progress in our fight against the evils of human trafficking. Scoring political points for our party is rightfully taking a backseat for producing important results for our country.

Nevertheless, our majority can only do so much on its own. Simply put, it is hard to get much done in the Senate without bipartisan cooperation. So for all the restraint the majority has shown by bringing up bills such as this one that enjoy broad bipartisan support, we need at least some measure of restraint from the minority. By restraint, I do not mean to call for my colleagues on the other side of the aisle

to give up all their principles and simply give in to everything the majority wants. Instead, I mean the minority cannot demand getting their way on every single issue, that they should be willing to work through the open amendment process to reach an accommodation. Unfortunately, we find ourselves at an impasse with the minority claiming we somehow ambushed them with supposedly controversial language that they now are demanding we remove. My colleagues and I have come to the floor repeatedly over the past few days to illustrate just how ridiculous that claim is—how the language that is in the bill has been in there every step of the way since its introduction and how the Democrats had voted for it over and over again over the nearly 40 years it has been settled law.

Beyond all of the rhetoric, the pivotal moment in this debate came when the majority leader came to the floor and offered an up-or-down vote to strip out the language in question. This offer should have settled this controversy once and for all. It represented the majority leader extending his hand across the aisle in hopes of cooperation, but the minority leader objected, demanding a guarantee the provision would be removed. Well, that is not the way it works around here. That moment revealed what this logjam is really about. This is about the minority leadership resorting to the same "my way or the highway" tactics they abused when they were in the majority, tactics that have no place in a body built on compromise. This is about trying to stir up a fake controversy to fit a discredited war-on-women narrative.

Above all else, this is about scoring political points and trying to embarrass the majority by undermining our efforts to govern responsibly. This behavior is itself embarrassing and unworthy of this great institution in which we all serve, but it comes at a price.

It comes at a price for the victims of human trafficking whose suffering we are all committed to alleviate. It comes at a price for those men, women, and children living in silence, fear, hopelessness, and unspeakable anguish.

My colleagues on the other side of the aisle are not bad people—far from it. They are men and women of great character who want to do the right thing for their constituents and for the Nation. I have enormous respect for each and every one of them, but in this latest maneuver, I feel many of them have gotten so caught up in partisan rhetoric—something that is so easy to do in Washington—that they have staked out an unjustifiable position that is prolonging the suffering of trafficking victims.

Let's be honest about it. The Hyde amendment has been in many bills that we all voted for time after time after time. However, NARAL, the National Abortion Rights Action League, and Planned Parenthood have tried to

make this into an issue that it should never have been made into. Unfortunately, we don't have any courage on the other side of the aisle except for a few Senators who are willing to vote with us. We don't have any real courage to take on these people.

My gosh. I mean there comes a time—keep in mind, how do Republicans give in on this when this has been such an established law of our country?

I ask my colleagues to take a step back from the heat of the debate to think about this language that has been in the bill from the very beginning, that they have voted for in so many other contexts, that has been the settled law of the land for nearly 40 years, that they have rejected an up-or-down vote to remove, and that they have demanded be removed as a condition for passing this important legislation.

Is picking this fight really worth it?

Is scoring points against Republicans really worth the costs of victims of human trafficking?

Is trying to undermine our efforts to govern worth sacrificing the opportunity to help these men, women, and children in need?

The choice is clear. I applaud my colleagues on both sides of the aisle who are pushing to end this stalemate, especially my colleagues on the other side of the aisle who are willing to sacrifice temporary political gain to do the right thing for these victims we all want to help. I plead with those who have yet to join our efforts to move this bill forward to realize the suffering they are prolonging and to change their approach at the earliest possible opportunity.

GEOSPATIAL DATA REFORM ACT

Mr. President, in addition to urging the passage of the bill under consideration to fight human trafficking, I want to highlight another important bipartisan bill I have introduced and urge its speedy consideration. It is exactly the sort of productive legislating in which I believe the Senate should be engaged.

I rise in strong support of the Geospatial Data Reform Act, a bipartisan bill that will save taxpayers money while improving public safety, bolstering public development and preserving our natural resources through wider accessibility to geospatial data.

I am grateful for Senator WARNER's collaboration on this bill. Without his partnership this legislation would not have been possible, and I wish to thank him for his support over the past several months. Together we have worked tirelessly to craft bipartisan legislation that streamlines the way Federal agencies collect, manage, and distribute geospatial data to better serve the American people.

Whether we realize it or not, geospatial data is ubiquitous in our everyday lives. Geospatial data is the information that identifies the geographic locations and characteristics of

natural or constructed features and objects. To make this abstract concept more tangible, consider that every time we turn to the GPS on our phones we rely on geospatial data to find our destination. Geospatial data is an invaluable information resource, and we are just beginning to tap its full potential.

Every year, private businesses and government agencies are finding new and innovative ways to use this information to better deliver services to the public and to improve overall quality of life. FEMA's use of geospatial data during Hurricane Sandy is testament to the merits of this information resource.

The tragedy of Hurricane Sandy is still fresh in our memories. In 2012, this late autumn storm ravaged our eastern seaboard, battering buildings, toppling homes, and demolishing power lines, leaving behind a wake of destruction and shattered lives. Sandy was the deadliest hurricane to reach our shores since Katrina in 2005. In addition to the human toll, Sandy extracted a heavy financial cost, with estimated damages exceeding well over \$50 billion. By using geospatial data, our government was better equipped to respond to this catastrophe. As victims rummaged through the rubble and wreckage of their broken homes, FEMA set to work analyzing geospatial datasets to identify over 40,000 homes damaged by the storm. This information allowed the Agency to pinpoint the most devastated neighborhoods and dispatch emergency personnel to those areas more quickly and efficiently. The use of geospatial data in response to this tragedy played an integral role in coordinating emergency response and helping families repair their damaged lives.

The way FEMA used geospatial data to aid victims of Hurricane Sandy is just one powerful example of the positive impacts geospatial data has on our lives.

But there are many more. The CDC also uses geospatial data to track disease outbreaks, informing decisions that ultimately save lives, the Department of Education uses geospatial data to analyze test scores from schools across the country to make plans for improvement, and the National Park Service uses geospatial data for resource management and to conserve our Nation's natural treasures.

There is almost no end to the sundry uses and benefits of geospatial data, but as the Federal Government invests billions of dollars every year in the collection and storage of geospatial data, there is a serious problem of inter-agency duplication. This duplication stems from a glaring lack of coordination between agencies on efforts to collect this information. In short, agencies are spending inordinate sums in taxpayer dollars to collect the same geospatial data other agencies may have already collected.

These duplicative efforts are a monumental and inexcusable waste of tax-

payer money. Although the executive branch has been working for decades to reduce duplication and standardize the process for collecting and storing geospatial information, it has received little help from Congress.

The legislation Senator WARNER and I have introduced provides the executive branch the resources and direction it needs to reduce duplication and engender cooperation among agencies to ensure the efficient collection and dissemination of geospatial data across all levels of government. To save the taxpayers money, our bill requires Federal agencies to implement international consensus standards for geospatial data and assist in eliminating duplication.

The Geospatial Reform Act also codifies the implementation of the national spatial data infrastructure and provides agencies with a clear definition for geospatial data and metadata.

In addition, this bill standardizes the collection process by requiring agencies to comply with the Federal Geospatial Data Committee's standards for the development, sharing, and use of geospatial information.

Finally, our bill ensures accountability, transparency, and public access to nondefense-related Federal investments in geospatial data. Already, States, counties, municipalities, and the private sector are discovering dynamic ways to use and share geospatial data with one another.

Collaboration in this sphere is leading the way for new and improved services that were previously impossible to deliver. These entities outside of the Federal Government are finding new ways to coordinate investments and implement common standards. We need to do the same on the national level. We need proper Federal management for these data assets, and we need a national strategy for their many uses.

Our legislation provides the foundation for both. In a political environment clouded by polarization, this bill is a ray of hope. It is an opportunity for us to work together in a bipartisan fashion to pass commonsense legislation that is based on transparency and good governance.

I urge all of my colleagues to support the American taxpayer by supporting this bill. It is the right thing to do.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Washington

Mrs. MURRAY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to speak as in morning business, and that following me, the Senator from Washington be allowed to speak.

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

OSO MUDSLIDE

Mrs. MURRAY. Mr. President, almost 1 year ago, on a calm Saturday morning in the small town of Oso, more than a square mile of mud rushed down a mountainside in my home State of Washington. In a matter of seconds, dozens of homes were de-

stroyed, dozens of people were missing, and they were trapped in the debris from the mudslide.

It was unclear at first the extent of the damage, the number of people trapped, and what could be done in the face of such devastation. First responders risked their own lives, braving dangerous conditions to look for survivors. Some were pulled from the rubble, but so many, too many, were lost. Houses over more than a square mile were simply swept away. The main highway to nearby Darrington was blocked, isolating that community. Forty-three people—children, mothers, brothers, and aunts—were killed.

This was the deadliest mudslide in our country's history. A year later, there is not a single person in Oso who has not been affected by this devastating natural disaster. In the blink of an eye, they saw water and earth wipe away their homes and their entire community. Let me tell you what I found when I visited the small nearby town of Arlington, where recovery plans were being made just days after the mudslide occurred 1 year ago.

I saw small towns like so many across the country in all of our States, the types of towns where everybody knows each other, the types of places where everyone stops to say hello and lend a helping hand. What I saw that day last March was a community where there was not a single person who was not doing every single thing they could to help.

Amidst the terrible destruction, I saw hope. I spoke to firefighters who had not slept for days, refusing to stop searching for survivors. I saw neighbors and friends and volunteers providing food and shelter and hugs and prayers, anything to assist the community who had experienced the unthinkable.

I want to tell one story from the days following that awful moment, a story that has been told before but bears repeating. A local woman named Rhonda Cook heard about the slide and she found out that her friend was driving by and was buried when the slide hit. Rhonda spent days digging through that debris looking for that blue car she knew was there somewhere, determined to bring her friend out of the mud.

When that car was finally uncovered and her friend's body was lifted out, Rhonda paused to pay her last respects. But then she kept on digging, looking for others. Rhonda is just one of the many heroes. There were so many, and so many more who continue working to this very day.

Last year, I joined many others in a pledge to stand with the people of Oso and Darrington in the months and years to come and to do whatever we could to help them on the road to recovery. I was proud to work with my colleagues in the Senate and with our friends in the House to make sure the Federal Government was offering a hand, because we are a nation that sticks together when times are tough.

We worked to secure housing grants and FEMA funding and transportation investments to repair State Route 530. More than 600 National Guard soldiers were deployed to help in the emergency response. The main highway through Darrington reopened finally last summer. Homes are now being rebuilt. Lives are being pieced back together. While I am so grateful for all that has been done to aid the recovery, our work is far from done.

Although the devastation will eventually be cleared, injuries will heal, the emotional scars will always remain, and the memory of those who were lost will never leave us. A disaster of this magnitude requires long-term assistance to help these communities respond, rebuild, and cope. Now a year down the long road of recovery, there is one word that comes to mind when trying to explain what the people of Oso and Darrington are at their core: resilient.

Aid workers searched for remains to return to loved ones for as long as 4 months after that mudslide. A man who lost his wife and son gave thousands of dollars in donations to other victims who he thought needed the money more than himself.

The people of Oso and Darrington will look back on March 22, 2014, this weekend, remembering lost homes and lost loved ones and even pets. I want those communities to know that all the way here across the country in the other Washington, I stand with Oso. We stand with Oso. Their resiliency in the face of such unthinkable devastation is an inspiration to us all. We will always remember what it means to be "Oso strong." They have the thoughts and prayers of everyone in the country to continue rebuilding, from Washington State to Washington, DC, and everywhere in between.

I yield the floor to my colleague, Senator CANTWELL, who, as I was, was there time and time again with this community.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Washington.

Ms. CANTWELL. Mr. President, I rise to join my colleague from Washington, Senator MURRAY, on the observance of this very solemn milestone. This Sunday will be 1 year since this catastrophic event. I want to thank Senator MURRAY for something she did not mention, which is her leadership on helping us get passed the Green Mountain Lookout legislation in the aftermath of this event, which is legislation that she had championed for a long time and yet had been stuck. When people realized there were things we could do for this community to help restore its recreational and economic activity, she got on it and we were able to pass that very quickly. So I thank her for that leadership.

This Sunday is a very solemn milestone, because 43 Washingtonians lost their lives in a very destructive mudslide that buried the highway between the communities of Darrington

and Oso and nearby Arlington. These communities lost loved ones, friends. Their memory will be with us for a long time. These communities have shown that even in the most unimaginable devastation, people can come together in unity and persevere. They showed how light and hope can shine through even in grief.

Now, after many months, stores are reopening, the highway is again bustling, there are new connections of Internet and phone lines being restored, residents are rebuilding, and they are hoping for a brighter economic future.

As my colleague said, we were very inspired by the hope and grace of this community, that continues to demonstrate that on a daily basis. It is hard to believe that a year has gone by. On that morning, it became just like every other morning, a rainy Saturday morning, and people went about their business. But as the heavy rain weakened one of the hills in the Stillaguamish Valley, the resulting landslide was approximately 1 square mile. Forty-nine homes were destroyed, 530 were covered, and the Stillaguamish River was basically rerouted. So many problems arose. But immediately more than 1,000 volunteers descended. Many from the local community, with their own transportation systems, their own rigs, came to the river and devoted thousands of hours to try to help survivors and to help the community recover.

This American flag was hoisted by one of the firefighters. It is tacked to a standing nearby tree, just to show our resilience. Much like the American flag, this community was battered and bruised but was very proud. During those days, many Washingtonians would make sure that every resource was made available to this community. When faced with these immense challenges, these communities of Darrington and Oso pulled together and, yes, Oso became "Oso strong."

It was a rallying cry for the volunteers, to the young people, to many people who were working many hours a day. Private companies and individuals, corporations, tribes, charities, nonprofits—all sorts of governments chipped in. Everybody helped. We want to thank them for that help. It was just a year ago that it seemed as though every resource covered the festival grounds and the Forest Service parking lot, FEMA, Snohomish County, the Department of Natural Resources, the National Guard, fire departments up and down the State. They continued to make sure everything was addressed—recovery efforts underway, local people gathered, such as the small business owner there in Darrington, Kevin Ash, who tried to keep a plan for every business to stay open.

We looked at what could be accomplished for the future. Out of these meetings, we were able to secure a \$150,000 grant from the Economic Development Administration to draft an

economic disaster recovery plan for the community. That plan is set to be unveiled in June and help the local economy that once was heavily dependent on logging that was hit hard by this disaster.

Senator MURRAY and I have worked with Mayor Dan Rankin from Darrington, whose leadership and on-the-job focus for this has helped the community continue to survive this incredible disaster. There are so many strategies Mayor Dan has put into place that are about how the community moves forward.

Over the past year, the Small Business Administration awarded \$400,000 in low-interest loans to help rehabilitate businesses in the area. It is helping the Darrington-Arlington economy and others in the affected area. Through their innovation and hard work, everybody is trying to help what is called the Upper Stillaguamish Valley not just get back to where it was but flourish in the future. This is some of the most beautiful territory in our State, from the heights of Glacier Peak to the depths of the Upper Stillaguamish Valley. This typifies the beauty of the Northwest.

I want to make sure we thank the appropriate people who helped us in this response: President Obama, who visited the area; Homeland Secretary Jeh Johnson; FEMA Director Craig Fugate; obviously our Governor; Representative DELBENE, who was there practically every moment of this disaster, from the moment it happened, for days and days and days, and then around the clock, shutting back and forth between Washington, DC, and the site; Congressman LARSEN; obviously SBA Administrator Maria Contreras-Sweet, who came to the site; the Red Cross; the Oso fire station.

We talk about first responders here. But when you see first responders for small communities step up and address such an incredible natural disaster and coordinate everything—I want to say a thanks to Willy Harper from the Oso fire station, and Travis Hots, who was the incident command leader for the first several days from Snohomish County Fire District, which brought all of the resources together to try to make the planning and recovery efforts for this incredible disaster go as smoothly as possible; County Executive John Lovick and Sheriff Ty Trenary. I also want to say Arlington Mayor Barbara Tolbert did more for the community in using every resource she had to help support the recovery of these Washington residents. Some communities might say, well, that is somewhere down the road, and who is going to help us? But she put every Arlington resource onto this site, knowing it might be months and months and months before she ever saw any of the resources to reimburse them.

We want to thank Arlington for everything they did. So while we will this weekend be having a moment of silence on the site, we have to remember the

individuals we lost, and how we need to move ahead. This hillside bears an unmistakable scar. It has inflicted deep wounds. But it is healing because of the friends and neighbors who have strengthened us in this region.

We want to make sure that the memories of those we lost will fuel our determination to do better. Regardless, it is not going to be easy, it is not going to be quick, but we will continue to build off of the strength this community demonstrated in the aftermath of this disaster.

I yield the floor.

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

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

Ms. COLLINS. Mr. President, on behalf of myself and Senator HEITKAMP, I send an amendment to the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The amendment will be received.

Ms. COLLINS. Mr. President, for the past 10 days this body has been engaged in an important debate on a bill that has had widespread, bipartisan support, that was reported unanimously by the Senate Judiciary Committee, and that would help to end the scourge of human trafficking.

I am a cosponsor of this bill because I believe it will help equip law enforcement and prosecutors with the tools they need to combat these horrific sex trafficking crimes.

I, along with my colleague, Senator LEAHY, have also introduced a bill—that we have filed as an amendment—that would reauthorize the Runaway and Homeless Youth Act programs so we can also have a prevention piece in this legislation.

Many Members of this body have worked very hard on this legislation. Senator CORNYN, whose bill we are considering, has been a real leader in the area of human trafficking. Senator KLOBUCHAR also has a bill I have been proud to cosponsor. Senator GRASSLEY and Senator LEAHY, at the request of all 20 of the women Senators, held a hearing on this issue at which I was privileged to testify, along with Senator AYOTTE, Senator MIKULSKI, and Senator GILLIBRAND.

I applaud the Judiciary Committee for its work in shining a light on some of the darkest stories imaginable. No State is immune from the evils of human trafficking.

Just recently in Maine, a couple was arrested for allegedly trafficking a girl who was only 13 years old. They used the Internet to sell her for sex.

The Runaway and Homeless Youth and Trafficking Prevention Act that Senator LEAHY and I have cosponsored seeks to prevent young people from ever getting trapped in these situations

in the first place, and I hope we can move on to that bill, which we have filed as an amendment.

But, regrettably, we find ourselves at an impasse—imagine that—an impasse on a bill that would help curb human trafficking. How can that be?

Senator HEITKAMP and I have joined forces to try to move this bill forward. That is our goal, and the goal of the amendment we have filed.

What our amendment would do, and it is very straightforward, is it would subject the fund that Senator CORNYN has created, and which I strongly support, to the annual appropriations process and to all of the usual restrictions that the Appropriations Committee can and does add to appropriations bills.

There is precedent for taking a fund that is not financed by tax dollars and sending it through the appropriations process. It, frankly, happens all the time. We have seen it with the oil and gas revenues that go to the Land and Water Conservation Fund. Those are not tax dollars.

We have seen it with a number of fees and restitution programs that are not tax dollars but go through the appropriations process, where the Appropriations Committee can work its will.

Under our amendment, all of the money collected from special assessments imposed on certain trafficking criminals and deposited into the fund would still be made available to anti-trafficking and victims' services grant programs, but only through the direction of the annual appropriations process. By placing the fund squarely within the jurisdiction of appropriators, each and every penny collected would be subject to the limitations in those appropriations bills. Our amendment would strike the reference that has been the sources of this controversy from this authorizing bill, but does not alter that restriction on federal funds that has existed for 39 years.

Our amendment makes clear that money in the fund, or transferred from the fund, is subject to the limitations provided in appropriations acts.

I believe our amendment, by allowing the Appropriations Committee to put whatever restrictions are appropriate on this fund—and I have no doubt the usual restrictions will be put on by the Appropriations Committee—could get this bill to move forward, and those such as Senator CORNYN, Senator KLOBUCHAR, and others who have worked so hard to bring this bill to the Senate floor, will see there is a path forward.

We owe it to the victims of human trafficking. We owe it to them. We cannot fail in this task. If we cannot approve a bill to deal with human trafficking, then what will we be able to deal with?

We have to get past the tendency to score partisan, political points that have affected too many bills on both sides of the aisle. In this case, it is simply too important.

I thank my dear friend and colleague from North Dakota, Senator HEITKAMP, who has been an attorney general, who has dealt with the victims of this terrible crime, for coming forward and joining with me as we attempt to put forth—for our colleagues' sincere consideration—a path forward that will end this impasse.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from North Dakota.

Ms. HEITKAMP. Mr. President, I thank my great friend, the Senator from Maine. She has been so instrumental in achieving compromise in the body, whether it is in the Commonsense Caucus, when we were in shut down, or it is just bridging the gap many times and trying to find a path forward for us to legislate in the Senate. She truly is a champion in her efforts in trying to make this body work.

I wish to start off by saying that as an attorney general, the whole while I was attorney general—for 8 years—there was very little activity on prostitution. When I was running for office, I visited with law enforcement—and I still have a lot of friends in law enforcement—and I asked them: What are your challenges? Every local sheriff, especially those in western North Dakota, and every city chief of police said: We have a growing concern with prostitution.

I started thinking about that. I started thinking about what that meant. Then I started looking behind what those claims of prostitution were, and I began to realize that for very many of these young women—often children—who are in this life of prostitution, it is not by choice. This is some of the most horrific victimization that goes on in America today—the victimization of small children, the dehumanization of small children, the challenge of a recovery once they are given an opportunity to find a different path forward, the addiction that comes with it, the grooming that comes with it, and the shame that comes with it.

Many people say they want to prevent this, but very often we know the victims of human trafficking come from homes that weren't the healthiest of homes. These are very often runaways, they are homeless youth, and they have no other option for recovering, they have no other option for sustaining their life than being part of this horrific experience.

So as my great friend from Maine talks about this, we need to do a better job in getting the tools for prosecution, which is the excellent bill Senator KLOBUCHAR has advanced for promoting safe harbor legislation, which will not only help in the path to recovery but also will give us an opportunity to encourage more and more of these victims to come forward as witnesses for the prosecution. It is very difficult to convince someone who has been told for years and years, as they have been in the life, that "If you tell about this victimization, what will happen is you will go to jail with me. So we have to

stick together." How do we break that cycle of control? We break it by providing opportunity, which these bills do. We break it by passing the homeless youth and runaway bill. We break it by focusing a bright light on this problem.

I could not have been prouder of this body as we moved toward these series of bills on homeless youth and moved forward on these series of bills on trafficking. This body was speaking for some of the most disenfranchised citizens in our country—those victims of human trafficking. So you can imagine my despair and I think the despair of a lot of victims groups and the despair of a lot of people in this body when we reached this impasse.

It is important that we say that the goal now is not to rehash what has happened in the past, it is not to rehash the problems and the concerns everybody has had in the past. We must set aside all of that. Set aside all of the rancor we have heard for the last week and focus on one thing: Focus on a victim who may be watching us. Focus on a victim's advocate who may be wanting and needing and desperately seeking the help we can provide that advocate in providing a secure future for these victims. Let's focus on them. Let's focus on what we can do to bridge this impasse.

My friend Senator COLLINS and I think we have, as she has described it, advanced a proposal that we believe firmly resolves all the issues. It sets forth a path where we can, in fact, move forward and listen to the voices that don't get heard very often in places like Washington, DC, and respond to their concerns, respond to the victimization, be the empathetic body I know we can be by saying: Yes, we can help, and we will help.

So my colleague and I hope this will at least generate enough discussion, provide at least enough of a bridge forward that we can continue to have the dialogue, continue to address amendments—if we can get through this—and actually move this issue forward.

I yield to my great friend from Maine, but I would like to ask her a question. As an appropriator, I know there may be some controversy. She has raised this already. There is some discussion that this may not be an appropriate place to make this decision, and I would like my colleague to elaborate on the appropriations process.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Maine.

Ms. COLLINS. If I could respond through the Chair, Mr. President, I do have the privilege of serving on the Committee on Appropriations, and I have seen the restrictions we have put on funds over the years. One of those restrictions which is at issue here goes back 39 years. So it is not unusual for the Committee on Appropriations to put certain limitations on the use of funds.

As I explained earlier, the Committee on Appropriations also deals with

nontax dollars. It is not unusual for us to appropriate money that comes from the collection of fines, of fees, of penalties, from leases. This is common. So what we are proposing in this bill is not anything new, unusual, or unique. It would be part of the standard appropriations process.

Indeed, Senator CORNYN actually raised the idea on the floor today of having the victims fund go through the appropriations process. We differ in language, so I don't want to imply there is any endorsement, but the concept is one the author of the bill has raised.

So in response to my colleague from North Dakota, who has spoken so eloquently of her experience in dealing with the victims of human trafficking, I would assure her that as a member of the Committee on Appropriations, I know full well that we put restrictions and limitations on funding as a standard course.

Ms. HEITKAMP. Mr. President, I would like to have a moment where we think about this body and how impressed everybody throughout the country is, how proud they are of our system of government, how proud of the great decisions that have been made in this room and of the great deliberations and the great debates. This truly is a remarkable government, and it is a remarkable system. But it has always been remarkable because it is not just the wealthy and powerful who have a voice in this body. With us comes the opportunity to speak for the most disadvantaged Americans, the most disadvantaged people in our system. And I cannot imagine a more horrific life than the life of being sold into prostitution. I cannot imagine a more horrific life than being enslaved through the horrible events of human trafficking.

Let's speak for those victims. Let's speak for those advocates who work so hard, who have been so encouraged that an issue such as this has become a priority issue for the United States of America. Let's try to bridge this gap. Let's work across the aisle, and let's reach to find a way forward because these victims deserve our attention, they deserve this debate, and they deserve our voice.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Maine.

Ms. COLLINS. Mr. President, I again want to thank my colleague from North Dakota for her very eloquent plea to our colleagues.

I know we can do this. I know we can find a path forward. I know we can get a sufficient number of votes so that we can proceed and debate the many amendments that have been filed on this bill. I know we can do it. The victims of this horrific crime deserve no less from the United States Senate, so let's not fail them. Let's not fail them.

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.

Ms. KLOBUCHAR. 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. KLOBUCHAR. Mr. President, I come to the floor again today to talk about the importance of getting the bill passed, and we have seen today for the first time—I talked I think 3 hours yesterday—the need to change the tone and try to work across the aisle on some ideas to move forward with this bill. That is happening in many conversations in this Senate Chamber and in offices, and I am pleased that we have had a change in tone and that we have some possibility of moving forward. I thank my colleagues for that.

Senator CORNYN and I have worked on this issue for a long time. In addition to the bill that is on the floor today, we also have the important safe harbor bill that I am leading and that Representative ERIK PAULSEN is leading in the House. This is a bill—since it went out of the Judiciary Committee unanimously and has none of the issues and controversy involved in the current bill on the floor—I hope will be able to get through this Senate Chamber in the coming week as either part of this bill or on its own.

This safe harbor bill, of course, is about treating the victims of sex trafficking as victims and not treating them as criminals when they are 12 years old. It is taking a model from Minnesota and 15 States and now creating incentives to bring it out to the rest of the country.

So what is it we have been talking about here over this last week? We are talking about 27 million people around the world who are victims of some kind of trafficking every year. Some of this is labor trafficking, but what we are focused on this week is sex trafficking. It is the third biggest criminal enterprise in the world. The first is illegal trafficking of drugs, the second is illegal trafficking of guns, and the third is illegal trafficking of girls and young boys. And the average age is 12 years old—not even old enough to drive a car, not even old enough to go to their first prom.

Last year, I went to Mexico with Cindy McCain, and we met with a number of officials and prosecutors and victim advocates who were working to fight this crime in Mexico. We visited a shelter for abused girls. We met with the Attorney General and with the Federal Police. But what I most remember of all of those meetings as to how we could better coordinate our focus on sex trafficking was the visit to the Covenant House in Mexico City, where there were girls as young as 11 years old who were victims of trafficking.

There was one girl who truly stood out. Her name was Paloma. She was new to the house which had taken her in and was in the first stage of recovery. Unlike the other girls who spoke

through an interpreter, she could speak English, but all she could say was her name, and then she couldn't stop crying. And while some of the other girls told their stories, she never told her stories in words. She only told her story through her tears. That is a moment I won't forget.

It reminded me of something I heard when I visited a refugee camp once in Jordan, where a mother said she had seen things that would make stones cry. That is what that little girl Paloma was saying through her tears, that the experiences she had had of being trafficked at 11 years old would make stones cry. These are real stories.

When Polaris—one of the major groups working on this issue of sex trafficking—released their State-by-State rankings of efforts to fight human trafficking, here is what they had to say:

The scope and scale of human trafficking within the United States presents a daunting challenge to policymakers, service providers, law enforcement, and advocates. Originally, human trafficking was thought to be more of a problem in other countries, but now it is known to be happening in our own backyards. It is estimated that there are hundreds of thousands of victims of sex and labor trafficking inside our borders.

But what we know today is that 83 percent of the victims in the United States are from the United States. It is not just girls at the bottom of a ship—which does happen—it is girls right in our country, girls right in Minnesota, on the streets of Rochester, where just in the last few months we had a 12-year-old girl who got a text inviting her to a party, showed up at a McDonald's parking lot where she was supposed to go, a guy puts her in a car, takes her up to the Twin Cities, rapes her, takes sexually explicit pictures of her, puts them on the Internet. The next day she is sold on Craigslist to two other men and raped. That happened in Minnesota. That man has now been indicted by the U.S. Attorney's office. But we have seen these cases over and over again.

People say, why is this getting worse? Why is the Senate debating this issue right now? It is because, as much as we love the Internet, we also know it has provided a vehicle for this kind of activity so that it is much easier for people to do behind closed doors where no one notices them basically get these young girls in their grasp.

Yesterday I spent nearly 3 hours reading from a book by Nicholas D. Kristof and Sheryl WuDunn about international sex trafficking called "Half the Sky." I did that because I felt the tone had gotten so bad in this Chamber on both sides, with people hurling accusations and not even being willing to talk about possible ways to resolve this, and I am glad again that now we are finally talking today.

They have another book about domestic sex trafficking, which is the focus of the bill on the floor today, as well as our safe harbor bill. They tell a

story of a girl named Clemmie. The book is called "A Path Appears." They say:

One of the first women whom Becca helped was Clemmie Greenlee, an African American woman who had been raped repeatedly beginning at the age of five and then systematically pimped from the age of twelve. Clemmie began drinking at the age of eight, dropped out of school in fourth grade, and soon became a heroin addict and an expert at robbing johns. On one occasion she did more than steal. A customer was beating her so badly, so she pulled out a knife and stabbed him. "I didn't see blood, so I stabbed him again, four more times," she said. He almost died, but fortunately for Greenlee he was a married man who begged the police not to press charges, and without his testimony they didn't have a case. She was freed.

By 2001, Greenlee was a gaunt eighty-five pounds, sleeping on the streets or in abandoned buildings, all of her money was going to crack cocaine. She had had a son who was killed in gang violence. She was seen as having so little commercial value that pimps abandoned her. An old friend from the streets found Greenlee in a crack house and dragged her over to see Reverend Stevens at Magdalene.

This is an example of what we are seeing across this country—right in our own country. These stories are so raw and so ugly, but I tell them and read from that book yesterday just so people remember why we are here and what we are dealing with, so we can put some of these issues—extraneous issues, things we need to change in the bill and fix in the bill, that we have some motivation to do it. These girls really don't know how to change the laws in Congress. They need our help to do that.

My good friend Cindy McCain, through her work at the McCain Institute—and I see Senator RUBIO here from Florida, who is also familiar with that work and knows what she has done. They undertook a study looking to get some baseline data on sex trafficking around big events. We have seen what happens where we have increases in Web site advertising and other things, and we have seen what happens when law enforcement actually comes together across all jurisdictional lines—Federal, State, and local—when the private sector engages, like our hotels—hotels like the Radisson Hotels in Minnesota. Marilyn Carlson Nelson has been such a leader on this, and has really set up and helped to fund foundations, because they see it. They know their workers are on the frontline and can actually stop it from happening—or airlines, like Delta, American, United that are on the frontlines and they train employees so they can stop this from happening.

So, yes, these bills will help. The bill we have on the floor right now that Senator CORNYN and I worked on, and many others in this Chamber, will help get funds for the victims and for these shelters. The bill I am leading with Senator CORNYN will actually help to make sure our States get incentives to make sure we are handling these criminal prosecutions in a way that works,

that emboldens the victims so they don't go back to the pimps, so they don't go back to that cycle of violence, so they actually feel they are in a safe harbor, that they are in a safe place so they will testify against these perpetrators—the ones running these rings, these crooks, these people who are treating these young girls as chattel. That is what these bills are about.

So we need a path forward. I think for the first time today we are seeing—despite no agreement yet and a lot of ideas out there, we are seeing a different tone. I want people to remember that not only will this bill involve the fund I am talking about, but once we either join it or pass separately our safe harbor law, it will also create incentives for States to change their laws. It will also create a national sex trafficking strategy that is in my safe harbor law. It will also allow these young girls who are victims to be part of job training programs and other things, to make it easier for our law enforcement with an amendment that I included in my bill from Senator SESSIONS and Senator WHITEHOUSE with the U.S. Marshals. There are many good things that are going to help.

Mostly, we are going to send a message from this Chamber, finally, after all of this acrimony over the last days and all of the blame, that we can finally send a message to that little girl named Paloma that this country believes in her. We believe these lives have value, and we must stand by these victims and stand up for these victims—not only in our country but internationally.

I thank the Presiding Officer. I thank my colleagues. I know these conversations are continuing as we work to find a path forward. I thank Senator CORNYN for the work we have done together. I look forward to getting this done.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Florida.

Mr. RUBIO. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that I be recognized to speak as in morning business.

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

Mr. RUBIO. Mr. President, let me begin by acknowledging the work the sponsors of the human trafficking bill are doing. Trafficking is a sanitized way to discuss this issue. It is actually slavery, and I am glad that term is finding its way into the lexicon of how this is discussed.

It is not just the sex trafficking—sex slavery—it is also labor trafficking, which is a major problem in this country as well.

I do hope we can find a way forward on this one. It is an extraordinarily important issue, one that has taken far too long to pay attention to. It is not something that happens just around the world, but it happens here closer than we think.

ISRAEL

Mr. President, I want to talk about a separate topic today as well. It is one a

lot of people have been reading about in the newspapers over the last 72 hours.

As we all know, there was an election in Israel this week, and many people are wondering: What is this aftermath of the election we keep reading about, where there is this controversy and back and forth? Certainly some of that happened a few weeks ago, when the Prime Minister of Israel visited Washington and spoke before the Congress. People are wondering, what is it that is going on here and why is there so much controversy around all this? I want to take a moment to delve deeper into this, because this is important.

First of all, to answer the fundamental question: Why should we care about what is happening with Israel, in Israel, and about Israel? There are two reasons I think we should care.

The first is because Israel represents everything we want that region of the world to be. Israel is a democracy, as evidenced by the vibrant election process they just underwent. Israel is a free enterprise economy, a developed economy, that provides prosperity for its people and its partners in trade and commerce. And Israel is a strong American ally—a democracy, a free enterprise, and a strong American ally.

Don't we wish the entire Middle East looked that way? Don't we wish we had more countries in the Middle East that looked like Israel—that were allies, that were democratic, and had a free and prosperous economy? How much better would the world be if the Middle East looked more like Israel and less like Iraq and Syria and other places look like at this moment?

There is another reason why we should care about Israel. Israel is not just another country. It has a special and unique purpose. It was founded as a homeland for the Jewish people in the aftermath of the Second World War and of the Holocaust, where over 6 million human beings were slaughtered. It was founded on the promise that never again in the history of the world would there not be a place for the Jewish people to go and be safe. It is not just a nation, it is a nation with a special and unique purpose unlike any other nation in the world, and I for one am proud that the United States has stood with Israel for all these years, and I am proud that the American people on a bipartisan basis have stood behind the Jewish State of Israel for all of these years. So the security, safety, and future of Israel is in our national security interest, as well as a moral obligation of every Member of this body and us as a nation.

What are the underpinnings of Israeli security? There are two things. First, the ability of Israel to defend itself; and the second, the reality that if Israel ever has to defend itself, the United States will be there to support them.

There is little doubt about the first pillar of its security. As the Prime Minister reminded us: Unlike many

other countries, Israel is not asking us to send American soldiers or aircraft to defend themselves. They are willing to defend themselves. But the second pillar, about strong and unquestionable American support, is increasingly being questioned around the world. And there is good reason why.

Let's begin with the aftermath of this recent election.

As far as I know—maybe this has changed in the last few hours—after this election, the President has yet to call the Prime Minister. That is unlike, of course, the fact that in March of 2012, he was among the first to call and congratulate Putin in Moscow. Or that in June of 2012, he was among the first to call Morsi and the Muslim Brotherhood when they won the Egyptian Presidency. Or that in November of 2012, he called to congratulate the top Chinese Communists on their new position—which, by the way, is not elected in the way you and I would consider there to be an election. Or the fact that in 2013, there was an historic phone call. They bragged about how he called the Iranian President and congratulated him on his election. And of course, in August of 2014, he called to congratulate Turkey's President Erdogan.

And on and on.

Time and again, this President has made a habit of quickly calling these leaders when they win. But as of 4:40 p.m. eastern time, as far as I know, that call has yet not been made. Thinking about all the things that have been going on with Israel, we would think he would be quick to make that call. It hasn't happened. Maybe it has already, but it certainly didn't happen fast enough.

But where does this come from? Is this new? Is this something that just happened recently? It isn't. In fact, we can start to see the trends here pretty early.

In October of 2008, then-Senator Obama told an audience in Cleveland:

There is a strain within the pro-Israel community that says unless you adopt an unswerving pro-Likud [one of the political parties in Israel] approach to Israel that you're anti-Israel.

Which is a silly comment to make, since at that time that party had been out of power.

In January of 2009, the President, upon taking office, makes a quick phone call to the Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas before he even phoned the Israeli Prime Minister. Abbas's spokesman Nabil Abu Rudeina quoted Obama as saying:

This is my first phone call to a foreign leader, and I'm making it only hours after I took office.

In July of 2009, the President hosted American Jewish leaders at the White House, and he reportedly told them that he sought to put "daylight" between America and Israel. Here is the quote that someone at that meeting says he made: "For eight years [during the Bush administration] there was no

light between the United States and Israel, and nothing got accomplished," he declared.

In September of 2009, in his first address to the U.N. General Assembly, President Obama devoted five paragraphs to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, during which he declared—to loud applause; by the way, in the United Nations, no surprise—"America does not accept the legitimacy of continued Israeli settlements." He went on to draw a connection between rocket attacks on Israeli civilians with living conditions in Gaza. There was not a single unconditional criticism of Palestinian terrorism.

In March of 2010, Secretary of State Hillary Clinton berated Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu on a now infamous 45-minute call, telling him that Israel had "harmed the bilateral relationship." By the way, the State Department triumphantly shared details of the call with the press. That same month, the Israeli Ambassador was dressed down at the State Department, and Mr. Obama's Middle East envoy canceled his trip to Israel, and the United States under his leadership joined the European condemnation of Israel.

In May of 2011, the State Department issued a press release declaring that the Department's No. 2 official would be visiting "Israel, Jerusalem, and the West Bank," as if Jerusalem was not part of Israel. So they left that separate.

Later in the month, only hours before Mr. Netanyahu departed from Israel to Washington, Mr. Obama delivered his infamous Arab Spring speech, which focused on a demand that Israel return to its indefensible pre-1967 borders with land swaps.

In November of 2011, an open microphone caught part of a private conversation with the President and French President Nicolas Sarkozy. Sarkozy said of the Israeli premier:

I can't stand Netanyahu. He's a liar.

But rather than defend Israel, the President piled on. He said:

You're tired of him; what about me? I have to deal with him every day.

In February of 2012, at a conference in Tunis, Secretary of State Hillary Clinton was asked about Mr. Obama pandering to "Zionist lobbies." She acknowledged that it was "a fair question" and went on to explain that during an election season "there are comments made that certainly don't reflect our foreign policy."

In 2014, during the Gaza conflict, the White House and the State Department criticized Israel for the deaths of Palestinians who were being used as human shields by Hamas. But far worse and far more suggestive of the President's true feelings was the White House's decision to try and use arms supplies as a pressure point against Israel.

In October of 2014, an anonymous administration official called Prime Minister Netanyahu "a chicken—" I can't even finish it.

That is what has happened up to this point. That is what has happened up to this point. What has happened now? An election just happened 2 days ago. The first thing the White House says is: You used a lot of divisive language in that election. That is saying a lot from someone who has been elected at least once, probably twice, on extremely divisive language.

But what about when Iran had a fraudulent election in 2009 and the people of Iran took to the streets to protest in the famous Green Revolution? You know what the White House said? We are not going to comment on that election because we are not going to interfere in the sovereignty of Iran. They will comment on the elections of an ally, calling the rhetoric of the election divisive. But when an enemy—which is what Iran is—has a fraudulent election and kills people who protest against it, we can't comment. We can't comment because that would be infringing on their sovereignty.

The other thing that has happened is the Prime Minister made a statement about how a two-state solution isn't possible given the current circumstances. What does the White House do? They jump up and say: Well, that means we may have to reconsider. We may have to go to the United Nations Security Council now and support a resolution, and that means not to use our veto authority to stop a resolution that calls on Israel to create a Palestinian State with 1967 borders.

Why would the Prime Minister of Israel say that, by the way? He is right; the conditions don't exist. Do you want to know why the conditions don't exist? First of all, let's go through the history of peace negotiations.

In 2000, at Camp David, Israel offered the Palestinian Authority nearly all of the West Bank, Eastern Jerusalem, and Gaza. The Palestinians said no. In 2000, Israel withdrew from southern Lebanon. Do you know what that is today? That is a place where they launch rockets against Israel.

In 2005, Israel withdrew from Gaza. Do you know what that is today? A place where they launch rockets from against Israel.

In 2008, Israel offered—again, to the Palestinian Authority—nearly all of the West Bank, nearly all of Judea and Samaria and Eastern Jerusalem. The Palestinian authority said no.

What about the Palestinian record? Let's begin with the fact that according to many reports, about 6 percent of the Palestinian budget is diverted to pay the salary of prisoners. That means the salary of terrorists, of people who have blown up centers and killed civilians, including Americans. They are being paid salaries and benefits, including with money from donors, such as the United States, Great Britain, Norway, and Denmark.

Here is another material on how the PA routinely depicts a world without Israel. This is from a Palestinian schoolbook:

Palestine's war ended with a catastrophe that is unprecedented in history, when the Zionist gangs stole Palestine . . . and established the so-called State of Israel.

Or what about this particularly horrific expression of ideology which appeared in a Palestinian Authority daily as far back as 1998:

The difference between Hitler and [British Foreign Minister] Balfour was simple: the former [Hitler] did not have colonies to send the Jews to, so he destroyed them, whereas Balfour . . . [turned] Palestine into his colony and sent the Jews. Balfour is Hitler with colonies, while Hitler is Balfour without colonies. They both wanted to get rid of the Jews. . . . Zionism was crucial to the defense of the West, [by] ridding Europe of the burden of the Jews.

This is from a daily of the PA. These are the people with whom we are pressuring them to cut a peace deal.

What about this?

The Palestinian Authority has named numerous locations and events after Palestinian terrorists responsible for killing Israeli civilians.

What about this? This opinion piece appeared in the New York Times in 2013:

The Palestinian Authority's television and radio stations, public schools, summer camps, children's magazines and Web sites are being used to drive home four core messages. First, that the existence of a Jewish state . . . is illegitimate because there is no Jewish people and no Jewish history. . . . Second, that Jews and Zionists are horrible creatures that corrupt those in their vicinity. Third, that Palestinians must continue to struggle until the inevitable replacement of Israel by an Arab-Palestinian state. And fourth, that all forms of resistance are honorable and valid, even if some forms of violence are not always expedient. Instead of being schooled in the "culture of peace," the next generation of Palestinians is being relentlessly fed a rhetorical diet that includes the idolization of terrorists, the demonization of Jews and the conviction that sooner or later Israel should cease to exist.

These are the people with whom this President wants to put pressure on them to cut a peace deal. I think Netanyahu is right. The conditions do not exist for a peace deal with people who teach their children that killing Jews is a glorious thing. The conditions for peace do not exist with a people—with a government, I should say, not a people. The people are victims of this government, the Palestinian Authority—not to mention Hamas, which teaches people that killing Jews is a glorious thing, that there is no such thing as a Jewish people, that any methods of destroying them is valid, that pays them salaries and benefits.

This President is making a historic mistake. Allies have differences. But for allies such as Israel, when you have a difference with them and it is public, it emboldens their enemies—to launch more rockets out of southern Lebanon and Gaza, to launch more terrorist attacks, to go to international forums and delegitimize Israel's right to exist. This is what they are doing.

This is a historic and tragic mistake. Israel is not a Republican or a Democratic issue. If this were a Republican

President doing these things, I would give the exact same speech. In fact, I would be even angrier. This is outrageous. It is irresponsible, and it is dangerous. It betrays the commitment this Nation has made to the right of a Jewish State to exist in peace. No people on earth want peace more than the people of Israel. No people have suffered more at the hands of this violence and this terrorism than the people of Israel. They need America's support unconditionally. If there are differences, they need to be dealt with privately as we do with other allies.

More than anything else, they deserve to be treated with more respect, not less than the respect this President and this White House is giving the Supreme Leader of Iran. He would not dare say the things about the Supreme Leader of Iran now that he is saying about the Prime Minister of Israel because he wouldn't want to endanger his peace deal or his arms deal that he is working out with them.

I hope he will reconsider. I hope the bipartisan nature of our support of Israel is reinvigorated. I hope that once again this body, this Congress, and this government will recommit themselves to this extraordinarily important relationship, because if America doesn't stand with Israel, who would we stand with? If Israel—a democracy, a strong American ally on the international stage—is not worthy of our unconditional support, then what ally of ours around the world can feel safe in their alliance with us?

I yield the floor.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Arkansas.

MR. COTTON. Mr. President, today I want to comment on the recent election in Israel and the Obama administration's outrageous reaction to it. Two days ago Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu's Likud Party won a decisive victory in the Israel election. For myself and on behalf of 3 million Arkansans, I want to offer hearty congratulations to Prime Minister Netanyahu. I have the greatest admiration for the Prime Minister's visionary and courageous statesmanship, as well as his service as a young man in his country's elite special operations forces. Prime Minister Netanyahu and his family have paid the highest price over the decades in the fight against the common enemies of Israel and the United States.

Yet let me also stress that the alliance between the United States and Israel is not an alliance for this or that Israeli statesman nor this or that Israeli political party. Nor, for that matter, does the alliance depend on whom or which party controls the White House or the Congress. Rather, it is an alliance between the American people and the Israeli people, between the ultimate defender of the West and the easternmost frontier of the West. Our alliance rests on our shared experiences and principles: our Judeo-Christian heritage, respect for the natural

rights of mankind, democratic self-government, market-based economics, and strong provision for our common defense. Israel's commitment to democratic elections demonstrated just this week an important distinction from many of their neighbors and why they are our closest ally in the region.

Apparently, President Obama harbors such deep-seated and irrational antipathy for Prime Minister Netanyahu that he is now willing to upend this decades-long alliance. President Obama's antagonism toward Prime Minister Netanyahu is longstanding and well known. Last year, for example, anonymous administration officials used a vulgar epithet to question Prime Minister Netanyahu's courage.

I will point out, as an aside, that anonymity is the Washington coward's shield, just as I am also compelled to point out that, so far as I know, neither the President nor his senior political aides served in our country's elite special operations forces, unlike Prime Minister Netanyahu.

Back to my main point, in the last 48 hours, more anonymous administration officials have suggested a fundamental rethinking of the United States-Israel alliance, citing Prime Minister Netanyahu's simple restatement of fact that there can be no Palestinian State until conditions change. The Palestinian Authority must, at a minimum, eject Hamas from its governing coalition, reclaim control of the Gaza Strip, accept a demilitarized eastern border in Judea and Samaria, and recognize Israel's right to exist as a Jewish State. As Prime Minister Netanyahu has said, if the Palestinians lay down their arms, there will be peace. But if Israel lays down its arms, there will be no Israel.

The Obama administration, though, has gone off the deep end and let their personal bitterness towards the Israeli Prime Minister drive their public foreign policy toward our closest ally. Here are just a few quotes from administration officials suggesting a fundamental change in our relationship with Israel and a willingness to abandon Israel at the United Nations.

One official said: "We are signaling that [if the Israeli government's position is no longer to pursue a Palestinian state,] we're going to have to broaden the spectrum of options we pursue going forward."

According to reports, that same official "wouldn't rule out a modified American posture at the United Nations, where the U.S. has long fended off resolutions criticizing Israeli settlement activity and demanding its withdrawal from Palestinian territories."

Another senior White House official said:

The premise of our position internationally has been to support direct negotiations between the Israelis and the Palestinians. We are now in a reality where the Israeli government no longer supports direct negotiations. Therefore we clearly have to factor that into our decisions going forward.

Finally, State Department spokeswoman Jen Psaki said:

We're currently evaluating our approach. We're not going to prejudge what we would do if there was a UN action.

Some observers will dismiss these comments as the petulant response of a President and political operatives who didn't get their way in the elections this week. But there is something much more worrisome underway. While Prime Minister Netanyahu won a decisive victory, he still has just started assembling a governing majority coalition.

These kinds of quotes from Israel's most important ally could very well startle some of the smaller parties and their leaders with whom Prime Minister Netanyahu is currently in negotiations. This raises the question, of course, if the administration intends to undermine Prime Minister Netanyahu's efforts to assemble a coalition by suggesting a change to our longstanding policy of supporting Israel's position with the United Nations.

After all, if you were an elected leader in Israel's parliament, you surely would worry about the United States refusing to exercise its veto at the U.N. Security Council. Consider the United Nations' long and dark history of anti-Semitism.

The U.N. Human Rights Council has condemned Israel in 45 resolutions since its creation in 2006. In 2013, the U.N. General Assembly adopted a total of 21 resolutions singling out Israel for disapproval and just 4 resolutions for the rest of the world.

Fifty percent of all emergency special sessions of the General Assembly over the last six decades were convened to denounce Israel. Meanwhile, no emergency special session has been called for any other state in over 30 years. Given this history and the stakes here and abroad, let me speak bluntly so there can be no misunderstanding. Under no circumstances will I or this Congress allow the Obama administration to abandon Israel to the United Nations or any other international institution or to change fundamentally the terms of our alliance with Israel.

This administration's latest outrageous pronouncement is even more difficult to understand as they simultaneously coddle the terrorist regime in Iran. The people of Israel should know the American people remain in solidarity with them in their quest to exist peacefully with their neighbors and that we will not allow them to be thrown to the jackals at the United Nations—a characterization made famous by a past Member of this body, the late Daniel Patrick Moynihan. I call on all Members of this body, including my colleagues on the other side of the aisle, to join with me in one voice supporting our ally Israel against the jackals.

In the coming days—perhaps as soon as the debate over the budget resolu-

tion next week—I will propose legislation that reaffirms the longstanding policy of the United States to continue to defend Israel against attacks at the United Nations and other international agencies. I urge all Members of this body, including my colleagues on the other side of the aisle who have a long history of supporting Israel, to join me in supporting such legislation.

Further, should the United Nations, its subordinate agencies, the International Criminal Court or any other international agency take adverse action against Israel, I will consider introducing legislation to restrict U.S. funding for the offending agency. Finally, if the U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations does not exercise the American veto against any anti-Israel resolution, I will also consider introducing similar legislation to restrict funding to the Ambassador's office.

For decades, the relationship between Israel and the United States has transcended political and personal differences. Our shared interests were enough to overcome any ideology or personal disagreement, but I fear mutual respect is of little concern to this administration. The President and all those senior officials around him should carefully consider the diplomatic and security consequences of their words. This Congress certainly will.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. CASSIDY). The Senator from Maryland.

SYRIAN WAR CRIMES ACCOUNTABILITY ACT

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. President, I rise to discuss the ongoing crisis in Syria. Sunday, March 15, marked the fourth anniversary of the beginning of the Syrian civil war.

Since this brutal war began, more than 3.8 million Syrians have fled Syria, 7.6 million have been displaced within Syria, and 12.2 million Syrians are in need of humanitarian assistance. Most tragically, more than 205,000 people have died as a result of the war. This past year was the deadliest year since the conflict began, with more than 76,000 dying in 2014 alone, including more than 3,500 children.

One thing has remained clear over the last 4 years—the war tactics employed in Syria by both government and opposition forces represent gross violations of human rights and fly in the face of internationally accepted rules of war.

The United Nations Independent International Commission of Inquiry on Syria has reported that the progovernment forces have murdered, tortured, assaulted, and raped civilians in Syria. Antigovernment groups have also engaged in murder, execution, torture, hostage-taking, and shelling of civilian neighborhoods. Medical workers and hospitals across Syria have also been targeted, but nowhere was the brutality of this war more evident than the events of August 21, 2013, when the Syrian Army, under the direction of President Assad, launched a chemical weapons attack in the Damascus suburbs killing 1,400 Syrians.

The United States, along with the international community, has a long tradition of upholding international norms, including holding accountable those guilty of crimes against humanity and war crimes. The international community cannot stand by and allow the murder of innocent men, women, and children to go unchallenged. He must immediately bring Assad and all the perpetrators of gross human rights violations in Syria to justice. This cannot wait another year.

Earlier this week, I reintroduced the Syrian War Crimes Accountability Act, along with my colleagues Senators RUBIO, MENENDEZ, SHAHEEN, and PETERS. This bipartisan legislation establishes a Syria-specific standard of reporting and accountability for crimes against humanity. The bill will require the U.S. State Department to report to relevant congressional committees on war crimes and crimes against humanity committed in Syria. This would include an account of war crimes and crimes against humanity committed by the regime of President Bashar al-Assad and violent extremist groups and other combatants involved in the conflict.

Today, as I stand on the floor of the Senate, the violence is continuing unabated.

Some of my colleagues may be aware of a Syrian defector and photographer named Caesar. Caesar fled from Syria in 2013 with more than 55,000 photos documenting the torture and murder of more than 11,000 civilians. Last week, some of those photos were put on display at the United Nations.

We must shine a light on the atrocities that have been committed in Syria and demand accountability. Ignoring these violations sends a message to the global community that war crimes and crimes against humanity are tolerable. The Syrian people deserve much more than that.

On this fourth anniversary of the beginning of the Syrian war, we must recommit to supporting the Syrian people through humanitarian efforts and by holding those individuals and groups which are guilty of committing war crimes and crimes against humanity accountable for their atrocities.

I ask my colleagues to stand with the Syrian people and join me in supporting the Syrian War Crimes Accountability Act.

LYNCH NOMINATION

Mr. President, I will also take time to urge my colleagues to immediately bring Loretta Lynch's nomination to the floor of the U.S. Senate to be the next Attorney General of the United States.

Ms. Lynch currently serves as the Senate-confirmed U.S. attorney for the Eastern District of New York. She has already been confirmed by the U.S. Senate. She served with great distinction as the U.S. attorney for the Eastern District.

I had the chance to visit with her last January and talk to her firsthand

about her vision to be the next Attorney General of the United States. She is extremely impressive, very well qualified, and has the right values to be the Attorney General of the United States.

I will give a few examples. I know all of us are concerned about equal justice to the law. Well, Ms. Lynch has lived that through her own personal commitments. At Harvard Law School, she was a member of the Legal Aid Bureau, helping people who otherwise would not have been able to afford access to our legal system.

Ms. Lynch has a long and distinguished record of prosecuting terrorists, sex traffickers, organized crime cartels, corrupt politicians, and dangerous gangs. She has been endorsed by a wide variety of law enforcement agencies and individuals.

Put it this way: I have not heard anyone question her qualifications. I have not heard anyone question why she should not be confirmed to be the next Attorney General of the country.

Loretta Lynch's nomination has been pending on the Senate floor as long as the five most recent Attorneys General combined. If we take five of the most recent Attorneys General and add all the time it took for their nominations to be confirmed, Loretta Lynch is now exceeding that. That is not fair.

President Obama is entitled to have his team in place, and we have a responsibility to vote on his nominations. Let's do the right thing and take up this nomination, debate it, and then have Senators vote up or down, not maybe, on her nomination. We owe it to Ms. Lynch, the employees of the Justice Department, and the American people to have a newly designated Attorney General in place as the Nation's chief law enforcement officer and top defender of Americans' constitutional rights.

With that, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate be in a period of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

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

BISHOP GORMAN HIGH SCHOOL 60TH DIAMOND ANNIVERSARY

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I rise to honor the 60th anniversary of Bishop Gorman High School in Las Vegas, NV.

In 1954, Bishop Gorman High School opened as the first Catholic high school

in Southern Nevada. I congratulate the institution on 60 years of leading our country in first-rate education while positively implementing Catholic values.

Bishop Gorman High School has graduated more than 9,000 students and currently has a 100 percent graduation rate and a college bound rate of 96 percent, making Bishop Gorman a national leader in college preparatory education. The school is equipped with an impressively experienced and credited faculty, with nearly 70 percent holding advanced degrees. The administration and the faculty's dedication to providing excellent education in a Catholic setting, in addition to a low student-teacher ratio, has contributed to Bishop Gorman's success and helped ensure that its students can reach their full potential.

The school takes pride in providing its students with a well-rounded education that includes strong academic principles, faith, and competitive athletic opportunities. Over the past 60 years, students have won 97 State athletic championships and received State and national recognition in academics, fine arts, and extracurricular activities.

Bishop Gorman High School also gives back to the local community and the State. Every year they organize multiple service events, and this past year, art students designed a beautiful courtyard for a transitional home in Las Vegas. Additionally, the National Honor Society students volunteered each week at a local food bank.

I applaud Bishop Gorman High School President John Kilduff and Principal Kevin Kiefer for their strong leadership and recognize this year's Knight of the Gaels honoree, Jack Raftery, Sr. I am pleased that through your joint efforts and the dedication of those before you, this remarkable institution has been a part of our community for 60 years. Best wishes for continued success, and congratulations on this great achievement.

BLACK WOMEN'S HISTORY WEEK

Mrs. GILLIBRAND. Mr. President, I request that the U.S. government officially recognize the last week in March as Black Women's History Week. During the week of March 23, as part of Women's History Month and in honor of the U.N. declaration of 2015 as the decade of Afro descendants, this week marks the perfect occasion on which to begin an annual recognition and celebration of Black women's history and contributions to American society.

Black women have long gone above and beyond the call of duty in their contributions to American society through civic engagement, high voter turnout, and stepping up as leaders and bulwarks in their communities. Even in the face of grave oppression throughout our Nation's history, Black women have continued to stand strong

and contribute to the well-being of their families, communities, and our country as a whole. A recognition of Black Women's History Week on the part of the Obama Administration and Congress would send a critical message that the government wishes to elevate their role in history and contemporary society and recognizes the unique struggles they continue to experience today.

Black women have consistently played a critical role in this Nation's history, often with little thanks or recognition. Harriet Tubman escaped slavery and bravely returned to the enslaved South 13 times to herald her people to freedom on the Underground Railroad. A century later, Rosa Parks witnessed the oppression of her people—specifically her fellow Black sisters—and took an active role in organizing the Montgomery Bus Boycott. Today, a Black woman is our nation's First Lady. Recognition of Black Women's History Week would honor and uplift the sacrifices of women such as Harriet Tubman and Rosa Parks, who paved the way for Barack and Michelle Obama to reach the White House, and me to address you on their behalf today.

Yet at the same time that Black women from our Nation's history have become inspirational symbols of strength and perseverance, Black women today continue to face the necessity to persevere through undue burdens as they navigate American society. They must try to hold their families together as primary caregivers when family members are incarcerated or killed, support their children as they grow up in food deserts and attend failing schools, they must continue to persevere when our society does not provide them with adequate support and equal rights. All the while, many Black women struggle to forward their own careers and provide for their families. Recent U.S. Department of Labor data shows that while job prospects are improving for nearly every group in America, one glaring exception remains: Black women. Since August 2013, Black women are the only group for whom unemployment rates have not fallen.

Karen McLeod's experience as a 59-year-old college graduate with two degrees who cannot find steady employment sheds light on the economic tribulations many Black women face. Karen went from making \$30 per hour as a respiratory therapist to \$16 per hour at a nonprofit, to \$8.67 per hour, working only 4 hours per week. In her current circumstances, she has had to make a series of tough decisions to get by. Karen sold her jewelry to pay for gas, pawned her television for food, and was forced to ask local nonprofits for rent assistance. Karen's story represents the experiences of a growing number of Black women, whose conditions are not improving with economic recovery. White House recognition of Black Women's History Week will

serve to acknowledge and call attention to the continued struggles Black women face in our society today and will send the critical message that their government cares about what they are going through.

This year, a coalition of organizations advocating for the well-being of women and communities of color will partner to elevate the stories, histories, and realities of Black women's lives. Each day of the week, starting on March 23 and continuing through March 29, will focus on a different issue Black women face in American society today, from economic disparities to educational achievement to police violence. Exploring these issues and acknowledging the centrality of Black women to our history and social fabric, along with recognizing the uniquely gendered and racialized inequities they face, is critical as we seek to extend equal rights to all Americans. I hope and request that this will be the first year in what will become an annual tradition of celebration and intentional recognition of our sisters through Black Women's History Week.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

TRIBUTE TO DON SHORT

• Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, today, I would like to recognize an exceptional Iowan who has been devoted to the State and to our agricultural heritage. After serving as president of Silos and Smokestacks National Heritage Area since 2001, Don Short has announced his retirement.

Don Short was raised in Winthrop, IA, where he took over the family farm. From early on, Don has dedicated his efforts to farming and agricultural policy. He was employed with Moews Seed Company, a family owned business since 1927 that specializes in corn seed production. Afterward, Don worked for DuPont Seed Company.

Don's experiences in agriculture have provided him the insight necessary to lead the Silos and Smokestacks National Heritage Area. For 15 years, he has been able to protect and promote natural, cultural, and historic areas. He spearheaded efforts to maintain and strengthen the Silos and Smokestacks National Heritage Area and has been a dogged advocate on its behalf. He is a farmer whose desire is to keep agricultural heritage alive through partnerships, such as historic sites, tourist attractions, and businesses that bring economic benefits to Iowa.

I want to congratulate Don Short on his retirement and his success over the years. Silos and Smokestacks will no doubt miss his daily contributions; however, he plans on remaining a consultant on a parttime basis. I thank him for his unwavering commitment to improving agricultural policies and making Iowa a better place.●

REMEMBERING WILLIAM DAVID ROTH

• Mr. SANDERS. Mr. President, I wish to speak today in remembrance of William David Roth, who passed away on March 17, 2015.

William "Bill" David Roth, 71, of Albany, NY, lived an extraordinary life and made major contributions to U.S. public policy. He was the son of Dr. Oscar Roth and Dr. Stefanie Zeimer Roth, refugees from Vienna who arrived in the United States just prior to the onset of World War II. Bill graduated magna cum laude from Yale University in 1964 after majoring in mathematics, economics, and politics. This is all the more remarkable given the fact that a neuromuscular disorder from the age of 8 left him unable to write. He performed complex mathematical equations and logical formulae in his head. He was also a formidable presence at Yale and later at the University of California, Berkeley, where he received his Ph.D. in 1970. He was that rare person who was both a man of thought and action and who inspired others by overcoming great odds and obstacles. From 1971 to 1972 he taught political science at the University of Vermont. He very well may have averted a Kent State tragedy in 1972 by permitting himself to be arrested at the Federal building in downtown Burlington during a nonviolent student protest against the Vietnam war. While Roth was offered immediate release because of his disability, he chose instead to remain until all the students had been released from the Burlington city jail. In this way he showed one of the virtues of civil disobedience, conducted with dignity and without violence, thus serving as an example and inspiration to others.

Subsequently, he went to work on the Carnegie Council on Children in Connecticut. He coauthored a landmark book that dealt searchingly with children with disabilities. His first major work was called "The Unexpected Minority: Handicapped Children in America." He also coauthored "The Grand Illusion: Stigma, Role-expectations, and Communication." These are widely acknowledged as providing the analytical basis for the disability rights movement as well as fostering a new academic discipline, disability studies.

Bill's work emphasized the disability movement's core vision: the most socially incapacitating aspects of disability are not the inescapable consequence of biology but the result of countless social decisions that do not acknowledge the needs of people with different bodies and, indeed, discriminate against people whose bodies are different. Bill went on to pioneer the use of computer technology for people with disabilities and in 1984 founded the Center for Computing and Disability at SUNY, Albany, one of the first such centers in the Nation. Bill was widely acknowledged through his scholarly research, technological

imagination, and progressive politics, as one of the founders of America's disability rights movement. He helped establish the framework for the Federal Disabilities Act and his work over the years addressed the architectural, transportation, and technological barriers to living with a disability in the United States.

As a longtime professor at the University at SUNY School of Social Welfare he taught courses in social policy and disability studies. In recent years, Bill's research and writing focused on illuminating the damage done in the aggressive pursuit of dismantling of the U.S. welfare state. His book, "The Assault on Social Policy," Columbia UP, is now in its second edition. It is recommended reading for all of my colleagues. Bill Roth fought not only with issues in disability but with his own neuromuscular disorder. He was a little like the phoenix—the bird that kept coming back. He was one of the most courageous people I have ever known. He was brilliant, imaginative, inventive, and utterly fearless. Bill inspired those of us who had the good fortune to know him. As Senator Joe Lieberman noted upon hearing of Bill Roth's death:

Bill was an extraordinary person—gifted, strong, funny, inspiring. We were blessed to know him.

As lawmakers, we have benefited from his many contributions to public policy and discourse. We remember and honor him for these accomplishments. Bill Roth overcame serious illnesses as well as disabilities. He served as a courageous example to his family, friends, colleagues, and students.●

RECOGNIZING HELM PAINT & DECORATING

● Mr. VITTER. Mr. President, small businesses often set the bar for quality and service across the United States. When quality and customer service are at the forefront of a business's mission, viable, sustainable jobs are created for countless members of our communities. Such is the case with the Small Business of the Week, Helm Paint & Decorating of Hammond, LA.

Ronald "Bunky" Helm opened shop in 1970 on Earhart Boulevard in New Orleans. Despite having to move from their original location after Hurricane Katrina in 2005, the Helm family has continued to bring excellent service and paint colors to south Louisiana. Today, Helm Paint is more than just a paint store—offering a wide variety of specialized paint, decoration, and accessory consultation. Helm's self-proclaimed goal is for their customers to have a customized and quality experience.

Last week, I had the distinct honor of officiating the grand opening ribbon cutting of Helm in Hammond, LA. The Hammond store is one of six locations serving south Louisiana communities. Each store participates in its surrounding community, holding events

throughout the year in support of local charities and other organizations. Helm Paint & Decorating is also a testament to how vital small businesses are for creating jobs for Louisianians. Much of the company's staff are second, third or even fourth generation employees who serve second, third, and fourth generation customers. Because Helm employees are experts in the products they sell, the majority of customers only have to complete a project once. As the locals like to say, Helm Paint & Decorating is not just a business, it is an experience.

Congratulations again to Helm Paint & Decorating for being selected as Small Business of the Week. Thank you for your commitment to customer service and creating quality jobs in communities across the State.●

MESSAGES FROM THE PRESIDENT

Messages from the President of the United States were communicated to the Senate by Mr. Pate, one of his secretaries.

EXECUTIVE MESSAGES REFERRED

As in executive session the Presiding Officer laid before the Senate messages from the President of the United States submitting sundry nominations which were referred to the appropriate committees.

(The messages received today are printed at the end of the Senate proceedings.)

MESSAGE FROM THE HOUSE

At 11:03 a.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Mrs. Cole, one of its reading clerks, announced that the House has passed the following bill, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate:

H.R. 1030. An act to prohibit the Environmental Protection Agency from proposing, finalizing, disseminating regulations or assessments based upon science that is not transparent or reproducible.

MEASURES REFERRED

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

H.R. 1030. An act to prohibit the Environmental Protection Agency from proposing, finalizing, or disseminating regulations or assessments based upon science that is not transparent or reproducible; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

MEASURES PLACED ON THE CALENDAR

The following bill was read the second time, and placed on the calendar:

H.R. 1191. 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.

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-988. A communication from the President of the United States of America, transmitting, pursuant to law, the fiscal year 2014 Annual Nuclear Weapons Stockpile Assessments from the Secretaries of Defense and Energy, the three national security laboratory directors, and the Commander, United States Strategic Command (OSS-2015-0289); to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC-989. A communication from the Assistant Administrator for Procurement, National Aeronautics and Space Administration, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "NASA FAR Supplement, Contractor Whistleblower Protections" (RIN2700-AE08) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 12, 2015; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-990. A communication from the Board of Trustees, National Railroad Retirement Investment Trust, transmitting, pursuant to law, the annual management report relative to its operations and financial condition for fiscal year 2014; to the Committee on Finance.

EC-991. A communication from the Secretary of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to Executive Order 13313 of July 31, 2003, a semiannual report detailing telecommunications-related payments made to Cuba pursuant to Department of the Treasury licenses; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC-992. A communication from the Assistant Attorney General, Office of Legislative Affairs, Department of Justice, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to the implementation of the recommendations of the 9/11 Commission for the period from October 1, 2009, through September 30, 2012; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-993. A communication from the Assistant Attorney General, Office of Legislative Affairs, Department of Justice, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to the implementation of the recommendations of the 9/11 Commission for the period from January 1, 2008, through September 30, 2009; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-994. A communication from the Chief, Administrative Law Division, Central Intelligence Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to a vacancy in the position of Inspector General, Central Intelligence Agency, received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 12, 2015; to the Select Committee on Intelligence.

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 Mrs. MURRAY (for herself and Ms. HIRONO):

S. 796. A bill to incentivize State support for postsecondary education and to promote increased access and affordability for higher education for students, including Dreamer students; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. BOOKER:

S. 797. A bill to amend the Railroad Revitalization and Regulatory Reform Act of

1976, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

By Mr. VITTER (for himself and Mr. TESTER):

S. 798. A bill to provide for notice to, and input by, State insurance commissioners when requiring an insurance company to serve as a source of financial strength or when the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation places a lien against an insurance company's assets, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

By Mr. MCCONNELL (for himself and Mr. CASEY):

S. 799. A bill to combat the rise of prenatal opioid abuse and neonatal abstinence syndrome; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. KIRK (for himself, Mr. BENNET, Mr. HATCH, and Ms. MURKOWSKI):

S. 800. A bill to improve, coordinate, and enhance rehabilitation research at the National Institutes of Health; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. ISAKSON (for himself, Mr. ALEXANDER, Mr. SCOTT, Mr. COATS, Mr. PERDUE, Mr. THUNE, Mr. SESSIONS, Mr. CORNYN, Mr. CORKER, Mr. HATCH, Ms. AYOTTE, Mr. BOOZMAN, Mr. MCCONNELL, and Mr. ROBERTS):

S. 801. A bill to amend the National Labor Relations Act to provide for appropriate designation of collective bargaining units; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. RUBIO (for himself and Mrs. SHAHEEN):

S. 802. A bill to authorize the Secretary of State and the Administrator of the United States Agency for International Development to provide assistance to support the rights of women and girls in developing countries, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

By Ms. AYOTTE (for herself, Mr. MCCONNELL, and Mr. ISAKSON):

S. 803. A bill to amend the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938 to provide employees in the private sector with an opportunity for compensatory time off, similar to the opportunity offered to Federal employees, and a flexible credit hour program to help balance the demands of work and family, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Ms. COLLINS (for herself and Mrs. SHAHEEN):

S. 804. A bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to specify coverage of continuous glucose monitoring devices, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. UDALL (for himself, Mr. RUBIO, Mr. MENENDEZ, and Mr. HEINRICH):

S. 805. A bill to amend title 54, United States Code, to make Hispanic-serving institutions eligible for technical and financial assistance for the establishment of preservation training and degree programs; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

By Mr. BOOZMAN (for himself, Mr. MANCHIN, and Ms. HEITKAMP):

S. 806. A bill to amend section 31306 of title 49, United States Code, to recognize hair as an alternative specimen for preemployment and random controlled substances testing of commercial motor vehicle drivers and for other purposes; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

By Mr. BLUNT (for himself, Ms. BALDWIN, Mr. KIRK, Mrs. SHAHEEN, Mr. JOHNSON, Mr. BENNET, Mr. VITTER, and Mr. PETERS):

S. 807. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to reform and reset the ex-

cise tax on beer, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. THUNE:

S. 808. A bill to establish the Surface Transportation Board as an independent establishment, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

By Mr. RUBIO:

S. 809. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to allow a credit against tax for qualified elementary and secondary education tuition; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. HATCH:

S. 810. A bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to repeal the Medicare sustainable growth rate and improve Medicare payments for physicians and other professionals, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. MURPHY (for himself, Mr. BOOKER, and Mrs. MURRAY):

S. 811. A bill to amend the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 to require States to develop policies on positive school climates and school discipline; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. MORAN (for himself, Mr. TESTER, Mr. INHOFE, Mr. PORTMAN, Mr. BARRASSO, and Ms. HEITKAMP):

S. 812. A bill to enhance the ability of community financial institutions to foster economic growth and serve their communities, boost small businesses, increase individual savings, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

By Mr. PAUL:

S. 813. A bill to provide the Secretary of Defense with authority to transfer funds in order to mitigate the effects on the Department of Defense of a sequestration of funds available to the Department of Defense, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Armed Services.

By Mr. WYDEN (for himself and Mr. MERKLEY):

S. 814. A bill to provide for the conveyance of certain Federal land in the State of Oregon to the Confederated Tribes of Coos, Lower Umpqua, and Siuslaw Indians; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

By Mr. WYDEN (for himself and Mr. MERKLEY):

S. 815. A bill to provide for the conveyance of certain Federal land in the State of Oregon to the Cow Creek Band of Umpqua Tribe of Indians; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

By Mr. WYDEN (for himself and Mr. MERKLEY):

S. 816. A bill to amend the Coquille Restoration Act to clarify certain provisions relating to the management of the Coquille Forest; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

By Mr. WYDEN (for himself and Mr. MERKLEY):

S. 817. A bill to provide for the addition of certain real property to the reservation of the Siletz Tribe in the State of Oregon; to the Committee on Indian Affairs.

By Mr. WYDEN (for himself and Mr. MERKLEY):

S. 818. A bill to amend the Grand Ronde Reservation Act to make technical corrections, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Indian Affairs.

By Mr. KIRK (for himself, Ms. HEITKAMP, Mr. GRAHAM, Mr. MANCHIN, Mr. BLUNT, Mr. DONNELLY, Ms. AYOTTE, and Mr. WARNER):

S. 819. A bill to reauthorize and reform the Export-Import Bank of the United States, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

By Mr. CASEY:

S. 820. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to enhance the Child and Dependent Care Tax Credit and make the credit fully refundable; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mrs. FEINSTEIN (for herself and Mr. LEAHY):

S. 821. A bill to establish requirements with respect to bisphenol A; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. WYDEN (for himself, Mr. RUSCH, Mr. MERKLEY, Ms. MURKOWSKI, and Mr. CRAPO):

S. 822. A bill to expand geothermal production, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

By Mr. SCHUMER (for himself and Mrs. GILLIBRAND):

S. 823. A bill to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 206 West Commercial Street in East Rochester, New York, as the "Officer Daryl R. Pierson Post Office"; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

By Mrs. SHAHEEN (for herself, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, Mr. FRANKEN, and Mr. BLUMENTHAL):

S. 824. A bill to reauthorize the Export-Import Bank of the United States, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

By Mr. CRUZ:

S. 825. A bill to terminate the authority to waive certain provisions of law requiring the imposition of sanctions with respect to Iran, to codify certain sanctions imposed by executive order, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

By Mr. DAINES:

S. 826. A bill to amend title 5, United States Code, to sunset rules after 10 years unless agencies undergo notice and comment rulemaking, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

By Ms. KLOBUCHAR (for herself and Mr. TESTER):

S. 827. A bill to amend the Communications Act of 1934 to ensure the integrity of voice communications and to prevent unjust or unreasonable discrimination among areas of the United States in the delivery of such communications; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

By Mr. INHOFE (for himself, Mr. MCCONNELL, Mr. CORNYN, Mr. BLUNT, Mr. BOOZMAN, Mrs. CAPITO, Mr. CASIDY, Mr. COTTON, Mr. CRUZ, Mr. DAINES, Mr. HATCH, Mr. JOHNSON, Mr. LANKFORD, Mr. LEE, Mr. MCCAIN, Mr. RUSCH, Mr. ROBERTS, Mr. ROUNDS, Mr. SCOTT, Mr. SESSIONS, Mr. TOOMEY, Mr. WICKER, Mr. HOEVEN, Mr. CRAPO, Mr. PAUL, Mr. PORTMAN, and Mr. THUNE):

S. 828. A bill to clarify that a State has the sole authority to regulate hydraulic fracturing on Federal land within the boundaries of the State; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

SUBMISSION OF CONCURRENT AND SENATE RESOLUTIONS

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

By Mr. MENENDEZ (for himself, Mr. BARRASSO, Mrs. BOXER, Mr. BROWN, Mr. CARDIN, Mr. CARPER, Mr. CASEY, Mr. COCHRAN, Mr. COONS, Mr. DONNELLY, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. ENZI, Mrs.

GILLIBRAND, Mr. ISAKSON, Mr. JOHN-SON, Mr. KIRK, Mr. MANCHIN, Ms. MIKULSKI, Mr. MURPHY, Mr. NELSON, Mr. PETERS, Mr. REED, Mr. RUBIO, Mr. SCHUMER, Mrs. SHAHEEN, Ms. STABENOW, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Mr. WICKER, and Mr. WYDEN):

S. Res. 105. A resolution recognizing the 194th anniversary of the independence of Greece and celebrating democracy in Greece and the United States; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

By Mr. ISAKSON (for himself and Mr. CASEY):

S. Res. 106. A resolution designating March 22, 2015, as "National Rehabilitation Counselors Appreciation Day"; considered and agreed to.

ADDITIONAL COSPONSORS

S. 148

At the request of Mr. PORTMAN, the names of the Senator from South Dakota (Mr. THUNE) and the Senator from Kentucky (Mr. PAUL) were added as cosponsors of S. 148, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to require State licensure and bid surety bonds for entities submitting bids under the Medicare durable medical equipment, prosthetics, orthotics, and supplies (DMEPOS) competitive acquisition program, and for other purposes.

S. 301

At the request of Mrs. FISCHER, the names of the Senator from Ohio (Mr. BROWN), the Senator from Hawaii (Ms. HIRONO), the Senator from Alabama (Mr. SHELBY), the Senator from Delaware (Mr. COONS), the Senator from Washington (Ms. CANTWELL) and the Senator from Maryland (Mr. CARDIN) were added as cosponsors of S. 301, a bill to require the Secretary of the Treasury to mint coins in commemoration of the centennial of Boys Town, and for other purposes.

S. 330

At the request of Mr. HELLER, the names of the Senator from Idaho (Mr. RISCH) and the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. MURPHY) were added as cosponsors of S. 330, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to make permanent the special rule for contributions of qualified conservation contributions, and for other purposes.

S. 423

At the request of Mr. MORAN, the names of the Senator from Arizona (Mr. FLAKE), the Senator from West Virginia (Mrs. CAPITO) and the Senator from Indiana (Mr. COATS) were added as cosponsors of S. 423, a bill to amend the Gramm-Leach-Bliley Act to provide an exception to the annual written privacy notice requirement.

S. 441

At the request of Mr. NELSON, the name of the Senator from North Carolina (Mr. TILLIS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 441, a bill to amend the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act to clarify the Food and Drug Administration's jurisdiction over certain tobacco products, and to protect jobs and small businesses involved in the sale, manufacturing and distribution of traditional and premium cigars.

S. 498

At the request of Mr. CORNYN, the name of the Senator from Alaska (Mr. SULLIVAN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 498, a bill to allow reciprocity for the carrying of certain concealed firearms.

S. 505

At the request of Mr. PORTMAN, the names of the Senator from Michigan (Ms. STABENOW) and the Senator from New York (Mr. SCHUMER) were added as cosponsors of S. 505, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to extend the Health Coverage Tax Credit.

S. 539

At the request of Mr. CARDIN, the names of the Senator from California (Mrs. BOXER) and the Senator from Kansas (Mr. MORAN) were added as cosponsors of S. 539, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to repeal the Medicare outpatient rehabilitation therapy caps.

S. 582

At the request of Mr. WICKER, the name of the Senator from North Carolina (Mr. TILLIS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 582, a bill to prohibit taxpayer funded abortions.

S. 590

At the request of Mrs. MCCASKILL, the names of the Senator from Oregon (Mr. MERKLEY) and the Senator from Oregon (Mr. WYDEN) were added as cosponsors of S. 590, a bill to amend the Higher Education Act of 1965 and the Jeanne Clery Disclosure of Campus Security Policy and Campus Crime Statistics Act to combat campus sexual violence, and for other purposes.

S. 615

At the request of Ms. MURKOWSKI, her name was added as a cosponsor of S. 615, a bill to provide for congressional review and oversight of agreements relating to Iran's nuclear program, and for other purposes.

S. 624

At the request of Mr. BROWN, the names of the Senator from Rhode Island (Mr. REED) and the Senator from Delaware (Mr. COONS) were added as cosponsors of S. 624, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to waive coinsurance under Medicare for colorectal cancer screening tests, regardless of whether therapeutic intervention is required during the screening.

S. 629

At the request of Mr. PORTMAN, the name of the Senator from Iowa (Mr. GRASSLEY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 629, a bill to enable hospital-based nursing programs that are affiliated with a hospital to maintain payments under the Medicare program to hospitals for the costs of such programs.

S. 650

At the request of Mr. THUNE, the name of the Senator from Nevada (Mr. HELLER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 650, a bill to extend the positive train control system implementation deadline, and for other purposes.

S. 688

At the request of Mr. MANCHIN, the name of the Senator from West Virginia (Mrs. CAPITO) was added as a cosponsor of S. 688, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to adjust the Medicare hospital readmission reduction program to respond to patient disparities, and for other purposes.

S. 709

At the request of Mr. ROBERTS, the name of the Senator from West Virginia (Mrs. CAPITO) was added as a cosponsor of S. 709, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to repeal the amendments made by the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act which disqualify expenses for over-the-counter drugs under health savings accounts and health flexible spending arrangements.

S. 737

At the request of Mr. BROWN, the name of the Senator from Oregon (Mr. MERKLEY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 737, a bill to amend title XIX of the Social Security Act to extend the application of the Medicare payment rate floor to primary care services furnished under Medicaid and to apply the rate floor to additional providers of primary care services.

S. 756

At the request of Mr. CARDIN, the name of the Senator from New Hampshire (Mrs. SHAHEEN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 756, a bill to require a report on accountability for war crimes and crimes against humanity in Syria.

S. 774

At the request of Mr. MORAN, the names of the Senator from Wyoming (Mr. BARRASSO), the Senator from South Carolina (Mr. SCOTT) and the Senator from Nebraska (Mrs. FISCHER) were added as cosponsors of S. 774, a bill to amend the Federal Financial Institutions Examination Council Act of 1978 to improve the examination of depository institutions, and for other purposes.

S. 783

At the request of Mr. GRASSLEY, the name of the Senator from Minnesota (Ms. KLOBUCHAR) was added as a cosponsor of S. 783, a bill to provide for media coverage of Federal court proceedings.

S. 793

At the request of Ms. WARREN, the names of the Senator from Minnesota (Ms. KLOBUCHAR), the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. MURPHY) and the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. BOOKER) were added as cosponsors of S. 793, a bill to amend the Higher Education Act of 1965 to provide for the refinancing of certain Federal student loans, and for other purposes.

STATEMENTS ON INTRODUCED BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

By Mr. BOOKER:

S. 797. A bill to amend the Railroad Revitalization and Regulatory Reform

Act of 1976, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

Mr. BOOKER. Mr. President, our Nation faces an infrastructure investment crisis across the board, but one aspect of our infrastructure that has been particularly neglected by the Federal Government is rail. While the Nation's large freight rail carriers are able to invest in infrastructure with their own funds, the infrastructure used by passenger and many smaller freight railroads is deteriorating at an alarming rate. We need to be doing more to repair and modernize these tracks, roadbeds, bridges, tunnels, and train cars.

Nowhere is the investment crisis more pressing than in New Jersey, where a set of tunnels constructed under the Hudson River in 1910—badly damaged by Hurricane Sandy—must either be replaced or shut down sometime over the next two decades. The shutdown scenario is unacceptable to the economy of not only my State, but the entire northeast region, if not the country.

Amtrak has a plan, known as the Gateway Program, to replace these tunnels, as well as the century old Portal Bridge. Executing the Gateway Program will take a significant funding commitment from the Federal Government, and I stand ready to fight for that funding. But, given the significant upfront cost, and the long-term benefits and revenue potential, it makes sense to explore financing opportunities in addition to funding.

The Federal Government already has an established financing program in the Railroad Rehabilitation and Improvement Financing Program, or RRIF. However, the RRIF program is fraught with limitations, particularly in its ability to finance fixed infrastructure projects like a bridge or tunnel. The program is significantly underutilized, especially relative to other Federal financing programs.

That is why I am introducing the Railroad Infrastructure Financing Improvement Act. This bill would incorporate into RRIF the policies that make other Federal loan programs more successful. For instance, it will establish new creditworthiness criteria focused on the merits of the project, increase repayment flexibility, help leverage private financing opportunities, speed up the process of applying for and receiving a loan, and improve access to the program particularly for smaller applicants.

The bill is meant to start a conversation about the tools we currently have available for investing in rail infrastructure, and the improvements we can make to start getting critical projects like the Gateway Program off the ground. I look forward to working with my colleagues and rail stakeholders to build upon this proposal and move forward on a comprehensive passenger rail reauthorization bill.

By Mr. McCONNELL (for himself and Mr. CASEY):

S. 799. A bill to combat the rise of prenatal opioid abuse and neonatal abstinence syndrome; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, next month I look forward to hosting our Nation's newest drug czar at a forum in Covington, KY. It is a forum that will allow Director Bottecelli to hear firsthand accounts of the devastating impact of one of America's most significant public health challenges and one that continues to hit my State particularly hard—the growing epidemic of prescription drug and heroin abuse.

It is hard to overstate the challenge. Drug overdoses, largely driven by pain killers, now claim more Kentucky lives than car accidents, and rising heroin overdose rates now account for nearly one-third of all drug overdose deaths in Kentucky.

While statistics such as these are devastating enough, they hardly paint the full picture because they don't account for the thousands of innocent children born dependent on opioids. The numbers are hard to hear. Nationwide we have seen a staggering 300-percent increase in the number of infants diagnosed with newborn withdrawal since 2000. But in Kentucky, we saw similar numbers grow by an almost unbelievable 3,000 percent.

It is a tragic challenge, and I say that especially as a father of three daughters. But it is a challenge we can do something about. If Washington enacts the bipartisan Protecting Our Infants Act that I am introducing today, along with Senator CASEY of Pennsylvania, it is a challenge we will do something about.

This bipartisan bill will do a number of important things. It will direct the Secretary of Health and Human Services to develop recommendations both for preventing prenatal opioid abuse and treating infants dependent on opioids. It would direct the Secretary to help develop a strategy to address research and program gaps—a step recommended by GAO in one of their reports released last month—and it would encourage the Director of the CDC to work with States to help improve surveillance and data collection activities in this area.

Obviously, no piece of legislation would ever solve the challenge overnight, but the bipartisan Protect Our Infants Act can help move the country in the right direction. That is why it is supported by the March of Dimes, the American Academy of Pediatrics, the American Congress of Obstetricians and Gynecologists. That is why an identical bill will also be introduced in the House today by Congresswoman KATHERINE CLARK of Massachusetts and Congressman STEVE STIVERS of Ohio.

I commend these Representatives and Senator CASEY for their leadership on this issue. I look forward to working with them to advance this important

measure through Congress, and I look forward to discussing it with Director Bottecelli during his visit to Kentucky in the next few weeks.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the text of the bill be printed in the RECORD.

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

S. 799

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 “Protecting Our Infants Act of 2015”.

SEC. 2. FINDINGS.

Congress finds as follows:

(1) Opioid prescription rates have risen dramatically over the past several years. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, in some States, there are as many as 96 to 143 prescriptions for opioids per 100 adults per year.

(2) In recent years, there has been a steady rise in the number of overdose deaths involving heroin. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the death rate for heroin overdose doubled from 2010 to 2012.

(3) At the same time, there has been an increase in cases of neonatal abstinence syndrome (referred to in this section as “NAS”). In the United States, the incidence of NAS has risen from 1.20 per 1,000 hospital births in 2000 to 3.39 per 1,000 hospital births in 2009.

(4) NAS refers to medical issues associated with drug withdrawal in newborns due to exposure to opioids or other drugs in utero.

(5) The average cost of treatment in a hospital for NAS increased from \$39,400 in 2000 to \$53,400 in 2009. Most of these costs are born by the Medicaid program.

(6) Preventing opioid abuse among pregnant women and women of childbearing age is crucial.

(7) Medically-appropriate opioid use in pregnancy is not uncommon, and opioids are often the safest and most appropriate treatment for moderate to severe pain for pregnant women.

(8) Addressing NAS effectively requires a focus on women of childbearing age, pregnant women, and infants from preconception through early childhood.

(9) NAS can result from the use of prescription drugs as prescribed for medical reasons, from the abuse of prescription drugs, or from the use of illegal opioids like heroin.

(10) For pregnant women who are abusing opioids, it is most appropriate to treat and manage maternal substance use in a non-punitive manner.

(11) According to a report of the Government Accountability Office (referred to in this section as the “GAO report”), more research is needed to optimize the identification and treatment of babies with NAS and to better understand long-term impacts on children.

(12) According to the GAO report, the Department of Health and Human Services does not have a focal point to lead planning and coordinating efforts to address prenatal opioid use and NAS across the department.

(13) According to the GAO report, “given the increasing use of heroin and abuse of opioids prescribed for pain management, as well as the increased rate of NAS in the United States, it is important to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of planning and coordination of Federal efforts on prenatal opioid use and NAS”.

SEC. 3. DEVELOPING RECOMMENDATIONS FOR PREVENTING AND TREATING PRENATAL OPIOID ABUSE AND NEONATAL ABSTINENCE SYNDROME.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of Health and Human Services (referred to in this Act as the “Secretary”), acting through the Director of the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (referred to in this section as the “Director”), shall conduct a study and develop recommendations for preventing and treating prenatal opioid abuse and neonatal abstinence syndrome, soliciting input from nongovernmental entities, including organizations representing patients, health care providers, hospitals, other treatment facilities, and other entities, as appropriate.

(b) REPORT.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, the Director shall publish on the Internet Web site of the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality a report on the study and recommendations under subsection (a). Such report shall address each of the issues described in paragraphs (1) through (3) of subsection (c).

(c) CONTENTS.—The study described in subsection (a) and the report under subsection (b) shall include—

(1) a comprehensive assessment of existing research with respect to the prevention, identification, treatment, and long-term outcomes of neonatal abstinence syndrome, including the identification and treatment of pregnant women or women who may become pregnant who use opioids or other drugs;

(2) an evaluation of—

(A) the causes of and risk factors for opioid use disorders among women of reproductive age, including pregnant women;

(B) the barriers to identifying and treating opioid use disorders among women of reproductive age, including pregnant and postpartum women and women with young children;

(C) current practices in the health care system to respond to and treat pregnant women with opioid use disorders and infants born with neonatal abstinence syndrome;

(D) medically indicated use of opioids during pregnancy;

(E) access to treatment for opioid use disorders in pregnant and postpartum women; and

(F) access to treatment for infants with neonatal abstinence syndrome; and

(3) recommendations on—

(A) preventing, identifying, and treating neonatal abstinence syndrome in infants;

(B) treating pregnant women who are dependent on opioids; and

(C) preventing opioid dependence among women of reproductive age, including pregnant women, who may be at risk of developing opioid dependence.

SEC. 4. IMPROVING PREVENTION AND TREATMENT FOR PRENATAL OPIOID ABUSE AND NEONATAL ABSTINENCE SYNDROME.

(a) REVIEW OF PROGRAMS.—The Secretary shall lead a review of planning and coordination within the Department of Health and Human Services related to prenatal opioid use and neonatal abstinence syndrome.

(b) STRATEGY TO CLOSE GAPS IN RESEARCH AND PROGRAMMING.—In carrying out subsection (a), the Secretary shall develop a strategy to address research and program gaps, including such gaps identified in findings made by reports of the Government Accountability Office. Such strategy shall address—

(1) gaps in research, including with respect to—

(A) the most appropriate treatment of pregnant women with opioid use disorders;

(B) the most appropriate treatment and management of infants with neonatal abstinence syndrome; and

(C) the long-term effects of prenatal opioid exposure on children; and

(2) gaps in programs, including—

(A) the availability of treatment programs for pregnant and postpartum women and for newborns with neonatal abstinence syndrome; and

(B) guidance and coordination in Federal efforts to address prenatal opioid use or neonatal abstinence syndrome.

(c) REPORT.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall submit to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions of the Senate and the Committee on Energy and Commerce of the House of Representatives a report on the findings of the review described in subsection (a) and the strategy developed under subsection (b).

SEC. 5. IMPROVING DATA ON AND PUBLIC HEALTH RESPONSE TO NEONATAL ABSTINENCE SYNDROME.

(a) DATA AND SURVEILLANCE.—The Director of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention shall, as appropriate—

(1) provide technical assistance to States to improve the availability and quality of data collection and surveillance activities regarding neonatal abstinence syndrome, including—

(A) the incidence and prevalence of neonatal abstinence syndrome;

(B) the identification of causes for neonatal abstinence syndrome, including new and emerging trends; and

(C) the demographics and other relevant information associated with neonatal abstinence syndrome;

(2) collect available surveillance data described in paragraph (1) from States, as applicable; and

(3) make surveillance data collected pursuant to paragraph (2) publically available on an appropriate Internet Web site.

(b) PUBLIC HEALTH RESPONSE.—The Director of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention shall encourage increased utilization of effective public health measures to reduce neonatal abstinence syndrome.

By Ms. COLLINS (for herself and Mrs. SHAHEEN):

S. 804. A bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to specify coverage of continuous glucose monitoring devices, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Finance.

Ms. COLLINS. Mr. President, as the founder and the cochair of the Senate Diabetes Caucus, I have learned much about this devastating disease affecting nearly 29 million Americans. Fortunately, due to the Special Diabetes Program and to increased investments in diabetes research, we have seen some exciting breakthroughs and we are on the threshold of a number of important new discoveries.

This is particularly true for the estimated 1.2 million Americans living with type 1 diabetes. Advances in technology such as continuous glucose monitors are helping patients control their blood glucose levels, which is key to preventing costly and sometimes deadly diabetes complications. We are moving closer and closer to our goal of an artificial pancreas.

The National Institutes of Health and the Food and Drug Administration have been extremely supportive of these innovations in diabetes care. I was, therefore, shocked and troubled to learn that insulin-dependent Medicare

beneficiaries are being denied coverage for continuous glucose monitors because the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services has determined that they do not meet the definition for durable medical equipment and do not fall under any other Medicare category. As a consequence, we are seeing situations similar to what we saw with insulin pumps in the late 1990s, where individuals with type 1 diabetes have had coverage for their continuous glucose monitors on their private insurance, only to lose that coverage when they get old enough to become eligible for Medicare.

Let me give some brief background. A continuous glucose monitor is a physician-prescribed, FDA-approved medical device that can provide real-time readings and data about trends in glucose levels every 5 minutes, thus enabling someone with insulin-dependent diabetes to eat or take insulin and prevent dangerously high or low glucose levels.

There has been essential and extensive clinical evidence that shows that individuals using this device have improved overall glucose control and, thus, reduced rates of hypoglycemia or low blood glucose levels. That is why professional medical societies have recognized the clinical evidence and have published guidelines recommending that these monitors be used in appropriate patients with type 1 diabetes.

Now, here is the fact that is astonishing to me. About 95 percent of commercial insurers provide coverage for continuous glucose monitors, but Medicare is refusing to provide coverage for those devices. I recently heard about this problem from one of my constituents, 74-year-old Prudence Barry of Portland, ME. Diabetes treatments have changed dramatically since Pru was diagnosed with type 1 diabetes back in 1954. Back then, it was very difficult for her to control her insulin levels and to get her glucose levels properly read. Well, Pru has led an active and fulfilling life. Living with type 1 diabetes for more than 60 years has taken its toll.

Today, Pru no longer feels it when her blood glucose levels drop to dangerous levels, causing her to lose consciousness and suffer seizures more frequently. Nighttime low sugars are particularly troubling. She fears the possibility of her blood sugar developing so low during the night that she never wakes up. The continuous glucose monitor is a potential lifesaver for Pru because it prevents these dangerously high or low blood glucose levels by alarming the wearer when the glucose levels fall outside of the safe range.

So even though 95 percent of private insurers cover this technology, Medicare does not. As a consequence, Pru does not have access to the potentially lifesaving device because she cannot afford to pay for it out of pocket. Pru is not alone. There are thousands of seniors with type 1 diabetes who like my constituent are denied access to this

technology that would help keep them healthy and safe.

The ironic thing is it is only because of advances in diabetes care, such as continuous glucose monitors, that people with type 1 diabetes can expect to live long enough to become Medicare beneficiaries. So I am very concerned about this decision by CMS. It makes absolutely no sense. It contradicts all the work NIH and the FDA are doing to get new innovative treatments and technologies to patients.

I brought this up in a recent hearing of the HELP Committee and asked the outgoing FDA Commissioner what she thought. She expressed her regret about the lack of consultation between her agency and CMS about payments for FDA-approved devices and drugs. I am particularly concerned given the implications that this coverage decision will have for future decisions regarding artificial pancreas systems, which will combine a continuous glucose monitor, insulin pump, and sophisticated algorithm to control high and low blood sugar around the clock.

This coverage decision on the part of CMS—which, after all, is also part of the Department of Health and Human Services—directly counteracts all of the work that the NIH and the FDA are doing to get new innovative treatments and technologies to patients. As I said, I recently had the opportunity at a HELP Committee hearing to ask outgoing FDA Commissioner Hamburg whether CMS consults with her agency when making these kinds of coverage decisions. In response to my question, Commissioner Hamburg expressed regret that her agency does not routinely consult with CMS about payments for FDA-approved drugs and devices, saying that the FDA should “look at the whole ecosystem of biomedical product development and use, and recognize that each of the different components that often operate in silos actually are very interdependent.” I completely agree with her assessment.

I am therefore joining my colleague from New Hampshire and the Co-Chair of the Senate Diabetes Caucus in introducing the Medicare CGM Access Act of 2014 to create a separate benefit category under Medicare for the continuous glucose monitor and require coverage of the device for individuals meeting specified medical criteria.

Our legislation is strongly supported by a coalition of organizations, including the American Association of Clinical Endocrinologists, the American Association of Diabetes Educators, the Endocrine Society and the JDRF.

I encourage my colleagues to join us as cosponsors of this important legislation.

I see Senator LEAHY has come to the floor and undoubtedly wants to speak on the pending business. Let me conclude my remarks by saying I am very pleased the Senator from New Hampshire, JEANNE SHAHEEN, who is the co-

chair of the Senate Diabetes Caucus, is joining me in introducing the Medicare CGM Access Act to create a separate benefit category under Medicare for these monitors and to require coverage of the device for seniors who are meeting specified medical criteria.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that a letter of endorsement be printed in the RECORD.

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

MARCH 15, 2015.

HON. SUSAN COLLINS,
*U.S. Senate, Dirksen Senate Office Building,
Washington, DC.*

HON. JEANNE SHAHEEN,
*U.S. Senate, Hart Senate Office Building,
Washington, DC.*

DEAR SENATORS COLLINS AND SHAHEEN, Therapy innovation is moving forward at a rapid pace for those living with insulin-dependent diabetes. As leaders of the Senate Diabetes Caucus, you have worked to catalyze these efforts by ensuring American patients have access to these life-saving technologies that can transform quality of life. Advancements in integrated insulin pump and continuous glucose monitoring (CGM) technologies are progressing toward closed-loop “artificial pancreas” systems that will enable greater patient care and improved health outcomes. With these technology advancements, thankfully, most children with type 1 diabetes will be Medicare beneficiaries one day, something that could not have been said with such certainty even 20 years ago.

While thousands of people with insulin-dependent diabetes benefit from advanced diabetes technologies, including CGM, Medicare beneficiaries do not. CGM is covered by nearly all private health plans. Numerous studies have demonstrated conclusively that use of CGMs improves glucose control, enabling better patient care, thereby improving patient health. Studies have also shown that use of CGM devices reduce severe hypoglycemia events, which particularly impact elderly patients and can lead to falls, fractures and other complications. The average cost of an inpatient hypoglycemia admission is over \$17,500.

The undersigned organizations strongly support your legislation, the Medicare CGM Access Act that would remedy this disparity for those in Medicare. Your legislation creates a new benefit category for FDA approved CGM devices, including stand-alone CGM, CGM integrated with an insulin pump, and future artificial pancreas device systems. This therapy would be covered for those meeting appropriate medical criteria consistent with private coverage and professional clinical guidelines. Again, thank you for your continued leadership on behalf of those with diabetes and we look forward to working with you to move this legislation forward quickly.

American Association of Clinical Endocrinologists (AACE); American Association of Diabetes Educators (AADE); Dexcom; Endocrine Society; JDRF; Johnson & Johnson; Medtronic.

By Mr. WYDEN (for himself and Mr. MERKLEY):

S. 814. A bill to provide for the conveyance of certain Federal land in the State of Oregon to the Confederated Tribes of Coos, Lower Umpqua, and Siuslaw Indians; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

Mr. WYDEN. Mr. President, today I rise to introduce five unique Oregon tribal bills S. 814, S. 815, S. 816, S. 817, and S. 818, that each deliver on promises made to the tribes long ago. By introducing these bills today I am renewing my commitment to the five Oregon tribes who will benefit greatly from passage of these bills—the Confederated Tribes of the Coos, Lower Umpqua, and Siuslaw Indians, the Coquille Indian Tribe, the Cow Creek Band of Umpqua Tribe of Indians, the Confederated Tribes of Siletz Indians, and the Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde.

For the Confederated Tribes of the Coos, Lower Umpqua, and Siuslaw Indians and the Cow Creek Band of Umpqua Tribe of Indians, their bills put land into trust, the last two remaining federally-recognized Indian tribes in Oregon without a land base. The third bill amends the Restoration Act of the Coquille Indian Tribe to make forest management activities on tribal lands uniform with the management of other tribal forests. The final two bills streamline the Bureau of Indian Affairs process for putting land into trust for the Confederated Tribes of Siletz Indians and the Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde. These five unique bills honor and respect tribal sovereignty and support each tribe’s right to be self-sufficient, build their economies, and support and provide for their communities. I am pleased to be joined on these bills by my colleague Senator MERKLEY and look forward to working with our Senate and House colleagues to advance the bills and to finally send them to the President’s desk.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the text of the bill be printed in the RECORD.

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

S. 814

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 “Oregon Coastal Land Act”.

SEC. 2. DEFINITIONS.

In this Act:

(1) CONFEDERATED TRIBES.—The term “Confederated Tribes” means the Confederated Tribes of Coos, Lower Umpqua, and Siuslaw Indians.

(2) OREGON COASTAL LAND.—The term “Oregon Coastal land” means the approximately 14,408 acres of land, as generally depicted on the map entitled “Oregon Coastal Land Conveyance” and dated March 27, 2013.

(3) SECRETARY.—The term “Secretary” means the Secretary of the Interior.

SEC. 3. CONVEYANCE.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Subject to valid existing rights, including rights-of-way, all right, title, and interest of the United States in and to the Oregon Coastal land, including any improvements located on the land, appurtenances to the land, and minerals on or in the land, including oil and gas, shall be—

(1) held in trust by the United States for the benefit of the Confederated Tribes; and

(2) part of the reservation of the Confederated Tribes.

(b) SURVEY.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall complete a survey of the boundary lines to establish the boundaries of the land taken into trust under subsection (a).

SEC. 4. MAP AND LEGAL DESCRIPTION.

(a) IN GENERAL.—As soon as practicable after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall file a map and legal description of the Oregon Coastal land with—

(1) the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources of the Senate; and

(2) the Committee on Natural Resources of the House of Representatives.

(b) FORCE AND EFFECT.—The map and legal description filed under subsection (a) shall have the same force and effect as if included in this Act, except that the Secretary may correct any clerical or typographical errors in the map or legal description.

(c) PUBLIC AVAILABILITY.—The map and legal description filed under subsection (a) shall be on file and available for public inspection in the Office of the Secretary.

SEC. 5. ADMINISTRATION.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Unless expressly provided in this Act, nothing in this Act affects any right or claim of the Confederated Tribes existing on the date of enactment of this Act to any land or interest in land.

(b) PROHIBITIONS.—

(1) EXPORTS OF UNPROCESSED LOGS.—Federal law (including regulations) relating to the export of unprocessed logs harvested from Federal land shall apply to any unprocessed logs that are harvested from the Oregon Coastal land taken into trust under section 3.

(2) NON-PERMISSIBLE USE OF LAND.—Any real property taken into trust under section 3 shall not be eligible, or used, for any gaming activity carried out under Public Law 100-497 (25 U.S.C. 2701 et seq.).

(c) LAWS APPLICABLE TO COMMERCIAL FORESTRY ACTIVITY.—Any commercial forestry activity that is carried out on the Oregon Coastal land taken into trust under section 3 shall be managed in accordance with all applicable Federal laws.

(d) AGREEMENTS.—The Confederated Tribes shall consult with the Secretary and other parties as necessary to develop agreements to provide for access to the Oregon Coastal land taken into trust under section 3 that provide for—

(1) honoring existing reciprocal right-of-way agreements;

(2) administrative access by the Bureau of Land Management; and

(3) management of the Oregon Coastal land that are acquired or developed under chapter 2003 of title 54, United States Code, consistent with section 200305(f)(3) of title 54, United States Code.

(e) LAND USE PLANNING REQUIREMENTS.—Except as provided in subsection (c), once the Oregon Coastal land is taken into trust under section 3, the land shall not be subject to the land use planning requirements of the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 (43 U.S.C. 1701 et seq.) or the Act of August 28, 1937 (43 U.S.C. 1181a et seq.).

SEC. 6. LAND RECLASSIFICATION.

(a) IDENTIFICATION OF OREGON AND CALIFORNIA RAILROAD GRANT LAND.—Not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Agriculture and the Secretary shall identify any Oregon and California Railroad grant land that is held in trust by the United States for the benefit of the Confederated Tribes under section 3.

(b) IDENTIFICATION OF PUBLIC DOMAIN LAND.—Not later than 18 months after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall identify public domain land in the State of Oregon that—

(1) is approximately equal in acreage and condition as the Oregon and California Railroad grant land identified under subsection (a); and

(2) is located in the vicinity of the Oregon and California Railroad grant land.

(c) MAPS.—Not later than 2 years after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall submit to Congress and publish in the Federal Register 1 or more maps depicting the land identified in subsections (a) and (b).

(d) RECLASSIFICATION.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—After providing an opportunity for public comment, the Secretary shall reclassify the land identified in subsection (b) as Oregon and California Railroad grant land.

(2) APPLICABILITY.—The Act of August 28, 1937 (43 U.S.C. 1181a et seq.), shall apply to land reclassified as Oregon and California Railroad grant land under paragraph (1).

By Mr. WYDEN (for himself and Mr. MERKLEY):

S. 815. A bill to provide for the conveyance of certain Federal land in the State of Oregon to the Cow Creek Band of Umpqua Tribe of Indians; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

Mr. WYDEN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the text of the bill be printed in the RECORD.

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

S. 815

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 “Cow Creek Umpqua Land Conveyance Act”.

SEC. 2. DEFINITIONS.

In this Act:

(1) COUNCIL CREEK LAND.—The term “Council Creek land” means the approximately 17,519 acres of land, as generally depicted on the map entitled “Canyon Mountain Land Conveyance” and dated June 27, 2013.

(2) TRIBE.—The term “Tribe” means the Cow Creek Band of Umpqua Tribe of Indians.

(3) SECRETARY.—The term “Secretary” means the Secretary of the Interior.

SEC. 3. CONVEYANCE.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Subject to valid existing rights, including rights-of-way, all right, title, and interest of the United States in and to the Council Creek land, including any improvements located on the land, appurtenances to the land, and minerals on or in the land, including oil and gas, shall be—

(1) held in trust by the United States for the benefit of the Tribe; and

(2) part of the reservation of the Tribe.

(b) SURVEY.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall complete a survey of the boundary lines to establish the boundaries of the land taken into trust under subsection (a).

SEC. 4. MAP AND LEGAL DESCRIPTION.

(a) IN GENERAL.—As soon as practicable after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall file a map and legal description of the Council Creek land with—

(1) the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources of the Senate; and

(2) the Committee on Natural Resources of the House of Representatives.

(b) FORCE AND EFFECT.—The map and legal description filed under subsection (a) shall have the same force and effect as if included in this Act, except that the Secretary may correct any clerical or typographical errors in the map or legal description.

(c) PUBLIC AVAILABILITY.—The map and legal description filed under subsection (a) shall be on file and available for public inspection in the Office of the Secretary.

SEC. 5. ADMINISTRATION.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Unless expressly provided in this Act, nothing in this Act affects any right or claim of the Tribe existing on the date of enactment of this Act to any land or interest in land.

(b) PROHIBITIONS.—

(1) EXPORTS OF UNPROCESSED LOGS.—Federal law (including regulations) relating to the export of unprocessed logs harvested from Federal land shall apply to any unprocessed logs that are harvested from the Council Creek land.

(2) NON-PERMISSIBLE USE OF LAND.—Any real property taken into trust under section 3 shall not be eligible, or used, for any gaming activity carried out under Public Law 100-497 (25 U.S.C. 2701 et seq.).

(c) FOREST MANAGEMENT.—Any forest management activity that is carried out on the Council Creek land shall be managed in accordance with all applicable Federal laws.

SEC. 6. LAND RECLASSIFICATION.

(a) IDENTIFICATION OF OREGON AND CALIFORNIA RAILROAD GRANT LAND.—Not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Agriculture and the Secretary shall identify any Oregon and California Railroad grant land that is held in trust by the United States for the benefit of the Tribe under section 3.

(b) IDENTIFICATION OF PUBLIC DOMAIN LAND.—Not later than 18 months after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall identify public domain land in the State of Oregon that—

(1) is approximately equal in acreage and condition as the Oregon and California Railroad grant land identified under subsection (a); and

(2) is located in the vicinity of the Oregon and California Railroad grant land.

(c) MAPS.—Not later than 2 years after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall submit to Congress and publish in the Federal Register 1 or more maps depicting the land identified in subsections (a) and (b).

(d) RECLASSIFICATION.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—After providing an opportunity for public comment, the Secretary shall reclassify the land identified in subsection (b) as Oregon and California Railroad grant land.

(2) APPLICABILITY.—The Act of August 28, 1937 (43 U.S.C. 1181a et seq.), shall apply to land reclassified as Oregon and California Railroad grant land under paragraph (1).

By Mr. WYDEN (for himself and Mr. MERKLEY):

S. 816. A bill to amend the Coquille Restoration Act to clarify certain provisions relating to the management of the Coquille Forest; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

Mr. WYDEN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the text of the bill be printed in the RECORD.

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

S. 816

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

SECTION 1. AMENDMENTS TO COQUILLE RESTORATION ACT.

Section 5(d) of the Coquille Restoration Act (25 U.S.C. 715c(d)) is amended—

(1) by striking paragraph (5) and inserting the following:

“(5) MANAGEMENT.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—Subject to subparagraph (B), the Secretary, acting through the Assistant Secretary for Indian Affairs, shall manage the Coquille Forest in accordance with the laws pertaining to the management of Indian trust land.

“(B) ADMINISTRATION.—

“(i) UNPROCESSED LOGS.—Unprocessed logs harvested from the Coquille Forest shall be subject to the same Federal statutory restrictions on export to foreign nations that apply to unprocessed logs harvested from Federal land.

“(ii) SALES OF TIMBER.—Notwithstanding any other provision of law, all sales of timber from land subject to this subsection shall be advertised, offered, and awarded according to competitive bidding practices, with sales being awarded to the highest responsible bidder.”;

(2) by striking paragraph (9); and

(3) by redesignating paragraphs (10) through (12) as paragraphs (9) through (11), respectively.

By Mr. WYDEN (for himself and Mr. MERKLEY):

S. 817. A bill to provide for the addition of certain real property to the reservation of the Siletz Tribe in the State of Oregon; to the Committee on Indian Affairs.

Mr. WYDEN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the text of the bill be printed in the RECORD.

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

S. 817

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

SECTION 1. PURPOSE; CLARIFICATION.

(a) PURPOSE.—The purpose of this Act is to facilitate fee-to-trust applications for the Siletz Tribe within the geographic area specified in the amendment made by this Act.

(b) CLARIFICATION.—Except as specifically provided otherwise by this Act or the amendment made by this Act, nothing in this Act or the amendment made by this Act, shall prioritize for any purpose the claims of any federally-recognized Indian tribe over the claims of any other federally-recognized Indian tribe.

SEC. 2. TREATMENT OF CERTAIN PROPERTY OF THE SILETZ TRIBE OF THE STATE OF OREGON.

Section 7 of the Siletz Tribe Indian Restoration Act (25 U.S.C. 711e) is amended by adding at the end the following:

“(f) TREATMENT OF CERTAIN PROPERTY.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—

“(A) TITLE.—The Secretary may accept title to any additional number of acres of real property located within the boundaries of the original 1855 Siletz Coast Reservation established by Executive Order dated November 9, 1855, comprised of land within the political boundaries of Benton, Douglas, Lane, Lincoln, Tillamook, and Yamhill Counties in the State of Oregon, if that real property is conveyed or otherwise transferred to the United States by or on behalf of the tribe.

“(B) TRUST.—Land to which title is accepted by the Secretary under this paragraph shall be held in trust by the United States for the benefit of the tribe.

“(2) TREATMENT AS PART OF RESERVATION.—All real property that is taken into trust under paragraph (1) shall—

“(A) be considered and evaluated as an on-reservation acquisition under part 151.10 of title 25, Code of Federal Regulations (or successor regulations); and

“(B) become part of the reservation of the tribe.

“(3) PROHIBITION ON GAMING.—Any real property taken into trust under paragraph (1) shall not be eligible, or used, for any gaming activity carried out under the Indian Gaming Regulatory Act (25 U.S.C. 2701 et seq.).”.

By Mr. WYDEN (for himself and Mr. MERKLEY):

S. 818. A bill to amend the Grand Ronde Reservation Act to make technical corrections, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Indian Affairs.

Mr. WYDEN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the text of the bill be printed in the RECORD.

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

S. 818

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

SECTION 1. ADDITIONAL LAND FOR RESERVATION.

Section 1 of the Act entitled “An Act to establish a reservation for the Confederated Tribes of the Grand Ronde Community of Oregon, and for other purposes,” approved September 9, 1988 (Public Law 100-425; 102 Stat. 1594; 102 Stat. 2939; 104 Stat. 207; 106 Stat. 3255; 108 Stat. 708; 108 Stat. 4566; 112 Stat. 1896), is amended—

(1) in subsection (a)—

(A) by striking “Subject to valid” and inserting the following:

“(1) IN GENERAL.—Subject to valid”; and

(B) by adding after paragraph (1) (as designated by subparagraph (A)) the following:

“(2) ADDITIONAL TRUST ACQUISITIONS.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary may accept title to any additional number of acres of real property located within the boundaries of the original 1857 reservation of the Confederated Tribes of the Grand Ronde Community of Oregon established by Executive Order dated June 30, 1857, comprised of land within the political boundaries of Polk and Yamhill Counties, Oregon, if that real property is conveyed or otherwise transferred to the United States by or on behalf of the Tribe.

“(B) TREATMENT OF TRUST LAND.—

“(i) IN GENERAL.—Applications to take land into trust within the boundaries of the original 1857 reservation shall be treated by the Secretary as an on-reservation trust acquisition.

“(ii) GAMING.—Any real property taken into trust under this paragraph shall not be eligible, or used, for any Class II or Class III gaming activity carried out under the Indian Gaming Regulatory Act (25 U.S.C. 2701 et seq.), except for real property within 2 miles of the gaming facility in existence on the date of enactment of this paragraph that is located on State Highway 18 in the Grand Ronde community of Oregon.

“(C) RESERVATION.—All real property taken into trust within those boundaries at any time after September 9, 1988, shall be part of the reservation of the Tribe.”; and

(2) in subsection (c)—

(A) in the matter preceding the table, by striking “in subsection (a) are approximately 10,311.60” and inserting “in subsection (a)(1) are approximately 11,349.92”; and

(B) in the table—

(i) by striking the following:

“6	7	8	Tax lot 800	5.55”;
and inserting the following:				

“6	7	7, 8, 17, 18	Former tax lot 800, located within the SE ¼ SE ¼ of Section 7; SW ¼ SW ¼ of Section 8; NW ¼ NW ¼ of Section 17; and NE ¼ NE ¼ of Section 18	5.55”;
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(ii) in the acres column of the last item (108 Stat. 4566), by striking “240” and inserting “241.06”; and (iii) by striking all text after

“6	7	18	E ½ NE ¼	43.42”;
and inserting the following:				

“6	8	1	W ½ SE ¼ SE ¼	20.6
6	8	1	N ½ SW ¼ SE ¼	19.99
6	8	1	SE ¼ NE ¼	9.99
6	8	1	NE ¼ SW ¼	10.46
6	8	1	NE ¼ SW ¼, NW ¼ SW ¼	12.99
6	7	6	SW ¼ NW ¼	37.39
6	7	5	SE ¼ SW ¼	24.87
6	7	5, 8	SW ¼ SE ¼ of Section 5; and NE ¼ NE ¼, NW ¼ NE ¼, NE ¼ NW ¼ of Section 8	109.9
6	8	1	NW ¼ SE ¼	31.32
6	8	1	NE ¼ SW ¼	8.89
6	8	1	SW ¼ NE ¼, NW ¼ NE ¼	78.4
6	7	8, 17	SW ¼ SW ¼ of Section 8; and NE ¼ NW ¼, NW ¼ NW ¼ of Section 17	14.33

6	7	17	NW¼ NW ¼	6.68
6	8	12	SW ¼ NE¼	8.19
6	8	1	SE ¼ SW ¼	2.0
6	8	1	SW ¼ SW ¼	5.05
6	8	12	SE ¼, SW ¼	54.64
6	7	17, 18	SW ¼, NW ¼ of Section 17; and SE ¼, NE ¼ of Section 18	136.83
6	8	1	SW ¼ SE ¼	20.08
6	7	5	NE ¼ SE ¼, SE ¼ SE ¼, E ½ SE ¼ SW ¼	97.38
4	7	31	SE ¼	159.60
6	7	17	NW ¼ NW ¼	3.14
6	8	12	NW ¼ SE ¼	1.10
6	7	8	SW ¼ SW ¼	0.92
6	8	12	NE ¼ NW ¼	1.99
6	7	7	NW ¼ NW ¼ of Section 7; and	
6	8	12	S ½ NE ¼, E ½ NE ¼ NE ¼ of Section 12	86.48
6	8	12	NE ¼ NW ¼	1.56
6	7	6	W ½ SW ¼ SW ¼ of Section 6; and	
6	8	1	E ½ SE ¼ SE ¼ of Section 1	35.82
6	7	5	E ½ NW ¼ SE ¼	19.88
6	8	12	NW ¼ NE ¼	0.29
6	8	1	SE ¼ SW ¼	2.5
6	7	8	NE ¼ NW ¼	7.16
6	8	1	SE ¼ SW ¼	5.5
6	8	1	SE ¼ NW ¼	1.34
			Total	11,349.92".

By Mrs. FEINSTEIN (for herself and Mr. LEAHY):

S. 821. A bill to establish requirements with respect to bisphenol A; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

Mrs. FEINSTEIN. Mr. President, I remain concerned about the high levels of exposure Americans have to Bisphenol-A, BPA, an endocrine-disrupting chemical. BPA is a synthetic estrogen, which means that it mimics this hormone when in the body. Scientific studies continue to show cause for concern, especially for the health effects on babies, children, and expectant mothers. While these studies continue to examine the exact effects that BPA has on humans, consumers deserve more information.

BPA is most commonly found in food products, such as the lining of canned goods like string beans, but consumers have no clear way of knowing this. The BPA in Food Packaging Right to Know Act is a simple solution to fix this problem. This legislation requires that food packaging that uses BPA include a clear label that reads, "This food packaging contains BPA, an endocrine-disrupting chemical, according to the National Institutes of Health." This is basic information that consumers have the right to know so they can make informed decisions about the products they wish to purchase.

This legislation also directs the Department of Health and Human Services to do a safety assessment of food containers that use BPA to determine if there is reasonable certainty that no harm will come from exposure, including from low doses over the long term. This safety standard would also apply to the evaluation of alternatives to BPA to ensure that replacement chemicals are not simply causing the same harm by a different name. The legislation calls specific attention to the effects of exposure on vulnerable populations, such as infants, children, pregnant women, and workers who are

exposed through production practices or handling of final products.

I am particularly concerned about the negative health effects to children who are exposed to chemicals both while they are developing in the womb and in the first few years of their lives. Children are particularly susceptible to toxins while their bodies are developing at such a rapid pace.

According to Dr. Heather Patisaul, a biologist at North Carolina State University, when pregnant women are exposed to BPA and other endocrine-disrupting chemicals, three generations are impacted: the mother, the fetus, and the reproductive cells in the fetus. She cites that nearly 100 studies have shown an association between BPA exposure and negative health effects in humans. These include reproductive disorders, behavioral problems in children, and heart disease. In addition, there are over 1200 published animal studies on effects of BPA that show potential links to cancer, tumors, and brain development disorders.

A recent study published in *Hypertension*, a journal by the American Heart Association, found that individuals who drank beverages from containers made with BPA had an acute increase in their blood pressure, compared with individuals who drank the same beverage from containers that did not use BPA. This shows the potential for an increased risk for heart disease.

Another recent study, published in *Endocrinology*, a journal by the Endocrine Society, shows a link between fetal exposure to BPA and increased oxidative stress—an imbalance in the body's ability to protect against and repair cell damage.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 93 percent of Americans have BPA in their bodies. As a society we are constantly exposed to low doses of this chemical over a long timeframe. Consumers deserve the opportunity to have more control over their own exposure and at the least

should be provided information about if BPA is in the food products that they purchase.

I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting the BPA in Food Packaging Right to Know Act and stand up for the rights of consumers to have this basic information.

By Mr. WYDEN (for himself, Mr. RISCH, Mr. MERKLEY, Ms. MURKOWSKI, and Mr. CRAPO):

S. 822. A bill to expand geothermal production, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

Mr. WYDEN. Mr. President, today I am proud to introduce the Geothermal Production Expansion Act of 2015 with my colleagues Senators RISCH, MERKLEY, MURKOWSKI, and CRAPO.

This bipartisan bill will allow for the rapid expansion of already identified geothermal resources without the additional delays of competitive leasing and without opening up those adjacent properties to speculative bidders who have no interest in developing the resource. At the same time that the bill streamlines the leasing process, it also protects the taxpayer by requiring that developers pay fair market value for the new lease, and limiting the amount of adjacent Federal land that can be leased to 640 acres.

The Bureau of Land Management, which manages geothermal projects on federal land under lease agreements, estimates about 250 million acres of federal land contains geothermal power potential. Geothermal energy projects that are producing geothermal power under the BLM's management make up about half of the total geothermal generating capacity in the United States. This legislation takes an important step to speed the development of this tremendous clean energy potential on public lands, and I urge my colleagues to support it.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the text of the bill be printed in the RECORD.

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

S. 822

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 “Geothermal Production Expansion Act of 2015”.

SEC. 2. NONCOMPETITIVE LEASING OF ADJOINING AREAS FOR DEVELOPMENT OF GEOTHERMAL RESOURCES.

Section 4(b) of the Geothermal Steam Act of 1970 (30 U.S.C. 1003(b)) is amended by adding at the end the following:

“(4) ADJOINING LAND.—

“(A) DEFINITIONS.—In this paragraph:

“(i) FAIR MARKET VALUE PER ACRE.—The term ‘fair market value per acre’ means a dollar amount per acre that—

“(I) except as provided in this clause, shall be equal to the market value per acre (taking into account the determination under subparagraph (B)(iii) regarding a valid discovery on the adjoining land) as determined by the Secretary under regulations issued under this paragraph;

“(II) shall be determined by the Secretary with respect to a lease under this paragraph, by not later than the end of the 180-day period beginning on the date the Secretary receives an application for the lease; and

“(III) shall be not less than the greater of—

“(aa) 4 times the median amount paid per acre for all land leased under this Act during the preceding year; or

“(bb) \$50.

“(ii) INDUSTRY STANDARDS.—The term ‘industry standards’ means the standards by which a qualified geothermal professional assesses whether downhole or flowing temperature measurements with indications of permeability are sufficient to produce energy from geothermal resources, as determined through flow or injection testing or measurement of lost circulation while drilling.

“(iii) QUALIFIED FEDERAL LAND.—The term ‘qualified Federal land’ means land that is otherwise available for leasing under this Act.

“(iv) QUALIFIED GEOTHERMAL PROFESSIONAL.—The term ‘qualified geothermal professional’ means an individual who is an engineer or geoscientist in good professional standing with at least 5 years of experience in geothermal exploration, development, or project assessment.

“(v) QUALIFIED LESSEE.—The term ‘qualified lessee’ means a person that may hold a geothermal lease under this Act (including applicable regulations).

“(vi) VALID DISCOVERY.—The term ‘valid discovery’ means a discovery of a geothermal resource by a new or existing slim hole or production well, that exhibits downhole or flowing temperature measurements with indications of permeability that are sufficient to meet industry standards.

“(B) AUTHORITY.—An area of qualified Federal land that adjoins other land for which a qualified lessee holds a legal right to develop geothermal resources may be available for a noncompetitive lease under this section to the qualified lessee at the fair market value per acre, if—

“(i) the area of qualified Federal land—

“(I) consists of not less than 1 acre and not more than 640 acres; and

“(II) is not already leased under this Act or nominated to be leased under subsection (a);

“(ii) the qualified lessee has not previously received a noncompetitive lease under this paragraph in connection with the valid discovery for which data has been submitted under clause (iii)(I); and

“(iii) sufficient geological and other technical data prepared by a qualified geothermal professional has been submitted by the qualified lessee to the applicable Federal land management agency that would lead individuals who are experienced in the subject matter to believe that—

“(I) there is a valid discovery of geothermal resources on the land for which the qualified lessee holds the legal right to develop geothermal resources; and

“(II) that thermal feature extends into the adjoining areas.

“(C) DETERMINATION OF FAIR MARKET VALUE.—

“(i) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall—

“(I) publish a notice of any request to lease land under this paragraph;

“(II) determine fair market value for purposes of this paragraph in accordance with procedures for making those determinations that are established by regulations issued by the Secretary;

“(III) provide to a qualified lessee and publish, with an opportunity for public comment for a period of 30 days, any proposed determination under this subparagraph of the fair market value of an area that the qualified lessee seeks to lease under this paragraph; and

“(IV) provide to the qualified lessee and any adversely affected party the opportunity to appeal the final determination of fair market value in an administrative proceeding before the applicable Federal land management agency, in accordance with applicable law (including regulations).

“(i) LIMITATION ON NOMINATION.—After publication of a notice of request to lease land under this paragraph, the Secretary may not accept under subsection (a) any nomination of the land for leasing unless the request has been denied or withdrawn.

“(ii) ANNUAL RENTAL.—For purposes of section 5(a)(3), a lease awarded under this paragraph shall be considered a lease awarded in a competitive lease sale.

“(D) REGULATIONS.—Not later than 270 days after the date of enactment of the Geothermal Production Expansion Act of 2015, the Secretary shall issue regulations to carry out this paragraph.”.

By Mr. DAINES:

S. 826. A bill to amend title 5, United States Code, to sunset rules after 10 years unless agencies undergo notice and comment rulemaking, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

Mr. DAINES. Mr. President, when I travel across the State of Montana, from Alzada to Whitefish, I meet many different people and small businesses. Although the diversity of thought in Montana is self-evident to anyone who has spent time there, everyone agrees on one thing. Regulation dictated by bureaucrats in Washington, D.C. is stifling entrepreneurial creativity, pushing opportunities overseas, and killing jobs.

While many burdensome regulations are new, through adoption of laws such as the Dodd-Frank Wall Street Reform Act and the Affordable Care Act, still many more have been on the books for years without review. In an evolving and dynamic economy, regulators should, at the very least, review their regulations on a periodic basis, allow for public input, and eliminate any rules that are either obsolete or unnecessary.

Often times, regulation has unintended consequences on Montana's small businesses. In discussions about the harmful impacts of regulations with Montanans, Vicki Bertelsen, who is the President of K&K Trucking in Great Falls, said, “Burdensome reporting requirements eat up too many business hours every month. I would rather be growing my business than sending redundant [and] antiquated paperwork to the government.”

With nearly 175,000 pages in the Code of Federal Regulations, it is easy to understand how regulations are keeping people from getting back to work.

That is why today I am introducing the Regulatory Examination Vital for Improving and Evaluating Working Solutions, REVIEWS, Act. While this bill recognizes that many regulations serve a noble purpose in protecting consumers and natural resources, it also seeks to address a structural deficiency in government agencies which allow obsolete and unnecessary regulations to remain in the Code of Federal Regulations. Because agencies operate on limited resources, they focus their efforts on drafting new regulatory rules, rather than monitoring the rules that already exist. While most agency employees are well-intentioned, this structural deficiency places a greater emphasis on creating rules, rather than monitoring the application and effectiveness of existing rules, only to the detriment of Americans.

The REVIEWS Act will require agencies to periodically review each regulation every ten years using the Notice and Comment process. This requirement will ensure that obsolete regulations are recognized and eliminated and that regulatory cost considerations are properly evaluated. If a rule is not reviewed at least every 10 years, it cannot be enforced in court. This requirement will provide public accountability and force regulators to periodically examine existing rules.

It is my hope that this common sense bill will ultimately reduce the regulatory burden on Americans and allow them to freely pursue their ends, independently of government intervention.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the text of the bill be printed in the RECORD.

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

S. 826

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 “Regulatory Examination Vital for Improving and Evaluating Working Solutions Act of 2015” or the “REVIEWS Act”.

SEC. 2. DEFINITIONS.

In this Act, the terms “agency” and “rule” have the meanings given those terms in section 551 of title 5, United States Code.

SEC. 3. REGULATORY SUNSET.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 553 of title 5, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following:

“(f) EFFECTIVE DATE OF RULES.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in paragraph (2), any rule required to be promulgated in accordance with this section shall cease to be effective on the date that is 10 years after the date on which the agency promulgates the rule.

“(2) EXCEPTION.—The effective period of a rule described in paragraph (1) may be extended for additional periods of not more than 10 years if, before the date on which the rule ceases to be effective, the agency that promulgated the rule complies with the procedures under this section as if the rule were a new rule to be issued by the agency.”

(b) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendment made under subsection (a) shall apply to a rule promulgated by an agency after the date of enactment of this Act.

SEC. 4. ENFORCEMENT OF RULES.

(a) ACTIONS REVIEWABLE.—Section 704 of title 5, United States Code, is amended—

(1) by striking “Agency action” and inserting the following:

“(a) IN GENERAL.—Agency action”; and

(2) by adding at the end the following:

“(b) CLARIFICATION OF FINAL AGENCY ACTION.—For purposes of this section, the term ‘final agency action’ includes interpretative rules, general statements of policy, and rules of agency organization, procedure, or practice issued by an agency.”

(b) REVIEW IN COURT OF APPEALS.—Section 2342 of title 28, United States Code, is amended—

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

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

(3) by inserting after paragraph (7) the following new paragraph:

“(8) all rules of an agency (as defined under section 551 of title 5) that—

“(A) ceased to be effective under section 553(f) of such title; and

“(B) the agency continues to enforce.”.

SUBMITTED RESOLUTIONS

SENATE RESOLUTION 105—RECOGNIZING THE 194TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE INDEPENDENCE OF GREECE AND CELEBRATING DEMOCRACY IN GREECE AND THE UNITED STATES

Mr. MENENDEZ (for himself, Mr. BARRASSO, Mrs. BOXER, Mr. BROWN, Mr. CARDIN, Mr. CARPER, Mr. CASEY, Mr. COCHRAN, Mr. COONS, Mr. DONNELLY, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. ENZI, Mrs. GILLIBRAND, Mr. ISAKSON, Mr. JOHNSON, Mr. KIRK, Mr. MANCHIN, Ms. MIKULSKI, Mr. MURPHY, Mr. NELSON, Mr. PETERS, Mr. REED of Rhode Island, Mr. RUBIO, Mr. SCHUMER, Mrs. SHAHEEN, Ms. STABENOW, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Mr. WICKER, and Mr. WYDEN) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations:

S. RES. 105

Whereas the people of ancient Greece developed the concept of democracy, in which the supreme power to govern was vested in the people;

Whereas the founding fathers of the United States, many of whom read Greek political philosophy in the original Greek language, drew heavily on the political experience and philosophy of ancient Greece in forming the representative democracy of the United States;

Whereas Petros Mavromichalis, the former Commander in Chief of Greece and a founder

of the modern Greek state, said to the citizens of the United States in 1821, “It is in your land that liberty has fixed her abode and . . . in imitating you, we shall imitate our ancestors and be thought worthy of them if we succeed in resembling you.”;

Whereas the Greek national anthem, the “Hymn to Liberty”, includes the words, “most heartily was gladdened George Washington’s brave land”;

Whereas the people of the United States generously offered humanitarian assistance to the people of Greece during their struggle for independence;

Whereas Greece heroically resisted Axis forces at a crucial moment in World War II, forcing Adolf Hitler to change his timeline and delaying the attack on Russia;

Whereas Winston Churchill said, “if there had not been the virtue and courage of the Greeks, we do not know which the outcome of World War II would have been” and “no longer will we say that Greeks fight like heroes, but that heroes fight like Greeks”;

Whereas hundreds of thousands of the people of Greece were killed during World War II;

Whereas Greece consistently allied with the United States in major international conflicts throughout the 20th century;

Whereas Greece is a strategic partner and ally of the United States in bringing political stability and economic development to the volatile Balkan region, having invested billions of dollars in the countries of the region and having contributed more than \$750,000,000 in development aid for the region;

Whereas the government and people of Greece actively participate in peacekeeping and peace-building operations conducted by international organizations, including the United Nations, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, the European Union, and the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe, and have more recently provided critical support to the operation of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization in Libya;

Whereas Greece received worldwide praise for its extraordinary handling during the 2004 Olympic Games of more than 14,000 athletes and more than 2,000,000 spectators and journalists, a feat the government and people of Greece handled efficiently, securely, and with hospitality;

Whereas Greece, located in a region where Christianity meets Islam and Judaism, maintains excellent relations with Muslim countries and Israel;

Whereas the Government of Greece has taken important steps in recent years to further cross-cultural understanding, rapprochement, and cooperation in various fields with Turkey, and has also improved its relations with other countries in the region, including Israel, thus enhancing the stability of the wider region;

Whereas the governments and people of Greece and the United States are at the forefront of efforts to advance freedom, democracy, peace, stability, and human rights;

Whereas those efforts and similar ideals have forged a close bond between the people of Greece and the United States; and

Whereas it is proper and desirable for the United States to celebrate March 25, 2015, Greek Independence Day, with the people of Greece and to reaffirm the democratic principles from which those two great countries were founded: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) extends warm congratulations and best wishes to the people of Greece as they celebrate the 194th anniversary of the independence of Greece;

(2) expresses support for the principles of democratic governance to which the people of Greece are committed; and

(3) notes the important role that Greece has played in the wider European region and in the community of nations since gaining its independence 194 years ago.

SENATE RESOLUTION 106—DESIGNATING MARCH 22, 2015, AS “NATIONAL REHABILITATION COUNSELORS APPRECIATION DAY”

Mr. ISAKSON (for himself and Mr. CASEY) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 106

Whereas rehabilitation counselors conduct assessments, provide counseling, support families, and plan and implement rehabilitation programs for individuals in need of rehabilitation;

Whereas the purpose of professional organizations for rehabilitation counseling and education is to promote the improvement of rehabilitation services available to individuals with disabilities through quality education for counselors and rehabilitation research;

Whereas various professional organizations have vigorously advocated up-to-date education and training and the maintenance of professional standards in the field of rehabilitation counseling and education, including—

(1) the National Rehabilitation Association;

(2) the Rehabilitation Counselors and Educators Association;

(3) the National Council on Rehabilitation Education;

(4) the National Rehabilitation Counseling Association;

(5) the American Rehabilitation Counseling Association;

(6) the Commission on Rehabilitation Counselor Certification;

(7) the Council of State Administrators of Vocational Rehabilitation; and

(8) the Council on Rehabilitation Education;

Whereas, on March 22, 1983, the president of the National Council on Rehabilitation Education, testified before the Subcommittee on Select Education of the Committee on Education and Labor of the House of Representatives, and was instrumental in bringing the need for qualified rehabilitation counselors to the attention of Congress; and

Whereas the efforts of the National Council on Rehabilitation Education led to the enactment of laws that require rehabilitation counselors to have proper credentials, in order to provide a higher quality of service to those in need of rehabilitation: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) designates March 22, 2015, as “National Rehabilitation Counselors Appreciation Day”; and

(2) commends—

(A) rehabilitation counselors, for the dedication and hard work rehabilitation counselors provide to individuals in need of rehabilitation; and

(B) professional organizations, for the efforts professional organizations have made to assist those who require rehabilitation.

AMENDMENTS SUBMITTED AND PROPOSED

SA 320. Ms. COLLINS (for herself and Ms. HEITKAMP) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill S. 178, to provide justice for the victims of trafficking; which was ordered to lie on the table.

TEXT OF AMENDMENTS

SA 320. Ms. COLLINS (for herself and Ms. HEITKAMP) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill S. 178, to provide justice for the victims of trafficking; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

Beginning on page 48, strike line 3 and all that follows through page 63, line 2 and insert the following:

SEC. 101. DOMESTIC TRAFFICKING VICTIMS' FUND.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Chapter 201 of title 18, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following:

“§ 3014. Additional special assessment

“(a) IN GENERAL.—Beginning on the date of enactment of the Justice for Victims of Trafficking Act of 2015 and ending on September 30, 2019, in addition to the assessment imposed under section 3013, the court shall assess an amount of \$5,000 on any non-indigent person or entity convicted of an offense under—

“(1) chapter 77 (relating to peonage, slavery, and trafficking in persons);

“(2) chapter 109A (relating to sexual abuse);

“(3) chapter 110 (relating to sexual exploitation and other abuse of children);

“(4) chapter 117 (relating to transportation for illegal sexual activity and related crimes); or

“(5) section 274 of the Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C. 1324) (relating to human smuggling), unless the person induced, assisted, abetted, or aided only an individual who at the time of such action was the alien's spouse, parent, son, or daughter (and no other individual) to enter the United States in violation of law.

“(b) SATISFACTION OF OTHER COURT-ORDERED OBLIGATIONS.—An assessment under subsection (a) shall not be payable until the person subject to the assessment has satisfied all outstanding court-ordered fines and orders of restitution arising from the criminal convictions on which the special assessment is based.

“(c) ESTABLISHMENT OF DOMESTIC TRAFFICKING VICTIMS' FUND.—There is established in the Treasury of the United States a fund, to be known as the ‘Domestic Trafficking Victims' Fund’ (referred to in this section as the ‘Fund’).

“(d) DEPOSITS.—Notwithstanding section 3302 of title 31, or any other law regarding the crediting of money received for the Government, there shall be deposited in the Fund an amount equal to the amount of the assessments collected under this section, which shall remain available until expended.

“(e) APPROPRIATION OF FUNDS.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—Amounts in the Fund shall be available for obligation or expenditure only when specified in appropriations Acts for each of fiscal years 2016 through 2020.

“(2) EXPENDITURE OF FUNDS.—Amounts in the Fund made available for obligation or expenditure pursuant to paragraph (1) may only be used to award grants or enhance victims' programming under—

“(A) sections 202, 203, and 204 of the Trafficking Victims Protection Reauthorization Act of 2005 (42 U.S.C. 14044a, 14044b, and 14044c);

“(B) subsections (b)(2) and (f) of section 107 of the Trafficking Victims Protection Act of 2000 (22 U.S.C. 7105); and

“(C) section 214(b) of the Victims of Child Abuse Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 13002(b)).

“(3) GRANTS.—Of the amounts in the Fund made available for obligation or expenditure pursuant to paragraph (1), not less than \$2,000,000, if such amounts are made avail-

able in the Fund during the relevant fiscal year, shall be available for grants to provide services for child pornography victims under section 214(b) of the Victims of Child Abuse Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 13002(b)), as provided in appropriations Acts.

“(4) LIMITATIONS.—Amounts in the Fund, or otherwise transferred from the Fund, shall be subject to the limitations on the use or expending as provided in appropriations Acts.

“(f) TRANSFERS.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—Effective on the day after the date of enactment of the Justice for Victims of Trafficking Act of 2015, on September 30 of each fiscal year, all unobligated balances in the Fund shall be transferred to the Crime Victims Fund established under section 1402 of the Victims of Crime Act of 1984 (42 U.S.C. 10601).

“(2) AVAILABILITY.—Amounts transferred under paragraph (1)—

“(A) shall be available for any authorized purpose of the Crime Victims Fund; and

“(B) shall remain available until expended.

“(g) COLLECTION METHOD.—The amount assessed under subsection (a) shall, subject to subsection (b), be collected in the manner that fines are collected in criminal cases.

“(h) DURATION OF OBLIGATION.—Subject to section 3613(b), the obligation to pay an assessment imposed on or after the date of enactment of the Justice for Victims of Trafficking Act of 2015 shall not cease until the assessment is paid in full.”.

(b) TECHNICAL AND CONFORMING AMENDMENT.—The table of sections for chapter 201 of title 18, United States Code, is amended by inserting after the item relating to section 3013 the following:

“3014. Additional special assessment.”.

SEC. 102. CLARIFYING THE BENEFITS AND PROTECTIONS OFFERED TO DOMESTIC VICTIMS OF HUMAN TRAFFICKING.

Section 107(b)(1) of the Trafficking Victims Protection Act of 2000 (22 U.S.C. 7105(b)(1)) is amended—

(1) by redesignating subparagraphs (F) and (G) as subparagraphs (G) and (H), respectively;

(2) by inserting after subparagraph (E) the following:

“(F) NO REQUIREMENT OF OFFICIAL CERTIFICATION FOR UNITED STATES CITIZENS AND LAWFUL PERMANENT RESIDENTS.—Nothing in this section may be construed to require United States citizens or lawful permanent residents who are victims of severe forms of trafficking to obtain an official certification from the Secretary of Health and Human Services in order to access any of the specialized services described in this subsection or any other Federal benefits and protections to which they are otherwise entitled.”; and

(3) in subparagraph (H), as redesignated, by striking “subparagraph (F)” and inserting “subparagraph (G)”.

SEC. 103. VICTIM-CENTERED CHILD HUMAN TRAFFICKING DETERRENCE BLOCK GRANT PROGRAM.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 203 of the Trafficking Victims Protection Reauthorization Act of 2005 (42 U.S.C. 14044b) is amended to read as follows:

“SEC. 203. VICTIM-CENTERED CHILD HUMAN TRAFFICKING DETERRENCE BLOCK GRANT PROGRAM.

“(a) GRANTS AUTHORIZED.—The Attorney General may award block grants to an eligible entity to develop, improve, or expand domestic child human trafficking deterrence programs that assist law enforcement officers, prosecutors, judicial officials, and qualified victims' services organizations in collaborating to rescue and restore the lives of victims, while investigating and pros-

ecuting offenses involving child human trafficking.

“(b) AUTHORIZED ACTIVITIES.—Grants awarded under subsection (a) may be used for—

“(1) the establishment or enhancement of specialized training programs for law enforcement officers, first responders, health care officials, child welfare officials, juvenile justice personnel, prosecutors, and judicial personnel to—

“(A) identify victims and acts of child human trafficking;

“(B) address the unique needs of child victims of human trafficking;

“(C) facilitate the rescue of child victims of human trafficking;

“(D) investigate and prosecute acts of human trafficking, including the soliciting, patronizing, or purchasing of commercial sex acts from children, as well as training to build cases against complex criminal networks involved in child human trafficking; and

“(E) utilize, implement, and provide education on safe harbor laws enacted by States, aimed at preventing the criminalization and prosecution of child sex trafficking victims for prostitution offenses, and other laws aimed at the investigation and prosecution of child human trafficking;

“(2) the establishment or enhancement of dedicated anti-trafficking law enforcement units and task forces to investigate child human trafficking offenses and to rescue victims, including—

“(A) funding salaries, in whole or in part, for law enforcement officers, including patrol officers, detectives, and investigators, except that the percentage of the salary of the law enforcement officer paid for by funds from a grant awarded under this section shall not be more than the percentage of the officer's time on duty that is dedicated to working on cases involving child human trafficking;

“(B) investigation expenses for cases involving child human trafficking, including—

“(i) wire taps;

“(ii) consultants with expertise specific to cases involving child human trafficking;

“(iii) travel; and

“(iv) other technical assistance expenditures;

“(C) dedicated anti-trafficking prosecution units, including the funding of salaries for State and local prosecutors, including assisting in paying trial expenses for prosecution of child human trafficking offenders, except that the percentage of the total salary of a State or local prosecutor that is paid using an award under this section shall be not more than the percentage of the total number of hours worked by the prosecutor that is spent working on cases involving child human trafficking;

“(D) the establishment of child human trafficking victim witness safety, assistance, and relocation programs that encourage cooperation with law enforcement investigations of crimes of child human trafficking by leveraging existing resources and delivering child human trafficking victims' services through coordination with—

“(i) child advocacy centers;

“(ii) social service agencies;

“(iii) State governmental health service agencies;

“(iv) housing agencies;

“(v) legal services agencies; and

“(vi) nongovernmental organizations and shelter service providers with substantial experience in delivering wrap-around services to victims of child human trafficking; and

“(E) the establishment or enhancement of other necessary victim assistance programs

or personnel, such as victim or child advocates, child-protective services, child forensic interviews, or other necessary service providers; and

“(3) the establishment or enhancement of problem solving court programs for trafficking victims that include—

“(A) mandatory and regular training requirements for judicial officials involved in the administration or operation of the court program described under this paragraph;

“(B) continuing judicial supervision of victims of child human trafficking, including case worker or child welfare supervision in collaboration with judicial officers, who have been identified by a law enforcement or judicial officer as a potential victim of child human trafficking, regardless of whether the victim has been charged with a crime related to human trafficking;

“(C) the development of a specialized and individualized, court-ordered treatment program for identified victims of child human trafficking, including—

“(i) State-administered outpatient treatment;

“(ii) life skills training;

“(iii) housing placement;

“(iv) vocational training;

“(v) education;

“(vi) family support services; and

“(vii) job placement;

“(D) centralized case management involving the consolidation of all of each child human trafficking victim’s cases and offenses, and the coordination of all trafficking victim treatment programs and social services;

“(E) regular and mandatory court appearances by the victim during the duration of the treatment program for purposes of ensuring compliance and effectiveness;

“(F) the ultimate dismissal of relevant non-violent criminal charges against the victim, where such victim successfully complies with the terms of the court-ordered treatment program; and

“(G) collaborative efforts with child advocacy centers, child welfare agencies, shelters, and nongovernmental organizations with substantial experience in delivering wrap-around services to victims of child human trafficking to provide services to victims and encourage cooperation with law enforcement.

“(c) APPLICATION.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—An eligible entity shall submit an application to the Attorney General for a grant under this section in such form and manner as the Attorney General may require.

“(2) REQUIRED INFORMATION.—An application submitted under this subsection shall—

“(A) describe the activities for which assistance under this section is sought;

“(B) include a detailed plan for the use of funds awarded under the grant;

“(C) provide such additional information and assurances as the Attorney General determines to be necessary to ensure compliance with the requirements of this section; and

“(D) disclose—

“(i) any other grant funding from the Department of Justice or from any other Federal department or agency for purposes similar to those described in subsection (b) for which the eligible entity has applied, and which application is pending on the date of the submission of an application under this section; and

“(ii) any other such grant funding that the eligible entity has received during the 5-year period ending on the date of the submission of an application under this section.

“(3) PREFERENCE.—In reviewing applications submitted in accordance with para-

graphs (1) and (2), the Attorney General shall give preference to grant applications if—

“(A) the application includes a plan to use awarded funds to engage in all activities described under paragraphs (1) through (3) of subsection (b); or

“(B) the application includes a plan by the State or unit of local government to continue funding of all activities funded by the award after the expiration of the award.

“(d) DURATION AND RENEWAL OF AWARD.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—A grant under this section shall expire 3 years after the date of award of the grant.

“(2) RENEWAL.—A grant under this section shall be renewable not more than 2 times and for a period of not greater than 2 years.

“(e) EVALUATION.—The Attorney General shall—

“(1) enter into a contract with a nongovernmental organization, including an academic or nonprofit organization, that has experience with issues related to child human trafficking and evaluation of grant programs to conduct periodic evaluations of grants made under this section to determine the impact and effectiveness of programs funded with grants awarded under this section;

“(2) instruct the Inspector General of the Department of Justice to review evaluations issued under paragraph (1) to determine the methodological and statistical validity of the evaluations; and

“(3) submit the results of any evaluation conducted pursuant to paragraph (1) to—

“(A) the Committee on the Judiciary of the Senate; and

“(B) the Committee on the Judiciary of the House of Representatives.

“(f) MANDATORY EXCLUSION.—An eligible entity awarded funds under this section that is found to have used grant funds for any unauthorized expenditure or otherwise unallowable cost shall not be eligible for any grant funds awarded under the block grant for 2 fiscal years following the year in which the unauthorized expenditure or unallowable cost is reported.

“(g) COMPLIANCE REQUIREMENT.—An eligible entity shall not be eligible to receive a grant under this section if within the 5 fiscal years before submitting an application for a grant under this section, the grantee has been found to have violated the terms or conditions of a Government grant program by utilizing grant funds for unauthorized expenditures or otherwise unallowable costs.

“(h) ADMINISTRATIVE CAP.—The cost of administering the grants authorized by this section shall not exceed 5 percent of the total amount expended to carry out this section.

“(i) FEDERAL SHARE.—The Federal share of the cost of a program funded by a grant awarded under this section shall be—

“(1) 70 percent in the first year;

“(2) 60 percent in the second year; and

“(3) 50 percent in the third year, and in all subsequent years.

“(j) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—For purposes of carrying out this section, there is authorized to be appropriated not more than \$7,000,000 of the funds available in the Domestic Trafficking Victims’ Fund, established under section 3014 of title 18, United States Code, for each of fiscal years 2016 through 2020.

AUTHORITY FOR COMMITTEES TO MEET

COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES

Mr. BLUNT. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Armed Services be author-

ized to meet during the session of the Senate on March 19, 2015, at 9:30 a.m.

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

COMMITTEE ON BANKING, HOUSING, AND URBAN AFFAIRS

Mr. BLUNT. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on March 19, 2015, at 10 a.m., to conduct a hearing entitled “Examining the Regulatory Regime for Regional Banks.”

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

COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE, SCIENCE, AND TRANSPORTATION

Mr. BLUNT. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on March 19, 2015, at 10 a.m., in room SR-253 of the Russell Senate Office Building to conduct a Subcommittee hearing entitled “Examining the Evolving Cyber Insurance Marketplace.”

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

COMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND NATURAL RESOURCES

Mr. BLUNT. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on March 19, 2015, at 10 a.m., in room SD-366 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building.

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

COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

Mr. BLUNT. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Finance be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on March 19, 2015, at 9:30 a.m., in room SD-215 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building, to conduct a hearing entitled “The Affordable Care Act at Five Years.”

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

COMMITTEE ON SMALL BUSINESS AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP

Mr. BLUNT. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on March 19, 2015, at 10 a.m., to conduct a hearing entitled “Patent Reform: Protecting Innovation and Entrepreneurship.”

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

SELECT COMMITTEE ON INTELLIGENCE

Mr. BLUNT. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Select Committee on Intelligence be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on March 19, 2015, at 2:30 p.m.

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

SUBCOMMITTEE ON AIRLAND

Mr. BLUNT. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Subcommittee on Airland of the Committee on Armed Services be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on March 19, 2015, at 2:30 p.m.

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

SUBCOMMITTEE ON AFRICA AND GLOBAL HEALTH POLICY

Mr. BLUNT. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Foreign Relations Subcommittee on Africa and Global Health Policy be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on March 19, 2015, at 9:30 a.m., to conduct a hearing entitled "The U.S.-Africa Leader's Summit Seven Months Later: Progress and Setbacks."

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

SUBCOMMITTEE ON OVERSIGHT, AGENCY ACTION, FEDERAL RIGHTS, AND FEDERAL COURTS

Mr. BLUNT. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on the Judiciary, Subcommittee on Oversight, Agency Action, Federal Rights, and Federal Courts, be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate, on March 19, 2015, at 3:30 p.m., in room SD-226 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building, to conduct a hearing entitled "Reining in Amnesty: Texas v. United States and Its Implications."

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

SUBCOMMITTEE ON REGULATORY AFFAIRS AND FEDERAL MANAGEMENT

Mr. BLUNT. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Subcommittee on Regulatory Affairs and Federal Management of the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on March 19, 2015, at 10 a.m., to conduct a hearing entitled "Examining Federal Rulemaking Challenges and Areas of Improvement Within the Existing Regulatory Process."

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

NATIONAL REHABILITATION COUNSELORS APPRECIATION DAY

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the consideration of S. Res. 106, which was submitted earlier today.

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

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 106) designating March 22, 2015, as "National Rehabilitation Counselors Appreciation Day."

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

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the resolution be agreed to, the preamble be

agreed to, and the motions to reconsider be laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate.

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

The resolution (S. Res. 106) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to. (The resolution, with its preamble, is printed in today's RECORD under "Submitted Resolutions.")

REPORTING AUTHORITY

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that notwithstanding the adjournment of the Senate, on Friday, March 20, between 12 noon and 2 p.m., it be in order for the Budget Committee to report out a concurrent resolution and that it be in order for the Senate to proceed to that resolution on Monday, March 23.

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

ORDERS FOR MONDAY, MARCH 23, 2015

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that when the Senate completes its business today, it adjourn until 12 noon, Monday, March 23; 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 leader remarks, the Senate be in a period of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

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

PROGRAM

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, on Monday at 12 noon, the Senate will proceed to consider the budget resolution. Senators should expect at least one vote on an amendment to the budget at 5:30 p.m. on Monday night.

For the information of all Senators, the budget resolution is privileged and therefore will not displace the pending trafficking legislation. Once the budget resolution has been adopted, the trafficking bill will be the pending business before the Senate.

ADJOURNMENT UNTIL MONDAY, MARCH 23, 2015

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, if there is no further business to come before the Senate, I ask unanimous consent that it stand adjourned under the previous order.

There being no objection, the Senate, at 5:50 p.m., adjourned until Monday, March 23, 2015, at 12 noon.

NOMINATIONS

Executive nominations received by the Senate:

NATIONAL FOUNDATION ON THE ARTS AND THE HUMANITIES

FRANCINE BERMAN, OF NEW YORK, TO BE A MEMBER OF THE NATIONAL COUNCIL ON THE HUMANITIES FOR A TERM EXPIRING JANUARY 26, 2020, VICE GARY D. GLENN, TERM EXPIRED.

CORPORATION FOR NATIONAL AND COMMUNITY SERVICE

RICHARD CHRISTMAN, OF KENTUCKY, TO BE A MEMBER OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE CORPORATION FOR NATIONAL AND COMMUNITY SERVICE FOR A TERM EXPIRING OCTOBER 6, 2017. (REAPPOINTMENT)

NATIONAL FOUNDATION ON THE ARTS AND THE HUMANITIES

SHELLY COLLEEN LOWE, OF ARIZONA, TO BE A MEMBER OF THE NATIONAL COUNCIL ON THE HUMANITIES FOR A TERM EXPIRING JANUARY 26, 2018, VICE JANE M. DOGGETT, TERM EXPIRED.

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE

JUAN M. GARCIA III, OF TEXAS, TO BE AN ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF DEFENSE, VICE JESSICA LYNN WRIGHT, RESIGNED.

STEPHEN P. WELBY, OF MARYLAND, TO BE AN ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF DEFENSE, VICE ZACHARY J. LEMNIOS, RESIGNED.

MARINE MAMMAL COMMISSION

ANDREW J. READ, OF NORTH CAROLINA, TO BE A MEMBER OF THE MARINE MAMMAL COMMISSION FOR A TERM EXPIRING MAY 13, 2016, VICE DARYL J. BONESS, TERM EXPIRED.

SMALL BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION

DOUGLAS J. KRAMER, OF KANSAS, TO BE DEPUTY ADMINISTRATOR OF THE SMALL BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION, VICE MARIE COLLINS JOHNS, RESIGNED.

DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS

LAVERNE HORTON COUNCIL, OF NEW JERSEY, TO BE AN ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF VETERANS AFFAIRS (INFORMATION AND TECHNOLOGY), VICE ROGER W. BAKER.

DAVID J. SHULKIN, OF PENNSYLVANIA, TO BE UNDER SECRETARY FOR HEALTH OF THE DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS, VICE ROBERT A. PETZEL, RESIGNED.

IN THE AIR FORCE

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES AIR FORCE TO THE GRADE INDICATED WHILE ASSIGNED TO A POSITION OF IMPORTANCE AND RESPONSIBILITY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 601:

To be lieutenant general

MAJ. GEN. JOHN N. T. SHANAHAN

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES AIR FORCE TO THE GRADE INDICATED WHILE ASSIGNED TO A POSITION OF IMPORTANCE AND RESPONSIBILITY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 601:

To be lieutenant general

MAJ. GEN. JACK WEINSTEIN

IN THE ARMY

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES ARMY TO THE GRADE INDICATED WHILE ASSIGNED TO A POSITION OF IMPORTANCE AND RESPONSIBILITY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 601:

To be lieutenant general

MAJ. GEN. JOSEPH P. DISALVO

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES ARMY TO THE GRADE INDICATED UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 624:

To be major general

BRIG. GEN. JOHN W. BAKER
 BRIG. GEN. CHRISTOPHER S. BALLARD
 BRIG. GEN. JOHN W. CHARLTON
 BRIG. GEN. ROGER L. CLOUTIER, JR.
 BRIG. GEN. EDWARD M. DALY
 BRIG. GEN. JASON T. EVANS
 BRIG. GEN. JOHN G. FERRARI
 BRIG. GEN. ANTHONY C. FUNKHOUSER
 BRIG. GEN. WILLIAM K. GAYLER
 BRIG. GEN. DAVID B. HAIGHT
 BRIG. GEN. JOSEPH P. HARRINGTON
 BRIG. GEN. WILLIAM B. HICKMAN
 BRIG. GEN. CHRISTOPHER F. HUGHES
 BRIG. GEN. CLAYTON M. HUFMACHER
 BRIG. GEN. DONALD E. JACKSON, JR.
 BRIG. GEN. DANIEL L. KARBLER
 BRIG. GEN. JAMES E. KRAFT, JR.
 BRIG. GEN. MICHAEL E. KURILLA
 BRIG. GEN. JOSEPH M. MARTIN
 BRIG. GEN. PAUL M. NAKASONE
 BRIG. GEN. MARK J. O'NEIL
 BRIG. GEN. ANDREW P. POPPAS
 BRIG. GEN. JAMES E. RAINEY
 BRIG. GEN. KENT D. SAVRE
 BRIG. GEN. STEVEN A. SHAPIRO
 BRIG. GEN. JAMES E. SIMPSON
 BRIG. GEN. MARK R. STAMMER
 BRIG. GEN. SEAN P. SWINDELL
 BRIG. GEN. LEON N. THURGOOD
 BRIG. GEN. KIRK F. VOLLMECKE
 BRIG. GEN. FLEM B. WALKER, JR.

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES ARMY TO THE GRADE INDICATED UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 624:

To be brigadier general

COL. RONALD P. CLARK

IN THE NAVY

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES NAVY TO THE GRADE INDICATED WHILE ASSIGNED TO A POSITION OF IMPORTANCE AND RESPONSIBILITY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 601:

To be vice admiral

REAR ADM. HERMAN A. SHELANSKI

IN THE ARMY

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES ARMY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 624:

To be major

RACHEL S. THEISEN

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE RESERVE OF THE ARMY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 12203:

To be colonel

ROBERT A. BLESSING
JOHN D. LAING
PAUL L. MINOR

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE RESERVE OF THE ARMY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 12203:

To be colonel

JOANNE S. MARTINDALE
ROBERT J. PAMULA
JAMES A. THOMAS

CHARLES YOST

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE RESERVE OF THE ARMY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 12203:

To be colonel

JAMES L. BOGGESS

IN THE COAST GUARD

THE FOLLOWING OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES COAST GUARD TO THE GRADE INDICATED WHILE ASSIGNED TO A POSITION OF IMPORTANCE AND RESPONSIBILITY AS DEPUTY COMMANDANT FOR MISSION SUPPORT UNDER TITLE 14, U.S.C., SECTION 50:

To be vice admiral

REAR ADM. SANDRA L. STOSZ