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House of Representatives

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

DESIGNATION OF SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

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

WASHINGTON, DC,
April 15, 2015.

I hereby appoint the Honorable DAVID W. JOLLY to act as Speaker pro tempore on this day.

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

MORNING-HOUR DEBATE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the order of the House of January 6, 2015, the Chair will now recognize Members from lists submitted by the majority and minority leaders for morning-hour debate.

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

IMMIGRATION REFORM

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

Mr. GUTIÉRREZ. Mr. Speaker, the man pictured alongside me will go a long way towards determining who lives in the White House for the next few years. No, he is not a pollster or a campaign spin doctor. No, this is a Federal judge for the U.S. District Court for the Southern District of Texas, the Honorable Judge Andrew Hanen.

The lawsuit by 26 Republican Governors and attorneys general seeking to block the executive actions taken by the Obama administration on immigration was filed in his court. He has not ruled yet on the constitutionality of the case.

He ordered a preliminary injunction, however, saying he thought the States have standing to bring the suit—or at least that the State of Texas did. That was enough for him to stop the implementation of the program nationwide.

Not surprisingly, just last week, the judge refused the government's request to lift his injunction and allow the plan to move forward.

Here is the reality: Congress mandates that about 400,000 people will be deported this year out of a total of 11 million.

The Secretary of Homeland Security developed a plan to choose between hardened criminals and those immigrants who have lived here for at least 5 years, have U.S. citizen children, and can pass a criminal background check at their own expense.

The plan also requires immigrants to renew their temporary status periodically to prove again that they have not committed crimes or fraudulently sought out services or benefits.

It is that plan for the parents of U.S. citizens in American families, people who have been working and staying out of trouble for years, that the Texas judge here believes will cause irreparable damage to the State of Texas and, therefore, must be stopped nationally.

Just as they had hoped, the judge ruled that Texas might some day in the future suffer irreparable harm because of driver's licenses. In other words, people who qualify for driver's licenses and who take the test and pay their fees for driver's licenses—if they live in Texas and apply for those driver's licenses in Texas—will be doing the State irreparable harm.

I have a driver's license. It is right here. I had no idea I was causing irreparable damage to the State of Illinois just by applying for it and paying for the driver's license and learning the rules of the road and buying car insurance; but who am I to disagree with a Federal judge?

On Friday, the Department of Justice will argue before the fifth circuit court in New Orleans that the President's executive actions should move forward. It is well known that the fifth circuit is among the most conservative.

Look what happened a couple of weeks ago in that very same circuit court. They ruled on a lawsuit related to the State of Mississippi which, like Texas, felt it might some day in the future be dealt damage by the deferred action program announced by the President for DREAMers back in 2012.

The panel of judges from the fifth circuit looked at the program, the evidence, and the cost of the State of Mississippi, and the fifth circuit judges said Mississippi is not harmed and, thus, does not have legal standing for the lawsuit.

That bodes well for the country and the President's executive actions. In the meantime, Judge Hanen still hasn't ruled on the case. Maybe he is running out the clock, trying to make the immigrants in cities like Chicago and Houston lose hope or stop preparing to sign up or maybe magically self-deport and give up on watching their children, their U.S. citizen children, grow up in America.

It might turn into a drawn-out series of rules and appeals that wind up in the Supreme Court, which could take us well into 2016.

2016 is an election year, where Latino U.S. citizens—not immigrants we are discussing, but their neighbors, cousins, spouses, and coworkers who are citizens of the United States—are not likely to vote for a party that is making sure that their neighbors, cousins, spouses, and coworkers are still a top priority for deportation.

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I have a feeling the citizens will support the candidates and the parties that support their communities. I also have a feeling that the decision to drag this fight out in the courts will be one the Republican Party regrets from a political point of view; just like the decision not to allow a vote on immigration reform over the past 2 years will be seen as one of the biggest and most consequential political mistakes of all time.

How long does a vote take? Fifteen minutes—it might sound too much like a Geico commercial, but just 15 minutes could have saved the Republicans a great deal of heartache.

The failure to take those 15 minutes for a vote might mean that there are no Republican Presidents for a long time who would nominate judges like this one.

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA TAXATION WITHOUT REPRESENTATION

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from the District of Columbia (Ms. NORTON) for 5 minutes.

Ms. NORTON. Mr. Speaker, yesterday, I began a series of remarks leading up to tomorrow, Emancipation Day, in the District of Columbia, when Lincoln and the Congress freed the slaves in the District 9 months ahead of the Emancipation Proclamation.

There are no slaves living in the District today, nor is there a single free and equal citizen living in your Nation's Capital. Freedom from slavery did not give residents freedom as equal citizens.

During yesterday's remarks in this series, I spoke about D.C. residents going to war, to every war since the Nation was created, without ever having a vote. Today's remarks fit today, April 15, the day when D.C. residents will be the only Americans who pay Federal taxes without a vote for or against those taxes or anything else. For us, it is not tax day; it is taxation without representation day.

It is no overstatement to say that this House is obsessed with taxes, that is to say, tax cuts. There are tax cut bills on the floor this very week. Our residents are not demanding tax cuts—take the money—but they are demanding the rights that go with the taxes they pay.

We want an end to no vote on this floor; an end to local matters coming to Congress without a vote on this floor; an end to D.C.'s local budget, of all matters, coming to Congress, even though there is not one dime of Federal money in it, only local money.

We want an end to every Member getting a vote on District matters that come to this floor except the Member who represents the District of Columbia. We want an end to this mountainload of injustice, and that comes with statehood.

The best way to see the injustice of paying taxes without representation is to compare D.C. residents and what taxes they pay with what other Americans pay. Look at who pays the highest taxes in the United States of America, D.C. residents—this is per capita, my friends—compared to who pays the lowest, Mississippi. What is that, a third of what D.C. residents pay?

The two largest States in the Union, New York and California—New York taxpayers pay a little more than $8,700 per capita, California a little more than $8,000 per capita—both compared to our $12,000 per capita. Southern States average between the $4,000 and $5,000 per capita range. The Midwest states average in the $6,000 range. Ohio is $6,130. Iowa is $6,019.

Even States with many wealthy taxpayers, like Virginia and Florida, are within the $7,000 tax range, but D.C.—650,000 residents—pays $12,000 per resident. Find your State on my Web site. You will not find one state paying what District of Columbia residents pay.

Today is April 15, and nobody enjoys paying taxes, but we believe that the constituents of my colleagues will join the moral outrage of my constituents when they learn that D.C. residents are not only paying more federal taxes per capita than any other Americans, but that added up, this amounts to more dollars than 24 of our States are paying, all with representation.

D.C. residents pay more than their full freight to support the United States Government. The time is overdue to permit D.C. citizens to join the Union of States as the State of New Columbia, the 51st State of the Union.

INTERNAL REVENUE SERVICE

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

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, today is April 15. This is the day that our income taxes are due, a day that is difficult enough under the best of circumstances, but made even more difficult, purposefully, for millions of Americans.

My Republican friends have decided to take out their differences with the IRS by deliberately torturing the American taxpayer. Ours is the largest tax system in the world that relies primarily on voluntary compliance. Most Americans, in fact, do comply, but an ever-increasingly complex tax system makes that compliance difficult.

It should be noted that it is not the IRS that makes the Tax Code complex; it is Congress that makes the Tax Code complex, a Congress that is sometimes so late in meeting its obligations with tax changes that the Service has difficulty even printing the forms on time as these changes occur every single year.

In order to help citizens with Congress' complex tax system, the Internal Revenue Service runs the largest consumer service operation in the world, but this process has been deliberately sabotaged by the Republican approach to the agency budget.

The agency has 30,000 fewer employees today than it had in 1992. The real budget adjusted for inflation is about the level we had in 1998, when we had fewer taxpayers filing returns and a Tax Code that was smaller and less complicated.

If Congress had truly been partners with the agency in improving its service in streamlining and modernization and giving them today's computers, maybe it would be possible to keep pace, but the IRS has been given a budget that prevents it from modernizing its information technology. It uses applications for its computers that were running in the early 1960s.

The IRS is virtually a museum of computer technology, but you cannot modernize the simple call service function of answering phones and talking to taxpayers, yet Congress has deliberately slashed that money available for those positions.

When you visit the IRS offices, which I have and which I hope every one of my colleagues does before they reduce those budgets yet again, they will find employees who simply cannot meet the needs of their customers.

Our employees don't like putting people on hold for 20 minutes, 30 minutes, or more or dropping the calls altogether. It frustrates the taxpayer, and it breaks the hearts of our employees.

□ 1015

Now, it is no secret that some people forget to declare all of their income, and, frankly, there are some people who actually cheat on their taxes, but Congress has not equipped the IRS to do the audits necessary to actually collect the money that is due—billions and billions of dollars—which would pay for badly needed government services or reduce our debt.

They refuse to fund some positions that would not just pay for themselves but would collect 10, 20, 30 times or more their annual salaries, and Congress is deliberately making it worse with yet another budget cut while watching the exodus of highly trained, skilled professionals who have better things to do with their lives than work in an impossible situation and constantly be under attack.

I have no doubt that there are times when the agency has not performed in ways that we would all like, but the solution is not to torture the taxpayers and fail to equip the agency to do its job while continuing to make the Tax Code ever more complex.

This is gross political malpractice. It is not fair to the taxpayers; it is a disservice to our employees; and it makes it hard to fund the needs of our Nation. They may think it is good politics to make the taxpaying experience as miserable as possible, but it is, ultimately, bad judgment; it is poor politics; and it is a disservice to the American public.

Many of my colleagues have been looking at scandal within the IRS. Whatever problems they uncover or imagine, the real scandal is how the Republican budget is treating the American public and the people who work for them at the vital service of the Internal Revenue Service.

TRIBUTE TO KATRINA ADAMS, PRESIDENT OF THE U.S. TENNIS ASSOCIATION

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. DANNY K. DAVIS) for 5 minutes.

Mr. DANNY K. DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I rise to pay tribute to Katrina Adams, president of the United States Tennis Association.

Mr. Speaker, the community in which I live, work, and represent is well-known for its production of high-profile and world renowned male athletes, individuals like Ernie Terrell, world heavyweight champion; basketball stars Doc Rivers, Isaiah Thomas, Mark Aguirre, Mickey Johnson, Kevin Garnett; footballer Darryl Stingley; and countless others who have excelled in athletics. All of them are males.

However, I take this opportunity to mention two females. One is Dorothy Gaters, the girls' basketball coach and athletic director at the John Marshall High School in Chicago, Illinois, the winningest high school basketball coach in the Nation. The other is Katrina Adams, who grew up not far from Marshall High School and whose parents still live in the East Garfield Park community.

Earlier this year, Katrina Adams became the first African American and the first former pro tennis player to become president and CEO of the United States Tennis Association, which is a 134-year-old organization that had barred Black athletes from its premier event—the U.S. National Championship, currently known as the U.S. Open—until 1950, when it allowed Althea Gibson to compete.

At 46, Adams is the youngest of the 53 people—among them, just four women—who have been the USTA leaders, an unpaid volunteer position.

In an article done by the Chicago Tribune, the writer states that, although her term lasts only 2 years, Adams understands that her being the face of the U.S. Tennis Association can have a significant impact, especially at a moment when the best female player in the world, Serena Williams, is also an African American.

Katrina is supposed to have said:

> I think having an African American as president is a huge statement. It shows how far we have come within the USTA as a whole.

As family, friends, community leaders, old coaches, volunteers, and tennis fans gathered to congratulate and honor Katrina, they were reminded of something her mother, Yvonne, told her many years ago.

Her mother said:

> Katrina, other little Black girls may not want to reach where you are, but they will want you to do well, and you are showing them they can do it if they put their minds to it.

Philip Hersh also mentions in his article something that Billie Jean King is supposed to have said to her friend Katrina. She said:

> Katrina, if you can see it, you can be it.

Her being the first person of color as the U.S. Tennis Association president—and as a former pro besides—sends a strong message.

Her family, friends, and former classmates at Whitney Young High School, at Northwestern University, and in the East Garfield Park community were, indeed, a proud bunch as they gathered to salute the young lady they had watched grow up in the inner city, become a high school and college tennis star, a tennis pro, and, ultimately, the president of the United States Tennis Association.

Congratulations to you, Katrina. We are all proud of your accomplishments.

SUPPLEMENTAL SECURITY INCOME EQUALITY ACT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Puerto Rico (Mr. PIERLUISI) for 5 minutes.

Mr. PIERLUISI. Mr. Speaker, today, I am reintroducing a bill to extend the Supplemental Security Income program, known as SSI, to Puerto Rico.

Of all of the disparities that Puerto Rico faces because it is a territory and not a State, few are as damaging as its exclusion from SSI.

SSI provides monthly cash assistance to blind, disabled, or elderly individuals who have limited or no income. We are talking about the most vulnerable members of our society. SSI applies in all 50 States and in the District of Columbia. However, since the program's inception in 1974, it has not been extended to Puerto Rico. Instead, the Federal grant program, known as Aid to the Aged, Blind, and Disabled, or AABD, applies in Puerto Rico.

The Social Security Administration sends monthly SSI payments directly to beneficiaries; whereas the AABD program is administered by the Puerto Rico Government, using an annual block grant provided by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. The gap between the treatment that is provided to beneficiaries in the 50 States and the treatment that is provided to their fellow American citizens in Puerto Rico is, in a word, shocking.

According to the most recent Federal statistics, the average SSI payment to beneficiaries is $540 a month and is close to $650 a month for beneficiaries who are under the age of 18. By contrast, based on the most recent data that has been furnished to my office, the block grant that the Federal Government provides to the Puerto Rico Government is only $33 million a year.

With this limited funding, the Puerto Rico Government provides an average payment to adult beneficiaries of just $74 a month. Let me repeat that—$540 a month in the States versus $74 a month in Puerto Rico. To add insult to injury, the Puerto Rico Government is legally required to meet a 25 percent match in order to receive this block grant. The States, obviously, do not have to make any matching payments for their residents to receive SSI assistance.

In 2014, the GAO estimated that, if Puerto Rico were a State, it would receive up to $1.8 billion a year under SSI. That is 54 times as much as the territory receives annually under AABD. Again, let me repeat that—54 times greater. The GAO estimated that, if Puerto Rico were a State, 300,000 island residents would qualify for SSI payments. Under the current program in Puerto Rico, only 35,000 individuals receive assistance. Thus, Puerto Rico's exclusion from the SSI program means that its government cannot provide decent monthly payments to residents who cannot support themselves. It also means that the Puerto Rico Government cannot assist hundreds of thousands of extraordinarily needy residents at all.

Those who seek proof of how Puerto Rico is harmed by its territory status need look no further than the treatment it receives under SSI. Those who want to comprehend why, roughly, 240,000 island residents relocated to the States between 2010 and 2014 in search of a better quality of life should realize that Puerto Rico's unequal treatment under key Federal programs, including—but not limited to—SSI, is a major contributing factor to this migration.

Let me be crystal clear on this point. Politicians in Puerto Rico and the States who defend Puerto Rico's current status must accept the undeniable truth that this status is harming the people of Puerto Rico. When they rationalize or excuse Puerto Rico's territory status, they are complicit in Puerto Rico's mistreatment.

But make no mistake. The era of inequality is coming to an end. I stand side by side with a large and growing army of proud U.S. citizens from Puerto Rico who refuse to accept such shameful treatment any longer. We believe in full equality for Puerto Rico under the American flag. We will fight for it until we achieve it, and we will achieve it soon.

BRING BACK OUR GIRLS

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

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, I address the House to discuss a number of concerns that I believe we need to confront as quickly as possible.

Yesterday and today commemorate, sadly, the snatching of over 200 girls from northern Nigeria—the area in which the girls lost their innocence and their right to a good quality of life.

It was in the dark of night when heinous thugs, armed with horrific weapons, burst into the dorm rooms of sleeping girls who were preparing to take exams to improve their lives. Their parents had worked hard. They were like any other parents here in the United States or around the world, loving their children; and these heinous thugs with their vile leader, Boko Haram, stole them—stole their innocence and, in a certain sense, their virginity. Now we are struggling to find them.

For over a year, many of us pressed the Nigerian Government to find and bring back the girls. In the spring of 2014, I traveled to the northern state with my colleague Ms. WILSON and with my colleague from Texas, and we met with broken families and with the girls who had escaped. We saw the northern state. We were not welcomed by the words that we were saying, which was ''bring the girls back.'' We met with generals in our military. We saw our military's compassion under the Africa Command, and we saw that they were ready to be of assistance. Those generals, I must say, said that they were ready.

In the course, Boko Haram has killed 15,000 people. There are thousands who are displaced—1.5 million, I believe the number is—and these girls are still missing. They are said to have been married off, but some girls are worth rescuing. All girls are worth rescuing. All children are worth saving. Today, we will stand on the steps of the Capitol, begging for help from the international community.

I must make mention that the African Union, through the auspices of the United Nations, has developed a strategy and a military effort, led by Chad, Niger, Cameroon, and Nigeria, but they are still not found—they are still not caught—and Boko Haram continues to be the heinous, vile organization that should not exist in attacking the innocent people of Nigeria. Boko Haram has declared itself part of the family of ISIL. That alone stands to promote them as a heinous terrorist group, and they should draw the attention of the world just like ISIL has drawn the attention of the world.

□ 1030

Mr. Speaker, I am calling upon the United States, who I believe has a deep commitment to find these girls, to be able to engage in an intensified effort to find them and a collaborative effort with our expertise, continued, to be able to assure that these girls are brought home, but that Boko Haram does not continue to flaunt itself.

Let me add al-Shabaab, that did the heinous killings of students in Kenya. We must be concerned about a continent that is our friend, a continent that desires to do trade and business with us, a continent that looks to America—Africa, who loves America. You can see the array of Africans who are here in the United States. I have the largest population of Nigerians—wonderful, good people, doctors and teachers, lawyers, public servants. But we must stand with them to bring these girls back.

Let me show you the mutilating and destroying of Christian artifacts, the destruction of towns left in their midst. They don't care, and I am outraged that they are standing.

Let me say this, Mr. Speaker, as I ask for them to be rescued, as I go to express this in an open forum to our community, our Nation. Let me add that part of the work of the Department of Justice deals with issues of human trafficking, and sometimes it takes it internationally.

So I conclude my remarks by saying that we must—we must—confirm as General, Loretta Lynch, the Attorney General nominee of the United States of America. This is an African American woman that has been held without conscience. She is qualified; she is ready to serve; and I would ask my colleagues to show to the world what kind of country America is—that we follow process, and that this individual be allowed to serve her nation as she desires to do.

RECESS

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

Accordingly (at 10 o'clock and 32 minutes a.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1200

AFTER RECESS

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

PRAYER

Reverend Kenny Gooden, Union Grove Baptist Church, Yadkinville, North Carolina, offered the following prayer:

Heavenly Father, today, we humbly come into Your presence, confessing our sins, asking You for mercy, grace, and forgiveness. We come, recognizing Your greatness and Your power, understanding today that, from Heaven, You oversee all that we do. We come, thanking You for the many blessings that You have bestowed upon this Nation in years past. For Your divine protection, provisions, and the power that You have bestowed upon us, we are grateful.

Today, we make these requests:

We pray for the Members of this great body that You grant to them safety, divine wisdom, and knowledge as they make decisions which affect both history and every American citizen.

We pray that You give to them a love for both You and this Nation that is unwavering and unsurpassed.

We also pray today for Your protection over the men and women who serve in our Nation's military all around the world.

And, above everything, we pray today for a real, true revival of righteousness in America, and we make this prayer in the name that is above every name and to which every knee shall bow and every tongue confess—the name of Jesus Christ.

Amen.

THE JOURNAL

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

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

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

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

Mr. COSTA led the Pledge of Allegiance as follows:

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

WELCOMING REVEREND KENNY GOODEN

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Without objection, the gentlewoman from North Carolina (Ms. FOXX) is recognized for 1 minute.

There was no objection.

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Speaker, it is an honor and a privilege to introduce our guest chaplain, Reverend Kenneth ''Kenny'' Gooden, today.

Reverend Gooden is a vital part of the religious community in northwest North Carolina, and he has faithfully shepherded the flock at Union Grove Baptist Church in Yadkinville for 25 years.

He previously served the faithful of Pilot View Baptist Church in High Point and of West Yadkin Baptist Church in Hamptonville. He attended North Iredell High School, Mitchell Community College, and Fruitland Baptist Bible College.

He is accompanied today by his wife, Tina; his daughter, Hannah; and his son, Hunter.

Reverend Gooden's service to God cuts to the very heart of the gospel message of love. He has brightened and enriched the lives of many throughout the years, and we are blessed to have him in our community.

I hope that his words of prayer will remain with all of us as we do the people's work.

COMMUNICATION FROM THE CLERK OF THE HOUSE

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

OFFICE OF THE CLERK,
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC, April 15, 2015.

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

DEAR MR. SPEAKER: Pursuant to the permission granted in Clause 2(h) of rule II of the Rules of the U.S. House of Representatives, the Clerk received the following message from the Secretary of the Senate on April 15, 2015 at 8:34 a.m.:

That the Senate passed without amendment H.R. 2.

With best wishes, I am

Sincerely,

KAREN L. HAAS.

COMMUNICATION FROM THE CLERK OF THE HOUSE

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

OFFICE OF THE CLERK,
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC, April 15, 2015.

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

DEAR MR. SPEAKER: Pursuant to the permission granted in Clause 2(h) of rule II of the Rules of the U.S. House of Representatives, the Clerk received the following message from the Secretary of the Senate on April 15, 2015 at 11:46 a.m.:

That the Senate agreed to without amendment H. Con. Res. 9.

With best wishes, I am

Sincerely,

KAREN L. HAAS.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

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

SOCIAL SECURITY UPDATE RULES

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

Mr. SAM JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, in 1979, Social Security began to use rules to help decide who should receive disability benefits. A lot has changed since then, and, yet, believe it or not, Social Security continues to use the same rules from 1979.

It is time Social Security caught up. That is why, today, I am introducing the Guiding Responsible and Improved Disability Decisions Act of 2015, which would require Social Security to update its rules. This bill is, simply, common sense.

The American people want, need, and deserve a disability program that works, and they expect Social Security to make consistent and accurate decisions when determining who should receive benefits.

On behalf of America's hard-working taxpayers, I urge my colleagues to join me in bringing Social Security into the 21st century.

ROOSEVELT UNIVERSITY ANNIVERSARY

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

Mr. QUIGLEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate my alma mater, Roosevelt University, on the 70th anniversary of its founding in Chicago, Illinois.

From its founding, the university has stood by its mission: to make higher education available to all students regardless of their socioeconomic status, racial or ethnic origin, age, or gender.

At the 1945 dedication of Roosevelt, Eleanor Roosevelt said:

> We can prepare to help the rest of the world and do it without fear, do it with goodwill.

For 70 years, the university has upheld the values of inclusiveness, opportunity, and social justice. In the next 70 years, I know Roosevelt will continue to provide transformational experiences and opportunities for discovery, shaping generations of socially conscious citizens.

I had an extraordinary experience at Roosevelt, learning as much from my fellow students as from my classroom work, and the school was very kind to me.

As my friend, colleague, and fellow alum, BOBBY RUSH, said:

> Roosevelt loved me before I loved Roosevelt.

Congratulations to Dr. Chuck Middleton and to the entire Roosevelt community on the university's 70th anniversary.

Go, Lakers.

SOUTH CAROLINA SAYS, ''NO MORE''

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

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, today, men and women will come together and take a stand against sexual assault at the sixth annual Walk a Mile in Her Shoes march in Columbia, South Carolina.

Men from across the State will don high-heeled shoes and join women and other community leaders to raise awareness and funds to support survivors of sexual assault and sexual violence. Just one victim is too many, and we must stand with survivors to prevent sexual assault.

I am grateful for the Sexual Trauma Services of the Midlands, the South Carolina Coalition Against Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault, the Cumbee Center, and countless other organizations for their advocacy, for their continued efforts to prevent sexual assault, and for their support to survivors.

Chaired by Ginny Walker, I am grateful my oldest son, State Attorney General Alan Wilson, will be one of the leaders of the Walk a Mile today. They are making a difference with efforts to end sexual assault and sexual violence.

In conclusion, God bless our troops, and may the President, by his actions, never forget September the 11th in the global war on terrorism.

My sympathy to the family of the late John Duncan of Laurens County, South Carolina, the father of our colleague Congressman JEFF DUNCAN.

PREVENT DANGEROUS GUNS FROM REACHING DANGEROUS PEOPLE

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

Mr. GALLEGO. Mr. Speaker, today, in America, 48 children and young people will be shot, and seven will die. Today, in America, 45 people will be injured in gun-related accidents, and 55 will take their own lives with guns. Yet, today, in America, zero new Federal gun laws will be debated here in this body.

This is unacceptable.

Yet we know smart gun laws work. We know background checks keep guns out of the hands of terrorists, criminals, and the mentally ill. We know banning assault rifles and high-capacity magazines protects police officers and the communities they serve.

Mr. Speaker, after the Newtown shootings claimed the lives of 20 innocent children, President Obama asked the Nation whether we were prepared to admit that we are powerless in the face of the carnage caused by guns. That is not an admission I am ready to make. This isn't a problem we can ignore.

Mr. Speaker, instead of politics as usual, let's come together to prevent dangerous guns from reaching dangerous people.

CONGRATULATIONS, KIMBERLY KEENAN

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

Mr. ROSS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the achievements of Ms. Kimberly Keenan.

Ms. Keenan has been both the principal and the assistant principal of Tampa Palms Elementary School in the school district of Hillsborough County, Florida, for 18 years. She has recently been appointed to serve as the supervisor of Language Arts and Writing for Hillsborough County. The school district is the eighth largest in the United States, and it is located in Florida's 15th Congressional District.

Under her leadership, Tampa Palms Elementary has been rated as an A-rated school for 16 years in a row and is a National Blue Ribbon School of Excellence.

During her time at this school, Ms. Keenan has created a culture that embodies her motto: ''Hard work pays off

all the time.'' Her efforts to help every child to be treated with love and respect has enabled countless students from diverse backgrounds to learn, gain confidence, and take with them the knowledge and the skills needed to help them make their way in this world.

Our Nation's teachers are the open door to education and opportunity by their working long hours and with, sadly, less recognition than they deserve.

Ms. Keenan has spent years shaping young minds. She has touched many lives of those at Tampa Palms Elementary, including those of the students and parents, and they are indebted to her for her life's work. I am proud to recognize her achievements.

HOLOCAUST REMEMBRANCE DAY

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

Mr. HIGGINS. Mr. Speaker, tomorrow, we commemorate Holocaust Remembrance Day.

This day was established by the Israeli Parliament in 1951, and it coincides with the anniversary of the Warsaw Ghetto uprising. Later, Congress established annual Days of Remembrance, which we also celebrate this week. Memorial and educational activities will take place in schools, places of worship, and communities across this Nation.

This is a time to mourn the millions of victims of the Holocaust, and it is an annual reminder to Americans—indeed, to all of humanity—that we must never forget the evil that man visited upon his fellow man.

It was a Supreme Court Justice from western New York, Robert H. Jackson, who served as the lead American prosecutor of Nazi war criminals at the Nuremberg trials. In recognition of his work to expose the horrors of the Holocaust, we named the new Federal courthouse in Buffalo in Jackson's honor.

Tomorrow, in western New York and across the country, Americans will memorialize the victims of the Holocaust, and we will pray for vigilance and for the resolve to stop such evil from ever happening again.

IRAN AGREEMENT

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

Mr. DOLD. Mr. Speaker, today, I rise to express my support for the Iran Nuclear Agreement Review Act, which has now passed out of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee with unanimous support.

This important step shows that there continues to be momentum to move forward on this vital and necessary bill to ensure accountability and congressional oversight over any deal with Iran.

I call on my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to move quickly to enact this bipartisan legislation so that the American people can have a say in any final agreement.

Mr. Speaker, I remain extremely concerned that the administration's latest agreement with Iran means that we are headed for a historically bad deal. An agreement that sunsets by the time my youngest daughter is in college does nothing to secure our long-term national security.

In the weeks ahead, Congress must stand strong and unequivocally reject any deal that leaves intact Iran's nuclear infrastructure, that cements Iran's position as a nuclear threshold state, that unwinds the sanctions architecture in exchange for empty promises, or that legitimizes a sure-to-fail inspection regime that falls short of ''anywhere, anytime'' inspections.

Mr. Speaker, we must not be fooled into false choices, and Iran must not be left with any path towards a nuclear weapon.

□ 1215

THE REPUBLICAN LEADERSHIP SHOULD LISTEN TO AMERICAN FAMILIES

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

Mrs. BEATTY. Mr. Speaker, I join many of my colleagues today proudly wearing red and this pin to ask us to remember to bring our girls back who were kidnapped by Boko Haram.

Mr. Speaker, I also returned to Washington this week from a busy district work period, where I advocated for homeownership, explored funding for early childhood through college education, and heard from seniors and veterans about their need for access to affordable health care.

Unfortunately, it is very clear, Mr. Speaker, that the Republican leadership continues to turn a deaf ear to the American people, to our seniors, to our veterans, and to the next generation by putting forward legislation that does not work for my district in central Ohio or this Nation.

Democrats, however, have put forth plans to help hard-working American families by making it easier to own a home, making it easier to send our children to college, and making it easier to have a secure and enjoyable retirement.

Mr. Speaker, Republican leadership should listen to American families and help them attain the tools they need to achieve economic security for now and the future.

PROTECTING TAXPAYERS

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

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Speaker, today Americans across the country face the annual deadline to file their tax returns. Taxpayers shudder at the mere mention of the IRS, and that image hasn't been helped since the Federal Government's most feared agency admitted to singling out conservative groups for unprecedented invasive scrutiny. As Americans, we expect our government to preserve, protect, and defend our rights, not target them for political gain and control.

The House is poised to pass several pieces of legislation today that will help ensure that all taxpayers are treated fairly and hold IRS employees accountable for their actions.

Tomorrow the House will vote to repeal permanently the death tax so that families who have lost loved ones are not faced with an enormous financial burden in the wake of that loss. While it represents only a tiny fraction of Federal revenue, the death tax can be devastating for a family. We must repeal this unreasonable and unfair burden on thousands of American families, small businesses, and family farms.

CONDEMNING BOKO HARAM

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

Ms. KELLY of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, it has been a year since 276 girls were abducted from Chibok Secondary School in northern Nigeria by the militant Islamic group Boko Haram. Since then, we have heard numerous tales of unspeakable atrocities committed by the group, the continued abductions of schoolgirls who have been trafficked and murdered, and the sickening discovery of a mass grave with beheaded remains in a formerly Boko Haram-held territory in northern Nigeria.

Just when we thought that Boko Haram had reached its evil peak, the group swears an unholy alliance to ISIL.

I would like to commend my House colleagues for unanimously passing a resolution I introduced condemning Boko Haram. It sent a strong message to the world that America will never tolerate terrorism, and this Congress will never abide terrorists.

We must continue to stand together to fight Boko Haram's brutal victimization of innocent men, women, and children, and defend the basic human right of schoolgirls in Nigeria and around the world to receive an education. We can never forget our girls, and we can never forgive the cowardly crimes of Boko Haram.

TAX DAY BRINGS ANOTHER PAINFUL REMINDER OF IRS ABUSE

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

Mr. BABIN. Mr. Speaker, today is tax day, bringing us another painful reminder of our broken Federal Tax Code, which is being enforced at the heavy and, many times, unfair hand of

the Internal Revenue Service. Simply put, American taxpayers are sick and tired of this out-of-control agency. The IRS has grown too large, too powerful, too aggressive, and too involved in the everyday lives of the American people.

Today the House will pass a series of bills to end this abuse, and we invite the U.S. Senate and the President to join us. Our bills will protect the hard-working taxpayers and hold the IRS employees accountable. We create a taxpayer bill of rights, ensuring the American taxpayers are treated with the respect that they deserve. We will take steps to end the politicization of the IRS, which abusively and illegally targeted conservative American citizens.

From lost emails to refusing to testify before Congress, the IRS abuses must end. I urge my colleagues to support these commonsense bills to bring transparency and accountability to this runaway agency.

ONE YEAR AFTER THE BOKO HARAM KIDNAPPING

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

Ms. HAHN. I rise today in solidarity with the Nigerian people who are still terrorized by Boko Haram.

It has now been 1 year since 276 schoolgirls were abducted from their dorms and classrooms by Boko Haram. This militant terrorist group continues its violent attacks—kidnapping, rape, murder, and brutality—against children, women, and men.

One year ago the international community joined in the social media campaign #bringbackourgirls to raise awareness of this tragic kidnapping. We speak out today to say these girls have not been forgotten, as 219 of them remain missing, their fates unknown. Many American individuals and organizations as well as government leaders are continuing efforts to aid the Nigerian people who have been victimized and to prevent future violence.

We must keep in mind the atrocities committed by Boko Haram as we and our allies continue to fight extremist groups around the world.

BRING BACK OUR GIRLS 1-YEAR ANNIVERSARY

(Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise to remind my colleagues that we have not yet succeeded in bringing back the 219 Nigerian girls abducted by Boko Haram on this day last year. For a moment, the plight of those young schoolgirls captured the attention of the world, spurred by millions of tweets and a hashtag that demanded justice, but as is so often the case with faces of color, their disappearance quickly left the headlines.

We can neither forget nor give up on these girls. Their abduction was a violent challenge to peace, to freedom, and to the right of every girl to choose to better herself through education.

Mr. Speaker, I join my colleagues in calling for a renewed effort to bring back those girls and to bring justice to those responsible.

GIRLS SHOULD NOT FEAR FOR THEIR LIVES BECAUSE THEY WANT AN EDUCATION

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

Mrs. DAVIS of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to bring back our girls. I recently returned from a bicameral delegation mission to several African countries, focusing on terrorist threats. The girls are still on everyone's minds, as are the increasingly frequent and violent attacks of Boko Haram.

With Boko Haram's recent alignment with ISIL, we must do more to counter the growing worldwide threat. We must work with the Nigerian Government and President Buhari, along with the Governments of Chad, Kenya, Cameroon, and any other nation willing to stand up and fight. Building partner capacity by assisting in military training and sharing intelligence will go a long way in the fight to end this cancer.

We must also ensure that the voices of women everywhere are elevated, not just in Nigeria, but around the world. Nowhere in this world should girls fear for their lives just because they want an education.

WE OWE TAXPAYERS A GREAT DEBT OF GRATITUDE

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

Mr. YODER. Mr. Speaker, today millions of Americans will take their hard-earned income through toil and labor and send a significant portion of that sweat equity to Washington, D.C., for this Congress to spend, sending trillions to continue to feed a bloated and inefficient government. According to the IRS, Americans have spent 6.1 billion hours and $168 billion just simply having their tax returns prepared. These taxpayers bear a heavy burden for our actions here.

Last year our Federal Government took in more money from the American people than ever before. Washington doesn't have a revenue problem; it has a spending problem, which is easy for Congress because they are spending other people's money.

Americans expect, when they send their tax dollars to Washington, D.C., that we will be good stewards of that money, that we will treat it with the respect for the American people that worked hard to earn it and send it here.

So today, as Americans head to the post office to drop their returns before the deadline, we owe them a great debt of gratitude; and in that, I ask that Congress renew its efforts to reduce spending, reform programs, balance our budget, and reduce the heavy weight of the tax burden on these hard-working American people.

BRING BACK OUR GIRLS

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

Ms. PLASKETT. Mr. Speaker, today, 1 day after the 1-year anniversary of the abduction of the Chibok schoolgirls in Nigeria, I rise to encourage my colleagues here in Congress to continue in their efforts to help bring back our girls. We have protested, demonstrated, tweeted, and spoken about this issue on a number of occasions. Now, with a new Nigerian leader in place, I encourage Muhammadu Buhari to do all that is within his power to defeat Boko Haram and bring back our girls.

In an effort to improve the quality of life of their young daughters, can you imagine, as a parent, sending your child off to school and never seeing them again? This is the case for hundreds of families. This is not right. No family or child should feel threatened when it comes to improving their lives through education.

Therefore, as we continue to call for the total annihilation of Boko Haram, we should also use this moment to emphasize the importance of establishing safe learning environments for all children. I commend USAID and other human rights organizations for the work that they have done to accomplish this goal.

As a person of color, a mother, and an American, I urge you all to do much more to stop Boko Haram and promote safe, quality education for young girls and boys around the world.

TODAY IS TAX DAY

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

Ms. HERRERA BEUTLER. Today is tax day, April 15, and one of the things that I wanted to bring to the attention of Congress, really, is the amount of waste and abuse that takes place not just within the bloated Federal Government, but within the IRS.

I serve as the vice chair of the Subcommittee on Financial Services and General Government of the Committee on Appropriations. In this last go-around, we reduced—or cut, actually—the IRS' budget by about $100 million to $300 million. The IRS Commissioner was before us to tell us that that is too much; it is too much; it is too much; the sky is going to fall; we are not going to be able to process returns; we are not going to be able to give taxpayers assistance.

But what needs to be told on this floor, Mr. Speaker, is that the IRS sends out tens of billions of misapplied

or fraudulent payments—tens of billions. This has to stop. It is not an issue of not making sure that people pay their taxes.

I am all for making sure that things are applied fairly and equitably, but we have an obligation of responsibility to make sure that money is spent appropriately and efficiently or safeguarded. It is not our money.

I just wanted, today, to take the opportunity to recognize the hard-working moms and dads, individuals across this country who have written their check to Uncle Sam, and they expect us to be good stewards of their hard-earned dollars.

There are a few bills we are working on this week I urge this body to pass. Whether it is balancing the budget or making sure that we eliminate the death tax, we will have our opportunity to make sure that we are holding the Federal Government accountable.

□ 1230

WATER WEEK

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

Mr. COSTA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to speak about our most precious natural resource: water.

It is Water Week here in D.C.; but in the San Joaquin Valley, in California, it is always Water Week.

At first glance at this picture, you might think this was taken in an underdeveloped country thousands of miles away. It is not. These are the squalid living conditions in California's San Joaquin Valley. They are a direct result of the extreme lack of water in California.

While, in part, the drought is to blame, our inability to move the limited water is exacerbating the crisis. While conditions like these are unacceptable, I think to all of us in the richest country in the world, we must do something about it.

It takes water to grow food, period. California grows half the Nation's fruits and vegetables and more, but this year, some estimates say that 1 million acres out of 6 million acres usually in production will be fallowed.

In the short term, we need to act on operational flexibility to deal with this crisis. In the long term, it is time that we fix this broken water system not just for California, but for the West and for the entire world to whom we provide a large part of the food supply. This is the challenge of the 21st century.

TACKLING THE TAX CODE

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

Mr. HARDY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to address an issue that has hampered the growth and prosperity for both individuals and businesses.

Our economy continues to struggle. Our Tax Code shouldn't be working against us. Each year, hard-working Americans have to navigate the Internal Revenue Code, which stands at tens of thousands of pages. Moreover, the agency charged with collecting taxes from Americans has been scrutinizing and delaying critical paperwork for conservative groups.

Mr. Speaker, I stand here today to advance the conversation surrounding the comprehensive tax reform. From the individual Code to the corporate tax system, reform needs to result in a fairer, flatter system that works for Americans and their businesses, not against them.

As we labor through another tax day, it is a reminder, Mr. Speaker, that we haven't addressed the Code in close to 30 years. We have the ability to tackle the Tax Code only if we are willing to make hard decisions.

ADOPT A LONG-TERM HIGHWAY FUNDING BILL

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

Mr. DELANEY. Mr. Speaker, in 45 days, the highway trust fund runs out of money. That means that 90 percent of the road projects in this country will grind to a halt. That is a national tragedy, particularly when there are numerous bipartisan proposals in this Congress to deal with the situation.

Rather than just focusing on the macro statistics, we decided to reach out to my constituents and find out what they think about America's infrastructure. We received hundreds and hundreds of responses detailing all the problems my constituents have with long commute times, concrete falling down from bridges and hitting their windshields, and water interruptions.

We cannot let this happen in the United States of America in the year 2015. I encourage this Congress to adopt a long-term highway funding bill and stop with short-term measures that just delay the inevitable.

Let's invest in America's future; let's invest in our infrastructure, and let's stop Americans from having the problems that they have to deal with day in and day out with an underinvested, aging, decrepit infrastructure.

BOKO HARAM

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

Ms. CLARKE of New York. Mr. Speaker, I stand today with my colleagues to focus the attention of the world on the 276 young women who were kidnapped by Boko Haram—219 whose whereabouts remain unknown—in Chibok, Nigeria, just a year ago in April.

This kidnapping, this act of terrorism, was an attack on the basic human rights of women and girls to participate in the civil society, in this instance by attending school to develop their individual talents and God-given potential.

These young women were violently abducted for the explicit purpose of preventing their full participation in the civil society of Nigeria.

Now, a year after their kidnapping, these young women are still missing, and Boko Haram continues to terrorize the people of west Africa, forcing millions of people to flee their home and undermining the foundations of democracy.

We must continue in our efforts to find these girls and bring their abductors to justice. The destabilization of Nigeria, Cameroon, and Chad has implications for the entire continent of Africa and, indeed, the world.

We have called on the community of nations to bring back our girls.

BRING BACK OUR GIRLS

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

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, what you have seen today is the powerful impact of the women of the United States Congress.

Earlier today, we joined on the steps of the United States Capitol; and in that area that we joined with the young girls who had escaped from Boko Haram, women of faith, and many other advocates, we stood there, arm-in-arm, listening to the stories of those young girls who jumped out of trucks and escaped the violence of Boko Haram and their very thuggish leader.

The Boko Haram are terrorists. A year ago, they stole the ''world's girls.'' I led a delegation, joined by my colleagues, to Nigeria. In that effort, we saw the families who were crying and broken. We protested at the Nigerian Embassy and made a direct call to the then President to ask him to denounce Boko Haram.

Today, we have been on the floor. Working with my colleagues, we have continuously said: bring the girls back.

Mr. Speaker, in Nigeria, 15,000 have been killed because of Boko Haram. Also, 1.5 million are displaced persons, 800,000 of which are children.

I end my remarks by saying: bring the girls back. I am delighted to have been with Congresswoman MALONEY and Congresswoman WILSON. We will never give up on bringing the girls back. They are the world's girls. They are our girls.

THE GIRLS OF CHIBOK

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

Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York. Mr. Speaker, yesterday, on the 1-

year anniversary of the kidnapping of the girls of Nigeria, there were solemn acts of remembrance in Nigeria's capital.

In the Republic of the Congo, they tied red and purple ribbons around the capital. There was a solidarity protest near the Eiffel Tower in Paris and a gathering in London to call for the girls to be returned.

In my home city of New York, as the sun was setting, the Empire State Building was lit up brightly in purple and red, purple for violence against women and red for the girls of Chibok.

It seems like the very act that ripped them from the arms of their parents has somehow tied the rest of the world together, united us in our outrage, and armed us with hope.

Feelings are not enough. It is time for action. It is time for the governments of Africa to unite and to act. Already, the Governments of Chad, Nigeria, Niger, and Cameroon are holding Boko Haram accountable.

It is time for Western countries to unite because we will never, ever forget our girls. We could not forgive our failure to act.

BOKO HARAM

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

Ms. WILSON of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the 1-year anniversary of the tragic kidnapping of 276 girls in Nigeria.

I welcome Patience and Saw to Washington, two of the girls who are with us all day. I thank all of the Members of Congress for taking part in this sad, sad anniversary. We are wearing red and purple today to note the horrible atrocity.

How much longer do we have to wait before the girls are returned to their families? How many more people must die before Boko Haram is defeated? How many more families must be separated? How many more women will be raped?

Mr. Speaker, Boko Haram must be stopped. We must do everything we can to help the Nigerian Government in bringing back our girls.

We must continue to march, continue to demonstrate, continue to protest, continue to pass legislation, and continue to tweet #bringbackourgirls and #followrepwilson until our girls are returned home.

PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 622, STATE AND LOCAL SALES TAX DEDUCTION FAIRNESS ACT OF 2015; PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 1105, DEATH TAX REPEAL ACT OF 2015; AND PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 1195, BUREAU OF CONSUMER FINANCIAL PROTECTION ADVISORY BOARDS ACT

Mr. STIVERS. Mr. Speaker, by direction of the Committee on Rules, I call up House Resolution 200 and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the resolution, as follows:

H. RES. 200

Resolved, That upon adoption of this resolution it shall be in order to consider in the House the bill (H.R. 622) to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to make permanent the deduction of State and local general sales taxes. All points of order against consideration of the bill are waived. The amendment in the nature of a substitute recommended by the Committee on Ways and Means now printed in the bill, modified by the amendment printed in part A of the report of the Committee on Rules accompanying this resolution, shall be considered as adopted. The bill, as amended, shall be considered as read. All points of order against provisions in the bill, as amended, are waived. The previous question shall be considered as ordered on the bill, as amended, and on any further amendment thereto, to final passage without intervening motion except: (1) one hour of debate equally divided and controlled by the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on Ways and Means; and (2) one motion to recommit with or without instructions.

SEC. 2. Upon adoption of this resolution it shall be in order to consider in the House the bill (H.R. 1105) to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to repeal the estate and generation-skipping transfer taxes, and for other purposes. All points of order against consideration of the bill are waived. The amendment in the nature of a substitute recommended by the Committee on Ways and Means now printed in the bill, modified by the amendment printed in part B of the report of the Committee on Rules accompanying this resolution, shall be considered as adopted. The bill, as amended, shall be considered as read. All points of order against provisions in the bill, as amended, are waived. The previous question shall be considered as ordered on the bill, as amended, and on any further amendment thereto, to final passage without intervening motion except: (1) one hour of debate equally divided and controlled by the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on Ways and Means; and (2) one motion to recommit with or without instructions.

SEC. 3. At any time after adoption of this resolution the Speaker may, pursuant to clause 2(b) of rule XVIII, declare the House resolved into the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for consideration of the bill (H.R. 1195) to amend the Consumer Financial Protection Act of 2010 to establish advisory boards, and for other purposes. The first reading of the bill shall be dispensed with. All points of order against consideration of the bill are waived. General debate shall be confined to the bill and amendments specified in this section and shall not exceed one hour equally divided and controlled by the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on Financial Services. After general debate the bill shall be considered for amendment under the five-minute rule. The amendment printed in part C of the report of the Committee on Rules accompanying this resolution shall be considered as adopted in the House and in the Committee of the Whole. The bill, as amended, shall be considered as read. All points of order against provisions in the bill, as amended, are waived. No further amendment to the bill, as amended, shall be in order except those printed in part D of the report of the Committee on Rules. Each such further amendment may be offered only in the order printed in the report, may be offered only by a Member designated in the report, shall be considered as read, shall be debatable for the time specified in the report equally divided and controlled by the proponent and an opponent, shall not be subject to amendment, and shall not be subject to a demand for division of the question in the House or in the Committee of the Whole. All points of order against such further amendments are waived. At the conclusion of consideration of the bill for amendment the Committee shall rise and report the bill, as amended, to the House with such further amendments as may have been adopted. The previous question shall be considered as ordered on the bill, as amended, and on any further amendment thereto, to final passage without intervening motion except one motion to recommit with or without instructions.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Ohio is recognized for 1 hour.

□ 1245

Mr. STIVERS. Mr. Speaker, for the purpose of debate only, I yield the customary 30 minutes to to the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. POLIS), pending which I yield myself such time as I may consume. During consideration of this resolution, all time yielded is for the purpose of debate only.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. STIVERS. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. STIVERS. Mr. Speaker, on Tuesday, the Rules Committee met and reported a rule for three important bills: H.R. 622, the State and Local Tax Deduction Fairness Act of 2015; H.R. 1105, the Death Tax Repeal Act of 2015; and H.R. 1195, the Bureau of Consumer Financial Protection Advisory Boards Act.

House Resolution 200 provides for a closed rule for consideration of H.R. 622 and H.R. 1105, and a structured rule for the consideration of H.R. 1195.

The resolution provides 1 hour of debate equally divided between the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on Ways and Means for H.R. 622 and H.R. 1105, and 1 hour of debate equally divided between the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on Financial Services for H.R. 1195.

The resolution also provides for consideration of the two amendments offered by the gentlewoman from New Hampshire (Ms. KUSTER) on H.R. 1195 and provides a motion to recommit for each bill.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to support the resolution and the underlying legislation. Each of these bills is important to providing fairness and certainty for our Nation's Tax Code, ensuring our Nation's small businesses and family farms are able to pass on to the next generation and ensuring our Nation's community banks, credit unions, and small businesses are able to work with Federal regulators and have their voices heard.

Today is April 15. It is tax day. Millions of Americans are filing their taxes today. They go through this annual process, and many Americans are frustrated today because sometimes the Tax Code is frustrating.

Unfortunately, many Americans are also frustrated by the fact that millions of Americans have to wait until the last minute to find out what the Tax Code will be because so many provisions in our Tax Code are temporary.

Last year, the so-called tax extender package, which was a batch of tax provisions, was retroactively applied for the entire year of 2014, but it didn't get signed into law until December 19. That is less than 2 calendar weeks from the end of the year.

Mr. Speaker, we are determined to provide a little more certainty and a little more fairness in our Tax Code for the future, and that is what these bills are about today. We are moving forward with important legislation that permanently extends a couple of sections in the Tax Code.

H.R. 622 is a very straightforward proposal. In our Tax Code today, American taxpayers have the option to deduct their State taxes. They can deduct their income taxes. Of course, that provision is permanent. It is in law permanently.

But if they want to deduct their sales taxes, that is an annual provision that has been—it was part of the tax extender package last year, which wasn't even renewed until December 19. This is an issue of fairness.

Some States, like Ohio, where I happen to reside, have an income tax. Other States have a sales tax in its place. For the States that have sales taxes, having this uncertainty is patently unfair, and it pits one State against another. It advantages States that have an income tax and disadvantages States that have a sales tax.

States like Texas and Florida, where millions of Americans live, do not have an income tax, and Arizona, they have a sales tax. So we should treat these two tax systems the same. We should be fair and say, if the income tax deduction is permanent, the sales tax deduction is permanent as well.

Certainly, I know the gentleman from Colorado brought up some good points yesterday in the Rules Committee meeting. While you could move to make the income tax deduction temporary, and that would also provide certainty, I think, until we can do tax reform, we should make these provisions permanent because of Congress' inability to, in a timely way, provide certainty to the American public.

In tax reform we can have the discussion about deductible as an overall concept, and I think that is a fair debate to have. But if we are not going to renew it until December 19, 12 months into the year, that does not create a fair and certain system for our taxpayers.

We want to ensure that taxpayers across the country are treated equally and fairly by our Tax Code. This underlying legislation would permanently extend the sales tax deduction, just like the income tax deduction is permanently in law.

H.R. 1105 is a proposal to repeal the death tax. The death tax conflicts with the American Dream, and it is inherently unfair.

The death tax hurts family businesses, family farmers, and ranchers. In fact, according to the Joint Economic Committee, the death tax hurts economic growth and activity by discouraging savings and small business growth. It represents a tiny fraction of Federal revenue, but its impact on families is enormous.

The death tax violates the basic premise of the American Dream that if American individuals work hard and provide for their families, that they will get to keep some of that money.

Many Americans spend their entire life working hard to build a nest egg for their families, and yet, through the Federal Tax Code, the Federal Government can take up to 40 percent of certain estates just because somebody was unfortunate enough to die.

In my district, which covers parts of rural Ohio, this is often a problem for small family businesses and family farms. As the price of land continues to go up and the price of farm equipment, it is a capital-intensive business, and unfortunately, when you have the power to tax something, you have the power to destroy it.

When these assets trigger the tax in the death tax, what many times happens is part of the family farm or part of the family business has to be sold and liquidated, taken away from the family, just to pay the tax collector.

In fact, the death tax is one of the reasons that some family businesses have been lost from one generation to the next. I don't think it is fair at all for family businesses to have to pay that type of price.

Family businesses and farms should be able to pass on what they have worked so hard for and what has already been taxed to the next generation, instead of giving 40 percent back to the government.

The death tax represents double and sometimes triple taxation, and it further penalizes people from saving and investing in their family or their business and their family farm. I am glad we have an opportunity to move forward on this proposal and repeal the onerous death tax.

Finally, Mr. Speaker, H.R. 1195 would create a small business advisory council for the CFPB and codify two other councils that the CFPB did create on their own.

These councils can advise and consult the CFPB in the exercise of its functions under the Federal consumer financial laws and provide information on emerging practices in the consumer financial products and services industry.

H.R. 1195 provides for a small business council to advise the CFPB regarding small business concerns. It is important that the CFPB receive this input from people who are close to the action, who know what is going on in consumer finance, and it is critical for small businesses and community-based financial institutions to have that kind of input and dialogue with the CFPB.

Small business is the engine of our economy, and we need to ensure its viability in the future by making sure that our Federal regulators are well-informed of the issues affecting small business as they move forward with important regulations.

I look forward to debating these bills with our House colleagues, and I urge support for the rule and the underlying legislation.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. POLIS. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

The rule here today provides for consideration of three bills, all of which I oppose in their current form. I want to talk about each of those.

We also have, under this rule, a closed process. This resolution contains the 19th and 20th closed rules of this Congress.

Instead of having an open debate about taxes here on tax day, we see nothing more than recycled partisan measures and attacks on consumer protections that are disguised and under the guise of a small business advisory board, which had historically been a bipartisan effort.

While discussing tax legislation on tax day may not seem the most exciting piece of legislative news to our constituents, I hope they are watching today, Mr. Speaker. This rule and this bill we are bringing under it really demonstrate the gulf that exists between our two parties when we talk about things like middle class economics.

This is a $296 billion tax cut. So if we have $296 billion in taxes cut, who are we going to cut taxes for?

This bill affects 100 families in Colorado. With the same amount of money, $296 billion, we could cut taxes for every American adult by $1,000.

That $1,000 would mean a lot to middle class families, Mr. Speaker. It might help pay for your kids' college tuition. It might help pay for a family vacation.

But instead of directing money there, we are directing it to the very wealthiest Americans, namely, those who die with more than a $10 million estate for a married couple. I think we see a stark contrast on priorities.

While I disagree with the policies and tactics that are under consideration, I think it is important to talk about what a Democratic majority would do here on tax day. We would certainly not be about to consider a bill that applies to literally zero percent of taxpayers, Mr. Speaker.

Let me clarify, because that may seem strange to some people that this applies to zero percent of taxpayers.

But the bill we are considering with regard to the inheritance tax on estates over $10 million would apply to 0.15 percent of taxpayers. That can be rounded down to zero.

It doesn't even apply to those taxpayers. It applies to them after they are dead. So it applies to zero living Americans.

Mind you, we won't have a debate about the broken immigration policies that impact over 11 million immigrant workers who would grow the tax base.

We won't have discussions on reducing taxes for the middle class, but we are having policies that affect a few thousand dead people, a few thousand rich dead people, I might add.

If there were a Democratic majority on tax day, we would be working to provide tax relief to middle class families, rather than offering a bill that would gut one agency whose sole purpose is to protect middle class consumers and delivering a tax break to rich, dead families.

We have another bill under this rule, ostensibly about a small business advisory board. This is a worthwhile effort to provide a small business advisory input to the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau.

Unfortunately, it is a minimal cost, $9 million, but the Republicans are offering a way of paying for it that guts the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau. They are effectively cutting off your arm to remove a splinter in your pinky.

Well, look. If the majority was consistent when they say the deficit matters and we must pay for legislation—but we are dealt with two bills that are mutually exclusive.

On the one hand, they are handing out $269 billion in deficit spending through providing tax cuts to 1,000 Americans who are already dead. And on the other hand, they are saying this $9 million dollars, somehow we have to figure out a way of paying for, and they are effectively gutting the financial protection agency to do it.

That is because this $9 million is apparently a step too far, even though they are offering two bills, one that adds $269 billion to the deficit, and the other adds $42 billion to the deficit, which I will talk about in a minute.

In this year alone, the House Ways and Means Committee has given Congress nine tax expenditure bills, at a cost of $317 billion, all unfunded; $317 billion in tax expenditure spending, not even including this $269 billion that they are looking at doing today.

□ 1300

And what bothers me most about this rule today is where we say to ourselves: Look, we will spend $269 billion for a tax expenditure for dead rich people, $42 billion on a tax reform that will ultimately make tax reform harder, but we can't spend $9 million on a bill to help small business.

I am sure that we all have a lot of ideas on both sides of the aisle about how we can spend money. If we have $269 billion in tax expenditures to use, why don't we direct that to a tax cut for small businesses or to reducing the corporate tax rate, which is one of the highest in the world, or reducing the middle class tax rate? But instead, it is being directed entirely to approximately 100 dead people in Colorado, rather than allowing businesses to keep more of their money so they can reinvest in their infrastructure and create jobs, this precious tax break we are giving to 100 dead people in the State of Colorado.

We should be talking about tax reform today. We should be talking about how to reduce taxes for the middle class. Instead, we are having a closed debate about another set of bills that will likely not pass the Senate, and if they got to the President's desk, he would veto.

I urge my colleagues to reject this rule. The repeal of the estate tax is very hard to explain to our constituents. That is because it is $269 billion that benefits almost no one—less than 100 people in the State of Colorado.

Now, when my friends call this the ''death tax'' or somehow say this will help small business, let's keep in mind, you don't even pay inheritance tax on the first $5 million of your estate, $10 million for a married couple. So you can die with a $5 million small business, a $10 million small business for a couple, and your heirs pay zero tax on that—zero tax.

What we are saying now is that the very limited number of families that might have estates of $50 million or $60 million, instead of paying tax on that, should pay zero tax on that and just have the costs of that added to the deficit.

There are a lot of ideas about spending $269 billion. We could say, oh, we could spend it on schools or science and research. Or even, if we limit ourselves to what we want to do with taxes, why aren't we lowering taxes on business? Why aren't we talking about reducing the marginal rate? Why aren't we talking about reducing all the tax brackets across the board? Why aren't we talking about a tax refund to middle class families? Instead, we are spending $269 billion on a few hundred dead rich people. From a tax policy standpoint, that has got to be one of the least productive ways to attempt to cut taxes.

You want to cut taxes on small businesses? No argument here. Give it to them while they are living.

I was a small-businessman before I got here. I would have loved to have been able to keep more of my own money to be able to invest in the growth of my small business rather than receive a tax break when I am already dead. This makes no sense in the world.

Look, we would all love to get rid of every tax, wouldn't we—estate tax, business tax, income tax—but we all agree that government needs so much money to function.

We have a House budget. The House budget that this body agreed to stipulates a certain amount of tax breaks. It is up to our body to decide how to deliver those tax breaks.

I honestly think that almost every businessowner would rather see lower rates while they are alive so they could grow their companies faster, creating growth and employing people, rather than a tax break after they are dead.

Proponents of this bill tell stories about how many businesses or farms are harmed every year by the estate tax. Well, how many of those same farms and businesses are harmed by the hard-earned money that they are forced to turn over to the government every year? Why aren't we saying: Give less of your hard-earned income to the government every year?

But no, the Republican tax-and-spend approach continues to oppress small businesses with higher and higher taxes, oppress the middle class with higher and higher taxes, while they are only concerned with delivering a tax break to dead rich people. I simply disagree that this is an efficient way to use our Tax Code to spur economic growth.

Chairman RYAN knows full well that I am enthusiastic about having a discussion about our Tax Code: how to cut taxes for business, reduce the burden on small businesses, simplify and streamline the Tax Code by reducing tax expenditures, and bringing down tax rates to ensure that the capital expenditures by businesses and reinvesting in businesses are determined by businessowners rather than by lobbyists here in Washington.

These bills are a step in the wrong direction, away from tax reform, and are detrimental to the American middle class and to American small businesses.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. STIVERS. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume because I have three quick points in response before I yield to the gentleman from Tennessee.

First, with regard to the death tax, it is important to remember whose money it is in the first place. This money has already been taxed, and it is being taken. Some small businesses, like the gentleman's from Colorado, grow to be big businesses, and we are for that in America, and that is great. But just because somebody has the misfortune to die doesn't mean the government should take up to 40 percent of their assets.

Second, with regard to the CFPB, this bill was bipartisan, and I hope that we can get it back to a bipartisan bill because the input from small businesses and credit unions and community banks is something that both sides of the aisle agree on. The disagreement is on the pay-for.

Unfortunately, the gentleman from Colorado and his side of the aisle, when they were in charge, when they passed the Dodd-Frank bill, did not subject

the CFPB to the appropriations process. Therefore, anytime we make any change that requires money, it requires an offset.

So this offset simply says, beginning in 2020, it reduces the cap of the amount that the CFPB can take from the Federal Reserve as an exact offset. It was done by the CBO, was what the chairman of the Financial Services Committee said to us, and they did it as an exact offset for exactly the $700,000 a year it allegedly, according to the CBO, will take to run these three advisory committees. It doesn't apply any cap until the year 2020. It does apply a cap exactly offset by the amount that it will have cost to run these committees for the budget window, and that starts in the year 2020.

I am really disappointed that we didn't find a bipartisan offset. I know that the chairman of our Financial Services Committee did say in the Rules Committee that he talked to the minority whip's office when he did the offset. Obviously folks on the other side of the aisle are upset about that. I am really sorry about it because I do want to acknowledge that it started as a bipartisan bill that passed our Financial Services Committee, which I happen to sit on, on an overwhelmingly bipartisan basis. In fact, I believe it was unanimous.

So my last point to the gentleman from Colorado is, on comprehensive tax reform, we completely agree. America needs comprehensive tax reform, and nothing in these underlying bills would preclude us from doing comprehensive tax reform.

But it is important that the American people know that we want to end the death tax. They know that we want to create a situation where there are permanent deductions that are the same for income tax States and sales tax States, and they will be treated fairly. Both those bills are about fairness. And of course the CFPB advisory committee bill is about input and making sure there is a real dialogue with small business before the CFPB creates regulation.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Tennessee (Mr. DUNCAN).

Mr. DUNCAN of Tennessee. I want to thank the gentleman from Ohio for yielding me this time.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of the combined rule, bringing all three of these very important bills to the floor today. However, I rise to speak primarily about H.R. 622, the State and Local Sales Tax Deduction Fairness Act, which is so vitally important to the people of my home State of Tennessee.

Some people refer to today as tax day, the day on which individual income tax returns are due to the Federal Government. But actually, Mr. Speaker, for most Americans, every day is tax day, counting sales taxes, gas taxes, property taxes, all of the taxes that people pay directly, and then all of the hidden indirect taxes we pay on everything in the cost of goods, taxes that are passed on to the consumer in the form of higher prices because, to stay in businesses, businesses have to pass their taxes on to the consumer in the form of higher prices.

We are an overtaxed nation, Mr. Speaker. Most taxpayers will pay more in taxes of all types this year than on food, clothing, and housing combined. Per person, the Federal Government collected a near record amount in revenues over the past 12 months: $3.3 trillion just to the Federal Government, and another $1.5 trillion, or perhaps even more, to State and local governments.

Despite what some people say, Washington does not have a revenue problem; it has a spending problem—and higher taxes won't solve it. Tennessee is a prime example of that. It is an example for the Nation, leading the way, because it is a low-tax State.

The State and Local Sales Tax Deduction Fairness Act is especially important to my State because it will help Tennessee families make ends meet by keeping more money in the pockets of hard-working individuals. This deduction is a matter of fairness for Tennesseans to ensure that they are treated the same way the Federal Government treats those in States with State income taxes.

The State and local sales tax deduction allows residents in States with no State income tax, such as Tennessee, to deduct their State and local sales tax payments from their Federal income tax. This puts Tennessee on equal footing with taxpayers in other States who can deduct their State income taxes from their Federal tax obligation.

This is a matter of fairness, Mr. Speaker. As the gentleman from Ohio just said, Tennesseans shouldn't pay a larger share of taxes than other taxpayers simply because we pay sales tax and we rely on sales tax instead of income tax. Making this deduction permanent will provide certainty to Tennesseans who itemize their taxes and allow them to plan their family budgets.

People all over the country, Mr. Speaker, are moving from the high-tax States to the low-tax States. Tennessee benefits from this. Jobs are being created. Our State's economy is one of the strongest in the Nation because we keep our taxes low. This is an example the Nation should follow and certainly not one that the Nation should penalize in any way.

I urge support for this legislation.

Mr. POLIS. Mr. Speaker, before further yielding, I yield myself such time as I may consume to address some of the points of my colleague, the gentleman from Ohio.

He asked, Whose money is it? I think if you ask any small-businessperson, any person whom we are talking about here—people that are worth over $10 million—and you say, ''Look, would you rather pay higher taxes while you are alive or after you are dead?'' I would bet almost everybody would rather hold on to more of their money. Whose money is it? Let them keep more of their own while they are alive and pay it after they are dead. I certainly would. I would much rather pay the government after I am dead than while I am alive, if we have to pay them at all.

Number two, he said, Why can't we come up with this pay-for? Well, look, this body, at its very best, just came together around a package over $100 billion for SGR.

This is $9 million. It is not that hard to pay for $9 million for the U.S. Government. We probably spent $9 million of U.S. Government time just having this debate right here, keeping the lights on and C–SPAN flowing and the Chamber going. For goodness' sake, $9 million—it is easy.

If you allowed this to come up under an open rule, Mr. Speaker, plenty of Members could have offered $9 million pay-fors. Take it out of almost any account; it is such a relatively small amount of money. You could take it from almost any government agency you want, and I am sure you can find $9 million to agree on to fund this rather than a backdoor attempt to gut the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau.

Finally, the gentleman from Ohio said nothing in here precludes tax reform. Of course he is right; nothing precludes tax reform. We are just moving further and further away from tax reform by making permanent special interest tax cuts that we all agree are part of the discussion for tax reform to eliminate in order to bring down taxes. So it is moving further and further away. It doesn't preclude it. It makes it harder.

Mr. Speaker, yesterday was Equal Pay Day. If we defeat the previous question, we will offer an amendment to the rule that would allow the House to consider H.R. 1619, the Paycheck Fairness Act, introduced by Representative DELAURO, which I am proud to cosponsor.

I yield 3½ minutes to the gentlewoman from Connecticut (Ms. DELAURO) to discuss our proposal.

Ms. DELAURO. I thank the gentleman.

Mr. Speaker, I rise to ask Members to defeat the previous question so that the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. POLIS) can offer an amendment for the House to immediately consider the Paycheck Fairness Act.

Yesterday we marked yet another Equal Pay Day. What is Equal Pay Day? That means that it took 104 days for the average woman's earnings to catch up with what the average man made last year—104 days. That is exactly 104 days too long.

It has been 52 years since the Equal Pay Act became law, and a woman still makes only 78 cents, on average, for every dollar earned by a man.

□ 1315

That is almost $10,000 a year or almost half a million dollars over the course of the average career. The gap has barely changed in over a decade. Even in nursing, a profession that is more than 90 percent female, a study last month showed that men earned $5,100 more per year on average than women, when you control for education, experience, and other factors.

Clearly, we must do more to close the gender pay gap. That is why, 3 weeks ago, I reintroduced the Paycheck Fairness Act. My bill would finish the job started by the Equal Pay Act. It would end pay secrecy across the board.

It would require employers to prove that pay disparities are not based on gender. Passing the bill would give real teeth to a very simple principle: men and women in the same job deserve the same pay.

The Paycheck Fairness Act enjoys bipartisan support. It has passed the House twice already and came just two votes shy of passing in the Senate. President Obama has called on us to pass it.

More crucially still, the American people know the importance of paycheck fairness. In October, a Gallup poll asked Americans to identify the top issue facing women in the workplace. Equal pay was, by far, the most common response among men as well as women.

All across the country today, working families are in trouble. Wages are stagnant. The single biggest issue that we face today in our economy is that men and women are in jobs that do not pay them enough money to live on.

Many are struggling—struggling—to feed their children and to heat their homes. It is time that we look at equal pay because equal pay is a crucial part of the solution to this problem.

Women are half of the workforce. Two-thirds of us are breadwinners for our families. Lower pay for women means less gas in the car; less food on the table; less money in the college fund; and, yes, less spending to support our economy.

President Obama and the Department of Labor have shown the way by taking action to protect women who work for Federal contractors. It is high time that we in the Congress acted to extend real, enforceable pay equity protection for all women.

Equal pay for equal work is the right thing to do; it is the smart thing to do, and it is the popular thing to do. It is time to make it a reality for all Americans.

For those of us who are in the Congress, we all come to this institution from different parts of the country. We come from different skill sets, different educational backgrounds, and different philosophies, yet we are in the same job, and men and women in this institution get paid the same amount of money. That ought to be extended to every woman in this Nation.

That is why we should defeat the previous question here so that we can introduce the paycheck fairness bill. I thank the gentleman.

Mr. STIVERS. Mr. Speaker, before yielding to the gentleman from Texas, I don't think we are going to solve necessarily the philosophical disagreement we have on the death tax because, clearly, we think death is bad enough, it shouldn't be a taxable event; and the gentleman from Colorado thinks it is a preferable tax.

On the other one, I would just ask the gentleman from Colorado, Mr. Speaker, whether he thinks that having a temporary deduction for sales tax States like Texas—the gentleman from Texas is about to speak—is fair when we have a permanent deduction for income taxes for States like Ohio.

Mr. POLIS. Will the gentleman yield?

Mr. STIVERS. I yield to the gentleman from Colorado.

Mr. POLIS. As we talked about yesterday in the committee, it seems like the answer that would move us toward tax reform would mean making the deduction of income tax temporary rather than make them both permanent, moving us away from reform.

Mr. STIVERS. Thank you, Mr. Speaker, to the gentleman from Colorado.

It appears to me it doesn't matter which we choose. We need to equalize the treatment, and neither one takes us further away from tax reform because, in tax reform, we are going to have the entire debate.

Whatever we do, we just need to move to a system that is fair, and I don't think it is fair today to States like Texas that we are not going to let you know whether you can deduct your sales tax until December 19. It just does not make sense.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. THORNBERRY).

Mr. THORNBERRY. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the gentleman from Ohio yielding. I rise in support of the rule and the underlying legislation.

Mr. Speaker, I think the gentleman from Ohio makes a great point. It is not right to have some States given preference versus other States when their States have different methods of taxation.

I want to focus my remarks primarily on the death tax. I want to first commend the gentleman from Texas (Mr. BRADY), who is the sponsor of the underlying legislation.

I have had a bill to deal with the death tax and supported doing away with it completely since I have been in Congress. I want to express appreciation for the 79 Members who have cosponsored my bill in this Congress, which is substantially similar to the bill we will vote on tomorrow.

Mr. Speaker, the reason this issue is so important is because the death tax has a huge effect on farmers, ranchers, and small businesses of all kinds, including those in my district. It is one of the issues I have heard the most about.

It hangs like a cloud over business growth and job creation. Now, what we often hear is: Well, the thresholds are so high that it really doesn't affect anybody but the very rich.

I just want to make two points. Number one is we see continual efforts to increase taxes on estates. Even the President's budget request this year had a different method of increasing taxes. It makes it very difficult for any farmer, rancher, or small-businessowner to plan because you never know what the government is going to do next.

Secondly, Mr. Speaker, it is wrong to levy a tax on what someone tries to leave to their children after they have already paid taxes on it when they earn it and then have the government come and want them to pay taxes on it again.

It is wrong for an estate of $100, and it is just as wrong for an estate of $100 million. We pay taxes when we earn it the first time. We should not have the government come in after death when we are trying to leave it to our heirs, our children, and then take another bite out of it.

There are too many farms, ranches, and small businesses who have had to sell just in order to pay the tax. If there is one thing we want people to do in this country, it is to work hard, to save, and to leave something for our kids so that they can have a better life.

The death tax punishes you for doing that. That is why it is so fundamentally wrong, regardless of whether you are leaving a farm, a ranch, a small business, or a lifetime of savings.

It is time to get rid of it completely so it does not hang over us in this country. I support the rule and the underlying legislation. I hope my colleagues will as well.

Mr. POLIS. Mr. Speaker, I would like to yield 3 minutes to the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON LEE).

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Let me thank the gentleman from Colorado for his very lucid explanation of where we are today.

Let me say that I hope my colleagues will join me in eliminating sequester. We can put that on the floor today that would in actuality provide more funding for education, for military pay, and for the infrastructure. We need to be doing serious work here.

Let me join my colleague, Congresswoman DELAURO, in opposing the rule and the previous question in order to be able to assure that we pass pay equity. Today, in 2015, whether we have the death tax or the sales tax, we have women who are making 75 cents on a dollar and cannot make ends meet. We are having women who are not in the body of this august House and Senate working every day and getting 75 cents on the dollar. It is time for pay equity now.

Let's hear the voices raised up to be able to support the working women of America who over almost a century ago—not yet—were fighting for the

right to vote. We have gained the right to vote, but we are still in an unequal economic circumstance. I want my colleagues to be as energetic about providing for pay equity.

Now, Mr. Speaker, let me say something that is sort of bifurcated. I will say to you that, on the death tax, there is an equity in that. There is an equity in that because the ability to build that estate has been through the gracious laws and hard work of the people, a combination that you are in the capitalistic system that is here in America and, therefore, the death tax is simply the transfer tax that goes on the basis of all of this money that you have made to be able to help run this government.

I don't really think that that is offensive at all because there are many tax breaks that have come to the individuals with these huge estates through their lifetime: capital gains tax; many different taxes that they have; R&D taxes, research tax that gives them a benefit. It is not like we are taking money. It is an investment in America.

Let me also add that I do come from Texas, and I do think equalizing of taxes is very important. I really do. What I would like to say to my friends is let us have a comprehensive tax reform. Let's get rid of sequester. Let's pass pay equity. Let's address the tax problems of people who make $50,000 a year, and that does impact those who pay sales tax. That is a reasonable approach.

Let's look at everybody in the circle of life, if you will, and make sure that, when we leave this floor tomorrow, we have addressed the concerns of all. Let us look closely at the death tax and the fact that they are not being punished; it is a transfer based upon the bounty of wealth that has been gained over the years and invested because of a capitalistic system that allows that wealth to grow.

I don't think anybody can challenge that when you have become a Rockefeller.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The time of the gentlewoman has expired.

Mr. POLIS. Mr. Speaker, I yield the gentlewoman an additional 30 seconds.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. The Rockefellers were most notorious, positively, for giving money back because they realized that they had gained money through the system here in the United States, their hard work—I am not denying that—but, in the overall system that we have, allowed their money to grow.

I would just make the argument that we can do well together in doing a comprehensive system. I certainly will not ignore the fact that the equalizing of taxes through the sales tax deduction is an important step, but I would like to take many steps.

I would like my colleagues to join me in relieving the sequester but also not voting for the previous question so that pay equity can come to the floor. Vote for the women.

Mr. STIVERS. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Louisiana (Mr. SCALISE), our whip.

Mr. SCALISE. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Ohio for yielding. I rise in strong support of the rule and especially in strong support of the underlying legislation to repeal the death tax in the United States of America.

Mr. Speaker, if you look at what the death tax is, this is an attack on family-owned businesses. You are talking about people who have built up, as part of the American Dream, built up businesses that are creating jobs across this country.

These people, by the way, paid taxes all along the way as they were building up that business. The business has already been taxed multiple times in some cases by the Federal Government; yet because of the death tax, when the businessowner dies, the first thing the Federal Government does is Uncle Sam shows up not to issue condolences to the grieving family, but to send them a massive tax bill that, in many cases, Mr. Speaker—in many cases—threatens the very existence of that business.

What we hear from small-businessowners all across the country and family-owned businesses is that, in many cases, when their loved ones die, while they are trying to figure out how to grieve and how to take care of the family from there, in many cases, they have to spend those first few weeks figuring out how or even if they can keep the family-owned business.

In many cases, we see people having to sell their family-owned business that they wanted to pass on to the next generation just to pay the death tax.

This is morally wrong, Mr. Speaker, that the Federal Government taxes people on their death after they have already paid taxes building up their businesses, wanting to pass on the American Dream.

Part of the American Dream is not just to own a home or to create good jobs for people, but to be able to pass that on to your kids so that they can experience and live that same dream as well and continue to grow and create jobs.

What we see so many times because of this death tax is that many businessowners spend so much of their time and their resources trying to figure out how to shield their business from the death tax.

A lot of people aren't paying this tax. They are paying a lot of accountants and attorneys to figure out how to avoid the death tax so they can pass it on to their kids. That is money—millions and billions of dollars—that they could be spending growing their business, growing jobs, and creating more opportunities for other people not only to have that first job, but to then go out and create their own small business.

But, lo and behold, if they are too successful, Mr. Speaker, and they grow that business big enough and they have kids they want to pass it on to, eventually, they are going to die, and the one constant they know is that their kids will have to face that same decision of whether or not to sell the family business just to pay the Federal Government over their death.

This is morally wrong. It is time we repeal this death tax and preserve the American Dream for those family-owned businesses all across this country.

□ 1330

Mr. POLIS. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time.

I have a hard time understanding why the Republicans, of all the parties, support H.R. 622, which incentivizes States and Governors to increase their taxes. This is a State and local tax extender. It is a step away from tax reform. It adds billions to our deficit.

Do my Republican colleagues realize that this bill and its sister policy deducting State and local income tax simply subsidizes high-tax States? That is what this does.

You are saying to Governors, Raise taxes as much as you want, Ohio Governor. Raise taxes as much as you want, Colorado Governor. Don't worry, the Federal Government will bail you out. We are going to have a Federal bailout for your own high taxes.

That is what this bill does, and you cannot dispute that. They are saying, Oh, it treats it the same. Oh, well, let's give this same bailout to Texas that we give to Ohio. Okay, let's bail out Texas for their high taxes and Ohio for their high taxes—brilliant, brilliant.

It seems like it is at odds with everything the Republican Party pretends to stand for while, here in this body, they are actually advocating to bail out States with high taxes.

For me, in some ways, that is actually the most troubling bill we are considering under this rule not because it is the worst policy of the three—that great distinction is owned by directing an enormous tax break to dead people rather than living people—but because the underlying policy of deducting State and local taxes can be defensible.

This signals that the majority has no interest in comprehensive tax reform. It moves us further away from tax reform by enshrining one of the tax loopholes that incentivizes States to raise taxes permanently in the Tax Code rather than including it as part of a package that brings down tax rates for American businesses and American individuals.

Here on tax day, why aren't we debating tax reform and reducing our tax rates? I am sure to say that there has been someone here on the House floor saying those exact words since 1986, the last time this body took on tax reform, but instead, the House Ways and Means Committee has given us these ''extender'' bills that all the ones passed this year have moved us $317 billion away from tax reform, away from cutting rates for American families and businesses.

Each billion that is put in the Tax Code represents an additional billion-dollar hurdle to ever getting a bipartisan tax reform deal done.

Now, look, I understand tax reform will be hard. No one agrees on what the final product should look like, even though the President and Chairman RYAN and others have indicated their support for the concept, but it should be and needs to be the goal of this Congress.

We can simplify the Tax Code and bring down tax rates. We can streamline the code. We can make sure that businesses invest wherever their productivity is most enhanced rather than optimize their expenditures to fit the Tax Code that lobbyists have inserted here in Washington, D.C. We can champion small businesses and middle class taxpayers rather than dead rich people and States with high sales taxes.

These discussions about tax extender policy move the baseline further and further away and make tax reform harder and harder to ever get done. Again, it is not adding any certainty to taxpayers.

If you listen to the majority, the folks who understand how these numbers add up at the end of the day, they know they can't take tax extenders that cost tens of billions of dollars completely ''off the table.'' You can't shield that money and still lower rates in the way that they are promising. The numbers just don't work.

If extenders like this are ''still on the table,'' why are we even calling this permanent? We are just further confusing people and injecting uncertainty. Republicans are telling Governors: go ahead and raise your sales taxes; we will bail you out.

At the same time, they are saying it is not off the table that some day we might cut that for tax reform, but they are moving further and further away from tax reform.

This bailout of high-tax States is simply a step away from tax reform and a step towards encouraging Governors to raise their sales tax by letting them know that the Federal Government is here to bail them out.

We will debate this bill today, not pay for it, make it harder to get to tax reform, send a message to Republican States like Texas that it is okay to raise your sales tax, but my hope is, hopefully, this is our last one.

Maybe we can begin a serious discussion that Chairman Camp started with his outline on tax reform that Chairman RYAN has paid lip service to, and I hope that we will work on a bipartisan proposal that we can begin without haste.

Finally, I want to address the Bureau of Consumer Financial Protection Advisory Boards Act. Again, Republicans took a bipartisan bill to add a small business advisory board to the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau. It came back costing $9 million—not billion, not trillion—$9 million.

Rather than allowing Members of both sides to come up with a way of paying for it, rather than cutting some bloated line of Federal bureaucracy that both sides could have agreed on to pay for $9 million, they are handcuffing the entire agency with effectively a policy rider pay-for that effectively restricts the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau in its entirety rather than extending their arm to come up with a bipartisan pay-for. It should be easy to find a bipartisan pay-for for $9 million.

These concepts represent a stark difference between our parties: Democrats wanting to cut taxes for middle class and businesses, Republicans wanting to cut taxes for rich dead people and incentivize States to raise their sales tax.

These rules allow for consideration of a tax bill that only serves the needs of a few thousand Americans rather than cutting taxes for the middle class. It allows the consideration of a bill that moves us further away from tax reform by bailing out States like Texas. After a self-executing amendment, this rule would drastically cut the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau.

We should be having a conversation of comprehensive tax reform. We should be talking about how we can make the Tax Code work better for the middle class and small businesses and bring down rates. We should streamline our Tax Code and make our businesses more competitive.

I hope my colleagues oppose this rule and the underlying bill.

Mr. Speaker, yesterday was Equal Pay Day. If you defeat the previous question, I will offer an amendment to the rule that will allow the House to consider H.R. 16, the Paycheck Fairness Act.

In one of the wealthiest countries in the world, it is unacceptable that women are paid significantly less than men for filling the exact same role. It is long past time that Congress acted to close the wage gap. This bill would do exactly that.

I join Representative DELAURO in advocating we finally enable women, support America's children and families, and end the crippling drag created by the gender pay gap on our Nation's economic prosperity.

Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to insert the text of the amendment in the RECORD, along with extraneous material, immediately prior to the vote on the previous question.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. POLIS. Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to vote ''no'' and defeat the previous question.

I urge a ''no'' vote on the rule and the underlying bills. Instead of talking about providing a tax cut for dead Americans, we talk about providing a tax cut for living Americans. Instead of bailing out States and encouraging them to raise their taxes even more, we give them an incentive to reduce their taxes and, at the same time, reduce the Federal tax rate.

Yes, we can—si, se puede. Si, se puede. Si, se puede.

I urge my colleagues to vote ''no'' on the underlying rule and bill.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. STIVERS. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time.

These bills today are about fairness. While I certainly agree with the gentleman from Colorado about the incentive in the deductibility of sales tax, it is really important that we put sales tax States and income tax States on a level playing field.

Because Congress last year and the President did not enact these tax extenders until December 19, it is important to create a permanent system that creates certainty that does not prevent anything from being considered in comprehensive tax reform. In fact, our side of the aisle has proposed comprehensive tax reform last year and continues to work to enact comprehensive tax reform that simplifies the Tax Code and lowers the rates.

On the death tax, we just have a fundamental disagreement. We think that repealing the death tax is fair. Small businesses and family farms should not be forced to be sold to pay the tax collector.

With regard to the CFPB, I think getting input from small businesses, credit unions, and small banks will ensure that financial regulations passed by the CFPB are thoughtful and understand what the impact will be on the overall economy.

It is unfortunate that the pay-for has become comprehensive. The pay-for is a simple offset that ensures that the CFPB doesn't spend more money than it costs to operate the CFPB, minus the small $700,000 a year cost for these three advisory councils.

It is too bad that that became partisan, but I understand from the Financial Services Committee that that effort was worked with the minority whip, and it is too bad that it became partisan.

The differences between the parties are clear. Republicans are for fairness in the Tax Code and ensuring we give input from our small businesses and Main Street before big Washington regulators crush small businesses with oppressive regulation.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support the rule and the underlying bills.

The material previously referred to by Mr. POLIS is as follows:

AN AMENDMENT TO H. RES. 200 OFFERED BY MR. POLIS OF COLORADO

At the end of the resolution, add the following new sections:

SEC. 4. Immediately upon adoption of this resolution the Speaker shall, pursuant to clause 2(b) of rule XVIII, declare the House resolved into the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for consideration of the bill (H.R. 1619) to amend the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938 to provide more effective remedies to victims of discrimination in the payment of wages on the basis of sex, and for other purposes. General debate shall be confined to the bill and shall

not exceed one hour equally divided and controlled by the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on Education and the Workforce. After general debate the bill shall be considered for amendment under the five-minute rule. All points of order against provisions in the bill are waived. At the conclusion of consideration of the bill for amendment the Committee shall rise and report the bill to the House with such amendments as may have been adopted. The previous question shall be considered as ordered on the bill and amendments thereto to final passage without intervening motion except one motion to recommit with or without instructions. If the Committee of the Whole rises and reports that it has come to no resolution on the bill, then on the next legislative day the House shall, immediately after the third daily order of business under clause 1 of rule XIV, resolve into the Committee of the Whole for further consideration of the bill.

SEC. 5. Clause 1(c) of rule XIX shall not apply to the consideration of H.R. 1619.

THE VOTE ON THE PREVIOUS QUESTION: WHAT IT REALLY MEANS

This vote, the vote on whether to order the previous question on a special rule, is not merely a procedural vote. A vote against ordering the previous question is a vote against the Republican majority agenda and a vote to allow the Democratic minority to offer an alternative plan. It is a vote about what the House should be debating.

Mr. Clarence Cannon's Precedents of the House of Representatives (VI, 308–311), describes the vote on the previous question on the rule as ''a motion to direct or control the consideration of the subject before the House being made by the Member in charge.'' To defeat the previous question is to give the opposition a chance to decide the subject before the House. Cannon cites the Speaker's ruling of January 13, 1920, to the effect that ''the refusal of the House to sustain the demand for the previous question passes the control of the resolution to the opposition'' in order to offer an amendment. On March 15, 1909, a member of the majority party offered a rule resolution. The House defeated the previous question and a member of the opposition rose to a parliamentary inquiry, asking who was entitled to recognition. Speaker Joseph G. Cannon (R–Illinois) said: ''The previous question having been refused, the gentleman from New York, Mr. Fitzgerald, who had asked the gentleman to yield to him for an amendment, is entitled to the first recognition.''

The Republican majority may say ''the vote on the previous question is simply a vote on whether to proceed to an immediate vote on adopting the resolution . . . [and] has no substantive legislative or policy implications whatsoever.'' But that is not what they have always said. Listen to the Republican Leadership Manual on the Legislative Process in the United States House of Representatives, (6th edition, page 135). Here's how the Republicans describe the previous question vote in their own manual: ''Although it is generally not possible to amend the rule because the majority Member controlling the time will not yield for the purpose of offering an amendment, the same result may be achieved by voting down the previous question on the rule . . . When the motion for the previous question is defeated, control of the time passes to the Member who led the opposition to ordering the previous question. That Member, because he then controls the time, may offer an amendment to the rule, or yield for the purpose of amendment.''

In Deschler's Procedure in the U.S. House of Representatives, the subchapter titled ''Amending Special Rules'' states: ''a refusal to order the previous question on such a rule [a special rule reported from the Committee on Rules] opens the resolution to amendment and further debate.'' (Chapter 21, section 21.2) Section 21.3 continues: ''Upon rejection of the motion for the previous question on a resolution reported from the Committee on Rules, control shifts to the Member leading the opposition to the previous question, who may offer a proper amendment or motion and who controls the time for debate thereon.''

Clearly, the vote on the previous question on a rule does have substantive policy implications. It is one of the only available tools for those who oppose the Republican majority's agenda and allows those with alternative views the opportunity to offer an alternative plan.

Mr. STIVERS. I yield back the balance of my time, and I move the previous question on the resolution.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on ordering the previous question.

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

Mr. POLIS. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

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

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, the Chair will postpone further proceedings today on motions to suspend the rules on which a recorded vote or the yeas and nays are ordered, or on which the vote incurs objection under clause 6 of rule XX.

Record votes on postponed questions will be taken later.

TAXPAYER BILL OF RIGHTS ACT OF 2015

Mr. RYAN of Wisconsin. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 1058) to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to clarify that a duty of the Commissioner of Internal Revenue is to ensure that Internal Revenue Service employees are familiar with and act in accord with certain taxpayer rights, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 1058

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 ''Taxpayer Bill of Rights Act of 2015''.

SEC. 2. DUTY TO ENSURE THAT IRS EMPLOYEES ARE FAMILIAR WITH AND ACT IN ACCORD WITH CERTAIN TAXPAYER RIGHTS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 7803(a) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 is amended by redesignating paragraph (3) as paragraph (4) and by inserting after paragraph (2) the following new paragraph:

''(3) EXECUTION OF DUTIES IN ACCORD WITH TAXPAYER RIGHTS.—In discharging his duties, the Commissioner shall ensure that employees of the Internal Revenue Service are familiar with and act in accord with taxpayer rights as afforded by other provisions of this title, including—

''(A) the right to be informed,

''(B) the right to quality service,

''(C) the right to pay no more than the correct amount of tax,

''(D) the right to challenge the position of the Internal Revenue Service and be heard,

''(E) the right to appeal a decision of the Internal Revenue Service in an independent forum,

''(F) the right to finality,

''(G) the right to privacy,

''(H) the right to confidentiality,

''(I) the right to retain representation, and

''(J) the right to a fair and just tax system.''.

(b) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by this section shall take effect on the date of the enactment of this Act.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. RYAN) and the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. LEWIS) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Wisconsin.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. RYAN of Wisconsin. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and to include extraneous material on H.R. 1058, currently under consideration.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. RYAN of Wisconsin. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, today is tax day. We are bringing to the floor today a number of bills aimed at one thing, recognizing the fact that the IRS works for the taxpayer, not the other way around. It is their job in the Internal Revenue Service to make paying your taxes as easy as possible.

This marks the day that most Americans are sending their taxes in; but just ask any of these Americans who probably went to the mailbox today if it is getting any easier, ask them if the IRS is making it easier for them to fill out their forms to do their civic duty. They will tell you that it is clearly not how the IRS is working today.

We have learned a lot. We have conducted rigorous oversight, led by Mr. ROSKAM here, into the Internal Revenue Service, into how they operate. We have learned all too well that bureaucracies don't always do what is efficient; they do what is convenient—at least what is convenient for them.

What we are doing is telling the IRS that they are going to have to clean up their act. We are saying that we think most of these bills are common sense, and we are saying that it is pretty much simple, like don't target people because of their political beliefs, don't tax donations to tax-exempt groups, don't send taxpayer information to

your private email—simple stuff, things that citizens should automatically expect from the Internal Revenue Service but have not been getting lately.

□ 1345

That is why we are bringing these bills to the floor. It is so that we can put the taxpayer in front, so that we can put the taxpayer first, so that we can realign the balance so that the Internal Revenue Service, like any other government agency, works for the taxpayer and not the other way around.

I want to make one more point.

All of this confusion, all of this unfairness, and all of this frustration that we are sensing and that we see on tax day is because our Tax Code is an absolute mess. It is way too complicated. It punishes people for saving; it punishes people for investing; it punishes people for working—all of the things that we need in order to build a healthy economy. It is going in the wrong direction.

We need to make our Tax Code simpler. We need to make it fairer. We need to make it easier for people to comply with. We need to make it flatter. We need to make it more internationally competitive. We need to make it so that it can help our economy heal and grow more jobs. We think these bills are the right bills to put the taxpayers back in the driver's seat, to reassert their rights.

I just want to say how proud I am of the members of our committee—of Mr. ROSKAM, of Mr. MARCHANT, of Mr. MEEHAN, of Mr. HOLDING, of Mr. RENACCI, of Mr. KELLY—who all were involved in doing vigorous oversight of this government agency, who found problems, and who have acted on behalf of hard-working taxpayers to right these wrongs and to make sure that they don't happen again.

With that, Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. ROSKAM), the author of H.R. 1058, the chairman of the Oversight Committee, the person who is in charge of our investigation and who is a member of the Ways and Means Committee.

Mr. ROSKAM. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, it is a very sobering thing to get a letter from the Internal Revenue Service and to not know what is inside. It is one thing if you go to the mailbox, and it is one of those ones that is a little bit colorful, and you say, Hey, that is a tax refund in there, and isn't that a delightful piece of mail? Everybody is happy to see that. Yet, when you get one of those other ones that is black and white and has all of that sort of nefarious print—and you know the kind I mean—it sends a chill through you.

Now, why does it send a chill through you? It sends a chill through you based on sort of the past disposition of the Internal Revenue Service. You get this feeling of: Is this an organization—is this an entity?—which has unbelievable authority? Are they being fair? Are they treating me, as a taxpayer, the way I ought to be treated?

The reason this becomes so important is that we have got a tax compliance system in the United States 99 percent of which is voluntary. It is a remarkable thing that 99 percent of American taxpayers voluntarily pay their taxes, and yet they are paying taxes into a system in which their confidence is shaken, and it is shaken grievously. It is shaken so much that, on a bipartisan basis, Mr. Speaker, the Ways and Means Committee reported out on a voice vote these things on which Republicans and Democrats have come together. They have said we know one thing: we know what impunity looks like when we see it, and we see impunity has seeped into the culture at the Internal Revenue Service, and on a bipartisan basis, we are going to do something about it. I think this deeply resonates with the American public.

H.R. 1058, the Taxpayer Bill of Rights Act of 2015, has received input and support from Nina Olson of the National Taxpayer Advocate. Mr. Speaker, let me read a couple of sentences that she said about this.

She says: ''A Taxpayer Bill of Rights would provide taxpayers with critical information to assist them in their dealings with the IRS, provide the IRS with foundational principles to guide employees in their dealings with taxpayers, and serve as a benchmark to help the IRS leadership and Congress monitor the extent of the agency's compliance with these rights.''

In just the height of gracious understatement, she says this: ''After a difficult period for the IRS, a Taxpayer Bill of Rights has the potential to restore taxpayers' trust in both the IRS and the tax system.''

Mr. Speaker, here is what the Taxpayer Bill of Rights calls for. These would then be enumerated rights the taxpayers would have, and under this legislation, it would be the responsibility of the Commissioner of the Internal Revenue Service to make sure that these would be in place and that employees would be familiar with these and that the Internal Revenue Service would be acting in accordance with them. It is a list. Let me read it. It is brief, and you are going to love it:

The right to be informed; the right to quality service; the right to pay no more tax than the correct amount of tax; the right to challenge the position of the Internal Revenue Service and to be heard; the right to appeal a decision of the Internal Revenue Service in an independent forum; the right to finality; the right to privacy; the right to confidentiality; the right to retain representation; and the right to a fair and just tax system.

Mr. Speaker, we have a responsibility in Congress, and that is to recognize our role in this whole enterprise. Clearly, what has happened is the American public has delegated authority to us, their elected representatives. We, in turn, and some of our predecessors, have delegated that authority to the Internal Revenue Service. I would argue—and, I think, on a bipartisan basis that argument is echoed—that that authority has been abused.

All right. So then what is the remedy?

The remedy is Congress comes together, as reflecting the American public, and it says, We are going to reclaim this. We are going to make this right. There is a whole series of bills today that, I think, will enjoy very, very strong support out of the House.

In closing, Mr. Speaker, I want to echo the theme that Chairman RYAN articulated. He said that we are reminded today that the Internal Revenue Service works for the public. The public does not work for the Internal Revenue Service.

I think that today's debate and the focus with which we on a bipartisan basis come to this is meant to do a couple of things. It is meant to restore confidence in an agency whose confidence has been undermined. It is meant to assert and assume a responsibility that we in Congress have, and it is meant to restore the confidence of the American people in the democratic process on an overall basis.

I thank the chairman for his leadership in bringing these bills before the committee, and I urge the passage of H.R. 1058.

Mr. LEWIS. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I rise in support of H.R. 1058.

Today, this day, April 15, is the due date for Americans to file their tax returns. On this day, it is important for the House to consider a taxpayer bill of rights.

This legislation would ensure that Internal Revenue Service employees are familiar with the rights guaranteed to taxpayers under the Internal Revenue Code. These include the right to be informed, the right to be heard, the right to privacy, the right to appeal, and the right to a fair and just system.

Mr. Speaker, we must do all we can to protect taxpayers' rights. In addition to passing this act, Congress must ensure that the agency has the resources it needs to properly serve American taxpayers. This year, American taxpayers finally felt the shock of the billion-dollar cuts to the agency's budget. Taxpayers seeking assistance waited in lines for hours. Few could reach a live person when they called the help hotlines, and according to press reports—to written reports, television, newspapers, and magazines—in New York, the Internal Revenue Service office even ran out of paper to print extra tax forms after taxpayers waited in long lines for hours. That is not right. That is not fair. That is not just.

The Taxpayer Bill of Rights Act takes an important step in the right direction. It is timely and it is just. I hope that we can come together to make sure that our constituents are receiving the services and the protections they deserve.

Again, I thank the gentleman from Illinois and my Republican colleague—the chairman—and others for bringing this bill to the floor today.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. RYAN of Wisconsin. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. ROSKAM).

Mr. ROSKAM. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Speaker, I want to associate myself with the remarks of the ranking member, which are that the American public has an expectation that they are going to be treated with respect and with dignity. With that, I urge the passage of H.R. 1058.

Mr. LEWIS. Mr. Speaker, in closing, I support H.R. 1058, the Taxpayer Bill of Rights Act of 2015. On this tax day, we must do more for our taxpayers. I urge all of my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to vote ''yes'' for H.R. 1058.

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

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. RYAN) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 1058, as amended.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill, as amended, was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

IRS EMAIL TRANSPARENCY ACT

Mr. RYAN of Wisconsin. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 1152) to prohibit officers and employees of the Internal Revenue Service from using personal email accounts to conduct official business, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 1152

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 ''IRS Email Transparency Act''.

SEC. 2. IRS EMPLOYEES PROHIBITED FROM USING PERSONAL EMAIL ACCOUNTS FOR OFFICIAL BUSINESS.

No officer or employee of the Internal Revenue Service may use a personal email account to conduct any official business of the Government.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. RYAN) and the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. LEWIS) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Wisconsin.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. RYAN of Wisconsin. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and to include extraneous material on H.R. 1152, currently under consideration.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. RYAN of Wisconsin. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I want to congratulate and thank Mr. MARCHANT of Texas, a member of the Ways and Means Committee, for bringing this issue to the floor. I want to thank the gentleman from Georgia, who is the ranking member of the subcommittee, for partnering, along with other members of the minority on the Ways and Means Committee, on this.

This is a perfect example of Congress' seeing an abuse that was made and rectifying it, and that is why these laws are here.

For the purpose of explaining what this particular bill does, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. MARCHANT).

Mr. MARCHANT. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and thank you for your leadership in helping advance the IRS Email Transparency Act.

Mr. Speaker, we have an important responsibility in Congress to protect American taxpayers. That is what our constituents sent us here to do. I believe we have the opportunity to do that today. By moving forward this bill, we put safeguards in place for taxpayers, and we bring greater transparency and accountability to the IRS.

H.R. 1152 is a clear, straightforward bill that will prohibit the IRS' officers and employees from using personal email accounts for official IRS business—a very commonsense thing.

This bill came as a result of the Ways and Means Committee's investigation into the IRS' targeting of taxpayers based on their political beliefs. Many of those wrongly targeted were in my district in Texas. The underlying issue of H.R. 1152 is about finding ways to fix the problem and ensuring that such abuses never happen again. This is something that will impact all Americans.

One of the abuses the committee discovered in our investigation was that some IRS employees used their personal, nonsecure email accounts to conduct official IRS business. In doing so, they also disclosed confidential taxpayer information.

□ 1400

Lois Lerner, a former IRS official at the center of the agency's targeting scandal, routinely conducted official business involving taxpayer information on her personal email account. If that is not bad enough, nothing on her personal email is subject to official recordkeeping, which conveniently keeps taxpayer information outside the orbit of proper security.

Such reckless behavior by the IRS breaches the trust between the American people and their government. This is wrong in principle and has failed in practice.

Currently, the IRS employee manual only says that sensitive but unclassified data can't be emailed outside the IRS network, but it says nothing about an outright prohibition. In other words, it is bad practice, but it is not prohibited. It clearly didn't stop Lois Lerner from betraying the confidence of the American taxpayer.

This bill makes it against the law for IRS employees to share confidential tax information on their personal email account. As I said at the outset, Congress has a responsibility to protect taxpayers. Just avoiding a repeat of past failures cannot be our ambition.

So let's put commonsense safeguards in place, shine the light of transparency on the IRS, and provide greater accountability to the American people. The IRS Email Transparency Act does just that.

Mr. LEWIS. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 1152, the IRS Email Transparency Act.

In 2012, the Internal Revenue Service prohibited employees from using personal email accounts for governmental or official purposes. This bill simply makes this commonsense rule a Federal law.

H.R. 1152 responds to the investigation into the processing of tax-exempt applications. This investigation started nearly 2 years ago, in May 2013. To date, the agency has spent more than $20 million to produce more than 1.3 million pages of documents, including 78,000 emails from Ms. Lois Lerner.

Mr. Speaker, to date, there has not been one shred of evidence produced to support the Republican claim that the processing of applications was politically motivated or intended to target the President's political enemies. The inspector general even stated that no one outside of the agency was involved in setting the standards for processing tax-exempt applications. The delays experienced by groups were the result of incompetence at the agency in the Exempt Organizations Division.

I want to thank the gentleman from Texas (Mr. MARCHANT) and my Republican colleagues for bringing this bill to the floor today.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. RYAN of Wisconsin. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. ROSKAM), the chairman of the subcommittee.

Mr. ROSKAM. Mr. Speaker, I thank the chairman for yielding.

One of the questions I get at home a lot is: How did the Lois Lerner scandal happen? How did it come to pass that that happened, and how do you make sure that it doesn't happen again?

Mr. MARCHANT's bill doesn't deal necessarily with Lois Lerner 1.0, but it deals with Lois Lerner 2.0. So it is a prohibition against this very cavalier attitude that we have seen coming from the Internal Revenue Service, and

that is to be cavalier about taxpayer information. It hasn't just been leaked through emails. It has been leaked in other sources and in other ways and shapes and iterations, but the effect is the same, and the effect is devastating.

So this takes away any ambiguity that somebody can use their own private email account and begin to do official activity. If that is the bright line that is necessary, that is the bright line that Mr. MARCHANT's bill creates.

So what we want to make sure is that we do more than simply say Lois doesn't work here anymore, as if that is the remedy, but to actually change these underlying policies, reclaim this authority, and make sure that this can never happen again.

Mr. LEWIS. Mr. Speaker, I don't have any other speakers.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. RYAN of Wisconsin. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. MARCHANT) for the purpose of closing.

Mr. MARCHANT. Mr. Speaker, today is the day that we should declare that the IRS cannot take our personal tax information and put it on their private email account so that it could be subject to discovery by other people and people who will not observe and revere that information.

I urge passage today of H.R. 1152.

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. DENHAM). The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. RYAN) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 1152, as amended.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill, as amended, was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

TAXPAYER KNOWLEDGE OF IRS INVESTIGATIONS ACT

Mr. RYAN of Wisconsin. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 1026) to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permit the release of information regarding the status of certain investigations, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 1026

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 ''Taxpayer Knowledge of IRS Investigations Act''.

SEC. 2. RELEASE OF INFORMATION REGARDING THE STATUS OF CERTAIN INVESTIGATIONS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 6103(e) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 is amended by adding at the end the following new paragraph:

''(11) DISCLOSURE OF INFORMATION REGARDING STATUS OF INVESTIGATION OF VIOLATION OF THIS SECTION.—In the case of a person who provides to the Secretary information indicating a violation of section 7213, 7213A, or 7214 with respect to any return or return information of such person, the Secretary may disclose to such person (or such person's designee)—

''(A) whether an investigation based on the person's provision of such information has been initiated and whether it is open or closed,

''(B) whether any such investigation substantiated such a violation by any individual, and

''(C) whether any action has been taken with respect to such individual (including whether a referral has been made for prosecution of such individual).''.

(b) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendment made by this section shall apply to disclosures made on or after the date of the enactment of this Act.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. RYAN) and the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. LEWIS) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Wisconsin.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. RYAN of Wisconsin. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on H.R. 1026, currently under consideration.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. RYAN of Wisconsin. At this time, I would like to thank Mr. KELLY, a member of the Ways and Means Committee, along with the minority ranking member for their diligence in uncovering this problem also. You are seeing a theme here, Mr. Speaker, which is both the Republican and Democratic side of the Ways and Means Committee in conducting oversight saw abuses that needed to be fixed. We are fixing these abuses so that they can't happen again, in this statute.

For the purpose of describing this particular legislation, I would like to yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. KELLY), the author of the bill.

Mr. KELLY of Pennsylvania. I thank the chairman for yielding me this time.

Mr. Speaker, H.R. 1026, as has been described, this actually had come before Congress before. Dr. BOUSTANY and Mr. ROSKAM have presented this. This is about taxpayer knowledge of IRS investigations.

Now, this would make sense to almost everybody to understand what exactly has been going on. Under section 6103 in the Tax Code, it is a felony to disclose or to compromise people's tax information and give it to other groups to work with. We shouldn't have to pass laws like this; but unfortunately, laws are not made and governments are not run by angels but they are run by men, so we have to have oversight over what has happened.

This piece of legislation gives the same rights to those people whose information has been violated, whose information has been compromised, as is given to IRS personnel. We found out 2 years ago, and Dr. John Eastman really made the point of it for the National Organization for Marriage, their tax information on their people, their members, was given out, and it went to Human Rights Campaign. Now, you would think by the name of that that it makes sense, Human Rights Campaign, those are probably good people, but you cannot divulge private tax information to anybody else. It is a felony to do that. But section 6103 also prevented those whose tax information was divulged, they couldn't get information on it. They weren't allowed to even inquire and were not allowed to be informed of what was taking place. Did it in fact take place? Well, we knew it took place because it was out in the public.

Secondly, who was it who divulged it? We don't know. We can't talk to you about that because that is protected under the Tax Code.

Well, is there an investigation? We can't tell you that either, because that is protected. We can't tell you who it was who divulged it, who they divulged it to, is there an investigation or is there not an investigation. And at the end of it, was there proof found that this was actually done? If so, what is the penalty for it? Those are basic tenets of what we are as Americans.

So I submit to people, this is not a Republican or Democrat issue, as we know it—Mr. LEWIS is a good friend of mine—it is American tenets. It is what we firmly believe as Americans. Nobody should be able to do that to us; and if they do that to us, we should be able to inquire about the status of that. This piece of legislation gives every single taxpayer the same rights as those doing the investigation, those doing the leaks and the findings.

Now, if we are to restore the American people's confidence in our form of government, this is essential. We can't allow these things to happen and then say, well, we could have helped you except for one thing in the Tax Code, section 6103(e). What is going to happen, those people are going to look at us and say: I have absolutely no idea what you are talking about. We say: Well, we can't really let you know what happened.

So if it really is an American principle and if we really do need to have faith and trust and feel that we are all being treated the same way and in an honest way, and if that is the only way to restore the confidence that the people need to have and the trust they have in our form of government and those of us who they have sent to represent them, then this type of legislation has to take place.

I am so proud of what our Committee on Ways and Means is doing today under Chairman RYAN and under Mr. ROSKAM. What are we doing? We are protecting taxpayers and taxpayers' rights. This is so fundamentally American. This shouldn't be anything you even have to stop and think about.

So what we are proposing today under H.R. 1026 is that the taxpayers

have the same information and the same knowledge of what is going on with their accounts, what has been divulged, who divulged it, is there an ongoing investigation, what were the findings of that investigation and who is being held responsible, and more important than that, who is being held accountable? These are felonies. Until we get to the point where the American people have faith and trust in us again and restore their confidence, we have nothing.

In America's House, we as Members have got to make sure that every single day we safeguard the rights of every single American. Unfortunately, this has not taken place in the past, and we have to move forward with it.

I do know that today being April 15 is a day that most people dread. Listen, tax revenues are necessary. We need to have an agency to collect them. But by the same token, when it turns out that those people in that agency—and not all of them, but we have some people in there that are violating individuals' rights, then we have to come forward and we have to champion legislation that protects the same people who voted us into office and sent us to defend them.

Mr. LEWIS. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 1026, the Taxpayer Knowledge of IRS Investigations Act.

Earlier this afternoon, the House passed H.R. 1058, the Taxpayer Bill of Rights Act. Two of the rights included in that bill were the right to confidentiality, the right to be informed. This bill complements that legislation.

Generally, tax returns are confidential and may not be disclosed unless authorized by the Internal Revenue Code. Section 6103 of the Code provides certain exceptions. These do not include telling a taxpayer if there has been an unauthorized disclosure of his or her tax return information. Fines, criminal penalties, or both apply to the unauthorized inspection or disclosure of tax return information.

H.R. 1026 would allow the Internal Revenue Service to update a taxpayer on the status of investigations of unauthorized disclosure of his or her tax return. They would be allowed to know whether the investigation started, is open, or is closed.

This is a simple, commonsense bill. Taxpayers have a right to know if their tax return information has been compromised.

□ 1415

I want to thank my friend, the gentleman from Pennsylvania, my Republican colleague; the ranking member of the subcommittee; and the chairman for bringing this bill to the floor today.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. RYAN of Wisconsin. Mr. Speaker, may I inquire as to how much time is remaining on each side, please?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. RYAN) has 17½ minutes remaining, and the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. LEWIS) has 18 minutes remaining.

Mr. RYAN of Wisconsin. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself 4 minutes.

This one, this case, really boils my blood. Let me just try and describe in a simple way what Mr. KELLY is fixing here and what happened to honest, hard-working taxpayers in America in this case.

There is an organization that is a nonprofit organization advocating freely in our free speech society for their view on a cause—I won't even say what cause it is—advocating for their view, a charitable nonprofit.

The Internal Revenue Service took their confidential filing and list of their donors to their cause, and the Internal Revenue Service broke the law and leaked it to an outside individual not with the Internal Revenue Service. This list of donors to this cause went out on the Internet. It was released to the public by the opponents of this cause.

Guess what happened. The people who confidentially, privately donated—exercising their free speech rights to advocate for a cause—found themselves intimidated, found themselves harassed because their personal, private information had been released by the IRS to the public.

This organization asked the Internal Revenue Service: What just happened? How did this private document with the private information of our donors to our cause get out there on the Internet and hosted on the page by our opponents of our cause?

The Internal Revenue Service in turn said: We can't answer your question.

The advocates of the cause, trying to defend the privacy of their donors—a free speech right—said: Well, are you investigating this? Are you looking into this? Are you holding somebody responsible? Is there an investigation into how this private information got out on the Internet?

They said: We can't answer that question.

Unbelievable—that is not freedom; that is not liberty. That is not how this IRS will ever act again if we have any say-so over this.

That is why Mr. KELLY is writing this bill, to make sure that people's privacy is protected and that it is not leaked to the public or to the opponents of a cause that they care about.

I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. ROSKAM), the chairman of the subcommittee.

Mr. ROSKAM. Mr. Speaker, you are noticing a theme here, and that is intimidation and impunity. That is a bad combination when a culture of impunity develops and an agency says: We can do what we want, when we want, and how we want to; and we can intimidate who we want, how we want, and when we want to.

Said another way, here is what the IRS did: the IRS broke the law, and then they used the law to conceal it. They broke the law, and they used the law. That is a manipulation. That is a manipulation that no side of this Congress is going to stand for.

That is a manipulation that has to be answered. That is a manipulation that has to be put down, that we cannot be complicit with. You cannot break the law and then use the law to conceal it. That is exactly what happened in this case.

In other words, the IRS releases this information in violation of the law; and then, when they are asked about it, they say: Well, we would just love to tell you about it, but it is against the law for us to tell you about it.

That is ridiculous. That is so jarring that now we have had a situation and we have had a culture that has developed over a period of time at the Internal Revenue Service where breaking the law and using the law to conceal it is considered what? It is considered normal.

I am proud of the House today because the sensibilities of the House of Representatives is to say that is not normal, that is not acceptable, that is not right, and that will not be tolerated.

Mr. LEWIS. Mr. Speaker, I support the piece of legislation.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. RYAN of Wisconsin. Mr. Speaker, I yield the balance of my time to the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. KELLY) for the purpose of closing.

Mr. KELLY of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I agree with everything my colleagues have said. I think Americans need to look at what is going on in their House—America's House—today and to understand that we do understand the difference between right and wrong. We also understand that sometimes absolute power corrupts absolutely.

We started years ago looking into this. We still don't have all the answers. I would just tell some of our fellow citizens that we are not done yet because we knew those things have happened.

I think what the chairman has expressed and Mr. ROSKAM has expressed is the outrage we feel because it is not only our responsibility, it is our duty to protect every single one of America's citizens. To divulge the information that was divulged and to do it in such a way to use the law to break the law makes absolutely no sense to any of us.

This isn't really about either side of the aisle. This is about all of us, together, doing what is right for the American people. This should reconfirm to the American people that we are here acting in their best interest and defending them every single day that we sit in session and that we sit in office.

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr.

RYAN) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 1026, as amended.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill, as amended, was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

ENSURING TAX EXEMPT ORGANIZATIONS THE RIGHT TO APPEAL ACT

Mr. RYAN of Wisconsin. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 1314) to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to provide for a right to an administrative appeal relating to adverse determinations of tax-exempt status of certain organizations, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 1314

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 ''Ensuring Tax Exempt Organizations the Right to Appeal Act''.

SEC. 2. ADMINISTRATIVE APPEAL RELATING TO ADVERSE DETERMINATIONS OF TAX-EXEMPT STATUS OF CERTAIN ORGANIZATIONS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 7123 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 is amended by adding at the end of the following:

''(c) ADMINISTRATIVE APPEAL RELATING TO ADVERSE DETERMINATION OF TAX-EXEMPT STATUS OF CERTAIN ORGANIZATIONS.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall prescribe procedures under which an organization which claims to be described in section 501(c) may request an administrative appeal (including a conference relating to such appeal if requested by the organization) to the Internal Revenue Service Office of Appeals of an adverse determination described in paragraph (2).

''(2) ADVERSE DETERMINATIONS.—For purposes of paragraph (1), an adverse determination is described in this paragraph if such determination is adverse to an organization with respect to—

''(A) the initial qualification or continuing qualification of the organization as exempt from tax under section 501(a) or as an organization described in section 170(c)(2),

''(B) the initial classification or continuing classification of the organization as a private foundation under section 509(a), or

''(C) the initial classification or continuing classification of the organization as a private operating foundation under section 4942(j)(3).''.

(b) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendment made by subsection (a) shall apply to determinations made on or after May 19, 2014.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. RYAN) and the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. LEWIS) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Wisconsin.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. RYAN of Wisconsin. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on H.R. 1314, currently under consideration.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. RYAN of Wisconsin. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I thank the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. MEEHAN) for his work in crafting this legislation and for bringing it to the floor. This, too, is one of the important things that we needed to do to restore some trust and confidence and accountability at the Internal Revenue Service.

For the purpose of describing the legislation, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. MEEHAN).

Mr. MEEHAN. I thank the chairman for his recognition and support of this very, very—once again—thematically important bill.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of what is commonsense legislation, H.R. 1314. What it does is gives tax-exempt status applicants whose application is denied the right to appeal that decision. That seems fundamental, doesn't it, in a country likes ours, where the Constitution built within it the concept of the right to petition your government for the decisions that they make.

The purpose of the legislation is simple. What it will do is codify in statute the requirement for the IRS to create a mechanism by which 501(c) organizations—tax-exempt organizations—if they get an adverse determination of their tax-exempt status, they can request an administrative appeal to the agency's internal Office of Appeals.

My colleague from Illinois talked about the concept here of impunity. To me, this is a lot of what this speaks to. The idea that an administrative agency—in this case, the IRS—will take this application and then would make a decision—it was because of the good work that was done in the previous Congress by this committee and the Oversight Subcommittee of this committee, that they exposed the reality that, in many cases, these particular appeals, these particular decisions, were being made after the applicant was being targeted because of the fact that they had chosen to express particular political views in the context of their application.

What was done was that those applications, once denied, were diverted to a different part of the structure in which they went to die. That made the IRS the judge; the jury; and, in fact, the executioner because you were done with respect to your application. There was no place else to go.

Now, I have to say that, when this came to light because of the work of this committee, the IRS did issue interim guidance in May 2014 that ensured that all groups subject to a denial would have the right to appeal the decision.

This bill today, H.R. 1314, codifies that guidance into law so there is no ambiguity and that, once again, we don't have the ability of the IRS to indiscriminately and sua sponte make their own decisions about when American taxpayers should have the right to be able to petition for an appeal of an adverse decision.

Mr. Speaker, I will enter in the RECORD a letter from the Small Business and Entrepreneurship Council which supports the legislation.

The group writes: ''H.R. 1314 is an important bill as it allows taxpayers an additional right to petition their government when they disagree with a decision.''

That is the fundamental challenge that we have to the impunity which has been taking place.

SMALL BUSINESS AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP COUNCIL,
Vienna, VA, April 13, 2015.

Hon. PAT MEEHAN,
Cannon Building,
Washington, DC.

DEAR REPRESENTATIVE MEEHAN: The Small Business and Entrepreneurship Council is pleased to support H.R. 1314, a bill that would allow for an appeals process for those organizations that are denied tax-exempt status by the Internal Revenue Service (IRS).

H.R. 1314 is an important bill as it allows taxpayers an additional right to petition their government when they disagree with a decision by the IRS to deny tax-exempt status. Given the clear and well-documented bias by IRS staff that thwarted and delayed the approval of organizations based on their ideology, more accountability and protection for taxpayers is needed. H.R. 1314 provides that check.

Thank you for your leadership on this important issue.

Sincerely,

KAREN KERRIGAN,
President & CEO.

Mr. MEEHAN. I urge my colleagues, as they have on our subcommittee and our committee with their unanimous support from both sides of the aisle, to support this commonsense taxpayer protection and to send an unmistakable signal to the American taxpayers that they should not be targeted by the IRS for their political views.

Mr. LEWIS. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 1314. Currently, not all 501(c) organizations are able to appeal decisions regarding the application for tax-exempt status; instead, the right to appeal depends on whether the application was processed inside the Internal Revenue Service.

This bill would give the right of an administrative appeal to all organizations that apply for tax-exempt status. It is a good, commonsense bill. I urge all of my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to vote ''yes'' on H.R. 1314, and I thank the chair of our full committee and the sponsor of this bill.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. RYAN of Wisconsin. I thank the gentleman from Georgia as well for his comments.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. ROSKAM), the chairman of the subcommittee.

Mr. ROSKAM. Mr. Speaker, I thank the chairman for yielding.

This is a classic example of the IRS basically putting the American taxpayers in a nice little cul de sac. They would come in; you would have a process, and they would review something and so forth and so on.

Then rather than moving you through where you could get a disposition, rather than moving you through to where you could get an answer, rather than moving you through so you knew that there was somebody unbiased that was looking at something, they essentially moved you into a cul de sac and just kind of let you walk around the neighborhood for a while and not particularly caring about the disposition of this.

□ 1430

I want to say, Mr. Speaker, these bills that we are discussing today, many of them were authored and have been highlighted and brainstormed by Dr. CHARLES BOUSTANY, the former chairman of the Oversight Subcommittee. And now, on a bipartisan basis, folks have come together.

So I want to congratulate Mr. MEEHAN for the procedure by which this has now been expedited and the expectation that people will be fairly considered and fairly reviewed and that they won't be stuck in a cul-de-sac with no way out.

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

Mr. RYAN of Wisconsin. Mr. Speaker, I yield the balance of my time to the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. MEEHAN) for the purpose of closing.

Mr. MEEHAN. Mr. Speaker, I think the point has been made very articulately by all of the speakers who have talked about what really is a fundamental and simple issue, which is the right to appeal to your government.

What concerned me the most when we began to look at what occurred with the IRS conduct in the context of the applications by the organizations which were denied based on their perceived political views or religious views, that the process for these particular applicants was changed; that it went to a different division, where, as my colleague from Illinois identified, it went to die in the cul-de-sac.

So this is a question of fundamental fairness, that every American taxpayer should have the right to be treated equally. That is all we are asking for here, fundamental, equal treatment, and the right, when you disagree with the decision by an IRS administrative official, to have somebody else question that decision.

That is fundamental. It is simple. It is basic American, and I am very proud that we have colleagues from both sides of the aisle who have joined together to petition to assure that that right is codified into law. That is what we accomplish today.

I am grateful for the support of all of my colleagues and the leadership of the chairman of the subcommittee, who has been helping to bring to light these abuses. I urge my colleagues to support the legislation.

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. RYAN) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 1314, as amended.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill, as amended, was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

IRS BUREAUCRACY REDUCTION AND JUDICIAL REVIEW ACT

Mr. RYAN of Wisconsin. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 1295) to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to improve the process for making determinations with respect to whether organizations are exempt from taxation under section 501(c)(4) of such Code, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 1295

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 ''IRS Bureaucracy Reduction and Judicial Review Act''.

SEC. 2. ORGANIZATIONS REQUIRED TO NOTIFY SECRETARY OF INTENT TO OPERATE AS 501(c)(4).

(a) IN GENERAL.—Part I of subchapter F of chapter 1 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 is amended by adding at the end the following new section:

''SEC. 506. ORGANIZATIONS REQUIRED TO NOTIFY SECRETARY OF INTENT TO OPERATE AS 501(c)(4).

''(a) IN GENERAL.—An organization described in section 501(c)(4) shall, not later than 60 days after the organization is established, notify the Secretary (in such manner as the Secretary shall by regulation prescribe) that it is operating as such.

''(b) CONTENTS OF NOTICE.—The notice required under subsection (a) shall include the following information:

''(1) The name, address, and taxpayer identification number of the organization.

''(2) The date on which, and the State under the laws of which, the organization was organized.

''(3) A statement of the purpose of the organization.

''(c) ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF RECEIPT.—Not later than 60 days after receipt of such a notice, the Secretary shall send to the organization an acknowledgment of such receipt.

''(d) EXTENSION FOR REASONABLE CAUSE.—The Secretary may, for reasonable cause, extend the 60-day period described in subsection (a).

''(e) USER FEE.—The Secretary shall impose a reasonable user fee for submission of the notice under subsection (a).

''(f) REQUEST FOR DETERMINATION.—Upon request by an organization to be treated as an organization described in section 501(c)(4), the Secretary may issue a determination with respect to such treatment. Such request shall be treated for purposes of section 6104 as an application for exemption from taxation under section 501(a).''.

(b) SUPPORTING INFORMATION WITH FIRST RETURN.—Section 6033(f) of such Code is amended—

(1) by striking the period at the end and inserting '', and'',

(2) by striking ''include on the return required under subsection (a) the information'' and inserting the following: ''include on the return required under subsection (a)—

''(1) the information'', and

(3) by adding at the end the following new paragraph:

''(2) in the case of the first such return filed by such an organization after submitting a notice to the Secretary under section 506(a), such information as the Secretary shall by regulation require in support of the organization's treatment as an organization described in section 501(c)(4).''.

(c) FAILURE TO FILE INITIAL NOTIFICATION.—Section 6652(c) of such Code is amended by redesignating paragraphs (4), (5), and (6) as paragraphs (5), (6), and (7), respectively, and by inserting after paragraph (3) the following new paragraph:

''(4) NOTICES UNDER SECTION 506.—

''(A) PENALTY ON ORGANIZATION.—In the case of a failure to submit a notice required under section 506(a) (relating to organizations required to notify Secretary of intent to operate as 501(c)(4)) on the date and in the manner prescribed therefor, there shall be paid by the organization failing to so submit $20 for each day during which such failure continues, but the total amount imposed under this subparagraph on any organization for failure to submit any one notice shall not exceed $5,000.

''(B) MANAGERS.—The Secretary may make written demand on an organization subject to penalty under subparagraph (A) specifying in such demand a reasonable future date by which the notice shall be submitted for purposes of this subparagraph. If such notice is not submitted on or before such date, there shall be paid by the person failing to so submit $20 for each day after the expiration of the time specified in the written demand during which such failure continues, but the total amount imposed under this subparagraph on all persons for failure to submit any one notice shall not exceed $5,000.''.

(d) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of sections for part I of subchapter F of chapter 1 of such Code is amended by adding at the end the following new item:

''Sec. 506. Organizations required to notify Secretary of intent to operate as 501(c)(4).''.

(e) LIMITATION.—Notwithstanding any other provision of law, any fees collected pursuant to section 506(e) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, as added by subsection (a), shall not be expended by the Secretary of the Treasury or the Secretary's delegate unless provided by an appropriations Act.

(f) EFFECTIVE DATE.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The amendments made by this section shall apply to organizations which are described in section 501(c)(4) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 and organized after the date of the enactment of this Act.

(2) CERTAIN EXISTING ORGANIZATIONS.—In the case of any other organization described in section 501(c)(4) of such Code, the amendments made by this section shall apply to such organization only if, on or before the date of the enactment of this Act—

(A) such organization has not applied for a written determination of recognition as an organization described in section 501(c)(4) of such Code, and

(B) such organization has not filed at least one annual return or notice required under subsection (a)(1) or (i) (as the case may be) of section 6033 of such Code.

In the case of any organization to which the amendments made by this section apply by reason of the preceding sentence, such organization

shall submit the notice required by section 506(a) of such Code, as added by this Act, not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act.

SEC. 3. DECLARATORY JUDGMENTS FOR 501(c)(4) ORGANIZATIONS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 7428(a)(1) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 is amended by striking ''or'' at the end of subparagraph (C) and by inserting after subparagraph (D) the following new subparagraph:

''(E) with respect to the initial classification or continuing classification of an organization described in section 501(c)(4) which is exempt from tax under section 501(a), or''.

(b) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by this section shall apply to pleadings filed after the date of the enactment of this Act.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. RYAN) and the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. LEWIS) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Wisconsin.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. RYAN of Wisconsin. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on H.R. 1295, currently under consideration.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. RYAN of Wisconsin. Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank Mr. HOLDING for bringing this bill to the floor, bringing it through committee.

I would like to thank the ranking member from Georgia as well for his support.

Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. HOLDING) for the purpose of describing his bill.

Mr. HOLDING. Mr. Speaker, I thank the chairman.

H.R. 1295, the IRS Bureaucracy Reduction and Judicial Review Act, has two simple goals. First, it will provide newly formed 501(c)(4) organizations with a mandatory yet simple process for registering with the IRS. Within 60 days of establishment, a new 501(c)(4) will be required to provide notice of formation and intent to the IRS. The IRS, in return, must issue an acknowledgement of receipt to the notifying organization.

Second, this legislation would offer 501(c)(4)s the ability to seek judicial review should the IRS deny their application for recognition, fail to act on the application, or inform an organization that it is considering revoking or adversely modifying its tax-exempt status. This would be conducted under the 7428 declaratory judgment procedure that is currently afforded to other tax-exempt organizations.

Mr. Speaker, it is important to note that this legislation does not change the requirement for 501(c)(4)s to file an annual 990 or alter any of the other reporting requirements currently mandated for 501(c)(4)s.

Now, thanks to the efforts of Chairman ROSKAM of the Oversight Subcommittee, leading a team of us, we know that last year the IRS spent nearly 10,000 hours reviewing 501(c)(4)s. So this legislation before us would simplify the review process for the IRS and allow them to better focus their resources on the thousands—thousands, Mr. Speaker—of 501(c)(3) applications which are outstanding and languishing for review.

So I urge the support of this bill, and I thank the chairman.

Mr. LEWIS. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself as much time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 1295. I support the improvements the bill makes to the taxpayers' exempt process for social welfare organizations.

Under current law, social welfare organizations are not required to file for tax-exempt status with the Internal Revenue Service, although many organizations do apply for greater certainty. From 2009 to 2012, the number of social welfare organizations applying for tax-exempt status nearly doubled, from 1,800 to 3,400 requests.

But for an organization that simply starts operating as a social welfare organization without applying for tax exemption, the agency does not have any information on the organization until it files its annual information return. This return, known as Form 990, may not be due until more than a year after the organization has already been operating.

This bill, which I think is a good bill, is a commonsense bill, requires all social welfare organizations to file a notice of formation with the agency no later than 60 days after the organization is established. The intent is to provide the agency with certain key information.

I believe this bill could have done more. Currently, social welfare organizations are permitted to engage in political campaigns. However, an organization's primary work cannot be engaging in political activities.

I am concerned that the information required to be provided to the agency under this bill, and in the first annual information return, may not be sufficient. It is important that the agency can clearly identify all cases in which the organizations engage in an inappropriate amount of political activity.

To address this concern, the bill should require these organizations to indicate whether they engage or intend to engage in political activity.

Although this bill does not go far enough, I support the improvement it makes. I urge all of my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to vote ''yes'' for H.R. 1295.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. RYAN of Wisconsin. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. ROSKAM), the chairman of the subcommittee.

Mr. ROSKAM. Mr. Speaker, I thank Chairman RYAN for yielding.

Congressman HOLDING's idea is a great idea, and we should enact it with dispatch and get it done with. And the reason is, according to the IRS, their 2014 data book—this is published by the Internal Revenue Service—they have said that they have spent 10,000 hours reviewing 4,000 applications for 501(c)(4) organizations, which sounds sort of interesting.

Except there is a plot trap. And you know what the plot trap is? They only said ''no'' to eight of them.

So, said another way, the way PETER ROSKAM thinks about the world, that is 10,000 hours of a complete waste of time. That is 10,000 hours from an organization that is saying, Oh, we are just begging for mercy, and we are not able to meet these claims, and we are not able to make these calls.

Now, I have got an email here that the Commissioner sent out to all the IRS employees at the beginning of this year. It is January 13, 2015. And you know how normally, around a dinner table, when people say, Hey, you know, it is getting really tough out there. We are going to have to do what? We are going to have do more with less.

That is what we do, as Americans, don't we? We do more with less. That is who we are as a people.

But that is not the Internal Revenue Service. Oh, no, no, no, no, no. They don't disappoint. You know what the Internal Revenue Service says?

We are going to do less with less. We are going to do less with less.

So this is an organization, now, that has spent 10,000 hours of taxpayer time, completely squandering it. Stay tuned next week, and come to the Oversight Subcommittee, where you are not going to be disappointed when you learn more things about the IRS budget and some of the things that we are going to be discussing.

But my point is this: Representative HOLDING's concept says, this is a complete waste of time. Let's clean this up. Let's free up 10,000 hours so that we can do more with less and reject the IRS notion that the best that they can do is to do less with less.

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

Mr. RYAN of Wisconsin. Mr. Speaker, I yield the balance of my time to the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. HOLDING) for the purpose of closing on his bill.

Mr. HOLDING. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the distinguished gentleman from Georgia for the support of this bill.

I thank the chairman, Mr. ROSKAM, of the subcommittee, for the support of this bill because, by streamlining the registration process for newly formed 501(c)(4)s with the IRS and providing them with the ability to seek judicial review similar to such review that other tax-exempt organizations have, we can have a process, Mr. Speaker, that is both simpler and fairer for the folks who want to get involved in their communities and across the Nation.

Civic engagement should not require jumping over hurdles or a long, drawn-out review process by the IRS. If you play by the rules, the IRS should not be a hindrance to your activities.

So, once again, I urge support of this bill.

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. RYAN) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 1295, as amended.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill, as amended, was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

PREVENT TARGETING AT THE IRS ACT

Mr. RYAN of Wisconsin. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 709) to provide for the termination of employment of employees of the Internal Revenue Service who take certain official actions for political purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 709

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 ''Prevent Targeting at the IRS Act''.

SEC. 2. TERMINATION OF EMPLOYMENT OF INTERNAL REVENUE SERVICE EMPLOYEES FOR TAKING OFFICIAL ACTIONS FOR POLITICAL PURPOSES.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Paragraph (10) of section 1203(b) of the Internal Revenue Service Restructuring and Reform Act of 1998 is amended to read as follows:

''(10) performing, delaying, or failing to perform (or threatening to perform, delay, or fail to perform) any official action (including any audit) with respect to a taxpayer for purpose of extracting personal gain or benefit or for a political purpose.''.

(b) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendment made by this section shall take effect on the date of the enactment of this Act.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. RYAN) and the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. LEWIS) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Wisconsin.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. RYAN of Wisconsin. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on H.R. 709, currently under consideration.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. RYAN of Wisconsin. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. RENACCI) to describe the contents of his bill, and thank Mr. RENACCI for bringing this issue to our attention, for crafting this legislation, for moving it through committee on a bipartisan basis.

□ 1445

Mr. RENACCI. I thank the chairman.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to urge approval of H.R. 709, the Prevent Targeting at the IRS Act.

This bipartisan legislation has over 50 cosponsors and actually passed by voice vote in a previous Congress. I think the overwhelming support for this legislation shows that the vast majority of Members, regardless of their party affiliation, believe the IRS should be above politics.

Congress has already acted to create a list of fireable offenses at the IRS. In 1998, the IRS Restructuring and Reform Act passed by a vote of 402–8. It sought to bring accountability to the IRS by allowing for the immediate termination of IRS employees who engage in the so-called ''10 deadly sins'' against taxpayers. Many of the Members in Congress today supported those reforms back then.

Unfortunately, while that legislation covers many offenses, it did not include political targeting. I have no doubt this was a simple oversight.

This is not a partisan issue. I cannot imagine any Member would support a process for removing an employee for bad behavior but somehow not consider political targeting to be a bad enough behavior. It is absolutely unacceptable for a government official to consider the political leanings of any taxpayer when conducting official business. If a Federal employee engages in political targeting, that employee should be fired. It is that simple.

My legislation will make sure of it. It specifically spells out that any IRS employee, regardless of political affiliation, who targets a taxpayer for political purposes will immediately be relieved of his or her duties. If you work for the IRS, you cannot target taxpayers for political purposes. There should be no controversy in that.

This legislation does not change any of the procedures for removing an IRS agent. It just adds ''political targeting'' to the list of the 10 deadly sins already in existence.

Though it has been nearly 2 years since we learned that the IRS targeted individuals based on their political beliefs, the American public's lack of trust in this Federal agency remains—and rightly so. Political targeting contradicts the very principles this country was founded upon, and there is no room for it in our democracy. It will not be tolerated.

The IRS needs this legislation; the entire Federal Government needs this legislation; and, most importantly, the American people need this legislation. They need to know that they will not be targeted by their government for political purposes. They need to know that those who are entrusted with the vast power of the Federal Government will act in a responsible and professional manner and will be reprimanded if they don't. They need to know that the government is accountable to them and not the other way around.

I urge all Members to support this commonsense legislation.

Mr. LEWIS. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 709. This legislation removes certain protections that are otherwise available to Federal employees if an employee conducts his or her official duties with the intent to extract personal gain or for a political purpose.

H.R. 709 responds to the investigation into the processing of tax-exempt applications. This investigation started nearly 2 years ago, in May of 2013. To date, the agency has spent more than $20 million to produce more than 1.3 million pages of documents, including 78,000 emails from Lois Lerner.

Mr. Speaker, to date, there has not been one shred of evidence produced to support the Republican claim that the processing of applications was politically motivated or intended to target the President's political enemies.

The inspector general even stated that no one outside the agency was involved in setting the criteria for processing tax-exempt applications. The delays experienced by groups were the result of incompetence at the agency in the Exempt Organizations Division.

I urge all of my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to vote ''yes'' for H.R. 709.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. RYAN of Wisconsin. At this time, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Kansas (Mr. HUELSKAMP).

Mr. HUELSKAMP. Mr. Speaker, I thank the chairman, and I appreciate my colleague from Ohio bringing forth this important legislation.

''If men were angels, no government would be necessary. If angels were to govern men, neither external nor internal controls on government would be necessary.'' James Madison wrote these words 227 years ago in his 51st Federalist Paper. It is an elegant way of expressing an ugly truth, that a government of the people cannot always be trusted to do right by the people and, thus, must hold itself in check for the sake of the people.

When Madison penned the Federalist Papers, it was with a fresh view of what the British Parliament did to exert government control over the lives of the colonists, leading to the famous Boston Tea Party and, ultimately, a revolution.

The targeted discrimination and unfair treatment of conservative organizations with the words ''Tea Party'' and others in their names that took place at the IRS under the direction of Lois Lerner shows what happens when government no longer feels accountable to the people and when the Constitution becomes simply a list of suggestions. Agencies can then become a

political weapon for one party to use against the other.

It is sad that we actually have to pass legislation to address these inexcusable actions. Every employee of the IRS, of this entire Federal Government, is ultimately a public servant. Once you stop serving the public and start serving political agendas, it is time for you to do something else.

This bill will add targeting taxpayers for political purposes to the list of the 10 things that can get you fired as an employee of the IRS.

I am not sure what is more upsetting about that sentence: that our government is so bureaucratic that only 10 things might get you fired at the IRS, or that political discrimination wasn't already one of those things.

I urge my colleagues to support this straightforward, commonsense measure.

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

Mr. RYAN of Wisconsin. Mr. Speaker, I yield 4 minutes to the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. ROSKAM), the chairman of the subcommittee.

Mr. ROSKAM. I thank the chairman for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, I want to tell you a story. I want to take you back to 1996. A friend of mine in Illinois, my former law partner, Al Salvi, was running for the United States Senate. He loaned himself some money to his campaign.

The Federal Election Commission—a different agency than we are talking about, but stick with me. This is like a 'Seinfeld' episode. It is all going to come together at the end. The Federal Election Commission said: You did that the wrong way. You violated Federal election law. They placed him under investigation. World War II headlines in the Chicago papers. He goes on, and he loses the election for the United States Senate.

Now, political scientists can debate whether he would have won or whether he would have lost, but let's face it, being under investigation by the Federal Election Commission generally does not help you win a political campaign.

At the end of that campaign, the Federal Election Commission came and they made a very large settlement demand. I don't remember off the top of my head how many hundreds of thousands of dollars they were demanding from him, but he said: I didn't do anything wrong, and I am not going to pay you any money.

The Federal Election Commission said: That is fine. We are going to sue you—which they did. They filed a lawsuit against him in Federal court. A Federal judge reads the pleadings, dismisses the case—against the Federal Election Commission—and finds in favor of Al Salvi.

You would think that this drama all ended there. Oh, no, no, no. The Federal Election Commission came back, and they said: Well, we know you won, but we are still going to make a settlement demand of you. We are going to lower the amount, but we are still going to make a demand because, if you don't pay us, we are going to appeal the judge's ruling.

Al Salvi is a pretty sophisticated lawyer. He talked to the lawyer at the other end of the line and said to that person: Let me talk to the person who had authority on this case because you don't understand. I won; you lost. I am not going to pay you any money. Let me talk to the person with authority on the case at the Federal Election Commission.

That person got on the phone with Al Salvi and said this: If you pledge never to run for office again, we will drop this case.

Al Salvi said: Put that in writing.

The person said: We don't put that in writing, and we never lose.

That person was Lois Lerner.

Now, you take that disposition, you take that attitude, you take that long arm of a bureaucrat who reaches into the sanctity of the ballot booth, and you've got a real problem. And you up the wattage on that, you move her over and you give her the type of authority that not the Federal Election Commission has, but the Internal Revenue Service to grab somebody by the throat and to do whatever they want with them, with the possibility of imprisoning them, that is a problem. That is a problem that the gentleman from Ohio, Representative RENACCI, is trying to make go away.

We had a hearing in the last Congress. I hear a lot of testimony. We all hear a lot of testimony. But this testimony was inspirational to me because these were people that came in before our committee.

Committee members, you will remember this.

They told us about how they had been targeted. But you know what was the most incredible thing? They kept faith with their country when it didn't look like their country had kept faith with them. They said: This isn't America. My America doesn't target me. My America doesn't shun me out of the public square.

But you know the one that got the most attention in my mind was the pro-life group in Iowa who was asked by the Internal Revenue Service: Tell us about your organization; tell us about your activity.

They gave a list of activities, and one of the activities they said was: We have prayer meetings.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The time of the gentleman has expired.

Mr. RYAN of Wisconsin. I yield the gentleman an additional 2 minutes.

Mr. ROSKAM. We have prayer meetings.

And the IRS said: In writing, under penalty of perjury, tell us about your prayer meetings.

The hair on the back of my neck is tingling at this moment as I am describing this to you because it is so scandalous.

Mr. RYAN of Wisconsin. Will the gentleman yield?

Mr. ROSKAM. I yield to the gentleman.

Mr. RYAN of Wisconsin. I believe the specific question from the IRS to the pro-life group from Iowa was: What do you pray about?

Mr. ROSKAM. So can you imagine that? You are a nice little group, minding your own business, in Iowa, with a point of view, and the Internal Revenue Service starts roughing you up?

This targeting is insidious. This targeting is poisonous. This targeting is without a defender. There is nobody who is getting up on this floor today—no voice is saying, ''Oh, yes. Let him do it. It is fine. It will all settle out.'' Not the ranking member, he is not defending this. There was nobody. Not the chairman, he is not defending this.

Everybody in this House should all be saying that we all have the right to come in and make our arguments and try to persuade the public to vote for us, and it should be never a bureaucrat who manipulates and uses power to an end and abuses somebody who, by good faith, is coming into this process.

This is an incredibly important piece of legislation. I urge its passage.

Mr. RYAN of Wisconsin. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself 2 minutes.

This one is the one that really takes the cake with us because we recognized a persistent pattern of targeting and harassment by the Internal Revenue Service over groups, and the only thing that grouped these groups together, the only thing that was similar, was their political persuasion, their political beliefs.

So the question that I get asked a lot from hard-working taxpayers in Wisconsin is: Did the IRS really target people based on their political beliefs? And the answer is: Absolutely yes, they did.

That is tyrannical; that is beyond the pale; and that, with the passage of this bill, will be illegal. It will make it extremely clear, no ifs, ands, or buts.

And let me tell you one other thing, Mr. Speaker. There is still a long ways to go with the investigation that is still underway, but what we already know is that this targeting happened. People were targeted based on their political beliefs, and this law makes that a crime.

With that, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. RENACCI) for the purpose of closing.

Mr. RENACCI. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the chairman; I want to thank the gentleman from Illinois for his comments; and I want to thank the gentleman from Georgia, my colleague from the other side.

□ 1500

Look, it is pretty simple. It is unacceptable for a government official to consider the political leanings of any taxpayer when conducting official business. If a federal employee engages in

political targeting, that employee should be fired. It is that simple.

With that, Mr. Speaker, I urge the Members to support H.R. 709 to prevent targeting of the IRS, a commonsense piece of legislation.

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. RYAN) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 709, as amended.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill, as amended, was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

FAIR TREATMENT FOR ALL GIFTS ACT

Mr. RYAN of Wisconsin. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 1104) to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to provide a deduction from the gift tax for gifts made to certain exempt organizations, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 1104

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 ''Fair Treatment for All Gifts Act''.

SEC. 2. DEDUCTION FROM GIFT TAX FOR GIFTS MADE TO CERTAIN EXEMPT ORGANIZATIONS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 2522(a) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 is amended by striking the period at the end of paragraph (4) and inserting a semicolon and by inserting after paragraph (4) the following new paragraph:

''(5) an organization described in paragraph (4), (5), or (6) of section 501(c) and exempt from tax under section 501(a).''.

(b) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by subsection (a) shall apply to gifts made after the date of the enactment of this Act.

(c) NO INFERENCE.—Nothing in the amendments made by subsection (a) shall be construed to create any inference with respect to whether any transfer of property (whether made before, on, or after the date of the enactment of this Act) to an organization described in paragraph (4), (5), or (6) of section 501(c) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 is a transfer of property by gift for purposes of chapter 12 of such Code.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. RYAN) and the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. LEWIS) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Wisconsin.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. RYAN of Wisconsin. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on H.R. 1104, currently under consideration.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. RYAN of Wisconsin. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. ROSKAM), the chairman of the Oversight Subcommittee and the author of this bill for the purpose of describing his bill.

Mr. ROSKAM. Mr. Speaker, I have a riddle for you:

What is it that brings together the American Civil Liberties Union, Americans for Prosperity, the Human Rights Campaign, and the Tea Party Patriots all under one tent? Mr. Speaker, it is the Fair Treatment for All Gifts Act, H.R. 1104.

Here is the point. This is why all these groups from a wide range of political perspectives have all come together. They have come together because the IRS has started sniffing around about the possibility of doing something that every one of those groups really finds jarring, and that is assessing a tax liability on gifts to nonprofit organizations.

Now, you would have thought that this would be pretty settled doctrine, that gifts to nonprofit organizations, those types of contributions, are not taxable events. Yet the Internal Revenue Service wrote a letter. It is this type of letter. It is the kind of letter that I described in an earlier bill. You get it, and it is very unsettling, Mr. Speaker. They just wrote some donor, and they said, Your gift tax return was assigned to me for examination. The IRS has received information that you donated cash to some organization, and it begins to lay out a theory as to why this should be a taxable event.

Mr. Speaker, this should not be a taxable event. Mr. Speaker, this should not be ambiguous. And, Mr. Speaker, the Internal Revenue Service should not be wasting its precious time, which it seems to have so little of; shouldn't be going after American donors to all kinds of groups—left, right, center, up, down, any which way—and giving them a hard time about the contributions that they are making.

One final point. We have got a system, Mr. Speaker, that depends on the generosity of Americans. The American public is an incredibly generous group. The American public is sacrificial in their giving in many ways, and the donations and the generosity of the American public is absolutely foundational for our civic life. So, Mr. Speaker, H.R. 1104 clarifies that, and it says donations to those tax-exempt organizations under 501(c)(4), (5), and (6) of the Tax Code are not taxable.

Mr. LEWIS. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself as much time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 1104. On this day, it is wise for the House to consider a bill to increase certainty for taxpayers. This bill brings clarity to what has historically been uncertain tax treatment for contributions to social welfare organizations, agricultural associations, labor unions, and trade associations.

With this bill, Mr. Speaker, amounts contributed to such organizations will not be subject to the gift tax.

Mr. Speaker, I urge all of my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to vote ''yes'' for H.R. 1104.

Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleagues, the chairman, the chairs of the subcommittee, and all of the members of the committee for supporting this piece of legislation and the other pieces.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. RYAN of Wisconsin. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Are you getting a theme here, Mr. Speaker? So what has happened here is individuals were giving donations to tax-exempt organizations, nonprofit organizations. As they should have, they did not expect to have to pay taxes on those donations. The Internal Revenue Service sent these letters to these donors, to these particular organizations, obviously stirring up a lot of confusion and threatening them with a big tax bill.

This makes it really clear. These organizations are tax-exempt organizations, and therefore you don't owe gift taxes for a donation to these organizations. It is crystal clear. It is made even more clear in this bill because, Mr. Speaker, it is very important for the operation of our society that that space that occurs between ourselves and our government is full, is vibrant, and is alive.

We call that space civil society. It is where we live our lives. The deeply woven fabric of civil society are all these various groups, nonprofit groups, all kinds of groups, advocating for something—advocating for the environment, advocating for the economy, advocating for the disabled, advocating for this cause, advocating for that cause, advocating for this person, and advocating for that person. It is how we lead our lives. It is how we integrate with one another. It is how we have a community.

So, Mr. Speaker, the last thing we want to do is have the IRS parachute itself in and divide itself and make people think that they can't participate in civil society. Civil society is so core to who we are as Americans and so core to our ability to live our freedoms and to help others. That is what is so important about this.

So when people are hit with an intimidating letter from the Internal Revenue Service and are being told that by participating in civil society, by participating in civil dialogue, and by exercising their free speech rights they are going to get hit with this huge, massive tax bill that they didn't expect, that is harassment. That is targeting. That is not going to happen once this bill passes. That is one other mistake that was made that is being rectified because of Mr. ROSKAM's diligence.

Mr. Speaker, I want to congratulate all the members of the committee who

on a bipartisan basis saw that this was wrong and on a bipartisan basis agreed with this solution. That is why I am just so pleased that we are bringing these bills to the floor. JOHN LEWIS, SANDY LEVIN, PETER ROSKAM, and PAUL RYAN are arm in arm agreeing on this. We are standing up for citizens, we are standing up for taxpayers, we are putting the taxpayer in charge of the IRS, not the other way around, and we are standing up for our free speech rights for our civil society. That is why on this tax day, April 15, we are bringing these bills to the floor and passing these bills on a bipartisan, unanimous basis because this is the signal we want to send to Americans on tax day that we are not going to take this anymore, and we are going to reassert our rights.

With that, Mr. Speaker, I yield the balance of my time to the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. ROSKAM) for closing on his bill.

Mr. ROSKAM. Thank you, Chairman.

Mr. Speaker, I want to make one other point to echo something Chairman RYAN said as it relates to civil society, and it is an important thing to think about.

There is the Federal Government here, and there is the individual here. The only thing that sort of comes in between as a buffer—there are a couple of things. One is family. I think that is a very important buffer. The other buffer is civil society. It is a restraining influence, the capability of individual, family, and civil society to push back.

So we are on the floor today, and we have been interacting with JOHN LEWIS, our friend from Georgia, who has a reputation that is unbelievable, and it is an honor and a privilege to serve with him. Why? Because of the work that he did in the civil rights movement. It is an inspiration.

But can you imagine what it would have been like if a bureaucrat at the time had said, Well, I am just going to send one of these kind of letters to the donors of the NAACP or any of these organizations? Can you imagine what happens?

Here is my second point. A letter like this? What does it do? It has a chilling effect, doesn't it? All of a sudden you have donors who say, I don't know, I don't know. This is going to be a taxable event. Well, maybe I am not going to give. Or I am going to end up on some list, I don't know. Or I am going to find my name in the paper in this way, and I don't want my name in the paper. Whatever it happens to be. But the impact and the damage, Mr. Speaker, is the same. It has a chilling effect, doesn't it?

Here is the final point. The IRS backed off really fast on this once we asked about it. This wasn't a situation where they doubled down, they said, Oh, no, no, no, the statute that you all passed absolutely gives us this authority. They backed off, and they said, No, we are not going to do that anymore. That tells you something too, doesn't it? It tells you that the ground upon which they thought they were operating was pretty soft ground.

So let me just conclude by saying this. Today, the nature of this debate, the intensity that you have heard from both sides of the aisle, the Members are reflecting not ourselves and just our world view, Mr. Speaker, but we are reflecting what we are hearing at home, and we are reflecting the desire of the American public who want to have confidence in these institutions. They want to know that the tax-collecting body of the United States that is the Internal Revenue Service is just going to collect the taxes and is not going to mess with them and is not going to put them through all kinds of paces and manipulate them and make their lives miserable and actually abuse power. That is all they want. Isn't that a very real expectation? It is not asking too much.

So my suspicion is that the debate today—and it is my hope that the other body will pick up these bills and move forward on them, recognize the bipartisan nature of them and recognize the timeliness and the ripeness of them. These need to be fixed. These problems need to be fixed now. There is an urgency to them. But this is not a false claim that this work is completed. In fact, this is going to be a work in process, because it is our responsibility to get an Internal Revenue Service that moves away from the disposition and the attitude of impunity—which is saturated up until now—back to where it should be. I think we can do it. I am confident with the bipartisan support in this House we can reflect back and say April 15 of this year, this was a good day.

Mr. LEWIS. Mr. Speaker, before I yield the balance of my time back, it has been an honor and a pleasure to work with the chairman, the chairman of the subcommittee, and all of the Members on the other side. We did come together in a bipartisan fashion.

In a real sense, we all live in the same house—the American house—and we must continue to look out for this house, not just this building, but the more than 300 million people in our country. That is the right thing to do. That is the fair thing to do. That is the just thing to do.

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

Mr. RYAN of Wisconsin. Mr. Speaker, I can't top that, so I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. RYAN) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 1104, as amended.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill, as amended, was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

□ 1515

CONTRACTING AND TAX ACCOUNTABILITY ACT OF 2015

Mr. CHAFFETZ. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 1562) to prohibit the awarding of a contract or grant in excess of the simplified acquisition threshold unless the prospective contractor or grantee certifies in writing to the agency awarding the contract or grant that the contractor or grantee has no seriously delinquent tax debts, and for other purposes.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 1562

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 ''Contracting and Tax Accountability Act of 2015''.

SEC. 2. GOVERNMENTAL POLICY.

It is the policy of the United States Government that no Government contracts or grants should be awarded to individuals or companies with seriously delinquent Federal tax debts.

SEC. 3. DISCLOSURE AND EVALUATION OF CONTRACT OFFERS FROM DELINQUENT FEDERAL DEBTORS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The head of any executive agency that issues an invitation for bids or a request for proposals for a contract in an amount greater than the simplified acquisition threshold shall require each person that submits a bid or proposal to submit with the bid or proposal a form—

(1) certifying that the person does not have a seriously delinquent tax debt; and

(2) authorizing the Secretary of the Treasury to disclose to the head of the agency information limited to describing whether the person has a seriously delinquent tax debt.

(b) IMPACT ON RESPONSIBILITY DETERMINATION.—The head of any executive agency, in evaluating any offer received in response to a solicitation issued by the agency for bids or proposals for a contract, shall consider a certification that the offeror has a seriously delinquent tax debt to be definitive proof that the offeror is not a responsible source as defined in section 113 of title 41, United States Code.

(c) DEBARMENT.—

(1) REQUIREMENT.—Except as provided in paragraph (2), the head of an executive agency shall initiate a suspension or debarment proceeding against a person after receiving an offer for a contract from such person if—

(A) such offer contains a certification (as required under subsection (a)(1)) that such person has a seriously delinquent tax debt; or

(B) the head of the agency receives information from the Secretary of the Treasury (as authorized under subsection (a)(2)) demonstrating that such a certification submitted by such person is false.

(2) WAIVER.—The head of an executive agency may waive paragraph (1) with respect to a person based upon a written finding of urgent and compelling circumstances significantly affecting the interests of the United States. If the head of an executive agency waives paragraph (1) for a person, the head of the agency shall submit to Congress, within 30 days after the waiver is made, a report containing the rationale for the waiver and relevant information supporting the waiver decision.

(d) RELEASE OF INFORMATION.—The Secretary of the Treasury, in consultation with

the Director of the Office of Management and Budget, shall make available to all executive agencies a standard form for the authorization described in subsection (a).

(e) REVISION OF REGULATIONS.—Not later than 270 days after the date of enactment of this subsection, the Federal Acquisition Regulation shall be revised to incorporate the requirements of this section.

SEC. 4. DISCLOSURE AND EVALUATION OF GRANT APPLICATIONS FROM DELINQUENT FEDERAL DEBTORS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The head of any executive agency that offers a grant in excess of an amount equal to the simplified acquisition threshold shall require each person applying for a grant to submit with the grant application a form—

(1) certifying that the person does not have a seriously delinquent tax debt; and

(2) authorizing the Secretary of the Treasury to disclose to the head of the executive agency information limited to describing whether the person has a seriously delinquent tax debt.

(b) IMPACT ON DETERMINATION OF FINANCIAL STABILITY.—The head of any executive agency, in evaluating any application for a grant offered by the agency, shall consider a certification that the grant applicant has a seriously delinquent tax debt to be definitive proof that the applicant is high-risk and, if the applicant is awarded the grant, shall take appropriate measures under guidelines issued by the Office of Management and Budget for enhanced oversight of high-risk grantees.

(c) DEBARMENT.—

(1) REQUIREMENT.—Except as provided in paragraph (2), the head of an executive agency shall initiate a suspension or debarment proceeding against a person after receiving a grant application from such person if—

(A) such application contains a certification (as required under subsection (a)(1)) that such person has a seriously delinquent tax debt; or

(B) the head of the agency receives information from the Secretary of the Treasury (as authorized under subsection (a)(2)) demonstrating that such a certification submitted by such person is false.

(2) WAIVER.—The head of an executive agency may waive paragraph (1) with respect to a person based upon a written finding of urgent and compelling circumstances significantly affecting the interests of the United States. If the head of an executive agency waives paragraph (1) for a person, the head of the agency shall submit to Congress, within 30 days after the waiver is made, a report containing the rationale for the waiver and relevant information supporting the waiver decision.

(d) RELEASE OF INFORMATION.—The Secretary of the Treasury, in consultation with the Director of the Office of Management and Budget, shall make available to all executive agencies a standard form for the authorization described in subsection (a).

(e) REVISION OF REGULATIONS.—Not later than 270 days after the date of the enactment of this section, the Director of the Office of Management and Budget shall revise such regulations as necessary to incorporate the requirements of this section.

SEC. 5. DEFINITIONS AND SPECIAL RULES.

For purposes of this Act:

(1) PERSON.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—The term ''person'' includes—

(i) an individual;

(ii) a partnership; and

(iii) a corporation.

(B) EXCLUSION.—The term ''person'' does not include an individual seeking assistance through a grant entitlement program.

(C) TREATMENT OF CERTAIN PARTNERSHIPS.—A partnership shall be treated as a person with a seriously delinquent tax debt if such partnership has a partner who—

(i) holds an ownership interest of 50 percent or more in that partnership; and

(ii) has a seriously delinquent tax debt.

(D) TREATMENT OF CERTAIN CORPORATIONS.—A corporation shall be treated as a person with a seriously delinquent tax debt if such corporation has an officer or a shareholder who—

(i) holds 50 percent or more, or a controlling interest that is less than 50 percent, of the outstanding shares of corporate stock in that corporation; and

(ii) has a seriously delinquent tax debt.

(2) EXECUTIVE AGENCY.—The term ''executive agency'' has the meaning given such term in section 133 of title 41, United States Code.

(3) SERIOUSLY DELINQUENT TAX DEBT.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—The term ''seriously delinquent tax debt'' means a Federal tax liability that—

(i) has been assessed by the Secretary of the Treasury under the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, and

(ii) may be collected by the Secretary by levy or by a proceeding in court.

(B) EXCEPTIONS.—Such term does not include—

(i) a debt that is being paid in a timely manner pursuant to an agreement under section 6159 or section 7122 of such Code;

(ii) a debt with respect to which a collection due process hearing under section 6330 of such Code, or relief under subsection (a), (b), or (f) of section 6015 of such Code, is requested or pending;

(iii) a debt with respect to which a continuous levy has been issued under section 6331 of such Code (or, in the case of an applicant for employment, a debt with respect to which the applicant agrees to be subject to such a levy); and

(iv) a debt with respect to which such a levy is released under section 6343(a)(1)(D) of such Code.

SEC. 6. EFFECTIVE DATE.

This Act shall apply with respect to contracts and grants awarded on or after the date occurring 270 days after the date of the enactment of this Act.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Utah (Mr. CHAFFETZ) and the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. CUMMINGS) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Utah.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. CHAFFETZ. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and to include extraneous materials on the bill under consideration.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. CHAFFETZ. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I appreciate being here today. We have done this in a good bipartisan way. This is a good, strong bill. This bill has come under a previous Congress and done quite well.

H.R. 1562 will increase tax compliance by Federal contractors and grant recipients and deny contracts or grants to those with seriously delinquent tax debt.

I am pleased to, again, present this bill to the House with Representative JACKIE SPEIER, like we did in the past. I also appreciate the help of Representative JOHN CARTER in his cosponsorship.

The bill has a long history of bipartisan support, including from then-Senator Obama and President Obama. While he cannot claim that he has commented specifically on this exact bill, this bill before us was something that was originally introduced by then-Senator Obama years ago.

Five years ago, President Obama directed his administration to crack down on tax cheats that are seeking government contracts. The President said:

> All across this country, there are people who meet their obligations each and every day. You do your jobs. You support your families. You pay the taxes you owe—because it's a fundamental responsibility of citizenship.
>
> The steps I'm directing today and the steps I'm calling on Congress to take are just basic common sense. They're not going to eliminate all of the waste or abuse in government contracting in one fell swoop. Going forward, we'll also have to do more to hold contractors more accountable not just for paying taxes, but for following other laws as well.

I wholeheartedly and totally agree with the President's approach on this.

On April 15, 2013, the House passed this very similar piece of legislation by a vote of 407–0. Unfortunately, the Senate did not act.

Two years later, we are considering essentially the same bill today with some very minor changes. For example, the definition of ''seriously delinquent tax debt'' now exempts individuals determined by the IRS to be under economic hardship.

Let me remind my colleagues of what this bill does. H.R. 1562 denies contracts or grants to those with seriously delinquent tax debt. The bill requires contractors and potential grant recipients to certify their tax status when submitting a proposal for a contract or a grant.

If the agency finds the contractor or grantee to have seriously delinquent tax debt, then they would be referred for suspension or debarment and would not be eligible for new awards.

There are exceptions in the bill for those that are trying to do the right thing so they should not be covered under the definition of ''seriously delinquent tax debt.''

Such people, including those who are paying their back taxes through debt installment plans or in the process of hearings with the IRS to finalize a determination of their debt or experiencing economic hardship as determined by the IRS, have exceptions.

In 2007, then-Senator Obama introduced legislation to address this contractor accountability issue.

The bill before us today is simple. If contractors and those applying for grants don't pay their taxes, they will not be eligible for lucrative Federal contracts or grants.

At its core, this bill is about contractor and grant recipient accountability with taxpayer dollars. Whether we like it or not, the law requires we pay taxes. We expect the same from contractors and grant recipients.

To give you some perspective on how much money we are talking about, the Federal Government spends about $1 trillion annually on contracts and grants, $1 trillion on just contracts and grants.

Most recently, in fiscal year 2014, the Federal Government spent $444 billion on contracts and $591 billion on grants. That is a lot of money and demands a lot of tax compliance.

Over the years, the GAO—the Government Accountability Office—has identified thousands of Federal contractors with substantial amounts of unpaid taxes.

Here are a few examples given to us by the GAO. Tens of thousands of recipients of Federal grant and direct assistance programs collectively owed more than $790 million in Federal taxes as of September 2006.

Approximately 27,000 defense contractors owed about $3 billion; 33,000 civilian agency contractors owed roughly $3.3 billion, and 3,800 General Services Administration contractors owed about $1.4 billion in unpaid taxes. We are talking about roughly $7.7 billion in uncollected taxes.

At least 3,700 Recovery Act contract and grant recipients owed more than $750 million in known unpaid Federal taxes while receiving over $24 billion in Recovery Act funds. We have 3,700 contractors that already owe $750 million; and what do we do? We gave them $24 billion in additional contracts.

GAO also found contractors were not paying payroll taxes or owed substantial property or other assets and still—still—didn't pay their taxes.

For example, under a VA-HHS contract for healthcare-related services, a contractor was paid more than $100,000 in Federal funds. The contractor also had an unpaid tax debt of more than $18 million. The owner was purchasing multimillion dollar properties and unrelated luxury vehicles while not fully paying its payroll taxes. It goes on and on.

The tax accountability problem has become a potential national security problem. In 2014, the GAO found 83,000 Department of Defense employees and contractors who held or were eligible for security clearances had unpaid Federal tax debt totaling more than $730 million.

Now, not all contractors are tax cheats; the vast majority do pay their taxes on time and in full. Those who fail to satisfy their tax debt have a cost advantage over those who do pay their taxes.

You are competing for Federal contracts; you are competing for grants. Some pay taxes; some don't. Who do you think is going to give the lowest price and potentially get the next grant or contract? The person who can undercut them because they don't pay their taxes—it is just not fair.

Further, many fulfill dangerous missions, invest in cutting-edge technology, and provide assistance for the poor and others in need.

Contractors who do not play by the rules should be held accountable.

Unfortunately, despite our past efforts, we haven't been able to get this bill over the finish line. I hope the House will again support this bill, as it did in the year 2013, and that the Senate will finally bring this bill up and pass it as they should. Hopefully, this Congress will be a bit different.

I urge my colleagues to support H.R. 1562.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. CUMMINGS. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I rise in strong support of H.R. 1562, the Contracting and Tax Accountability Act.

This bill is nearly identical to a bill introduced in the last two Congresses by Chairman CHAFFETZ and is very similar to legislation reported by the Oversight Committee and passed by the House in the 110th Congress. I supported this legislation each time it has been introduced, and I continue to support it today.

The Government Accountability Office has reported that government contractors owed more than $5 billion in unpaid Federal taxes in 2004 and 2005. Unpaid taxes owed by contractors include payroll taxes—amounts required to be withheld from employee wages—as well as corporate income taxes.

GAO has also found that some contractors with unpaid tax debts are repeat offenders that have failed to pay their taxes over many years, including one case for almost 20 years.

This legislation will allow the Federal Government to make sure that contractors seeking to do business with the Federal Government have paid their taxes before they can receive a Federal contract.

The Federal acquisition regulation was revised in 2008 to require contractors to certify that they do not owe a delinquent tax debt to the Federal Government. This bill builds on that requirement by providing Federal agencies the means to verify contractors' claims.

This legislation will also ensure that responsible contractors no longer have to compete with tax delinquents.

I would just like to reiterate that I fully support the legislation. It is imperative that we ensure that all contractors that are doing business with the government have complied with their tax obligations. I believe this bill does just that.

I urge all of our Members to support the legislation.

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

Mr. CHAFFETZ. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I want to reiterate my pleasure in working with both sides of the aisle on many, many pieces of legislation. We don't always agree, but I think the tone and tenor that is happening in the Oversight and Government Reform Committee is going in the right direction.

We have worked well with our staff. That wouldn't happen without the leadership of the ranking member, Mr. CUMMINGS, and I do appreciate it.

We have voted for this bill unanimously in the past. It is a new Congress with new Members, but I would encourage this passage today.

I believe in the spirit in which the President and previously Senator Obama has urged that Congress act on this issue. It is imperative that we act on this issue today, hopeful, with passage, that we would get the Senate to act as well. We are talking about billions of dollars of taxpayer money. It is the fair and right thing to do. I urge the passage of this bill.

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Utah (Mr. CHAFFETZ) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 1562.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds being in the affirmative, the ayes have it.

Mr. CHAFFETZ. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

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

FEDERAL EMPLOYEE TAX ACCOUNTABILITY ACT OF 2015

Mr. CHAFFETZ. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 1563) to amend title 5, United States Code, to provide that individuals having seriously delinquent tax debts shall be ineligible for Federal employment, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 1563

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 ''Federal Employee Tax Accountability Act of 2015''.

SEC. 2. INELIGIBILITY OF NONCOMPLIANT TAXPAYERS FOR FEDERAL EMPLOYMENT.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Chapter 73 of title 5, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following:

''SUBCHAPTER VIII—INELIGIBILITY OF NONCOMPLIANT TAXPAYERS FOR FEDERAL EMPLOYMENT

''§ 7381. Definitions

''For purposes of this subchapter—

''(1) The term 'seriously delinquent tax debt' means a Federal tax liability that has been assessed by the Secretary of the Treasury under the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 and may be collected by the Secretary by

levy or by a proceeding in court, except that such term does not include—

''(A) a debt that is being paid in a timely manner pursuant to an agreement under section 6159 or section 7122 of such Code;

''(B) a debt with respect to which a collection due process hearing under section 6330 of such Code, or relief under subsection (a), (b), or (f) of section 6015 of such Code, is requested or pending;

''(C) a debt with respect to which a continuous levy has been issued under section 6331 of such Code (or, in the case of an applicant for employment, a debt with respect to which the applicant agrees to be subject to such a levy); and

''(D) a debt with respect to which such a levy is released under section 6343(a)(1)(D) of such Code;

''(2) the term 'employee' means an employee in or under an agency, including an individual described in sections 2104(b) and 2105(e); and

''(3) the term 'agency' means—

''(A) an Executive agency;

''(B) the United States Postal Service;

''(C) the Postal Regulatory Commission; and

''(D) an employing authority in the legislative branch.

''§ 7382. Ineligibility for employment

''(a) IN GENERAL.—Subject to subsection (c), any individual who has a seriously delinquent tax debt shall be ineligible to be appointed or to continue serving as an employee.

''(b) DISCLOSURE REQUIREMENT.—The head of each agency shall take appropriate measures to ensure that each individual applying for employment with such agency shall be required to submit (as part of the application for employment) certification that such individual does not have any seriously delinquent tax debt.

''(c) REGULATIONS.—The Office of Personnel Management, in consultation with the Internal Revenue Service, shall, for purposes of carrying out this section with respect to the executive branch, promulgate any regulations which the Office considers necessary, except that such regulations shall provide for the following:

''(1) All applicable due process rights, afforded by chapter 75 and any other provision of law, shall apply with respect to a determination under this section that an applicant is ineligible to be appointed or that an employee is ineligible to continue serving.

''(2) Before any such determination is given effect with respect to an individual, the individual shall be afforded 180 days to demonstrate that such individual's debt is one described in subparagraph (A), (B), (C), or (D) of section 7381(a)(1).

''(3) An employee may continue to serve, in a situation involving financial hardship, if the continued service of such employee is in the best interests of the United States, as determined on a case-by-case basis.

''(d) REPORTS TO CONGRESS.—The Director of the Office of Personnel Management shall report annually to Congress on the number of exemptions requested and the number of exemptions granted under subsection (c)(3).

''§ 7383. Review of public records

''(a) IN GENERAL.—Each agency shall provide for such reviews of public records as the head of such agency considers appropriate to determine if a notice of lien has been filed pursuant to section 6323 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 with respect to an employee of or an applicant for employment with such agency.

''(b) ADDITIONAL REQUESTS.—If a notice of lien is discovered under subsection (a) with respect to an employee or applicant for employment, the agency may—

''(1) request that the employee or applicant execute and submit a form authorizing the Secretary of the Treasury to disclose to the head of the agency information limited to describing whether—

''(A) the employee or applicant has a seriously delinquent tax debt; or

''(B) there is a final administrative or judicial determination that such employee or applicant committed any act described under section 7385(b); and

''(2) request that the Secretary of the Treasury disclose any information so authorized to be disclosed.

''(c) AUTHORIZATION FORM.—The Secretary of the Treasury shall make available to all agencies a standard form for the authorization described in subsection (b)(1).

''(d) NEGATIVE CONSIDERATION.—The head of an agency, in considering an individual's application for employment or in making an employee appraisal or evaluation, shall give negative consideration to a refusal or failure to comply with a request under subsection (b)(1).

''§ 7384. Confidentiality

''Neither the head nor any other employee of an agency may—

''(1) use any information furnished under the provisions of this subchapter for any purpose other than the administration of this subchapter;

''(2) make any publication whereby the information furnished by or with respect to any particular individual under this subchapter can be identified; or

''(3) permit anyone who is not an employee of such agency to examine or otherwise have access to any such information.

''§ 7385. Adverse actions for employees who understate taxes or fail to file

''(a) IN GENERAL.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—Subject to subsection (c) and paragraph (2) of this subsection, the head of an agency may take any personnel action against an employee of such agency if there is a final administrative or judicial determination that such employee committed any act described under subsection (b).

''(2) PERSONNEL ACTIONS.—In paragraph (1), the term 'personnel action' includes separation but does not include administrative leave or any other type of paid leave without duty or charge to leave.

''(b) ACTS.—The acts referred to under subsection (a)(1) are—

''(1) willful failure to file any return of tax required under the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, unless such failure is due to reasonable cause and not to willful neglect; or

''(2) willful understatement of Federal tax liability, unless such understatement is due to reasonable cause and not to willful neglect.

''(c) PROCEDURE.—Under regulations prescribed by the Office of Personnel Management, an employee subject to a personnel action under this section shall be entitled to the procedures provided under sections 7513 or 7543, as applicable.''.

(b) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The analysis for chapter 73 of title 5, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following:

''SUBCHAPTER VIII—INELIGIBILITY OF NONCOMPLIANT TAXPAYERS FOR FEDERAL EMPLOYMENT

''7381. Definitions.
''7382. Ineligibility for employment.
''7383. Review of public records.
''7384. Confidentiality.
''7385. Adverse actions for employees who understate taxes or fail to file.''.

SEC. 3. EFFECTIVE DATE.

This Act and the amendments made by this Act shall take effect 9 months after the date of enactment of this Act.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Utah (Mr. CHAFFETZ) and the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. CUMMINGS) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Utah.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. CHAFFETZ. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and to include extraneous materials on the bill under consideration.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. CHAFFETZ. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Let me be clear right away. We have got great Federal workers. They care; they are patriotic; they work hard, but we have got a few that are bad apples. We have got to give the tools necessary to the leadership within the administration to do what is right and, if necessary, allow them latitude to let those people go.

We voted on a similar bill years ago before I got into Congress. We gave this right and authority. We gave it to the IRS. Guess what, the IRS has the best tax compliance in all Federal Government—who would have thought.

I was pleased to see that Congressman STENY HOYER voted for that piece of legislation, that Congressman ELIJAH CUMMINGS voted for that legislation.

We want to take that same power, that same right that we gave the IRS years ago because it worked—it worked—and we want to give that to the other departments and agencies.

Now, there are a lot of exceptions; there are a lot of ways to get out of this, but the basic principle is true. One, Federal workers do a better job of paying their taxes than the general public, and we should pat them on the back, and we should recognize them for that; but, two, when you do have a few bad apples, you have got to allow leadership the ability to let those people go if they continue to thumb their nose at the system and the taxpayers.

We just heard testimony from the DEA: I can't fire anybody, even though they were engaged in some very nefarious activity.

We heard the administrator of the EPA say: I can't let anybody go, even though the person is watching 4 hours of porn a day.

Four hours a day, they couldn't fire them. Let's give them some latitude because we have a test case. It has worked. We want tax compliance.

The President's fiscal year 2016 budget asks American taxpayers to spend $275 billion to pay Federal workers an average salary of more than $78,000; yet the IRS reports that more than 100,000 Federal civilian employees owed more than $1 billion in unpaid Federal income taxes in 2014—more than $1 billion.

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Now, there are lots of reasons people can't do that. There are people who need to have their wages garnished, and they are. There are people who are disputing what the IRS said. Again, this bill doesn't affect those people. The adjudication process continues on, and this bill doesn't affect those people. As a last resort, we need a tool that the IRS has for its employees. We need that tool for the other departments and agencies because, like it or not, the law requires that we pay taxes.

Five years ago, President Obama directed his administration to crack down on tax cheats. It was specifically targeting and discussing contractors, but I would argue that the same principle for contractors should be in place for Federal employees. How can you look the contractors and the employees in the eyes and say, Well, we have got two totally different standards of principles? The principle is the same—pay your taxes, and there is not a problem. If you are in trouble and if you are trying to get out of it, not a problem. We will work with you. Yet, for those of you who are just screwing over the American taxpayer, bye-bye. You can't even apply.

The President said:

> All across this country, there are people who meet their obligations each and every day. You do your jobs. You support your families. You pay the taxes you owe—because it's a fundamental responsibility of citizenship.

I totally and wholeheartedly agree.

The Federal Employee Tax Accountability Act makes individuals with seriously delinquent tax debt ineligible for Federal employment. It is defined as an outstanding Federal tax debt that has been assessed and may be collected by levy or court proceeding. The legislation does not affect employees who are working to settle their tax disputes or resolving outstanding liabilities.

I want to also remind everybody that the committee and I, as the prime sponsor, accepted every Democrat amendment that was offered—100 percent.

Several other safeguards are carved out in the bill, including provisions offered by the minority in the previous Congresses.

Individuals are provided full due process rights and have an additional 180 days to demonstrate their debts meet one of the exemptions of the bill. That was, I believe, offered by Congressman LYNCH. We accepted it. We thought we would get broader support because of it, and we would hope we would today.

The bill also provides a financial hardship exemption if the individual's service is in the best interest of the United States. The person who is leading that department or agency still has discretion. If he says, It is in the best interest, in my judgment, for the United States to continue to have this person serve, he is allowed to continue to serve.

The bill demonstrates a simple principle: individuals collecting Federal salaries funded by taxpayers have to follow the rules and pay their taxes.

Those charged with the stewardship of our Federal resources and programs should not be delinquent in their taxes. As all Americans file their taxes today, so should Federal employees, and most of them do—in fact, at better rates than civilians do.

Last month, in testimony before the committee, the GAO warned Congress of tens of thousands of Federal employees who were eligible for security clearances but who still had unpaid tax debts. I would argue that that is a potential security risk. It shows a vulnerability.

During the hearing, Members discussed the IRS employees' high rate of tax compliance.

From 2009 to 2013, IRS employees had a 0.8 percent delinquency rate compared to 3.3 percent for civilian workers throughout the government.

The IRS Restructuring and Reform Act of 1998, which, again, Mr. HOYER, Mr. CUMMINGS, and a host of other people voted in favor of, requires the removal of IRS employees who are found to have willfully failed to have filed their tax returns and who have willfully understated their Federal tax liabilities.

The House passed the conference report for this bill by a vote of 402–8. Overwhelming. I have never heard another Member complain that the IRS has this provision in place. Let's even the playing field. Let's give that same tool to the rest of the Federal Government. Don't give it just to the IRS. Give it to the Department of Defense. Give it to the other departments and agencies because the financial results of that work.

This bill makes Federal workers subject to the same standard as that for IRS employees. Not all Federal workers are tax cheats. This is not about politics. I appreciate the good work that has gone on in this bill. Unfortunately, despite past efforts, we have not been able to get this bill over the finish line. I hope the House will again support the bill, as it did in 2012, and that the Senate will act on this bill.

With that, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. CUMMINGS. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I rise in strong opposition to H.R. 1563, the Federal Employee Tax Accountability Act of 2015.

The bill seeks to resolve a problem of tax compliance that simply does not exist—a fact confirmed by the Internal Revenue Service. This measure is based on ideology rather than on facts, and it will perpetuate a negative image of Federal workers.

This legislation is very similar to H.R. 249, introduced in the last Congress, which I opposed in committee and on this House floor. I remain opposed to this legislation because the purpose and intent of the bill is the same as the measure from last Congress. It would require Federal agencies to fire Federal employees who are delinquent in paying their taxes.

Everyone, including Federal employees, should pay their taxes. There is no argument on that. My Republican colleagues seem to believe that there is a serious problem with Federal employees not paying their taxes and that it requires a legislative fix. There is not, and the chairman, I think, admitted that.

Last Congress, after committee consideration, former committee chairman—Chairman ISSA—and I sought information from the IRS on their rules and procedures regarding debt collections, options for resolving delinquencies, and payment options. Without waiting for these answers, the Republican leadership rushed this bill to the floor. During this Congress, we were able to obtain valuable information from the IRS which the Republicans have chosen to ignore by bringing this legislation to the floor.

The IRS has a mechanism in place already to recoup funds from Federal employees who fail to pay their taxes. It is known as the Federal Payment Levy Program. Under this program, the IRS can impose a continuous levy on Federal salaries and pensions up to 15 percent until the debt is paid. The IRS can initiate additional levies in cases when it determines that it is appropriate to do so. Data from the IRS shows that all Federal employees who owe taxes and who do not qualify for financial hardship exemptions or who are not involved in bankruptcy, litigation, or pending offers in compromise are subject to having their wages levied. That can happen today.

Since the start of the levy program, the IRS has been extremely successful in recovering delinquent taxes from Federal employees. According to the IRS, the levy program has collected over $5 billion since 2000. These facts indicate that the IRS is succeeding in recovering delinquent taxes in 100 percent or in nearly all cases involving Federal employees. The fact is that the IRS has confirmed that it does not have a problem in collecting delinquent taxes from Federal employees. Therefore, Mr. Speaker, I do not see a problem with the government's ability to recover delinquent taxes from Federal employees.

I do not understand why, despite this fact, we are debating this measure on the floor today. According to the IRS, the 2014 tax compliance rate for the Federal community was 97 percent. This is higher than the 95 percent tax compliance rate for Members and staffs of the House of Representatives. It is also much higher than the 91 percent compliance rate for the general public.

This legislation is designed to demonize Federal employees rather than to help the government recoup delinquent taxes. It is interesting to note that we want to collect the taxes, but we will never get them if we fire people. In fact, the Congressional Budget

Office concluded that these proposals would increase costs, by the way, to the taxpayers. Let me repeat. The CBO determined that these provisions would actually increase costs. That is because it would require agencies to spend time and resources in reviewing public records to find tax liens filed against current or prospective employees even though the gains would be minimal. Keep in mind that we already have a process to levy these funds that might be delinquent.

For these reasons and more, I urge my colleagues to join me in opposing this measure.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. CHAFFETZ. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. MEADOWS).

Mr. MEADOWS. I thank the chairman for his leadership on this particular issue.

Mr. Speaker, I think it is important to talk about what this bill is and what it is not.

When we talk about tax compliance, it becomes very easy to focus on those hardship cases, very easy to focus, as the gentleman opposite just talked about, on that 3 to 5 percent, depending on which agency you are talking about. This bill is really not about those with hardship cases, as there is already an exemption there. This bill is not about trying to penalize Federal workers. It is really about fairness, Mr. Speaker.

Why is it fair that 97 percent in some agency—94 and 95 in others—pay their taxes on time, and yet we continue to give others a free pass?

My friend opposite would many times suggest, Oh, well, they are complying better than this group and that group; but we need to look no further than the IRS because the IRS implemented a different standard within their agency. Guess what happened, Mr. Speaker? Their compliance went way up. They have one of the best records, that we get to oversee, with the Federal employees.

When we started to look at this, the chairman was very careful to make sure that hardship cases—the ones that all of our hearts go out to when people have family situations that preclude them from being able to pay their taxes on a timely basis—are an exemption. Yet I would say, whether it is Congress or whether it is the Federal employees, we are held to a different standard because we are paid with the hard-working American taxpayers' dollars. It is a higher standard than the private sector's. It is difficult for us to acknowledge that, but we are under the scrutiny that we should be because we have the authority to tax and spend. When you have both of those authorities, Mr. Speaker, it is a different standard.

I, for one, can tell you that, from the Federal employees' standpoint, it is all about making sure that we are fair to them. What happens is, when the headline is ''Federal employees are not paying their taxes,'' for whatever reason it may be, it paints in a bad light the hundreds of thousands of Federal workers who do everything right and on time.

Mr. Speaker, I think that what we must do is not only address this for the integrity of the American people but address it for the integrity and the spirit of those Federal workers as well.

Mr. CUMMINGS. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Again, I want somebody to answer for me: How do you get the money from somebody who is fired, who has no job?

With that, I yield to the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. HOYER), my friend.

Mr. HOYER. I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, the ranking member said this was a bill to solve a nonexistent problem. Everybody ought to pay their taxes—everybody. Everybody ought to pay their taxes. Now, if you are really rich, you can find an accountant who can find you about every loophole there is that we have given. You want to have a bill on the floor closing loopholes.

□ 1545

The chairman admits that Federal employees pay their taxes voluntarily and correctly at a higher percentage than the general public. Should every one of them pay? Should it be 100 percent? The chairman is right; it should be 100 percent.

The gentleman from North Carolina talks about our Federal employees, and they ought to be treated correctly. We are their board of directors. I will tell you, folks, if any board of directors of any large corporation in America treated its employees the way we treat them, they would all quit, and the company would go bankrupt, because we treat our Federal employees very poorly—very poorly.

The general public, of course, thinks they are loafing and they are not working hard and this, that, and the other, and that is wrong. We have the best civil service in the world.

This does convey the message that somehow you are not doing what you are supposed to do. I know the gentleman gets up and says this is a very small percentage. When a Member of Congress doesn't pay his taxes and he gets indicted and he has to quit this body, it besmirches all of us.

The gentleman from Maryland is absolutely correct. It has not been mentioned, but there is a provision in law that allows the IRS to go in and take the salary of Federal employees. That is what the gentleman is talking about. Unlike the private sector, where you have to go through a lot of rigmarole—properly so, to protect the taxpayer—the Federal employee is subjected to the IRS having special authority going and taking part of their salary.

Now, by the way, this mentions Federal employees. I don't know whether the ranking member knows the answer to this, but are Members of Congress included in that definition? The answer? The gentleman is shaking his head, saying no. Yet the Congress as an institution has a lower rate of paying, some 95 percent as opposed to 97 percent, of Federal employees.

What is this all about? This is about, frankly, saying government is bad and the people who work for them aren't so hot either. Now, I don't think the gentleman from Utah thinks that is the message. I understand that. The gentleman is my friend. I like him. He is a bright and able fellow. But that is the message we are sending. It's a bad message.

I will tell you, I represent 62,000 Federal employees, and I tell all of them and all the unions, if they are not performing their job, if they are watching television 4 hours a day, they ought to be fired. I will support the gentleman in that effort because we ought to demand performance, and that is why we have, in the IRS Code, you can take the salary if they are not paying their taxes. That is not true of any other employee in America. You have got to go through a legal process, et cetera, et cetera, as you should.

So I would urge my colleagues to defeat this bill, as we did in the last Congress on suspension, and yes, tell all of our employees, ''You need to pay your taxes,'' and make sure if they don't, IRS gets their fees; and if they are not performing their task and it undermines their performance, then we ought to subject them, just as every other employee, to being removed, but not simply to say, arbitrarily, this employee, these employees, our employees, America's employees, will be treated more harshly than the American people and the American workers around this country are treated. Treat them the same. That is fair. That is what they hope for.

We shut down government for 16 days, sent our employees home. The gentleman from North Carolina talked about there are some bad circumstances for some people: they have got to pay a mortgage payment or a rent payment or a car payment or a college tuition. We sent them home and we said: We are not paying you. We came back later and we said: Oh, no, we are going to pay you. But we caused them a great deal of angst.

I will tell you this: that is not the way to treat people. We didn't send them home because we didn't have the money to pay for them. We didn't send them home because America was bankrupt. We sent them home because we disagreed with a policy the President was pursuing or we wanted to repeal the Affordable Care Act, over which they had no control. But we sent them home without pay. Very frankly, those who were critical employees we kept working, but we didn't pay them. What way is that to run any organization, much less the greatest country on the face of the Earth?

I urge my colleagues, show respect and fairness to those who work for our

country in the civil service of our country. Reject this legislation. Vote ''no.''

Mr. CUMMINGS. Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. CHAFFETZ. I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, we have heard speeches on this floor about fairness, about treating them the same. I will remind Members that on June 25, 1998, the IRS Restructuring and Reform Act—which Mr. HOYER, Mr. CUMMINGS, and others voted in favor of—gave this same power and authority to the IRS, gave them the same authority and power. Why not treat them equally and fairly? Why not treat them exactly the same as the IRS employees? Why are the IRS employees treated so unfairly?

Other Members that are standing here on this floor today voted in favor of that bill. So it was okay back then, just gave it to them. Guess what; tax compliance went up.

I take issue with this quote, ''ideology rather than facts.'' The facts are, every single year the number of Federal employees not paying their Federal taxes has gone up. In fact, in 2008, we roughly didn't collect $962 million; in 2014, $1.14 billion.

If you pay your taxes, you are trying to pay your taxes, you don't have a problem. But if you want to be fair, if you want to be the same, if you want to treat them equally, then give the other departments and agencies the same power that we gave the IRS.

Mr. HOYER. Will the gentleman yield?

Mr. CHAFFETZ. I yield to the gentleman from Maryland.

Mr. HOYER. What other employee in America is subject to being fired because they don't pay taxes? Does the gentleman want to include either Members of Congress in this bill or all private sector employees?

Mr. CHAFFETZ. Reclaiming my time, I appreciate the spirit in which that is asked. I would hope the gentleman would join me in cosponsoring H.R. 1564, the Members of Congress Tax Accountability Act. There are constitutional reasons why we can't include them in this provision, but this bill has been referred to the Committee on House Administration, and I would encourage all Members to get behind this because there should be a higher standard for Members of Congress. That should be more readily available to the public. You should have to disclose that liability. Right now, you don't. So I introduced that bill as well.

I would also argue that Federal employees taking taxpayer dollars have a high standard and that the evidence that we have—and I have said it repeatedly, and I know the gentleman has heard this—Mr. Speaker, Mr. HOYER voted in favor of this same bill years ago, and it has worked. I have never heard anybody say, ''This is a problem. We have got to change this. We have got to take it out.'' I have never heard anybody offer an amendment. In fact, we accepted 100 percent, every amendment that was offered by the Democrats. We accepted them. We accepted them.

I want to tackle a couple other things.

Mr. HOYER. I don't think I got the answer to the private sector employees.

Mr. CHAFFETZ. Fair enough.

Reclaiming my time, since I didn't yield it, but reclaiming my time, I said, clearly, I don't think this should be part of the private sector. I think working for the Federal Government is a privilege, it is an honor, and I take great exception, Mr. Speaker, to the idea and the notion that we treat Federal workers so poorly that if we were a company everybody would quit. Well, they can quit. They don't. You look at the turnover rate in the private sector versus the turnover rate in the Federal Government, we treat them pretty darn well.

Can we do things better? Yes. Part of that is weeding out the bad apples. If you are sitting there watching pornography on your computer 4 hours a day, then you should be fired. If you are a DEA agent down serving in Colombia and you have sex slaves coming before you paid by them, then you should fire them. If you are a Federal worker thumbing your nose at the Federal Government, not paying your taxes, then you should be eligible to be fired by the supervisor. That supervisor, don't we trust them to make that decision and say: You know what? This person is so vital, they do such good work, we are going to keep them?

But you know what? 24,833 Federal employees didn't even file a Federal tax return, didn't even file one last year. Is that too small a percentage to worry about? How do you look people in the eye who are all working in this room at some government office and they are all paying their taxes, but these eight yahoos over here aren't paying their taxes?

I believe that standing up for the Federal workers means, you know what, we owe it to all of you that are doing a good job to make sure that they are too. If they don't and they are not getting good, guess what. A, you are not going to be hired, and, B, you are eligible to be fired.

Mr. Speaker, it is exactly what Mr. HOYER voted for, and it worked. It worked. It was a good piece of legislation. It was a good vote. Guess what. The IRS now has the highest—less than 1 percent of their people don't pay their Federal taxes. Give that same tool to the other departments and agencies, and I think we will have even better compliance, and we can look the American people in the eye and say: You know what? We are doing everything we can. Stop picking on Federal employees.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. CUMMINGS. I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. HOYER).

Mr. HOYER. I would hope the gentleman would make it very, very clear he is not making an analogy between the two instances that he cited for firing, on which I would agree with him, and a Federal employee, for whatever reason, says: Mr. MEADOWS may not have paid his taxes. Certainly the gentleman is not making an analogy between the two instances he cited and the latter, I hope; because if he is, he is doing exactly what I think this bill does.

Mr. CUMMINGS. Mr. Speaker, may I inquire how much time is remaining on each side?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Maryland has 7½ minutes remaining. The gentleman from Utah has 4½ minutes remaining.

Mr. CUMMINGS. I yield 2½ minutes to the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. CONNOLLY).

Mr. CONNOLLY. I thank my friend from Maryland.

Mr. Speaker, we have heard some words here on the floor describing this bill as simply actually a bill to protect Federal workers who are in compliance from that small percentage who aren't. We had a hearing today in the Subcommittee on Government Operations of the committee of which Mr. CHAFFETZ is full committee chair, and I asked the question of the tax advocate of the IRS: How would you characterize 97 percent compliance when the broad public compliance with tax compliance is 83 to 86 percent? So how would you characterize 97 percent? The answer was: Extraordinary.

This is a solution in search of a problem, and the protestations to the contrary notwithstanding, this is another way—albeit cloaked in respectability and sanctimony—of whacking Federal employees again. We just heard it: scratch the surface, and suddenly they are all watching pornography; they are all sitting around not doing work; they are all, in fact, not filing taxes, and they ought to be fired—let me go through the list of firing offenses—allowing the impression that this actually characterizes the Federal workforce.

My friend, the minority whip, said that if you were a CEO and managed your company this way, you would be fired or your company would go out of business. My friend from Utah took exception to that. But for those who say we ought to run the Federal Government as a private company, what CEO would keep his or her job who froze wages for 3 years; who disparaged his workforce as being overcompensated, unproductive, lazy, too many of them, and we are going to crack down on you; go after their benefits and make sure they are reduced; threaten not to pay your bills while you are at it? What company would stay in business? What CEO would ever get away with that? That is what we are doing here.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The time of the gentleman has expired.

Mr. CUMMINGS. I yield an additional 10 seconds to the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. CONNOLLY).

Mr. CONNOLLY. We are disparaging the Federal workforce. No matter how you put lipstick on a pig, it is still a pig.

□ 1600

Mr. CHAFFETZ. Mr. Speaker, I remind the gentleman in this room that it was President Obama who introduced the pay freeze.

I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. MULVANEY).

Mr. MULVANEY. Mr. Speaker, I was in my office watching some of this dialogue, and I will pick right up where the gentleman from Virginia just left off.

This is not an attack on Federal workers. I sat on the subcommittee, Mr. Speaker, when we had the hearing on this issue. This is not an attack on Federal workers. This has absolutely nothing to do with Federal workers and everything to do with taking care of the people who pay for those Federal workers, taking care of the people who pay the taxes.

The story was told of what happened yesterday in the hearing about the DEA. You can accept the services of a prostitute from a drug lord, let the drug cartel members watch your guns and your cell phone, and still not get fired.

It is not an attack on Federal workers. People back home see that and think that we are crazy. They think we are completely nuts and that we do not know how to run the country. You have to look at that hearing yesterday and think: you know what, they may be right.

This bill is an attempt to at least try to send the message back home to people and make it very clear: if someone is going to audit you for not paying your taxes, at the very least that person will have paid their taxes.

That is not a slam on Federal workers. It is going to the American people who pay the taxes and saying: look, we may not do the best we possibly can, but at least we pay attention to some things, and we are going to make sure that the people that are auditing you are at least following the law that they are making you follow.

That is not an unreasonable thing to ask for, and it is certainly not an attack on the larger Federal workforce. It is simply trying to reaffirm for people back home that we are not absurd and that we are not crazy and that we are not running this country in any mindless fashion, that we actually do pay attention to what is important to folks back home.

If we can't fire the guys taking the prostitutes from the drug lords, maybe we can make sure the people doing the audits pay the taxes. That is what this bill is about, which is why it should pass.

Mr. CUMMINGS. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentlewoman from the District of Columbia (Ms. NORTON).

Ms. NORTON. I thank my good friend for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, let's put in context what is happening on this floor today. This is tax day, and what the majority does each tax day is pull out tax bills. Some of them are good bills; some of them have the appearance of everything but the kitchen sink.

There are some Members of their party who are running for President on abolishing the IRS. Well, you can't abolish it; so what they are doing is targeting working people in the Federal Government to point out that Republicans are not asleep on tax day.

What the Republican majority is doing today is a gratuitous, useless, slap in the face of Federal employees who apparently do understand that they have an affirmative duty, even beyond others, to pay their taxes because they do so at a rate that is almost twice that of the general public which is more than twice that of other Americans.

The best that can be said about this bill is that it is entirely superfluous. It does what already can be done. What can be done is this: existing statutory authority gives the Federal Government, the IRS, the ability to collect Federal, State, and local taxes from all Federal employees.

If federal agencies find that there is a delinquent taxpayer, they can already, under Federal law, go from counseling to removal for all Federal employees. That is in the law already, my friends.

In their wisdom, Congresses in the past have wanted to keep Federal employees paying their taxes until they paid them off, so Congress didn't cut off its nose to spite its face by taking away their jobs as this bill allows.

They tried something that has worked, the Federal Employee/Retiree Delinquency Initiative, which matches up Federal employees in all the agencies, not just the IRS, with delinquencies so they have their very low delinquency rate today.

The IRS also can levy past the usual limit of 15 percent until the government gets all its money. The IRS have the discretion to do this for all Federal employees, not only IRS employees.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. MOONEY of West Virginia). The time of the gentlewoman has expired.

Mr. CUMMINGS. I yield the gentlewoman an additional 15 seconds.

Ms. NORTON. Chairman ISSA called this bill entirely cosmetic—conceded that this bill was cosmetic when it was introduced before.

If you want to do something about taxes for the American people, stop cutting the IRS so that the IRS can start collecting taxes and cutting the deficit.

Mr. CHAFFETZ. Mr. Speaker, I have no additional speakers, and I reserve the balance of my time to close.

Mr. CUMMINGS. Mr. Speaker, how much time do I have remaining?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Maryland (Mr. CUMMINGS) has 2¾ minutes remaining.

Mr. CUMMINGS. I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. LYNCH), my good friend.

Mr. LYNCH. I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong opposition to H.R. 1563, the Federal Employee Tax Accountability Act.

I just want to point out that this is indeed about Federal employees, the Federal Employee Tax Accountability Act. It is all about Federal employees.

While I have the greatest respect for the gentleman from Utah (Mr. CHAFFETZ), I remain concerned that the practical effect of H.R. 1563 will be to significantly diminish the privacy rights of our dedicated Federal workforce.

It is important to note that Internal Revenue Code section 6103 provides that all citizens, for all citizens, Federal tax information—including tax returns, annual wage and tax statements, and tax penalty notices—is strictly confidential and must remain in the trust of only the IRS. It must remain in the trust of only the IRS and the individual taxpayer. That is it. It is not open to general knowledge.

Under this bill, though, tax information—which now includes health information because of the Affordable Care Act—is all going to be shared among every single Federal agency to take so-called adverse personnel actions against one of its employees where the agency finds that an individual has willfully fallen behind on his or her taxes or failed to file a return on time.

Now, we have completely blown this out. If it is not about Federal employees, this is what we are going to do to every American taxpayer. We are basically deputizing the bosses of all these Federal employees to be able to delve into their personal tax information, their personal healthcare information that is now held by the IRS.

We are blowing this completely out so that we are damaging all of these Federal employees' privacy rights, and we also present the possibility that, in the future, this will be done to every American citizen. This is not a good idea.

I think that we have every opportunity to make sure the people pay their taxes. There is a greater compliance rate among Federal employees than there is among the general public.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong opposition to H.R. 1563, the Federal Employee Tax Accountability Act of 2015. While I have the greatest respect for the gentleman from Utah, Chairman CHAFFETZ, I remain concerned that the practical effect of H.R. 1563 will be to significantly diminish the privacy rights of our dedicated Federal workforce.

Importantly, Internal Revenue code section 6103 provides that all federal tax information—including tax returns, annual wage and tax statements, and tax penalty notices—is strictly confidential and must remain in the trust of only the Internal Revenue Service and the individual taxpayer. Current law therefore prohibits any federal agency—other than the I.R.S.—from delving into personal tax information to determine an individual's tax compliance status.

In stark contrast, H.R. 1563 would authorize the head of not only the I.R.S. but every federal agency to take so-called "adverse personnel actions" against one of its employees where the agency finds that an individual has wilfully fallen behind on his or her taxes or failed to file a return on time. In order to defend yourself against such an adverse personnel action under H.R. 1563, you must demonstrate that your failure to pay your taxes or file a return on time stemmed from a "reasonable cause."

In other words, this bill deputizes agency administrators, managers, and foremen as bonafide tax investigators—authorizing them to examine and determine the tax compliance status of agency employees. In addition, H.R. 1563 essentially requires all federal workers to affirmatively defend their failure to pay taxes or file a return on time by requiring them to provide agency management with specific and satisfactory reasons for their non-compliance. If you're behind on your taxes because you went through a health care crisis and want to keep your federal job, you're going to have to share the details of your medical emergency with your employing agency under this bill. If you're behind on your taxes because you're going through a divorce but still want to keep working at your federal agency, you're going to have to disclose the facts surrounding your divorce to your federal manager.

Now, I understand that this bill may seek to address those rare instances where federal bad actors intentionally try to cheat on their taxes. In practice, however, H.R. 1563 will broadly diminish the tax privacy rights of all federal employees. That's in spite of the 97% tax compliance rate for federal workers reported to our committee by the I.R.S. for 2014. It's also in spite of the existing federal payment levy program that already allows the I.R.S. to levy federal salaries and wages in order to recover delinquent tax debts in a cost-effective manner.

Mr. Speaker, I don't believe that the solution to achieving 100% tax compliance across the federal workforce is to waive the individual privacy rights of dedicated federal workers across the board. I urge my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to oppose this legislation.

Mr. CUMMINGS. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Unfortunately, all that is in this bill is pure symbolism without any substance, and it is very, very sad. I am disappointed to say that the House majority seems more interested in ideology and political messaging rather than facts and evidence.

Here are the facts. There is no problem to solve. The IRS confirmed that they have no problem collecting delinquent taxes from Federal employees. Federal employees have a much higher tax compliance rate than the American public and even Members of Congress and their staffs.

CBO has estimated that implementation of this measure will actually increase the cost to American taxpayers.

I, again, ask the question: When somebody is fired and does not have a job, where does the money come from? The fact is that we already have mechanisms in place to get the money. I do believe with all my heart that this is another effort to demonize our Federal employees, and it is very, very sad.

I urge all Members to vote against this legislation.

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

Mr. CHAFFETZ. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Here are the facts. I just love it when Washington, D.C., says, Oh, there is no problem. We have got a hundred thousand-plus people—Federal employees—who don't pay about $1.1 billion in taxes. That number is up from $962 million in 2008.

The problem is getting worse, but there is one department, one agency, where it is getting better, where it did improve, and it was in the IRS. We should pat them on the back.

There is one fundamental thing that we changed. In a bill that was voted on and supported by Mr. CUMMINGS and Mr. HOYER and the 400-plus Members of this body, the Congress gave the ability and the authority to the head of the IRS to terminate the employment of one of their workers if they are not paying Federal taxes.

Guess what. Now, they have the best tax compliance rate in the Federal Government. Let's give that same tool to the rest of the departments and agencies.

You know what is a slap in a face to the Federal worker? When you don't get rid of the bad apples. When you have got somebody who is thumbing their nose, not playing by the rules, not doing what they are supposed to be doing. Guess what. It goes into the morale of the institution.

I think, as a Federal employee being paid by the taxpayers, one of your fundamental responsibilities is to file and pay your Federal taxes.

A fact: last year, we had 24,833 people who, as Federal employees, didn't even file a return. Can we solve that? Absolutely, we can solve that. We should require it.

When somebody goes to fill out an application, they should certify that they are fully compliant with the taxes. If there is a hardship, if they are in dispute over taxes owed, if their spouse gets into problems, if they are having their wages garnished, there are all of these outs.

Even at the finish line, based on an amendment offered by Mr. LYNCH, which we accepted, you get another 180 days to then go forward to your administrator or whoever is leading your department and agency and say: I am valuable; I am trying.

Still, the leader can say: Oh, you know what? I am going to give you a waiver or allow you to continue.

If we don't give them the authority—which they have at the IRS—then you limit the tools, and you are not getting rid of the people who are the bad apples.

We can make sure we get the best Federal employees but weed out the bad apples. I want to see people on both sides of the aisle say: let's pat the back of the overwhelming majority who are patriotic, hard-working, dedicated employees, but we are going to get rid of the bad apples.

That is what this bill does. I urge its passage.

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Utah (Mr. CHAFFETZ) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 1563, as amended.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds being in the affirmative, the ayes have it.

Mr. CUMMINGS. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

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

HOUR OF MEETING ON TOMORROW

Mr. CHAFFETZ. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that when the House adjourns today, it adjourn to meet at 9 a.m. tomorrow.

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

There was no objection.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess for a period of less than 15 minutes.

Accordingly (at 4 o'clock and 15 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1629

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. COLLINS of Georgia) at 4 o'clock and 29 minutes p.m.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, proceedings will resume on the questions previously postponed.

Votes will be taken in the following order:

Ordering the previous question on H. Res. 200; adopting H. Res. 200, if ordered; and suspending the rules and passing H.R. 1562 and H.R. 1563.

The first electronic vote will be conducted as a 15-minute vote. Remaining electronic votes will be conducted as 5-minute votes.

PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 622, STATE AND LOCAL SALES TAX DEDUCTION FAIRNESS ACT OF 2015; PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 1105, DEATH TAX REPEAL ACT OF 2015; AND PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 1195, BUREAU OF CONSUMER FINANCIAL PROTECTION ADVISORY BOARDS ACT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The unfinished business is the vote on ordering the previous question on the resolution (H. Res. 200) providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 622) to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to make permanent the deduction of State and local general sales taxes; providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 1105) to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to repeal the estate and generation-skipping transfer taxes, and for other purposes; and providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 1195) to amend the Consumer Financial Protection Act of 2010 to establish advisory boards, and for other purposes, on which the yeas and nays were ordered.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on ordering the previous question.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 240, nays 183, not voting 8, as follows:

[Roll No. 154]

YEAS—240

Abraham
Aderholt
Allen
Amash
Amodei
Babin
Barletta
Barr
Barton
Benishek
Bilirakis
Bishop (MI)
Bishop (UT)
Black
Blackburn
Blum
Bost
Boustany
Brady (TX)
Brat
Bridenstine
Brooks (AL)
Brooks (IN)
Buchanan
Buck
Bucshon
Burgess
Byrne
Calvert
Carter (GA)
Carter (TX)
Chabot
Chaffetz
Clawson (FL)
Coffman
Cole
Collins (GA)
Collins (NY)
Comstock
Conaway
Cook
Costello (PA)
Cramer
Crawford
Crenshaw
Culberson
Curbelo (FL)
Davis, Rodney
Denham
Dent
DeSantis
DesJarlais
Diaz-Balart
Dold
Duffy
Duncan (TN)
Ellmers (NC)
Emmer (MN)
Farenthold
Fincher
Fitzpatrick
Fleischmann
Fleming
Flores
Forbes
Fortenberry
Foxx
Franks (AZ)
Frelinghuysen
Garrett
Gibbs
Gibson
Gohmert
Goodlatte
Gosar
Gowdy
Granger
Graves (GA)
Graves (LA)
Graves (MO)
Griffith
Grothman
Guinta
Guthrie
Hanna
Hardy
Harper
Harris
Hartzler
Heck (NV)
Hensarling
Herrera Beutler
Hice, Jody B.
Hill
Holding
Hudson
Huelskamp
Huizenga (MI)
Hultgren
Hunter
Hurd (TX)
Hurt (VA)
Issa
Jenkins (KS)
Jenkins (WV)
Johnson (OH)
Johnson, Sam
Jolly
Jones
Jordan
Joyce
Katko
Kelly (PA)
King (IA)
King (NY)
Kinzinger (IL)
Kline
Knight
Labrador
LaMalfa
Lamborn
Lance
Latta
LoBiondo
Long
Loudermilk
Love
Lucas
Luetkemeyer
Lummis
MacArthur
Marchant
Marino
Massie
McCarthy
McCaul
McClintock
McHenry
McKinley
McMorris Rodgers
McSally
Meadows
Meehan
Messer
Mica
Miller (FL)
Miller (MI)
Moolenaar
Mooney (WV)
Mullin
Mulvaney
Murphy (PA)
Neugebauer
Newhouse
Noem
Nugent
Nunes
Olson
Palazzo
Palmer
Paulsen
Pearce
Perry
Pittenger
Pitts
Poe (TX)
Pompeo
Posey
Price, Tom
Ratcliffe
Reed
Reichert
Renacci
Ribble
Rice (SC)
Rigell
Roby
Roe (TN)
Rogers (AL)
Rogers (KY)
Rohrabacher
Rokita
Rooney (FL)
Ros-Lehtinen
Roskam
Ross
Rothfus
Rouzer
Royce
Russell
Ryan (WI)
Salmon
Sanford
Scalise
Schweikert
Scott, Austin
Sensenbrenner
Sessions
Shimkus
Shuster
Simpson
Smith (MO)
Smith (NE)
Smith (NJ)
Smith (TX)
Stefanik
Stewart
Stivers
Stutzman
Thompson (PA)
Thornberry
Tiberi
Tipton
Trott
Turner
Upton
Valadao
Wagner
Walberg
Walden
Walker
Walorski
Walters, Mimi
Weber (TX)
Webster (FL)
Wenstrup
Westerman
Westmoreland
Whitfield
Williams
Wilson (SC)
Wittman
Womack
Woodall
Yoder
Yoho
Young (IA)
Young (IN)
Zeldin
Zinke

NAYS—183

Aguilar
Ashford
Bass
Beatty
Becerra
Bera
Beyer
Bishop (GA)
Blumenauer
Bonamici
Boyle, Brendan F.
Brady (PA)
Brown (FL)
Brownley (CA)
Bustos
Butterfield
Capps
Capuano
Cárdenas
Carney
Carson (IN)
Cartwright
Castor (FL)
Castro (TX)
Chu, Judy
Cicilline
Clark (MA)
Clarke (NY)
Clay
Cleaver
Clyburn
Cohen
Connolly
Conyers
Cooper
Costa
Courtney
Crowley
Cuellar
Cummings
Davis (CA)
Davis, Danny
DeFazio
DeGette
Delaney
DeLauro
DelBene
DeSaulnier
Deutch
Dingell
Doggett
Doyle, Michael F.
Duckworth
Edwards
Ellison
Engel
Eshoo
Esty
Farr
Fattah
Foster
Frankel (FL)
Fudge
Gabbard
Gallego
Garamendi
Graham
Grayson
Green, Al
Green, Gene
Grijalva
Gutiérrez
Hahn
Hastings
Heck (WA)
Higgins
Himes
Hinojosa
Honda
Hoyer
Huffman
Israel
Jackson Lee
Jeffries
Johnson (GA)
Johnson, E. B.
Kaptur
Keating
Kelly (IL)
Kennedy
Kildee
Kilmer
Kind
Kirkpatrick
Kuster
Langevin
Larsen (WA)
Larson (CT)
Lawrence
Lee
Levin
Lewis
Lieu, Ted
Lipinski
Loebsack
Lofgren
Lowenthal
Lowey
Lujan Grisham (NM)
Luján, Ben Ray (NM)
Lynch
Maloney, Carolyn
Maloney, Sean
Matsui
McCollum
McDermott
McGovern
McNerney
Meeks
Meng
Moore
Moulton
Murphy (FL)
Nadler
Napolitano
Neal
Nolan
Norcross
O'Rourke
Pallone
Pascrell
Payne
Pelosi
Perlmutter
Peters
Peterson
Pingree
Pocan
Polis
Quigley
Rangel
Rice (NY)
Roybal-Allard
Ruppersberger
Rush
Ryan (OH)
Sánchez, Linda T.
Sanchez, Loretta
Sarbanes
Schakowsky
Schiff
Schrader
Scott (VA)
Scott, David
Serrano
Sewell (AL)
Sherman
Sinema
Sires
Slaughter
Speier
Swalwell (CA)
Takai
Takano
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)
Titus
Tonko
Torres
Tsongas
Van Hollen
Vargas
Veasey
Vela
Velázquez
Visclosky
Walz
Wasserman Schultz
Waters, Maxine
Watson Coleman
Welch
Wilson (FL)
Yarmuth

NOT VOTING—8

Adams
Duncan (SC)
Poliquin
Price (NC)
Richmond
Ruiz
Smith (WA)
Young (AK)

□ 1700

Mrs. CAPPS, Messrs. AGUILAR and DOGGETT changed their vote from ''yea'' to ''nay.''

Messrs. DENT, McCLINTOCK, AUSTIN SCOTT of Georgia, and SESSIONS changed their vote from ''nay'' to ''yea.''

So the previous question was ordered.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the resolution.

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

RECORDED VOTE

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

A recorded vote was ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. This is a 5-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—ayes 242, noes 182, not voting 7, as follows:

[Roll No. 155]

AYES—242

Abraham
Aderholt
Allen
Amash
Amodei
Babin
Barletta
Barr
Barton
Benishek
Bilirakis
Bishop (UT)
Black
Blackburn
Blum
Bost
Boustany
Brady (TX)
Brat
Bridenstine
Brooks (AL)
Brooks (IN)
Buchanan
Buck
Bucshon
Burgess
Byrne
Calvert
Carter (GA)
Carter (TX)
Chabot
Chaffetz
Clawson (FL)
Coffman
Cole
Collins (GA)
Collins (NY)
Comstock
Conaway
Cook
Costello (PA)
Cramer
Crawford
Crenshaw
Cuellar
Culberson
Curbelo (FL)
Davis, Rodney
Denham
Dent
DeSantis
DesJarlais
Diaz-Balart
Dold
Duffy
Duncan (TN)
Ellmers (NC)
Emmer (MN)
Farenthold
Fincher
Fitzpatrick
Fleischmann
Fleming
Flores
Forbes
Fortenberry
Foxx
Franks (AZ)
Frelinghuysen
Garrett
Gibbs
Gibson
Gohmert
Goodlatte
Gosar
Gowdy
Granger
Graves (GA)
Graves (LA)
Graves (MO)
Griffith
Grothman
Guinta
Guthrie
Hanna
Hardy
Harper
Harris
Hartzler
Heck (NV)
Hensarling
Herrera Beutler
Hice, Jody B.
Hill
Holding
Hudson
Huelskamp
Huizenga (MI)
Hultgren
Hunter
Hurd (TX)
Hurt (VA)
Issa
Jenkins (KS)
Jenkins (WV)
Johnson (OH)
Johnson, Sam
Jolly
Jones
Jordan
Joyce
Katko
Kelly (PA)
King (IA)
King (NY)
Kinzinger (IL)
Kline
Knight
Labrador
LaMalfa
Lamborn
Lance
Latta
LoBiondo
Long
Loudermilk
Love
Lucas
Luetkemeyer
Lummis
MacArthur
Marchant
Marino
Massie
McCarthy
McCaul
McClintock
McHenry
McKinley
McMorris Rodgers
McSally
Meadows
Meehan
Messer
Mica
Miller (FL)
Miller (MI)
Moolenaar
Mooney (WV)
Mullin
Mulvaney
Murphy (PA)
Neugebauer
Newhouse
Noem
Nugent
Nunes
Olson
Palazzo
Palmer
Paulsen
Pearce
Perry
Pittenger
Pitts
Poe (TX)
Poliquin
Pompeo
Posey
Price, Tom
Ratcliffe
Reed
Reichert

Renacci
Ribble
Rice (SC)
Rigell
Roby
Roe (TN)
Rogers (AL)
Rogers (KY)
Rohrabacher
Rokita
Rooney (FL)
Ros-Lehtinen
Roskam
Ross
Rothfus
Rouzer
Royce
Russell
Ryan (WI)
Salmon
Sanford
Scalise
Schweikert
Scott, Austin
Sensenbrenner
Sessions
Shimkus
Shuster
Simpson
Sinema
Smith (MO)
Smith (NE)
Smith (NJ)
Smith (TX)
Stefanik
Stewart
Stivers
Stutzman
Thompson (PA)
Thornberry
Tiberi
Tipton
Trott
Turner
Upton
Valadao
Wagner
Walberg
Walden
Walker
Walorski
Walters, Mimi
Weber (TX)
Webster (FL)
Wenstrup
Westerman
Westmoreland
Whitfield
Williams
Wilson (SC)
Wittman
Womack
Woodall
Yoder
Yoho
Young (IA)
Young (IN)
Zeldin
Zinke

NOES—182

Aguilar
Ashford
Bass
Beatty
Becerra
Bera
Beyer
Bishop (GA)
Blumenauer
Bonamici
Boyle, Brendan F.
Brady (PA)
Brown (FL)
Brownley (CA)
Bustos
Butterfield
Capps
Capuano
Cárdenas
Carney
Carson (IN)
Cartwright
Castor (FL)
Castro (TX)
Chu, Judy
Cicilline
Clark (MA)
Clarke (NY)
Clay
Cleaver
Clyburn
Cohen
Connolly
Conyers
Cooper
Costa
Courtney
Crowley
Cummings
Davis (CA)
Davis, Danny
DeFazio
DeGette
Delaney
DeLauro
DelBene
DeSaulnier
Deutch
Dingell
Doggett
Doyle, Michael F.
Duckworth
Edwards
Ellison
Engel
Eshoo
Esty
Farr
Fattah
Foster
Frankel (FL)
Fudge
Gabbard
Gallego
Garamendi
Graham
Grayson
Green, Al
Green, Gene
Grijalva
Gutiérrez
Hahn
Hastings
Heck (WA)
Higgins
Himes
Hinojosa
Honda
Hoyer
Huffman
Israel
Jackson Lee
Jeffries
Johnson (GA)
Johnson, E. B.
Kaptur
Keating
Kelly (IL)
Kennedy
Kildee
Kilmer
Kind
Kirkpatrick
Kuster
Langevin
Larsen (WA)
Larson (CT)
Lawrence
Lee
Levin
Lewis
Lieu, Ted
Lipinski
Loebsack
Lofgren
Lowenthal
Lowey
Lujan Grisham (NM)
Luján, Ben Ray (NM)
Lynch
Maloney, Carolyn
Maloney, Sean
Matsui
McCollum
McDermott
McGovern
McNerney
Meeks
Meng
Moore
Moulton
Murphy (FL)
Nadler
Napolitano
Neal
Nolan
Norcross
O'Rourke
Pallone
Pascrell
Payne
Pelosi
Perlmutter
Peters
Peterson
Pingree
Pocan
Polis
Quigley
Rangel
Rice (NY)
Richmond
Roybal-Allard
Ruppersberger
Rush
Ryan (OH)
Sánchez, Linda T.
Sanchez, Loretta
Sarbanes
Schakowsky
Schiff
Schrader
Scott (VA)
Scott, David
Serrano
Sewell (AL)
Sherman
Sires
Slaughter
Speier
Swalwell (CA)
Takai
Takano
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)
Titus
Tonko
Torres
Tsongas
Van Hollen
Vargas
Veasey
Vela
Velázquez
Visclosky
Walz
Wasserman Schultz
Waters, Maxine
Watson Coleman
Welch
Wilson (FL)
Yarmuth

NOT VOTING—7

Adams
Bishop (MI)
Duncan (SC)
Price (NC)
Ruiz
Smith (WA)
Young (AK)

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (during the vote). There are 2 minutes remaining.

□ 1706

So the resolution was agreed to.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

REMEMBERING PRESIDENT ABRAHAM LINCOLN

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

Mr. MCCARTHY. Mr. Speaker, at 7:22 this morning, 150 years ago, we lost one of the greatest leaders of our Nation: President Abraham Lincoln.

Lincoln understood American exceptionalism. We know this for many reasons, but one great reason was his words at Gettysburg. He told the crowd that our Fathers had brought forth on this continent a new nation, one conceived in liberty and dedicated to the proposition that all men are created equal. It was his vision that this Nation would have a new birth of freedom; and, for that beautiful vision, many have fought and died.

President Lincoln understood the cost of freedom. He was a Member of this, the people's House, for one term before he rose to become—what I believe—one of our greatest statesmen.

He struggled and never gave up to pass the 13th Amendment, so that no one here would ever again have to endure the sin of slavery. He died for the dream that life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness would finally become more than just words, that it would be a promise kept to all.

As we remember Lincoln as one of the greatest American leaders and the truest embodiment of American principles, our country still feels the mark of his great presence today. I thought it was important that we memorialize it here.

CONTRACTING AND TAX ACCOUNTABILITY ACT OF 2015

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

There was no objection.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The unfinished business is the vote on the motion to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 1562) to prohibit the awarding of a contract or grant in excess of the simplified acquisition threshold unless the prospective contractor or grantee certifies in writing to the agency awarding the contract or grant that the contractor or grantee has no seriously delinquent tax debts, and for other purposes, on which the yeas and nays were ordered.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Utah (Mr. CHAFFETZ) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill.

This will be a 5-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 424, nays 0, not voting 7, as follows:

[Roll No. 156]

YEAS—424

Abraham
Aderholt
Aguilar
Allen
Amash
Amodei
Ashford
Babin
Barletta
Barr
Barton
Bass
Beatty
Becerra
Benishek
Bera
Beyer
Bilirakis
Bishop (GA)
Bishop (MI)
Bishop (UT)
Black
Blackburn
Blum
Blumenauer
Bonamici
Bost
Boustany
Boyle, Brendan F.
Brady (PA)
Brady (TX)
Brat
Bridenstine
Brooks (AL)
Brooks (IN)
Brown (FL)
Brownley (CA)
Buchanan
Buck
Bucshon
Burgess
Bustos
Butterfield
Byrne
Calvert
Capps
Capuano
Cárdenas
Carney
Carson (IN)
Carter (GA)
Carter (TX)
Cartwright
Castor (FL)
Castro (TX)
Chabot
Chaffetz
Chu, Judy
Cicilline
Clark (MA)
Clarke (NY)
Clawson (FL)
Clay
Cleaver
Clyburn
Coffman
Cohen
Cole
Collins (GA)
Collins (NY)
Comstock
Conaway
Connolly
Conyers
Cook
Cooper
Costa
Costello (PA)
Courtney
Cramer
Crawford
Crenshaw
Crowley
Cuellar
Culberson
Cummings
Curbelo (FL)
Davis (CA)
Davis, Danny
Davis, Rodney
DeFazio
DeGette
Delaney
DeLauro
DelBene
Denham
Dent
DeSantis
DeSaulnier
DesJarlais
Deutch
Diaz-Balart
Dingell
Doggett
Dold
Doyle, Michael F.
Duckworth
Duffy
Duncan (TN)
Edwards
Ellison
Ellmers (NC)
Emmer (MN)
Engel
Eshoo
Esty
Farenthold
Farr
Fattah
Fincher
Fitzpatrick
Fleischmann
Fleming
Flores
Forbes
Fortenberry
Foster
Foxx
Frankel (FL)
Franks (AZ)
Frelinghuysen
Fudge
Gabbard
Gallego
Garamendi
Garrett
Gibbs
Gibson
Gohmert
Goodlatte
Gosar
Gowdy
Graham
Granger
Graves (GA)
Graves (LA)
Graves (MO)
Grayson
Green, Al
Green, Gene
Griffith
Grijalva
Grothman
Guinta
Guthrie
Gutiérrez
Hahn
Hanna
Hardy
Harper
Harris
Hartzler
Hastings
Heck (NV)
Heck (WA)
Hensarling
Herrera Beutler
Hice, Jody B.
Higgins
Hill
Himes
Hinojosa
Holding
Honda
Hoyer
Hudson
Huelskamp
Huffman
Huizenga (MI)
Hultgren
Hunter
Hurd (TX)
Hurt (VA)
Israel
Issa
Jackson Lee
Jeffries
Jenkins (KS)
Jenkins (WV)
Johnson (GA)
Johnson (OH)
Johnson, E. B.
Johnson, Sam
Jolly
Jones
Jordan
Joyce
Kaptur
Katko
Keating
Kelly (IL)
Kelly (PA)
Kennedy
Kildee
Kilmer
Kind
King (IA)
King (NY)
Kinzinger (IL)
Kirkpatrick
Kline
Knight
Kuster
Labrador
LaMalfa
Lamborn
Lance
Langevin
Larsen (WA)
Larson (CT)
Latta
Lawrence
Lee
Levin
Lewis
Lieu, Ted
Lipinski
LoBiondo
Loebsack
Lofgren
Long
Loudermilk
Love
Lowenthal
Lowey
Lucas
Luetkemeyer
Lujan Grisham (NM)
Luján, Ben Ray (NM)
Lummis
Lynch
MacArthur
Maloney, Carolyn
Maloney, Sean
Marchant
Marino
Massie
Matsui
McCarthy
McCaul
McClintock
McCollum
McDermott
McGovern
McHenry
McKinley
McMorris Rodgers
McNerney
McSally
Meadows
Meehan
Meeks
Meng
Messer
Mica
Miller (FL)
Miller (MI)
Moolenaar
Mooney (WV)
Moore

Moulton
Mullin
Mulvaney
Murphy (FL)
Murphy (PA)
Nadler
Napolitano
Neal
Neugebauer
Newhouse
Noem
Nolan
Norcross
Nugent
Nunes
O'Rourke
Olson
Palazzo
Pallone
Palmer
Pascrell
Paulsen
Payne
Pearce
Perlmutter
Perry
Peters
Peterson
Pingree
Pittenger
Pitts
Pocan
Poe (TX)
Poliquin
Polis
Pompeo
Posey
Price, Tom
Quigley
Rangel
Ratcliffe
Reed
Reichert
Renacci
Ribble
Rice (NY)
Rice (SC)
Richmond
Rigell
Roby
Roe (TN)
Rogers (AL)
Rogers (KY)
Rohrabacher
Rokita
Rooney (FL)
Ros-Lehtinen
Roskam
Ross
Rothfus
Rouzer
Roybal-Allard
Royce
Ruppersberger
Rush
Russell
Ryan (OH)
Ryan (WI)
Salmon
Sánchez, Linda T.
Sanchez, Loretta
Sanford
Sarbanes
Scalise
Schakowsky
Schiff
Schrader
Schweikert
Scott (VA)
Scott, Austin
Scott, David
Sensenbrenner
Serrano
Sessions
Sewell (AL)
Sherman
Shimkus
Shuster
Simpson
Sinema
Sires
Slaughter
Smith (MO)
Smith (NE)
Smith (NJ)
Smith (TX)
Speier
Stefanik
Stewart
Stivers
Stutzman
Swalwell (CA)
Takai
Takano
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)
Thompson (PA)
Thornberry
Tiberi
Tipton
Titus
Tonko
Torres
Trott
Tsongas
Turner
Upton
Valadao
Van Hollen
Vargas
Veasey
Vela
Velázquez
Visclosky
Wagner
Walberg
Walden
Walker
Walorski
Walters, Mimi
Walz
Wasserman Schultz
Waters, Maxine
Watson Coleman
Weber (TX)
Webster (FL)
Welch
Wenstrup
Westerman
Westmoreland
Whitfield
Williams
Wilson (FL)
Wilson (SC)
Wittman
Womack
Yarmuth
Yoder
Yoho
Young (AK)
Young (IA)
Young (IN)
Zeldin
Zinke

NOT VOTING—7

Adams
Duncan (SC)
Pelosi
Price (NC)
Ruiz
Smith (WA)
Woodall

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (during the vote). There are 2 minutes remaining.

□ 1716

Ms. MAXINE WATERS of California changed her vote from ''yea'' to ''nay.''

So (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill was passed.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

FEDERAL EMPLOYEE TAX ACCOUNTABILITY ACT OF 2015

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The unfinished business is the vote on the motion to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 1563) to amend title 5, United States Code, to provide that individuals having seriously delinquent tax debts shall be ineligible for Federal employment, and for other purposes, as amended, on which the yeas and nays were ordered.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Utah (Mr. CHAFFETZ) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, as amended.

This is a 5-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 266, nays 160, not voting 5, as follows:

[Roll No. 157]

YEAS—266

Abraham
Aderholt
Aguilar
Allen
Amash
Amodei
Ashford
Babin
Barletta
Barr
Barton
Benishek
Bera
Bilirakis
Bishop (MI)
Bishop (UT)
Black
Blackburn
Blum
Bost
Boustany
Brady (TX)
Brat
Bridenstine
Brooks (AL)
Brooks (IN)
Brownley (CA)
Buchanan
Buck
Bucshon
Burgess
Byrne
Calvert
Capps
Carter (GA)
Carter (TX)
Chabot
Chaffetz
Clawson (FL)
Coffman
Cole
Collins (GA)
Collins (NY)
Conaway
Cook
Cooper
Costa
Costello (PA)
Cramer
Crawford
Crenshaw
Cuellar
Culberson
Curbelo (FL)
Davis, Rodney
DelBene
Denham
Dent
DeSantis
DesJarlais
Diaz-Balart
Dold
Duffy
Duncan (TN)
Ellmers (NC)
Emmer (MN)
Esty
Farenthold
Fincher
Fitzpatrick
Fleischmann
Fleming
Flores
Forbes
Fortenberry
Foxx
Franks (AZ)
Frelinghuysen
Garrett
Gibbs
Gibson
Gohmert
Goodlatte
Gosar
Gowdy
Graham
Granger
Graves (GA)
Graves (LA)
Graves (MO)
Griffith
Grothman
Guinta
Guthrie
Hanna
Hardy
Harper
Harris
Hartzler
Heck (NV)
Heck (WA)
Hensarling
Herrera Beutler
Hice, Jody B.
Hill
Himes
Holding
Hudson
Huelskamp
Huizenga (MI)
Hultgren
Hunter
Hurd (TX)
Hurt (VA)
Issa
Jenkins (KS)
Jenkins (WV)
Johnson (OH)
Johnson, Sam
Jones
Jordan
Joyce
Katko
Kelly (PA)
Kilmer
Kind
King (IA)
King (NY)
Kinzinger (IL)
Kline
Knight
Kuster
Labrador
LaMalfa
Lamborn
Lance
Latta
Lipinski
LoBiondo
Long
Loudermilk
Love
Lucas
Luetkemeyer
Lummis
MacArthur
Maloney, Carolyn
Maloney, Sean
Marchant
Marino
Massie
McCarthy
McCaul
McClintock
McHenry
McKinley
McMorris Rodgers
McNerney
McSally
Meadows
Meehan
Messer
Mica
Miller (FL)
Miller (MI)
Moolenaar
Mooney (WV)
Moulton
Mullin
Mulvaney
Murphy (PA)
Neugebauer
Newhouse
Noem
Nugent
Nunes
Olson
Palazzo
Palmer
Paulsen
Pearce
Perry
Peters
Pittenger
Pitts
Poe (TX)
Poliquin
Polis
Pompeo
Posey
Price, Tom
Quigley
Ratcliffe
Reichert
Renacci
Ribble
Rice (NY)
Rice (SC)
Rigell
Roby
Roe (TN)
Rogers (AL)
Rogers (KY)
Rohrabacher
Rokita
Rooney (FL)
Ros-Lehtinen
Roskam
Ross
Rothfus
Rouzer
Royce
Russell
Ryan (OH)
Ryan (WI)
Salmon
Sanford
Scalise
Schweikert
Scott, Austin
Sensenbrenner
Sessions
Shimkus
Shuster
Simpson
Sinema
Smith (MO)
Smith (NE)
Smith (NJ)
Smith (TX)
Stefanik
Stewart
Stivers
Stutzman
Thompson (PA)
Thornberry
Tiberi
Tipton
Trott
Turner
Upton
Valadao
Wagner
Walberg
Walden
Walker
Walorski
Walters, Mimi
Weber (TX)
Webster (FL)
Wenstrup
Westerman
Westmoreland
Whitfield
Williams
Wilson (SC)
Wittman
Womack
Woodall
Yoder
Yoho
Young (AK)
Young (IA)
Young (IN)
Zeldin
Zinke

NAYS—160

Bass
Beatty
Becerra
Beyer
Bishop (GA)
Blumenauer
Bonamici
Boyle, Brendan F.
Brady (PA)
Brown (FL)
Bustos
Butterfield
Capuano
Cárdenas
Carney
Carson (IN)
Cartwright
Castor (FL)
Castro (TX)
Chu, Judy
Cicilline
Clark (MA)
Clarke (NY)
Clay
Cleaver
Clyburn
Cohen
Comstock
Connolly
Conyers
Courtney
Crowley
Cummings
Davis (CA)
Davis, Danny
DeFazio
DeGette
Delaney
DeLauro
DeSaulnier
Deutch
Dingell
Doggett
Doyle, Michael F.
Duckworth
Edwards
Ellison
Engel
Eshoo
Farr
Fattah
Foster
Frankel (FL)
Fudge
Gabbard
Gallego
Garamendi
Grayson
Green, Al
Green, Gene
Grijalva
Gutiérrez
Hahn
Hastings
Higgins
Hinojosa
Honda
Hoyer
Huffman
Israel
Jackson Lee
Jeffries
Johnson (GA)
Johnson, E. B.
Jolly
Kaptur
Keating
Kelly (IL)
Kennedy
Kildee
Kirkpatrick
Langevin
Larsen (WA)
Larson (CT)
Lawrence
Lee
Levin
Lewis
Lieu, Ted
Loebsack
Lofgren
Lowenthal
Lowey
Lujan Grisham (NM)
Luján, Ben Ray (NM)
Lynch
Matsui
McCollum
McDermott
McGovern
Meeks
Meng
Moore
Murphy (FL)
Nadler
Napolitano
Neal
Nolan
Norcross
O'Rourke
Pallone
Pascrell
Payne
Pelosi
Perlmutter
Peterson
Pingree
Pocan
Rangel
Reed
Richmond
Roybal-Allard
Ruppersberger
Rush
Sánchez, Linda T.
Sanchez, Loretta
Sarbanes
Schakowsky
Schiff
Schrader
Scott (VA)
Scott, David
Serrano
Sewell (AL)
Sherman
Sires
Slaughter
Speier
Swalwell (CA)
Takai
Takano
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)
Titus
Tonko
Torres
Tsongas
Van Hollen
Vargas
Veasey
Vela
Velázquez
Visclosky
Walz
Wasserman Schultz
Waters, Maxine
Watson Coleman
Welch
Wilson (FL)
Yarmuth

NOT VOTING—5

Adams
Duncan (SC)
Price (NC)
Ruiz
Smith (WA)

□ 1723

So (two-thirds not being in the affirmative) the motion was rejected.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

MOMENT OF SILENCE IN MEMORY OF THE BOSTON MARATHON VICTIMS

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

Mr. CAPUANO. Mr. Speaker, 2 years ago today, one of the most cowardly acts in American history was perpetrated on the people of Boston, of Massachusetts, of America, and, in fact, of the world when two lowly cowards blew up two bombs in the middle of the Boston Marathon, which is a celebration of American patriotism and of the birth of this country, killing three innocent people and, later on in the day, shooting a police officer in, again, another cowardly act, and injuring over 275 people.

I just want to take a moment of the House's time to remember the people who died that day, the people who were injured that day, and to think for a moment as to what a wonderful country we have the good fortune to live in.

God bless the United States of America.

With that, Mr. Speaker, I would ask everyone to rise to share a moment of silence with me.

TAX DAY AND IRS ACCOUNTABILITY

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

Mr. ROTHFUS. Mr. Speaker, Americans strongly dislike tax day, and Uncle Sam is set to take in record levels of Americans' tax dollars again this year. These are dollars that the hard-working taxpayers take out of their wallets, and they are too often used to grow Washington's bureaucracy at the expense of growth elsewhere in the country.

Western Pennsylvanians are rightfully frustrated with the Federal Government's overreach into their daily lives. Back in Pennsylvania's 12th District, I regularly talk with folks who are appalled by the IRS' hypocrisy, corruption, and abuse of power.

From IRS' attempts to shut down people who disagree with the administration's political agenda to Federal employees owing thousands in back taxes, the IRS needs to be held accountable to the people. Washington bureaucrats are not above the law. Americans spend countless hours and precious financial resources in filing their tax returns by April 15. They are following the law. It is only fair for the American people to expect that the IRS does the same.

I was proud to support several bills today that are designed to protect taxpayers, to restore the public's faith in our system of laws, and to prevent the IRS from abusing its power.

□ 1730

BRING BACK OUR GIRLS

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

Ms. FRANKEL of Florida. Madam Speaker, I stand here today 1 year since Boko Haram kidnapped 270 young girls attending school in Chibok, Nigeria. This kidnapping received international attention for a short time; then, like the girls, the spotlight disappeared, and yet our children remain hidden and subjected to unimaginable crimes.

Innocent girls who cry out to be liberated cannot be forgotten. They are as Maya Angelou's caged birds who sing with a fearful trill of things unknown but longed for still, and their tune is heard on the distant hill, for the caged birds sing of freedom.

Madam Speaker, I join my colleagues today in saying, ''Bring Back Our Girls.''

UNITED STATES SET TO BE A NET EXPORTER OF NATURAL GAS IN 2017

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

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Madam Speaker, earlier this week the Energy Information Administration released its annual forecast of U.S. energy trends and predicted that the United States will become a net exporter of natural gas by 2017.

As cochair of the bipartisan Congressional Natural Gas Caucus, I understand the magnitude of this geopolitical transition and the implications for ensuring American energy security through continued natural gas development and investment. By becoming a net exporter of natural gas by 2017, the United States will be able to build and strengthen its economy, help to improve the environment, and remain globally competitive.

As one of the Nation's top producers of natural gas, Pennsylvania continues to help drive record-breaking oil and natural gas production domestically. The Energy Information Administration's recent projections place the United States closer than ever to obtaining energy independence, while signaling longer term market stability that will make energy prices more affordable for businesses and families throughout Pennsylvania and all across the country.

FISHER HOUSE ANNIVERSARY

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

Ms. TITUS. Madam Speaker, I rise today to congratulate the Fisher House Foundation on their 25th anniversary and to thank them for their services to our military and veteran families.

The Fisher House Foundation is the result of the vision and efforts by Zachary and Elizabeth Fisher. They wanted to provide a home away from home for the families of servicemen and -women while their loved ones received treatment, and their vision has come to fruition.

Since the first Fisher House opened in 1990, over 250,000 families have saved $282 million in lodging and transportation costs. The 64 locations throughout the United States and Germany have provided families 5.8 million days of lodging.

Just a few weeks ago, I was fortunate and proud to participate in the groundbreaking of Nevada's first Fisher House, located across the street from our new VA hospital. What a wonderful day it was.

Congratulations, Fisher House Foundation, and thank you and your volunteers for all you do to make a difficult time just a little easier for our Nation's heroes.

HONORING DR. DONNA E. SHALALA

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

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Madam Speaker, I rise tonight to recognize one of the most profound educational leaders of her generation, Dr. Donna Shalala.

As the head of my alma mater, the University of Miami, Donna made it her goal to see UM become the next great American research university. Never one to leave a promise unfulfilled, under her unparalleled guidance, the university has consistently ranked in the top 50 research institutions.

Through leadership, service, and selflessness, Donna has positively impacted our south Florida area as a school administrator and a community leader. It is with great pride, admiration, and affection that I join our community and University of Miami students, professors, and grads in thanking Dr. Shalala for her hard work and dedication.

Donna, you are an outstanding member of our south Florida community, and we will certainly miss you. I wish you good fortune and all the best in this new, exciting, next chapter of your life.

Oh, yes. Go Canes.

Thank you, Donna.

SUPPORTING THE DAY OF SILENCE

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

Mr. ENGEL. Madam Speaker, every year three-quarters of gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender kids in this country are verbally harassed at school. Nearly a fifth will be physically assaulted. It is time for the bullying and abuse to stop.

Every year GLSEN organizes the National Day of Silence. This Friday, kids across the country will take a daylong vow of silence to draw attention to the abuse their LGBT friends and classmates have to deal with every day.

Counseling and outreach have done a lot to help these kids, but change is not coming fast enough, so I am once again introducing a resolution supporting the Day of Silence. LGBT kids deserve to be able to go to school and feel safe. I invite my colleagues to join me and cosponsor the resolution.

On another matter, yesterday is the 1-year anniversary that the Nigerian schoolgirls were kidnapped by the terror group Boko Haram. I am wearing these ribbons today to say ''Bring Back Our Girls,'' and I thank our colleague

FREDERICA WILSON of Florida for being a champion on this issue.

CONGRATULATIONS TO THE DUKE UNIVERSITY BASKETBALL TEAM

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

Mr. BUTTERFIELD. Madam Speaker, I rise to congratulate Duke University and its Division I men's basketball team on winning the 2015 national championship. Duke's win against the University of Wisconsin at Madison marks their fifth national championship victory.

At the team's helm is the winningest coach in Division I men's basketball history, legendary coach Mike Krzyzewski. We refer to him as Coach K. This year's team, led by senior Quinn Cook, continued the tradition of excellence in my district in Durham, North Carolina, by earning the 88th schoolwide NCAA tournament victory. Even more impressive, Madam Speaker, is the fact that the Duke University Blue Devils had five All-ACC Academic players, which is the most in the school's history.

Today I introduced a resolution, along with my colleagues, to recognize the team for its extraordinary achievement. I urge quick consideration of my resolution and encourage my colleagues to support it.

Madam Speaker, I ask all of my colleagues to join me in congratulating the Duke University Blue Devils on their historic tournament win.

ONE-YEAR ANNIVERSARY OF THE BOKO HARAM KIDNAPPING OF NIGERIAN SCHOOLGIRLS

(Ms. MAXINE WATERS of California asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. MAXINE WATERS of California. Madam Speaker, a year and a day ago today, 276 innocent Nigerian schoolgirls were tragically taken away from their boarding school and their family.

One year later, more than 200 of these girls are still missing, and Boko Haram continues to prey on the Nigerian people. The kidnapping of these schoolgirls is just one example of the appalling acts of terror committed by this group, who, according to the Human Rights Watch, have killed more than 2,000 people and forced 800,000 children to be displaced from their homes.

We simply must do more to combat their efforts.

I commend President Obama for publicly expressing his willingness to assist Nigeria in its efforts to dismantle this group.

Additionally, I encourage the incoming President of Nigeria, President Buhari, to remain committed to his pledge to implement an aggressive effort to combat Boko Haram and to protect his citizens.

I hope, with the anniversary of these attacks upon us, we are all regalvanized to do what we can to bring back our girls and protect our other innocent citizens from any future attacks.

I thank Congresswoman FREDERICA WILSON for her leadership on this issue.

BOKO HARAM IS A CRIMINAL ORGANIZATION

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

Ms. MOORE. Madam Speaker, it is very heartbreaking to think that it has been a whole year since our girls, 276 girls, were kidnapped by Boko Haram in Nigeria. I think the importance of memorializing this is to talk about the nature of terror and its cruelty, to take these children, these babies, away in the name of religion.

It is extremely important for us to galvanize all around the world and to focus on the main thing. The main thing is these are criminal organizations. These are not religiously motivated people. These are people who will maim, cripple, and kill anyone for their political objectives.

I want to thank FREDERICA WILSON for her leadership in bringing us all together today, and Mrs. MALONEY from New York, and I pray that our resolve will be reignited today.

PAYCHECK FAIRNESS ACT

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

Mr. DESAULNIER. Madam Speaker, I rise today in support of the Paycheck Fairness Act. According to the U.S. Census Bureau, in 2013, women who worked full time earned, on average, only 78 cents for every dollar a man earned. The figures are even worse for women of color. African American women earned only approximately 64 cents and Latinas only 56 cents for each dollar earned by a White male. This is absolutely and unequivocally unacceptable in the United States of America. The average woman would have lost $420,000 throughout her working lifetime as a result of this pay gap.

In my district, women make up 51 percent of the population, yet there is still a 76.4 percent wage gap in their annual median earnings. That is why I am a sponsor of the Paycheck Fairness Act, which would work to close the gender wage gap by requiring employers to demonstrate that wage differentials are based on factors other than sex, and strengthening penalties for equal pay violations.

Families increasingly rely on women's wages to make ends meet. Equal pay is not simply a women's issue; it is a family issue.

SMALL BUSINESS TAX

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

Mr. CURBELO of Florida. Madam Speaker, small businesses are vital to the strength and dynamism of the American economy, generating 63 percent of new private sector jobs over the past two decades. But it's not just about the entrepreneurs. It is also about helping workers that depend on small businesses for their paycheck, whether it be young people paying down their college loans, immigrants hoping to provide a better life for their loved ones, or moms and dads looking for a little more income while the kids are at school. Small businesses not only strengthen Main Street, they play a vital role in keeping our neighbors prosperous.

One of the many challenges that small businesses face is a cumbersome and overbearing Tax Code. Most small businesses file their taxes as S corporations or sole proprietorships, both of which are taxed at individual rates.

Congress needs to get serious about reforming and simplifying the Tax Code. Creating a broader, flatter tax base will allow for lower rates for both individuals and businesses. I look forward to working with my colleagues to find ways to reform our Tax Code so small businesses and their workers can thrive.

HONORING ABRAHAM LINCOLN

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

Mr. CROWLEY. Madam Speaker, I was tempted to rise when my friend Mr. MCCARTHY from California was speaking of the great, late President Abraham Lincoln and his legacy—really, a dichotomy of a man, a very complicated individual. We know of his great achievements, of ending slavery, of maintaining our Union—great achievements—and very difficult achievements for him as well, passing the 13th Amendment.

We think of how dysfunctional, maybe, Congress is today and the lack of cooperation. Under the conditions that then-President Lincoln was operating, it is a marvel that he was able to pass such incredible legislation with such ramifications, and positively.

But I think one of the great things about Lincoln that oft times goes unnoticed is one of the legacies that was unintended by himself directly: he dies. He is shot on the 14th of April 1865. He dies on the 15th of April 1865.

One of the greatest things about Abraham Lincoln is, on the 16th of April, the Sun rose again on the Republic of the United States, a better nation for his having lived, but continued despite his absence. How wonderful a legacy is that, that this Republic, greater than any man or woman, lives on, a better place for him having lived.

May God rest the soul of Abraham Lincoln.

□ 1745

CONGRATULATING THE IRVING INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT

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

Mr. VEASEY. Madam Speaker, I rise today to congratulate the Irving Independent School District for being recognized by the College Board as the 2015 Advanced Placement District of the Year in the midsized category. This award recognizes the efforts Irving ISD has made in ensuring the academic success of our local school children.

Since 2008, Irving ISD has increased by 70 percent the number of students taking AP courses and has increased by 83 percent the number of students who scored a 3 or higher on an AP exam. Not only are more students taking AP courses at Irving, but they are also earning good scores, and that is really important.

I represent almost all of South Irving and District 33. Three out of the five high schools in the Irving ISD are located in South Irving.

To every teacher, principal, staffer, and parent at Cardwell, MacArthur, Nimitz, Singley, and Irving High, congratulations on this outstanding academic achievement. Thank you for making all of us Texas proud.

PROGRESSIVE CAUCUS HOUR

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mrs. MIMI WALTERS of California). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 2015, the gentlewoman from New Jersey (Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on the subject of my Special Order.

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

There was no objection.

Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN. Today, low-wage workers across the country rallied in small towns and big cities. Their request is very simple: a livable wage and the right to organize.

This isn't rocket science. These folks turn on the news and see reports on stock market gains on Wall Street. They see companies reporting record profits. They see the prices for bread and a carton of milk rising every month. Then they open their paychecks and see the same amount that they have seen for the past 10 years.

This is a crisis that my colleagues across the aisle keep trying to brush under a political rug. That may have worked in the past, but it is just getting too big to be hidden.

According to UC Berkeley economist Emmanuel Saez, the Nation's 100 richest families have as much wealth as the 80 million families that make up the bottom 50 percent in wealth. Meanwhile, Republicans keep trying to peddle the same, tired ''work hard and get ahead'' rhetoric.

Madam Speaker, American workers are doing just that. They are stringing together 40-hour weeks whenever they can. In many cases, they are not given the opportunity to even do that, but they are being paid wages that cobble together to just over $15,000 a year.

Even when McDonald's raises wages for the fraction of its workers behind the counters of their corporate stores, they will only get a raise of $5,000. $5,000 will make a huge difference for those families, but at $20,000, they have gone from drowning to just barely keeping their heads above water.

That is not enough to pay for a college education or to buy a home. That is not enough to save for retirement. That is not enough to pay for medical bills. Madam Speaker, that is not enough to achieve the American Dream.

My Progressive Caucus colleagues and I are here on the floor tonight to stand with workers in the fight for $15, that is $15 an hour and the right to form unions.

It is time to support working families, and it is time to make it possible to work hard and get ahead.

It is now my pleasure to yield to the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. ELLISON), one of the chairs of our caucus.

Mr. ELLISON. I thank the gentlewoman for yielding.

Madam Speaker, I had an interesting story today. I was talking with a young lady named Stacy Mitchell, who is a researcher.

She does a lot of research on this issue of what is the economic effect of raising the minimum wage because what you hear so many conservatives say is, if we raise the minimum wage, maybe there will be a lot of workers who simply will not be employable because they don't have the skill level to be employed, they don't bring enough value to the business to pay them $15 an hour.

What she showed—and this is through research—is that low wages lead to workers who have a lot of high turnover. High turnover leads to mistakes, leads to errors, leads to training errors, leads to bad customer service when the workers don't have a firm grip on what they have been doing. High turnover and the need to retrain then leads to a loss of money, and they have calculated that to about $12,000 a year for the average small business.

Now, folks who are interested in learning more about this can contact the Institute for Local Self-Reliance. This is a small-business organization that says that we can have more economic viability if we focus on small business and not just the big-box retailer.

Of course, it is interesting because, whenever you talk to the big-box retailer about raising the minimum wage or whether you talk to McDonald's or Walmart, they always say: yeah, we are making record profits; but what about the small business?

It was pretty surprising to hear that there are a lot of small businesses that have decided to pay people a better wage, keep them on the job, and as they stay on the job, they learn the job better, serve the customer better, and end up making the business more profitable overall.

A lot of businesspeople, whether it is Costco or Ben & Jerry's, are challenging this idea by the rightwing conservative business types that squeezing the most out of the worker, hurting the worker, taking the most out of the worker, paying the worker the least you can possibly afford—not any health care, not any sick days—just squeezing the life out of that worker is not a good business model. There are other ways to do it. There are ways for everyone to succeed.

Now, sometimes, my friends on the other side of the aisle like to say: Have you ever run a business? In fact, I have. I am a businessowner. I ran my own law firm for years. I employed investigators. I employed legal assistants. I even hired some lawyers.

When people arrogantly talk about, Oh, I know business, and you don't, it always makes me chuckle a little bit because I actually have run a business—owned a business—and actually have run fairly large nonprofits, which are also businesses.

It is clear to me that the real thing that I cared about as a businessperson is customers coming through the door. I needed people with money who could pay me. That is what I needed. If nobody was making any money, they couldn't pay me.

What was always better for me is being in a vibrant, strong community with an economy where prosperity was shared so that people had some business for me.

It is funny; I never worried about taxes too much. I can't imagine too many small-businesspeople staying up all night worrying about taxes. You know what they are worried about? Customers coming through the door, clients coming through the door, people who need haircuts, people who need meals, people who need a lawyer to do their will—that is what you have got to have.

But if the average working class person is broke because they have been getting paid $7 an hour or whatever, they can't spend money with you.

It was interesting to me, when I first got to Congress, this was right before the real hit in the financial system in 2008. I was at a committee hearing, I will let the gentlewoman know, and I asked one of the witnesses at the committee hearing what their opinion was about Americans having negative savings because I found a statistic that Americans had a negative 2 percent savings rate.

That meant that you were borrowing to consume. That meant that you

didn't have money, and you had to go to the credit card, the payday loan, title loan, something like that, to make it through the week.

This person looked at me and said: Well, there is so much equity people have in their homes; that is not a problem.

This is an economist I will never listen to again. The bottom line is, when you pay people more, they can save. They can save for retirement. When you pay people more, that makes them more loyal to you. I actually paid people as much as I could—way over minimum wage—and the reason why is I needed my legal secretary to know how to prepare documents the way I needed them.

I needed her to know how to prepare the document so that I could read it over, make sure that this divorce or this will or whatever it was that I was doing for them was right; and the better she got at what she was doing, the faster I could work. I was happy to pay her because the customer was happy to pay. The real job was getting customers in the door, and paying workers better was smarter and more profitable for me.

I absolutely reject this model that you squeeze the life out of the worker and try to make sure that they don't have anything except for the bus fare to get back to work the next day. This is absolutely wrong. Yes, you can run a business like that; you can make a lot of money like that, but you will ruin society doing things like that.

I actually liked paying taxes so we could have the Metro rail to get people to work, so the bus would come. I didn't mind being able to turn on the spigot and have clean water come out of the faucet in Minnesota.

I don't understand these people who claim to be for business, don't want to pay any taxes, don't want to train anybody, don't want to pay any decent wages, and hate health care. It is the craziest thing in the world. It is actually bad for business and leads to very extremes in society, the extremely rich and the vast ocean of the poor.

How many people have you talked to who sit back and say, You know what, you used to be able to get into the middle class by becoming a small-businessperson or getting a good union job?

The conservative rightwing attacks both. The conservative rightwing attacks unions. The conservative rightwing doesn't like unions, and they are union busters, so union membership has declined. As they have pushed this right-to-work garbage, what we have seen is wages go down at the very same time.

It is a funny thing about these big, big, big business types. Whenever they come to my office asking for whatever, they always talk in terms of the small business. I always find it somewhat amusing when the big businesses that pay poverty wages say: well, if we raise the minimum wage, it is going to hurt small business.

I think to myself: Man, when was the last time you were ever running a small business? You don't pay any taxes because you have got lawyers trying to figure out how to get around them. You don't deal with what the small-businessperson has to deal with.

They actually have to earn a living and come up with a product or service that people really want, and they don't get tax breaks the way you do. They don't have an army of lawyers to help them escape their responsibility to help fund the U.S. Government.

What does all that have to do with today? Well, low-wage workers have finally gotten sick of it. Today, over 200 cities are standing together to call for $15 an hour. Thirty different countries are standing in solidarity with low-wage workers, calling for $15 an hour.

I am proud that, in my own city of Minneapolis, low-wage workers have gone out and are on strike to demand $15 an hour. These are the people who make the hamburgers, they fry the chicken, they sweep the floors. They do the stuff that, if it doesn't get done, the business crashes.

I am going to tell you honestly, in the business I ran, if I wanted to go on vacation for a day or two, I probably could; but, if my legal secretary and my investigator and the lawyer that I hired didn't show up, I would be in trouble. I couldn't go anywhere.

I guarantee you that you can't show me a CEO of a business that is a big business who can't show up or go on a long golfing trip, whatever; but, if you let the people who actually fry the chicken not show up, this place will grind to a halt.

□ 1800

So I was very glad to see tens of thousands of low-wage workers in more than 200 cities standing together to call for $15 an hour. These workers are White, they are Black, they are Latino, they are Asian. They are young, they are old. Some of them are senior citizens.

These workers, some of them were born in the United States, and some of them came here from other places. They are diverse, but they are unified in the idea that in America we ought to have a fair economy that makes sure that everybody can climb the ladder of success, not just a few who want to concentrate wealth at the very top.

Then after they get to the top, they don't want to pay any taxes, they don't want to pay for public services, and they want to divide people. They want to divide people.

These workers, they don't care if you are straight or gay. They want to know, Are you down with raising the wage?

They don't care if you are Latino or maybe you are Black. They don't care. They care about, are you for an economic ladder that everyone can climb if they work hard.

We are in an America today where the people at the top, many of them are highly divisive. They want to split the straight from the gay, the Black from the White. They want to break everybody up because they know that is the only way they can keep the control that they have.

So we are unified around our common humanity, our love of this country and our belief that this is the land of opportunity. That is just not some slogan. It has got to be real, and it has got to mean something. And anybody who puts in a hard week of work ought to be able to do well by their family.

Here is one of the most amazing things. This statistic really blew me out.

And by the way, please just ask me to yield when you are sick of me going on.

I just thought I would share this little statistic with you because it really did shock me, because, you know, the conservative rightwing is very proud of how they claim, Oh, we are self-reliant. We don't ask anybody for anything. We believe people should work for themselves. And they are real hard on folks with government assistance.

But did you know that—I am looking for this statistic right here. I had it just a moment ago. It blew my mind when I saw it.

It showed that if you add up all of the public assistance that low-wage workers have to rely on because their bosses will not pay them properly—Uncle Sam has to pay if the people don't have a livable wage. If they don't have enough for rent and food because their job won't pay them enough, then these people go on public assistance.

If you add up all that public assistance, it basically is a subsidy to Big Business, and I think that number is about $150 billion. It is about $150 billion of welfare, welfare that some of these conservative corporate types are mooching off the American people.

And their chest is always poked out about how we work for ourselves. We don't rely on anyone.

Well, wait a minute. These folks work hard every day, getting splattered with grease, pushing a broom, making hamburgers, customer after customer, on your feet all day long. These folks work hard, but $150 billion of accumulated subsidy to the working poor.

I will never forget how Walmart—yes, I said the name. And by the way, I want to congratulate them for raising the wage. You ought to say what is good when it happens. Thank you, Walmart, for raising the wage.

But I do have to tell on you a little bit because last Christmas, which is the spirit of giving, they put out a bucket asking their customers to put canned goods in the bucket so that their customers would give canned food goods so that they would distribute them to their workers. I am sure somebody thought that was a clever business idea.

Wait a minute. You want the customers to give free canned goods to

your workers because you will not pay them?

You know, McDonald's had this proposed budget that was proposing, I don't know, all kinds of crazy things that—undignified things people were asked to do.

At the end of the day, though, I just want to say that these workers who have gone out, over 200 cities, where workers are going out on strike, saying that we need to get paid more, I am very proud of these people.

This is a great American tradition. Civil disobedience, striking has been something in America, sometimes when you don't have any bargaining power, when you don't have a union, when the National Labor Relations Board will not protect you quickly enough because it has been weakened by the conservative wing, then you have got to strike. What else are you going to do?

America's elected leaders and CEOs are finally waking up to the reality that a low-wage economy, in which many can't afford basic necessities and are forced to rely on public aid, isn't good for working families, or the economy, or the taxpayer.

Last year, the President issued executive orders that ensured the minimum wage and workplace protections for Americans working under Federal contracts.

And over the last few months, what we have seen is that employers like Walmart, Target, T.J. Maxx, McDonald's, have announced raises for the employees.

Do you really believe they would have done it without these strikes? Absolutely not. They wouldn't have given these poor folks a penny. They had to go on strike. They had to. They had no choice. They were pushed to the brink.

I am about to yield back to the gentlelady, but I just want to tell folks about the model employer and labor rights.

In Congress we can help support this movement by continuing to join workers in their strikes and by fighting for action at the Federal level.

The Congressional Progressive Caucus is calling for a model employer executive order that gives preference for Federal contracts to companies that do more than just pay the minimum by providing things like livable wages, paid leave, health benefits, and respecting their employees' right to collectively bargain.

That will restore the American middle class.

As I take my seat, I just want to point out to the gentlewoman from New Jersey, in 1957 there were a lot of things that America needed to improve. We had racism, segregation. Women could not rise to their potential. There were a lot of things America needed to do better at.

But in 1957, about 35 percent of the American workforce was in a union. And guess what? One person could feed a family of four. One person could feed a family of four.

Now, because people have been pushing trickle-down economics, Reaganomics, whatever, and we say we are going to squeeze the workers, we are going to offshore their job, the rich won't pay any taxes, and we are not going to provide any services, and we are going to break the unions, now, for 40 years, we have seen wages flat, and we have seen this thing happen. We have seen these bad outcomes.

But you know what?

Today is a new day. People are wise to it, and they are unifying together to push back and make a brand new economy where we can have the public sector and the private sector work together for the betterment of the American people.

Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN. I thank the gentleman for the fine points that he has made. I can speak from a personal perspective. I am one of four siblings, and my father was the bread earner and my mother was the woman who was taking care of our family. And he, indeed, did provide a good and wholesome living for his family.

Madam Speaker, right now, tens of thousands of American workers in fast food and child care and home care and airport services, and even in professional positions in higher education, are not being paid enough to survive. And what that means, and I believe that my colleague did mention it, it becomes a drag on the economy.

Our economy does rely on consumers buying products. They want not just products that they need. Spending is what gives companies, big and small, the revenue to expand and hire more workers. Ideally, it is also what gives companies the revenue to increase wages.

But if you ask the workers who are fighting for $15 an hour, they will tell you that a wage increase has been nowhere in sight.

Madam Speaker, I yield to my colleague from the great State of California, Congresswoman LEE.

Ms. LEE. Let me thank you, Congresswoman WATSON COLEMAN, for yielding and for hosting this important Special Order on the need to provide all Americans a good-paying job and the right to form a union.

I want to thank you for your tremendous leadership each and every day, for making sure that we stay on point on all of these economic issues that mean so much to people who are working yet still live below the poverty line. So thank you again.

This afternoon, the Congressional Progressive Caucus, which I am proud to serve as the whip of, welcomed experts and low-wage workers to the Hill for a forum.

Now, each of the workers told powerful stories, and I hope that these are stories that Members here on both sides of the House will listen to. They spoke of struggling to get by, despite working full time on paychecks that are just too small. I hope we will take their struggles to heart and join the Congressional Progressive Caucus in our efforts to ensure a good-paying job for all Americans.

Too many Americans are still struggling to find a job that pays more than the bare minimum. They don't want to just get by. They want to get ahead, and they want to live the American Dream. They deserve to live the American Dream.

They are looking for a job that pays an actual living wage, a job that will provide them with paychecks big enough to lift themselves out of poverty into the middle class, a job where they can take care of their families and make sure the bills are paid, and maybe save for retirement. These are American values that everyone wants to live by and to achieve.

A few decades ago, these jobs were accessible to most Americans. Yet, because of the Great Recession and wage stagnation, too many Americans are working harder and harder for paychecks that keep them trapped in poverty. In the world's richest and most powerful Nation, this really is a disgrace.

A report released just 2 days ago from the University of California at Berkeley, in my district, found that allowing companies to pay workers wages that keep them in poverty costs taxpayers $152 billion a year. That is outrageous.

Instead of doing the right thing and paying for a living wage, these corporations are reaping record corporate profits while leaving families to struggle and taxpayers on the hook.

Now, as a former small-businessowner myself, I can tell you that paying poverty wage is no way to run a business. Paying a living wage with benefits is good for business, and it is the right thing to do.

As we continue to build support for the Good Jobs Movement, I know that more and more businessowners will see the benefit of paying a living wage and will join our cause.

Everyone deserves a job that allows them to make a living and provides them with the right to form a union. It is the economically sensible thing to do. You can ask any college or high school student who has taken Economics 101.

When we empower workers to fight for themselves and provide them a big paycheck, our country becomes fairer and our economy grows. People who are working should not be living below the poverty line. So $15 an hour, that is the minimum that we should be paying our workers.

Certain parts of the country, $15 an hour just barely, barely helps them put food on the table. So we need to get to a living wage, and we need to talk about what that means in different parts of the country.

So I want to thank you, again, Congresswoman WATSON COLEMAN, for your leadership, for bringing us together. We have got to stay focused on this because everyone deserves a path out of

poverty into the middle class. Everyone in our country deserves to live the American Dream.

Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN. I thank the gentlewoman from California for sharing her insights with us and the very important points that have been made.

As I stated a moment ago, our economy relies upon consumers buying products that they want, not just products that they need. But $15 an hour is what we are trying to fight for, and even with that, that will barely provide the needs of these families.

They can barely cover their rent or keep food on the table. They can't buy new cars and support the American auto industry. They can't afford new clothes, supporting American retailers, and they can't buy computers or smart phones, supporting Silicon Valley.

Six out of the ten largest corporations with median wages of less than $15 also rank among the most occupations projected to add the most jobs in the coming years. And as the low-wage workforce grows, the declining purchasing power of Americans means that there is less demand for goods and services in the economy.

□ 1815

If we want to grow our economy, if we are focused on creating jobs, we need to support the people that do just that.

I would like now to yield to my colleague from the great State of Texas, who stands up for working-class families every single solitary day and has even introduced legislation to secure a living wage for the families in our country.

Mr. AL GREEN of Texas. Thank you very much. And I especially appreciate your remembering that I was reared in Florida. That is important to me. I now dwell in Texas, of course. But not many people remember that, so thank you so much. I am honored to be on the floor with you this evening.

I think this is a very timely topic that we are having an opportunity to give some opinions on, and I think that it is important for us to remember that America is not a poor country. America is not a poor country, and I want to emphasize that because too often we come to conclusions about what we should do based upon our lack of resources. I think that is appropriate to come to conclusions based upon a lack of resources, but the truth is that we are still the richest country in the world.

We are still the richest country in the world. As a matter of fact, in America, 1 in every 12 American households—1 in every 12—have investable assets of $1 million or more; 1 in 12 have investable assets of $1 million or more. As a matter of fact, in the United States of America, in 2013, we were fortunate enough to have the average CEO make $11.7 million. That is 331 times what the average worker made. The average worker made $35,293. So the average CEO did well.

And by the way, I don't begrudge the CEO who makes $11-plus million. I do not. I believe in capitalism. I believe that in this country you should succeed on your merits or fail on your demerits. And if a CEO can make $11-plus million, I think that is great. I do think that that CEO ought to pay a fair amount of taxes, just as the person who makes $35,000-plus pays a fair amount of taxes. But I think it is a wonderful thing, $35,000 versus $11.7 million.

Now, a full-time worker, a full-time worker, the average CEO that year made 774 times what a full-time minimum wage worker made—774 times.

We are in the richest country in the world; 1 in 12 households has investable assets of $1 million or more.

In 2007, an interesting thing occurred. A man made $3 billion. I don't begrudge him. I salute him for making $3 billion. I don't envy him for making $3 billion. I commend him for making $3 billion. I would note, however, that he did not pay ordinary income tax on that $3 billion. I think that if you are going to make $3 billion, you ought to pay your fair share of taxes on it.

Mr. Speaker, $3 billion, that is a lot of money, and it is very difficult to get your mind around it. So let me help you understand what $3 billion is. It would take a minimum wage worker working full time 198,000 years—198,000 years—to make $3 billion. I don't begrudge the person who made the $3 billion. I salute him. That person made about $400 a second.

This is the richest country in the world. People are making money in this country. Just because those of you who are at home, you don't know these people, I want you to know they are there. They are there, and they are doing quite well, and they ought to be the first in line to talk about raising the minimum wage.

It would take 198,000 years for a minimum wage worker to make $3 billion. A hedge fund manager made $400 a second. At $400 a second, it would take that hedge fund manager about 37.7 seconds to make what a minimum wage worker makes in a year—37.7 seconds. I don't begrudge him. I commend him. I salute him. But I do think he should pay a fair amount of taxes on it.

I think that paying a fair amount of taxes is the American way. Others pay their taxes, a fair amount. I think people who make billions of dollars ought to pay a fair amount of taxes as well.

When Dr. King gave his speech, when they had the March on Washington back in August of 1963, they had a list of 10 demands. Number eight on that list of 10 demands was to have a wage that people could make a living on. At that time, it was thought that $2 an hour would be a sufficient amount of money. Today we would call that a living wage. It was $2 an hour in 1963. Well, today, that $2 an hour would be about $14.90. So there is a rationale for the $15-an-hour hue and cry that we hear.

A lot of things have changed. A lot of things have also remained the same. Fifteen dollars an hour is not an unreasonable amount of money in the richest country in the world, in a country where we have people who can make $400 a second, hundreds of times what a minimum wage worker makes, more than 700 times what a minimum wage worker working full time makes in a year.

This is the richest country in the world. However, in the richest country in the world, we still have people who work full time and live below the poverty line.

For edification purposes, I believe every person ought to work his or her way out of poverty. I would like to see subsidies ended and people have wages that will allow them to work their way out of poverty. If I had my way, we would have people without subsidies who work hard, succeed on their merits, fail on their demerits, and elevate themselves out of poverty by simply working full time and not living below the poverty line.

It is interesting to note that, in 2015, the poverty threshold for a family of four is $28,850—for a family of four. I pray for the people who have to live off of that amount of money with a family of four, but that is what it is.

I believe that we should not only raise the minimum wage, but we should index it. I think that we should index it to poverty because right now a full-time worker with a child makes about $15,080 a year. That is below the poverty line of $15,930 a year—working full time, living below the poverty line in the richest country in the world where at least one person made $400 a second, where the average CEO made more than $11 million a year. It seems to me that we are talking about trying to bring a balance between the CEO's salary and the workers'.

At one time in this country there was a sense of moral responsibility that CEOs had for their workers. CEOs would literally sit and talk to the board of directors and talk about the needs of workers and how workers should be paid so that they could take care of families, so that they could educate children. There really was, at one time, this sense of moral responsibility to workers that CEOs had.

I saw an example of that just today. A CEO decided that he was going to cut his salary so that his workers could have a better quality of life, with higher earnings that would be paid to them.

We have a responsibility to each other in this country. We who happen to be blessed are not blessed so that we can just enjoy it all ourselves; we are blessed so that we may be a blessing to others. That sense of moral responsibility to those who are less fortunate than we has to return. If we don't get that sense of moral responsibility so that others can receive some of the blessings and some of the goodness of the richest country in the world, we do ourselves a disservice.

Dr. King reminded us that life is an inescapable network of mutuality, tied in a single garment of destiny. What impacts one directly impacts all indirectly. What happens to people who are living below the poverty line directly will indirectly impact all of us.

How does it happen? Well, here is how it happens:

When they live below the poverty line and they are being paid a salary and they don't get health care, they are going to get health care in the richest country in the world. It is just that it is going to cost us a lot more. When they live below the poverty line and they are working full time, they are going to get subsidies. Taxpayers are going to take care of that.

So there is an indirect impact on you, taxpayers, who are listening to me right now. You are paying for it. They are not getting it on the job. We are paying for it. We are subsidizing very wealthy people by paying a minimum wage on the job and then providing subsidies for people from the Federal Government such that they can have a decent living in the United States of America, the richest country in the world.

What impacts others indirectly impacts all directly. Health care, food subsidies, this is all coming out of the pockets of taxpayers. Why not have a wage that allows people to take care of themselves?

In this country, we tend for some reason to equate our net worth to our self-worth. That is unfortunate. We shouldn't do it, but a good many people do. A good many people do. And a good many people don't feel so good when they work full time and live below the poverty line, taking care of a family, playing by the rules.

Some would say, well, that living wage, that minimum wage is just a wage that you start out with. It is just a wage for young people. The statistical information does not bear that out. Unfortunately, too many people find themselves in minimum wage jobs for more than just a few months.

If you think about it, a good many of you who are listening to this, you know people who have been in minimum wage jobs for years and years and years. You know people who are doing their best to make ends meet at $7.25 an hour.

This is the richest country in the world, and 1 in 12 American households have these assets that I have talked about, have these investable assets of $1 million or more. I think that in such a rich country we should be able to allow people who are willing to work—willing to work; not people who are asking for a handout, but people who want to work, they want to earn their way through life—we ought to be able to pay them a decent wage.

What we have in Congress would raise it to $10.10 an hour, far below what I think it should be; because I am of the opinion that it should be $15 an hour based on what Dr. King said in 1963 with that list of 10 demands, number eight, which was to raise it to $2 an hour, which, by today's standards, is right at $15 an hour.

□ 1830

I think it should be 15, but I don't believe we will get 15 through the House, and I regret to say that. I support the bill that would raise it to $10.10 an hour.

My bill, Mr. Speaker, the Original Living Wage Act, would raise it higher than $10.10 an hour and would index the minimum wage to poverty so that as the poverty rate goes up—at some period of time, I'm willing to negotiate what that period is—the minimum wage would go up, too; and we wouldn't find ourselves on the floor trying to debate what the minimum wage ought to be, as we are doing currently.

I know that not everybody thinks that there should be a minimum wage at all. There are some people who think that market forces should control. Well, market forces have, in this circumstance, produced some very unpleasant circumstances for people who are working and trying to make ends meet on jobs that pay what we will call entry-level wages if we don't have a minimum wage.

Mr. Speaker, I am of the opinion that we ought to raise the wage, and I think we ought to index it to poverty. The bill that seems to have more support, and I confess that it does, would index it to the CPI. I am not a hard person to get along with. I can live with indexing it to the CPI, but I do think that it should be indexed, and I do think that we should raise it.

I say this to you, my dear friends, because Dr. King, who was so far ahead of his time—so far ahead of his time—was the preeminent fighter for those who live in the streets of life and those who are trying to eke out a living on little, who have learned how to take very little and do a lot with it, Dr. King was a fighter and a champion for these folk.

I think that as we continue to celebrate the anniversary of his birthday—now, he is being recognized on the Mall, there is a statue on the Mall—I think we ought to go further and recognize what he asked for in 1963, and that was a living wage. I think that it is time for us to honor the request of Dr. King which has not, to this date, been honored; and let us let everybody work his or her way out of poverty.

I thank you so much for this great opportunity to speak, and I pray that you will continue to be strong and carry on. You have done a stellar job. What you are doing now, you don't do for yourself. What you do now, you do for people you will never meet and greet, people that will never get to touch your hand, but they will be blessed by what you are doing to help them elevate themselves to a better standard of living.

God bless you, my dear sister, and I pray that you will continue to be strong and continue to carry on.

Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN. Congressman, it has been an honor to share this moment with you in this Special Order hour. It has been a blessing to me. Texas is very, very lucky and very fortunate to have you as a Representative. Florida must be very proud because you were born there.

Thank you, and God bless you.

Mr. AL GREEN of Texas. God bless you, too.

Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN. Mr. Speaker, how much time is remaining?

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. WESTERMAN). The gentlewoman has 15 minutes remaining.

Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN. Mr. Speaker, I want to follow up on something that my colleague had alluded to, and that is the impact of low wages and the government's need to subsidize. I think that he sort of spoke to it in a generalized way, but I would like to just share with you what I think happens with an individual and a family that has a $15,000 income.

Since it is not enough to keep food on the table, those Americans have to turn to food stamps. Since the jobs don't come with health care, we have got to rely on Medicaid. Because $15,000 a year doesn't pay for the rent in most cities, those Americans rely on low-income housing or subsidized housing through Section 8 vouchers, or they are homeless and living in shelters.

These workers' children are enrolled in children's health insurance programs, and these families are getting support through Temporary Assistance to Needy Families, the TANF program.

Fifty-two percent of fast-food workers rely on public assistance programs; 46 percent of childcare workers rely on public assistance; 48 percent of home care workers rely on public assistance; and, Mr. Speaker, 25 percent of part-time college faculty—highly educated adjunct professors—rely on public assistance.

According to a Berkeley report, the Federal Government spent $127.8 billion on working families in these programs. California spent almost $3.7 billion because of low-wage workers; New York, $3.3 billion; Texas, $2.1 billion; and Illinois and Florida both spent a little more than a billion.

This isn't funding for Americans that are uncharacteristically down on their luck or temporarily out of work or in some other moment of crisis. This money is spent on full-time, hard-working Americans who simply are working for corporations who maximize the CEO's benefits at the expense of the workers' salaries.

Mr. Speaker, if my Republican colleagues are so adamant about reducing government spending, shouldn't we be worried about why these folks are trying to work full-time but still need food stamps to make ends meet?

We have also spent a lot of time in this Congress debating tax breaks for the wealthy and for corporations. In fact, earlier this afternoon, we argued about whether or not the 5,000 or so

wealthiest families in this country, the only people who have enough money in their estates to qualify for the estate tax, should get a $2.5 million tax break.

Every year, we let corporations deduct unlimited amounts of bonus pay for executives, regardless of whether or not the companies' workers get pay raises or not, unlike that one special CEO who sees life differently and believes that to whom much is given much is required.

Corporations have written off $66 billion between 2007 and 2010 while letting the low-wage workers who make up the rank and file of their companies struggle.

My colleague, CHRIS VAN HOLLEN, has a solution for this, requiring companies to raise wages for their workers if they want to keep qualifying for that tax break. It is a simple solution that wouldn't mean companies suddenly have to raise pay for their workers; they just need to stop expecting the government to cover the exorbitant salaries of their executives if they can't pay the rest of their employees a liveable wage.

Mr. Speaker, my colleagues and I stand with the millions of workers fighting for 15. Lifting pay for low-wage workers will boost their purchasing power, pumping more money into our economy and giving businesses the revenue to create more jobs.

Lifting pay for low-wage workers will reduce government spending. Lifting pay for low-wage workers will open the doors to the American Dream for the millions who have already demonstrated that they are ready and willing to work and to work hard for it.

By standing together and fighting for the $15, these workers have already made their voices heard in the living rooms, the boardrooms, and the statehouses all across this country. It is time for D.C. to lend an ear as well.

It is my privilege and my honor to stand with those who are simply seeking a fair wage for the work that they do.

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

YUCCA MOUNTAIN

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 2015, the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. DOLD) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. DOLD. Mr. Speaker, it is indeed an honor for me to be here today with several colleagues to talk about and highlight a very serious environmental risk to our communities.

For the last 58 years, this Nation has embraced nuclear power as an inexpensive, clean, and nearly inexhaustible power source for our growing society; yet, in all that time, we have not yet addressed a key problem caused by nuclear power, and that is how to safely dispose of spent nuclear fuel.

We have gathered a good crew of folks here, Mr. Speaker, and it is an honor for me to yield to my good friend from Washington (Mr. NEWHOUSE).

Mr. NEWHOUSE. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the gentleman from Illinois' indulgence in allowing me to speak on this important subject this evening.

Mr. Speaker, located in my central Washington district is the Hanford site, which has played a pivotal role in our Nation's security and defense for decades. As part of the Manhattan Project, the Hanford site produced plutonium for the bomb that eventually brought an end to World War II, and continued work at the site was critical during the cold war.

However, this work also resulted in massive amounts of nuclear defense waste. Today, Hanford is the world's largest and most complex nuclear cleanup site, with over 56 million gallons of radioactive and chemical waste in 177 temporary underground storage tanks.

The Federal Government has a legal and a moral obligation to clean up this waste. The importance of Yucca Mountain cannot be overstated. Hanford is scheduled to send more nuclear defense waste to Yucca Mountain than anywhere else in the Nation.

The high-level defense waste at Hanford will be treated at the waste treatment plant, which is currently being constructed, to turn this waste into glass that can then be sent to Yucca.

The waste treatment plant is over 70 percent complete, and the glass produced will meet the geological specifications of Yucca Mountain; yet the Obama administration has moved the goalpost by illegally shutting down Yucca, which will take us back to square one and harm the already challenging Hanford cleanup.

Mr. Speaker, the Federal Government has spent decades and billions of taxpayer dollars studying the right place for the repository. The conclusion was Yucca Mountain, the subject of one of the most thorough and extensive reviews of a major government project ever conducted.

It is the lawful repository for nuclear waste, and Congress has reaffirmed this fact many times over. There is no scientific reason why Yucca cannot and should not move forward.

Earlier this month, I visited Yucca Mountain and was impressed by the substantial work that has already been completed. The development of the site has taken decades and has come at great taxpayer expense, costing Americans over $15 billion.

Because DOE has failed to begin accepting used nuclear fuel, as required by contracts signed with the electric utilities that own the reactors, liability and settlement estimates now range from $13 billion to $50 billion—a blow to taxpayers and ratepayers—all due to the failure of the President to move forward with the legal repository.

Simply put, Mr. Speaker, we do not have the time or the resources to just start over. Doing so would change Yucca from being the Nation's most secure national repository into a monument of government waste and all in violation of the law. After getting a firsthand look at Yucca, I can see why it was selected as the best place for our Nation's defense waste and commercial spent nuclear fuel.

I am disappointed the administration has continued efforts to push ahead with its plan to circumvent Yucca, as well as the repeated affirmations by Congress that Yucca is the lawful repository. I look forward to working with my colleagues here in Congress—especially the members of the Nevada delegation—to ensure that the law is upheld and Yucca Mountain moves forward.

Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the gentleman from Illinois.

Mr. DOLD. I thank the gentleman from Washington.

I just want to highlight, again, if I may, you mentioned a statistic just a moment ago that was talking about the fact that because the government hasn't moved forward with Yucca Mountain, the fact that we are actually paying to store this material all over the country to Exelon and other companies along those lines, it was anywhere between $15 and $50 billion.

Mr. NEWHOUSE. Over the course of those contracts, that is correct.

Mr. DOLD. That is astounding. I thank the gentleman from Washington for your leadership.

Mr. Speaker, it is my honor to yield to the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. SHIMKUS). He is the dean of the Illinois delegation and someone whose leadership, when it comes to Yucca Mountain, has been extensive.

He is certainly someone who understands what we need to be doing in terms of making sure this material gets off the shores of the Great Lakes and from our neighborhoods all around the country and put into a safe location about 150 miles from any inhabitant in Yucca Mountain.

Mr. SHIMKUS. Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for the time and just for having this national debate. The State of Illinois is a large State with a lot of nuclear power.

We are very fortunate to have that, not only to have the power generated, but to have the jobs, high-paying jobs, to be located around our State and paying a lot of taxes to our local communities, our local schools, and the like. It would even be better if the Federal Government would keep its promise.

Part of the movement to promote nuclear power was a promise by the Federal Government. In fact, they enforced a fee on those States that have nuclear power to go into a fund, the nuclear waste fund, to fund long-term geological storage.

□ 1845

Now, you might say: Why a long-term geological storage? Why a centralized location? Because the world

community, the best scientists have determined that one repository, one location, is better than 104, not counting defense sites—one geological repository—in other words, someplace in the ground—is better than above ground—or in the case that you are particularly concerned about, next to Lake Michigan.

That is not the only location that isn't what you would think would be some sensitive areas, whether it is large lakes, large rivers, flood plains, and the like. The world community, the scientists, have all said: let's get it all located in one place, and let's put it in long-term geological storage location.

The Federal Government passed a law in 1982 called the Nuclear Waste Policy Act. It had 10 locations. The top pick in that location was Yucca Mountain; then they narrowed the list down to three. The top pick of the three was Yucca Mountain. Then the 1987 amendments to the Nuclear Waste Policy Act said: that is where we are going to send it.

Now, after that, 30 years, $15 billion, the greatest scientific minds in the world, this is the most studied piece of ground on the planet, has concluded, based upon a report by the Nuclear Regulatory Commission—an independent science commission of our government—said that, once Yucca Mountain is closed, it will be safe for 1 million years. That is a long time.

That is really what has turned this debate again back into this country because it has always been a question of the science. Will the science prove it? We don't know. We have to do the studies; we have to do the research.

Well, fortunately, we were able to finally get the Nuclear Regulatory Commission to render the safety evaluation report which said, once closed, this site will be safe for 1 million years.

Now, as you mentioned, Yucca Mountain is 100 miles from Las Vegas. It is in the desert. It is a mountain in a desert. It is 1,000 feet below the crest of the mountain. It is 1,000 feet above the water table.

The other story that is not told very well, until you go out and visit, is it is surrounded by the nuclear test site, the place where our government used to test nuclear weapons. There is an Air Force base there, so the adjoining land around Yucca Mountain is all Federal land.

When people say, Well, you need to get local buy-in, local folks to decide, well, the Federal Government is the local folks in this case.

I appreciate you highlighting not just Yucca Mountain, but the need for communities around this Nation to start having this debate again because the Federal Government has already invested.

We have a site. It is time to move forward. It is time to get the spent nuclear fuel, in your case, or the defense waste, like Congressman NEWHOUSE, it is time to get that in a single repository.

Mr. DOLD. Can the gentleman shed a little light?

Many people might be watching this and not know who actually owns the nuclear fuel. Many people don't realize that private entities can't own this. This is actually all owned by the government. Private entities can use it for power, but the actual nuclear fuel rods, the spent nuclear fuel rods, are owned by the government.

Can you shed a little light on that? This is actually the government's problem here.

Mr. SHIMKUS. It is the government's fuel; it is the government's waste. You highlighted this earlier. When we don't have a long-term repository to take the spent nuclear fuel or the defense waste—mostly, the spent nuclear fuel—we have to pay the nuclear utilities to hold that spent fuel because we have an obligation by law to receive that.

Even from a fiscal conservative position, we should be moving forward. We should get a return on the investment of 30 years and $15 billion, especially since the NRC has said this location is safe; but then we should relieve ourselves from having to pay the additional cost to utilities for holding the waste that we should be holding.

I appreciate your leading this Special Order and, of course, again talking about the local issues that are very important in your district, but they are important in districts all around this country.

Someone has to lead the charge and make that statement for the Federal Government to start doing what it is legally obligated to do. I am just happy to join you, and I thank you.

Mr. DOLD. Well, I certainly appreciate your leadership, and it is great to have you speak on such an important topic.

This is an environmental issue; it is a safety issue; it is an economic issue—and one that we have to step up and solve.

I am pleased to yield to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. WILLIAMS), my good friend, who understands these issues and understands them very well.

Mr. WILLIAMS. Thank you, Congressman DOLD.

Mr. Speaker, I wish to discuss an important matter that we have heard tonight and talk a little bit about it more, that impacts both my home State of Texas and, as we have heard already, the Nation.

Nuclear power is a clean, efficient, and virtually inexhaustible fuel source. Many people rely on it. In fact, in Somerville County, Texas, Comanche Peak is a nuclear power plant that generates enough power to supply about 1.15 million homes in normal conditions and 460,000 homes in periods of peak demand.

Nuclear waste, however, must be isolated for tens of thousands of years to safely degrade. Yucca Mountain—we have talked a lot about it tonight—is the official Federal nuclear waste repository and is the law of the land under the Nuclear Waste Policy Act.

The Department of Energy has concluded that the repository would have little to no adverse impact on future populations or the environment; yet President Obama and HARRY REID effectively have delayed the Yucca program in 2009 without proposing any kind of alternative energy or energy strategy.

Now, like many other nuclear power plants across the United States, Comanche Peak in my district has been paying dues for storing waste, which some think could be as much as $30 billion which, of course, is simply passed on to its customers. That is what always happens.

Nuclear waste in our communities poses an environmental risk, a terrorism risk, and prevents communities from redeveloping the property. The facility at Yucca Mountain represents our best option to dispose of spent nuclear fuel in a safe, environmentally friendly, and secure way for centuries to come.

Now, if we fail to act, we will continue to spend billions of dollars storing nuclear waste in a way that ultimately leaves our communities vulnerable to environmental disaster or terrorism.

We cannot punt this problem to future generations. We have a habit of doing that. We need to find a solution, and we need to find that solution today. I believe we need the Federal Government to quit breaking promises to the American people.

Mr. DOLD. I thank my good friend from Texas, and I certainly appreciate your leadership on this.

Again, highlighting the fact that this is also an economic issue is this land, all of a sudden, can't be redeveloped oftentimes; and, frankly, the property taxes for a lot of these communities can't be developed to its fullest extent.

As jobs in the economy continue to be that constant drumbeat around the country and certainly in our communities, you know better than many in terms of what we need to do to create jobs, and this is one of the things that I think the government is falling short on.

Mr. WILLIAMS. Well, there is no question about it. It is about jobs, and it is about growth. We need Yucca Mountain to come online, so we can begin to develop these properties and also protect the safety of America and Americans.

Mr. DOLD. I thank the gentleman for your leadership.

As we continue to talk about this, again, it just highlights, Mr. Speaker, how many communities, how many sites we have around our country that are impacted by spent nuclear fuel, whether it could be defense or whether it be for civilian purposes.

It is now my pleasure to yield to the gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. WILSON), my good friend.

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Thank you for yielding; and, Congressman DOLD, thank you for your leadership on this issue.

I am very grateful. I represent the Savannah River Site in Aiken and Barnwell Counties of South Carolina. I had the privilege of working with Congressman JIM CLYBURN, very bipartisan. A portion of this site is located in Allendale County, South Carolina. We have worked together on the issues relative to the Savannah River Site, which should be noted is where the defense waste is currently being placed.

It is a consequence of the cold war, but it also is a consequence of victory in the cold war. I know that the persons who worked in the Savannah River Site are very, very grateful for the opportunities that they have had to provide for the protection of the American people, and it has been successful.

It is particularly meaningful to me because I am the only Member of Congress that actually worked at the Savannah River Site, so I know firsthand that it is really very professional, and it is also very environmentally sound.

We were talking about why are we here. For me, it is due to the environment and jobs. The environment we know is in danger if we have different sites around the country that could be addressed.

In the Department of Energy, I have another distinction. I was very grateful to be the deputy general counsel of the Department of Energy in 1981 and 1982. The defense waste bill came up through that time.

It was determined that there should be a geologic formation to place the waste of our country, whether it be defense waste or whether it be commercial. It was determined—and I know that you will be going through this to explain—that, indeed, Yucca Mountain is ideal.

None of us would ever want to put any community, any State at risk, but we know well that Yucca would not be of risk to the people of the West, but it would be very sound, and it would be very environmentally secure, and it would also, indeed, help create jobs.

Our State has been so fortunate to have the Savannah River Site, but we also have another distinction. We are one of the most nuclear-intensive States in the country. Nearly 60 percent of all the power that is produced in the State of South Carolina for almost 30 years has been nuclear.

We know what the consequence of this is, and that is that we have reliable energy, we have green, clean energy, and we have a level of inexpensive energy, which has a consequence of promoting jobs.

The jobs that have been created are quite self-evident in our State. We have a circumstance with the providing of low-cost energy. South Carolina now—particularly with the development of the BMW facility at Greer, South Carolina, of all things—is the leading exporter of cars in the United States, creating jobs in our State, our region, but then providing for extraordinary export around the world.

Additionally, South Carolina is the leading manufacturer of tires. Right next to the Savannah River Site is the Bridgestone facility, and this is a Japanese investment, over $1 billion.

Then right down I–20, not far in the district I represent, is the Michelin facility. There are two plants adjacent to each other. I was there recently with Ambassador Gerard Araud of France because we appreciate the French investment.

In fact, the Michelin facility is the largest Michelin facility in the world, nearly 2 million square feet with nearly 2,000 employees. Again, this is because of the success that we have with nuclear power.

Then further down I–20, we are very grateful of a German investment. Continental Tires has just announced that they just completed a half-billion-dollar facility in South Carolina. Then we also welcome from Singapore the Giti Tire company, which has announced a quarter-of-a-billion-dollar facility to be located in the upper part of South Carolina.

Over and over again, it is because we have safe, secure, clean energy. In fact, I want to commend the Obama administration. They actually have provided for the licensing of three new nuclear reactors in our country.

Two are located at the V.C. Summer facility at Jenkinsville, South Carolina, which is, again, adjacent to the district I represent in Fairfield County; and then directly across the Savannah River from the district that I represent is the Vogtle plant at Waynesboro, Georgia.

We are very supportive of these. All of them will be so helpful to achieve the environmentally very important determination of a geologic formation.

Then there is an economic side. Just as the people of Illinois, the people of South Carolina, and also the people of Pennsylvania have, through their rates, paid over $1 billion into the fund to build Yucca, so our people are invested.

We have done it in good faith, and we need to follow the law. The law is that, indeed, this be the geologic formation, which is safe for the American people and creating the opportunity for jobs.

□ 1900

A final point. South Carolina has taken this so seriously. I want to commend our Governor, Nikki Haley. I also want to commend our Attorney General, Alan Wilson. They have actually filed a suit—and it was inspired largely by U.S. Senator LINDSEY GRAHAM and U.S. Senator TIM SCOTT—to enforce the law. The law needs to be enforced. It would be beneficial to the people of our State, and it would be beneficial to our region of South Carolina and Georgia, but it would also be beneficial to the American people.

I want to thank you for your leadership on this issue so the American people understand how environmentally sound this is, how positive it is, the energy that is being produced because of this, and then the potential for jobs, not just in our region but across the United States.

Mr. DOLD. I thank the gentleman from South Carolina for his insight. Certainly, he knows, in living close to and representing an area that is very close to the water there on the Savannah River, that it is very close to what my particular issue is with spent nuclear fuel being just a few hundred feet away from the greatest fresh surface water we have in the world. Ninety-five percent of the world's fresh surface water is in the Great Lakes. Storing that nuclear fuel so close, I think, is not only an environmental risk and a terrorist risk, but it is jeopardizing where 30 million Americans actually get their drinking water. It is really just a jewel of a natural resource and one that we need to protect, so I certainly appreciate your leadership.

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Thank you for your leadership.

Mr. DOLD. Thank you, sir.

Mr. Speaker, we have heard today from different people from around our country about the need for us to move forward with Yucca Mountain. Again, just highlighting some of the points: Yucca Mountain is 100 miles away from the Colorado River, further away from any inhabitants, sitting 1,000 feet above the water table, 1,000 feet below ground.

Mr. Speaker, I came today wanting to share with you a story about my district and, more specifically, about a portion of my district in Zion, Illinois.

Zion has 25,000 residents and sits on the shores of Lake Michigan. Yet, due to the obstruction of the administration, tons of spent nuclear fuel remain stored at Zion. It is stored on the shores of the Great Lakes, literally just a few hundred feet away from the shore where 30 million Americans receive their fresh drinking water.

We need to make sure we do everything we can to protect what, I believe, is the jewel of our ecosystem in the Great Lakes, but so long as the fuel remains there, the city of Zion cannot use this site to bring in new businesses or new jobs on that site, and it continues to suffer from lost revenue from lost property taxes. The uranium that has been used in the nuclear reactors stays radioactive for tens of thousands of years. It stays radioactive after it has been removed from the reactor, and it must be isolated from the environment in order to allow it to safely degrade.

Unfortunately, the Federal Government has not done its part to take charge. As we talked about earlier, Mr. Speaker, the Federal Government is the one that actually owns the fuel, so it is sitting now in our communities as opposed to going to a site we have spent nearly $15 billion researching and putting money into—Yucca Mountain.

For the past three decades, the policy of the Federal Government has been to push forward with a long-term, deep

geologic repository at Yucca Mountain in Nevada. Thirteen years ago, the Department of Energy determined that Yucca Mountain was the best and safest location in which to store America's nuclear waste. Indeed, it is the law of the land, as we have heard tonight, and we have spent billions of dollars to study the site and get it ready to be able to store our spent nuclear fuel.

Mr. Speaker, despite the billions of dollars spent, nothing has been done on Yucca Mountain since this administration has taken office. The administration cut off funding for Yucca Mountain and ensured that nothing would be done to get this site ready—this despite the three decades spent studying the site and the over $15 billion spent. If we do not proceed, that money will be completely wasted. Further, the administration has failed to bring forward any kind of alternative, meaning that spent nuclear waste continues to sit in our communities where, I would argue, it should not be.

America's nuclear power plants have produced over 71,000 metric tons of spent nuclear fuel over the past six decades, and while it has created jobs and clean energy, we do have an obligation to make sure that it is stored, and stored safely. We need to make sure that it is stored in a long-term facility. But, instead, spent nuclear fuel remains at plants at at least 75 nationwide sites, including at Zion.

There is a solution to this problem which affects not only Zion but the entire country. We can fund the Yucca Mountain project and ensure that we will solve the problem once and for all. If we don't, the only alternative right now is to leave the waste where it is, stored in places like Zion, leaving both Zion and the drinking water for 30 million Americans vulnerable to an environmental disaster or to a terrorist event, leaving the residents of Zion with a large plot of land in the heart of their community that, frankly, we can't use.

The only responsible course of action is to tackle this problem today. We have seen the statistics out there, and as we look at what the facts are, the Department of Energy has determined that the deep geological disposal is the safest method to store spent nuclear fuel.

If we just look at the difference here, in Zion, Illinois, on the shores of Lake Michigan, there are 65 casks containing 1,135 metric tons of nuclear waste—waste stored above the ground, about 5 feet above the water table and just a few hundred feet away from the shores of Lake Michigan.

Yet Yucca Mountain, on the other hand—a place where we have spent $15 billion, where our experts have said is the safest place for us—is where we actually tested a nuclear weapon. It is near an Air Force base. So, when people talk about the neighbors, as Congressman SHIMKUS talked about earlier, the neighbor is the Federal Government. The Federal Government owns the spent nuclear fuel. The Federal Government owns the land around it. The Federal Government owns the site at Yucca Mountain—Yucca Mountain, again, 100 miles away from the Colorado River.

The storage that we are talking about would be 1,000 feet above the water table, because it is important that we protect our water, and 1,000 feet below ground. This is the ideal spot. Yet we have come not on science; this hasn't been objected to by the scientific research. This has been objected to for political reasons. Frankly, I have to tell you, Mr. Speaker, the politics has to end because what it is doing is jeopardizing communities across our Nation. We should be transporting this spent nuclear fuel to the safest location possible to make sure that we are not putting our citizens at risk, that we are not damaging or potentially damaging the environment.

The Department of Energy has concluded that the repository would have little or no adverse impact on future populations or the environment. These are key. So we are going to take a look at what the Department of Energy has to say and at the studies that have been done. Literally, Yucca Mountain is probably the most studied piece of real estate that we have in our Nation today. All of the studies that have come back say this is the spot at which we should be storing this spent nuclear fuel. Instead, it is staying all across the country at the cost to the taxpayers.

The Federal Government owns the nuclear fuel, and when it refused, according to the law, to take that nuclear fuel back and deal with it, we had our companies out there that basically said, Well, what are we supposed to do with it? So they sued on breach of contract, literally costing the taxpayers billions of dollars. We heard my colleague from Washington say that it could be as much as $50 billion that the hard-working taxpayers are going to pay to keep the spent nuclear fuel where we don't want it to stay.

The government has an obligation, Mr. Speaker, to step up and do the right thing. I, for one, am delighted to be able to be here today to tell you about the story of Zion, Illinois, but we recognize that this is a situation that is impacting over 104 different sites. We cannot afford to wait any longer.

There are some on the other side of the building, Mr. Speaker, who are specifically holding this process up. We need to move forward. We need to make sure Yucca Mountain is approved, open, and, again, able to store this for up to a million years. It is the right thing to do, and I urge my colleagues, Republicans and Democrats—we have got those in the Illinois delegation to my south who rely on Lake Michigan. This is something that we should all be united behind.

I am honored to be able to come up and talk about this, but I am also saddened that it has taken so long and that, if we do nothing, it will be potentially decades longer. This is unacceptable. The citizens of our country demand that the United States Government abide by the law and by its obligations to store the spent fuel at Yucca Mountain.

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

D.C. EMANCIPATION DAY: INJUSTICE AND PROGRESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 2015, the Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from the District of Columbia (Ms. NORTON) for 30 minutes.

Ms. NORTON. Mr. Speaker, in advance of D.C. Emancipation Day, and I know that it is not a national holiday, but it is, yes, a holiday in the District of Columbia. It commemorates the day when the slaves in the District of Columbia were liberated by the Congress and Abraham Lincoln 9 months before the national Emancipation Proclamation.

Astonishingly, 150 years later, full freedom and equal citizenship have not yet come to the residents of the District of Columbia.

You don't have to be the Holmes family in the District of Columbia, who have lived three generations here paying taxes without representation. Indeed, my great grandfather, Richard Holmes, was a runaway slave from Virginia. When Lincoln and Congress freed the slaves 150 years ago, Richard Holmes was not freed, because he was a runaway slave rather than a slave whose master lived in the District of Columbia. So he had to wait the 9 months for the Emancipation Proclamation, but he was working on the streets of Washington like a free man as they were building Washington. He became free, but his great granddaughter—grateful for all that my family has done—cannot say that we are free today.

The greater shock will not come from those of us who are longtime residents. It will come from those who moved to D.C. yesterday, from those who are not three generations here but who are one day here, when they find that their rights are gone, that the rights they had in every State of the Union have vanished except for a few.

They can vote for President, but they can't vote for whoever represents them on this House floor. They have Congress interfering with their local business. This will astonish the average American, and most Americans have no idea this is the case for the 650,000 residents who live in their Nation's Capital. People have taken for granted that the vote that is emblematic of statehood would follow them—I don't know—from Utah and California, from Alaska and Maine to the District of Columbia when they moved here. They had no idea that their local budget, for example, which is a budget raised exclusively in the District of Columbia,

would have the big foot of the Federal Government kicking it around—indeed, that it would even be in the Congress.

Emancipation Day in the District of Columbia is not a mere commemoration. It is not like George Washington's birthday. It is alive with a fervor against this rank injustice that I have begun to speak about this evening. I am going to speak about the injustice, but I am also going to talk about progress because we have been encouraged—we who live in the District of Columbia—and the many allies we have to fight as we begin to make some substantial headway.

□ 1915

Most Americans—indeed, all other Americans—obtain their full rights by going through a citizenship ceremony or by simply being born here. All you have to do to have your full citizenship rights, when all is said and done, is to pay taxes. You don't even have to have participated in all of the Nation's wars or any of the Nation's wars the way the residents of the District of Columbia have done ever since the first war, the war that created the United States of America. You don't have to have paid all the taxes ever since you have been in the Union of states the way the District of Columbia residents have.

The reason you don't is that the statehood simply comes with where you live, and that is what has not happened to us. Where do we live? We are proud to live in the Nation's Capital. There, you would expect rights to flourish first and foremost.

When I spoke of not having the vote, do understand I have the vote in committee, and I am very grateful for that vote because it does allow me to carry home some important benefits to the District of Columbia, but what I don't have is the right to come to this floor and have the same vote that each of my colleagues has on business that affects the District of Columbia and the Nation.

Even matters that affect the District of Columbia, our own budget comes to Congress; and every other Member, who had nothing to do with raising the funds, gets to vote on that budget, but not the Member elected by the people of the District of Columbia. How painful it is that I have been able to speak on a number of wars that our country has entered, most recently Afghanistan and Iraq, have gone to Arlington to bury those killed, residents killed in those wars who went to war, secured the vote for residents of Afghanistan and Iraq but came home to find no vote or, in the case of those who died, did not come home at all.

And yet I am in a Republican House where ''federalism'' is the byword. Indeed, I understand why, because nothing was more important to the Founders than their own local laws and keeping the Federal Government, which was then kept deliberately weak, out of their affairs. What mattered to them was what was most local. So the very notion of interfering with the local business of a jurisdiction of any kind was unthinkable for our Framers.

It is the very meaning of statehood, this localism, this thing that says that there is territory and there are laws, there are habits for you only. They will differ vastly across the country, but that is your prerogative; that is the prerogative of statehood. That is why the residents of the District of Columbia seek to become the 51st State, and know it will happen. Perhaps later than sooner, but it must happen because of the principles I have begun to describe.

It must happen because we have been called out and continue to be called out internationally, because we have signed treaties where we are now in violation. We are in violation of a treaty we signed in 1977, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights. The Human Rights Committee, the U.N. Human Rights Committee, has called us out once again as it did in 2006, and they recited the reason for it.

The Human Rights Committee, looking at what has been done or, as it turns out, not been done said, and I am quoting them, the United Nations delegation to the U.N. ''remains concerned that residents of the District of Columbia do not enjoy full representation in Congress, a restriction that does not seem to be compatible with article 25 of the covenant.''

Then they cited article 2, and I won't quote from it entirely, but it says that the treaty we signed requires that we ''adopt such laws or other measures as may be necessary to give effect to the rights recognized in the present covenant.''

What are those rights? In this covenant, in this treaty that we the United States has signed, says all persons are ''equal under the law and are entitled, without discrimination, through the equal protection of the law. In this respect, the law shall prohibit any discrimination and guarantee all persons equal and effective protection against discrimination on any ground,'' and then they name the grounds. Here are the grounds: ''such as race, color, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth—and here is the one that applies to the District of Columbia and its residents—''or other status.'' What is our other status? That we reside in our own Nation's Capital—and for that reason, and that reason alone, are denied equal rights with other citizens of the United States of America.

Worse than being denied your rights is getting a right and then having it taken from you. Even that has happened to the residents of the District of Columbia. Shortly after I was elected to Congress, I wrote a memo indicating that since, as a Delegate, by rules of the House, I could vote in the Committee of the Whole, it followed that I should be able to vote in the Committee of the Whole when it meets on this floor. The Democrats were in control, but even they said: We must send this to outside counsel. Nobody from the District of Columbia has ever voted on this floor.

They sent it to outside counsel. They said that the District of Columbia votes by rule in committee, so by rule, yes, if the majority pass a rule, the District can vote on the floor of the House of Representatives. That rule was passed. Every time that the Democrats are in power, I get to vote on the House floor—by no means on all business, but certainly on business in the Committee of the Whole, and some of that really affects and is important to the District of Columbia. It is not the whole and complete vote. It is not what we are entitled to.

Why would anyone want to take it from us when we pay taxes without representation? But sure enough, when my good friends on the other side of the aisle write their rules, they write the District right out of the rules and take from us a vote that we have actually exercised on the House floor with the concurrence of the Federal courts of the United States. Right after we were granted that right and after I began to exercise it, my Republican colleagues actually sued the Congress for giving the District the vote in the Committee of the Whole. The District Court said: It is your discretion. What Congress has done is legal; the matter is legal and constitutional. And the Congress—the Republicans, not the Congress, took their suit against the Congress, the Democratic Congress to the Court of Appeals. The Court of Appeals, the Federal Court of Appeals said: Yes, what Congress has done is legal, in its discretion and constitutional. And I proceeded to vote.

I think it is probably unheard of except in coups or dictatorships to snatch a vote or a right that someone once held, but that is what happened to the residents of the District of Columbia. No wonder there is rage in the city about such treatment.

Now, you might say: Well, there surely must be some reason why the residents of the District of Columbia don't have the vote. No one has found any such a reason yet. They have only found reasons why we should have the vote.

Some will say: Oh, you are much too small to have the vote. After all, you are only a city. Well, a city is whatever you call it, so is a State. But if the size determines that you have the vote, then Vermont and Wyoming should not have the vote because we have more population than either of those two States.

Vermont and Wyoming are not alone. Those are the states where we have notably more residents than they have. We have more than 650,000 residents. But there are more than half a dozen States that are in the same range of population as the District of Columbia and have a Representative—no more than one, just like the District of Columbia has one in this House—and two

Senators. The District of Columbia has no Senators.

Who would say that that is fair?

And yet if you look down to the states with comparable population, the first tier that are almost exactly like the District of Columbia: North Dakota, Alaska, Vermont, of course, and Wyoming. And then there is another tier that are above us but very close in population: Delaware and South Dakota. I want them to keep their vote, and I want them to keep their two Senators. All we are asking is that District of Columbia residents be treated equally.

I have been speaking all week in preparation for Emancipation Day tomorrow, April 16. I began with two important, what I call debt-paid, paid-in-full obligations of citizenship. The first is participation in the armed services—although we know nobody is required to participate in the armed services today—and the second is payment of taxes. Pretty much today, April 15, if you have earned enough money, even a relatively small amount, you are going to have to pay some taxes.

It is hard to say which of those is most important. They all, of course, surround citizenship. Both support our government: those who go to the service, those who pay their taxes. I won't say what is most important, but I started with military service for a reason: anyone who enters the service, especially today, does so voluntarily, knowing she is taking personal risk of her life.

Service in the armed services is so important to our country that undocumented immigrants have been granted citizenship by serving in the Armed Forces, and that has now been formalized. Young people who grew up in the United States but came with their parents as undocumented children without any legal status have always joined the armed services. In recognition of that, our country has now said that, at least for those who have special language or medical skills, if they join the armed services, after 6 months they can apply for citizenship.

Just consider the premium that we are placing on service in the Armed Forces, a premium that is more than deserved, and yet there is no cognizance taken of the fact that our residents who lived in the District of Columbia since its formation in 1801 have fought and died in the armed services; and even before that they fought in the Revolutionary War that led to the formal formation of the United States and the District of Columbia. So by any measure, District of Columbia residents have gone beyond the call of duty in serving their country and earned the right—earned, earned painfully, with their lives—the full right to be treated as full and equal citizens of a State.

□ 1930

This chart shows how the right to be the 51st State has been tragically earned. In World War I, there were more casualties from D.C., this small territory than three States; in World War II, there were more casualties from the District of Columbia than from four States—and it only rises.

In the Korean war, there were more casualties than from eight States of the union, almost all of which were larger in size and had more population. The Vietnam war, where we have the very most casualties—more men and women were killed than from 10 States in the Union.

There is a very special part of our service in the Armed Forces. The District of Columbia was not a majority African American city until almost 1960. Today, it really is not a majority African American city. I grew up in a city that was largely White.

During that period, for most of its history, the District of Columbia was a segregated city, segregated by the Congress of the United States. I went to segregated schools, for example; yet look at how residents of the District of Columbia who had no vote of any kind at that time, had no home rule government. The city was run by three commissioners—no mayor, no city council, nobody to go to who was responsible to you—yet look what its residents did.

The first African American Army general was born and raised in the District of Columbia. The first African American Air Force general was also born in the District of Columbia.

The first African American Naval Academy graduate was born right here in the District of Columbia. The first African American Air Force Academy graduate was born in this city. The roster continues into recent years, where we had the first Deputy Commandant of the U.S. Coast Guard and the first African American female aviator in the D.C. National Guard.

Don't tell me District residents haven't paid their dues and then some; yet I have sometimes had some difficulty getting our armed services personnel duly recognized.

Perhaps the most poignant was a mother who wrote me—and I thank this Congress for helping me to correct this injustice. It may seem small to you, but it didn't seem small to my constituents. They are the parents of Jonathan Matthew Rucker, a D.C. native high school graduate who then proudly joined the Navy, instead of going to college.

He graduated from Naval Station Great Lakes. His parents went to see him graduate. Tomi Rucker, his mother, is an investigator with the D.C. Fire and EMS Department. His father, Michael Linwood Boyd, is a sergeant in the Special Operations Division of the D.C. police department.

They enjoyed attending their son's graduation from naval boot camp. The Navy called out the names. As the name of each young person was called, the Navy raised the state flag. The name of Jonathan Matthew Rucker was called, and no flag was raised. Why? What in the world? What could they have been thinking, that we weren't a State, so the flag shouldn't be raised?

Well, this Congress, controlled by my good Republican friends, was also amazed. I very much appreciate that they passed my bill that was attached to the Defense authorization bill that the Armed Forces now must display the D.C. flag—and we learned only with the visibility of this incident that there were D.C. veterans who had come home from wars and, every flag was raised, except the D.C. flag.

I must tell you, I think it was because D.C. is not a State, for God's sake. At some point, you just have to draw the line. Just make us a State, and maybe those kinds of things won't happen.

Take our World War I memorial. Every State had a World War I memorial—paid for by people in that State—so was ours, 100 percent. Indeed, they collected money even from schoolchildren.

There has actually been an attempt to take our D.C. War Memorial—because it happens to be located on the Mall—and convert it into a national World War I memorial because there is no World War I memorial on the Mall.

Well, sorry about that, but we paid—not only in treasure, but in the lives of almost 500 D.C. residents. I thank my Republican colleagues for working with me to maintain the D.C. War Memorial. The D.C. World War I memorial had become, really, a war memorial for all D.C. veterans.

What I did was to work closely with my colleagues so that we would get a real World War I memorial that could be respected. That means there is going to be a wholesale redevelopment of the Pershing Park, which many always considered a World War I memorial.

It is not located on the Mall, but it is located right in a prime location on Pennsylvania Avenue, near the White House, and we were able to come to a compromise, the kind of compromise that makes the world go round and makes this House look good.

Today, of course, was tax day, and my Republican colleagues came forward with any number of bills. Some were worthy bills, bipartisan bills. Some were nonsense. Some were just straight out demagoguery. My colleagues are very concerned with tax cuts, even bills this week.

Many will be surprised about the District of Columbia and taxes. This is one of the great unknown factoids of the United States. Residents of the District of Columbia, per capita, per resident, pay the highest taxes in the United States, Federal taxes, more than any Americans.

If you are in Mississippi, you pay the lowest per capita, at just about $4,000, compared to our $12,000. If you go to my Web site, you will find out where your State stands.

I will go down the top 10: the District of Columbia, Connecticut, New Jersey, Massachusetts—this is in rank order,

by the way—Maryland, New York, Nevada, Wyoming, New Hampshire, and California.

The largest States—let's take California and New York—they each pay in the $8,000 range. D.C. is $12,000 per capita. This is all per resident.

You say: well, look at the small States; they must be like you.

No, they are not. Small States, like Rhode Island—we are $12,000, and they are at $7,000. We are at $12,000 per resident, and in Vermont, they are $6,000. North Dakota is at $6,000. Montana is at $5,000.

Those are the States with small populations, so population can't be the cause. The cause is that the District has middle-income people, rich people, and, yes, because it is a big city, poor people, and when you add it all up, Uncle Sam gets more than his due without D.C. getting statehood and the rights that come with it.

Only statehood can end this bucketload of injustice. Only statehood can end no vote for the Member from the District on this floor, no matter what the bill, even if the bill is about the District of Columbia. Only statehood can end the outrage of bringing the District's local budget for Members to vote on who have nothing to do with it and have contributed not one penny to it.

Only statehood can keep this Congress from interfering with the local laws of our local jurisdiction, using their own preferences to overturn the democratic will of the legislature of the District of Columbia.

But, it is not all terrible. We have made progress. This is a country that makes progress slowly, so we are not about to give up. We are trying to get the elements of statehood even as we try to get what we are entitled to.

Budget autonomy—so that our budget won't have to come here—was not only in the President's budget, but my bill for budget autonomy was in the Senate appropriations bill last Congress. They put it in their budget. That, I am afraid, did not pass because we cannot get yet the kind of consensus we need from the House.

The residents of the District of Columbia want to have sole dominion over their own money. That is $7 billion that we raise ourselves in the District of Columbia, so residents put it to referendum.

The city was sued after that referendum which passed by almost 85 percent of the vote. Now, that is in court to see where it goes. But residents are not going to give up. If they can't get statehood, they are trying to get any part of it that they can.

Other elements of statehood have also been introduced in the House and the Senate so that our local laws don't have to come here, for example.

Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the time I have had on the floor for Emancipation Day. I want to leave you looking forward, not backward. We are overjoyed by making some progress.

We know that, ultimately, the denial of rights will be seen as un-American, especially when that denial concerns the residents of our own Nation's Capital.

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

ADJOURNMENT

Ms. NORTON. Mr. Speaker, I move that the House do now adjourn.

The motion was agreed to; accordingly (at 7 o'clock and 42 minutes p.m.), under its previous order, the House adjourned until tomorrow, Thursday, April 16, 2015, at 9 a.m.

EXECUTIVE COMMUNICATIONS, ETC.

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

1117. A letter from the Associate Administrator, Agricultural Marketing Service, Fruit and Vegetable Programs, Department of Agriculture, transmitting the Department's interim rule — Marketing Order Regulating the Handling of Spearmint Oil Produced in the Far West; Revision of the Salable Quantity and Allotment Percentage for Class 3 (Native) Spearmint Oil for the 2014-2015 Marketing Year [Doc. No.: AMS-FV-13-0087; FV14-985-1C IR] received April 13, 2015, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Agriculture.

1118. A letter from the Associate Administrator, Agricultural Marketing Service, Fruit and Vegetable Programs, Department of Agriculture, transmitting the Department's final rule — Marketing Order Regulating the Handling of Spearmint Oil Produced in the Far West; Revision of the Salable Quantity and Allotment Percentage for Class 1 (Scotch) Spearmint Oil for the 2014-2015 Marketing Year [Doc. No.: AMS-FV-13-0087; FV14-985-1A FIR] received April 13, 2015, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Agriculture.

1119. A letter from the Associate Administrator, Agricultural Marketing Service, Fruit and Vegetable Programs, Department of Agriculture, transmitting the Department's interim rule — Fruit, Vegetable, and Specialty Crops —— Import Regulations; Changes to Reporting Requirements To Add Electronic Form Filing Option [Doc. No.: AMS-FV-14-0093; FV15-944/980/999-1 IR] received April 13, 2015, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Agriculture.

1120. A letter from the Assistant Secretary for Legislation, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting the FY 2014 Performance Report to the President and Congress for the Biosimilar User Fee Act; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

1121. A letter from the Executive Director, Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, transmitting the Commission's final rule — Annual Update of Filing Fees [Docket No.: RM15-6-000] received April 8, 2015, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

1122. A letter from the Director, Office of Congressional Affairs, Research, U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission, transmitting the Commission's final rule — ''Applications of Bioassay for Radioiodine'' Regulatory Guide 8.20, Revision 2, received April 13, 2015, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

1123. A letter from the Assistant Secretary for Export Administration, Bureau of Industry and Security, Department of Commerce, transmitting the Department's final rule — Revisions to the Export Administration Regulations Based on the 2014 Missile Technology Control Regime Plenary Agreements [Docket No.: 141204999-5186-01] (RIN: 0694-AG41) received April 8, 2015, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

1124. A letter from the Assistant Secretary, Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting the annual report pursuant to Sec. 2(8) of the Senate's Resolution of Advice and Consent to the Treaty with Australia Concerning Defense Trade Cooperation (Treaty Doc. 110-10); to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

1125. A letter from the Assistant Secretary, Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting a letter regarding commitments in the Joint Plan of Action, pursuant to Secs. 1245(d)(1) and 1245(d)(5) of the National Defense Authorization Act of Fiscal Year 2012, as amended; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

1126. A letter from the Assistant Secretary, Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting a report on the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) programs or projects in countries described in Sec. 307(a) of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 (22 U.S.C. 2227(a)); to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

1127. A letter from the Assistant Secretary, Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting a certification pursuant to the reporting requirements of Sec. 36(c) of the Arms Export Control Act (Transmittal No.: DDTC 15-010); to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

1128. A letter from the Assistant Director for Regulatory Affairs, Office of Foreign Assets Control, Department of the Treasury, transmitting the Department's final rule — Syrian Sanctions Regulations received April 13, 2015, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

1129. A letter from the General Manager and Director of Equal Employment Opportunity, Defense Nuclear Facilities Safety Board, transmitting the Board's FY 2014 annual report, pursuant to Sec. 203 of the Notification and Federal Employee Antidiscrimination and Retaliation Act of 2002 (No FEAR Act), Pub. L. 107-174; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

1130. A letter from the Assistant Director, Senior Executive Management Office, Department of Defense, transmitting a report pursuant to the Federal Vacancies Reform Act of 1998; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

1131. A letter from the Assistant Director, Senior Executive Management Office, Department of Defense, transmitting a report pursuant to the Federal Vacancies Reform Act of 1998; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

1132. A letter from the Assistant Director, Senior Executive Management Office, Department of Defense, transmitting a report pursuant to the Federal Vacancies Reform Act of 1998; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

1133. A letter from the Chief Human Capital Officer, Department of Energy, transmitting a report pursuant to the Federal Vacancies Reform Act of 1998; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

1134. A letter from the Senior Counsel for Regulatory Affairs, Department of the Treasury, transmitting the Department's final rule — Department of the Treasury Acquisition Regulation; Technical Amendments received April 8, 2015, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

1135. A letter from the Chairman, Federal Communications Commission, transmitting the Commission's FY 2014 annual report, pursuant to Sec. 203 of the Notification and Federal Employee Antidiscrimination and Retaliation Act of 2002 (No FEAR Act), Pub. L. 107-174; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

1136. A letter from the Attorney-Advisor, Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting a report pursuant to the Federal Vacancies Reform Act of 1998; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

1137. A letter from the General Counsel and Senior Policy Advisor, Office of Management and Budget, Executive Office of The President, transmitting a report pursuant to the Federal Vacancies Reform Act of 1998, 5 U.S.C. 3349, regarding a vacancy in a Senate-confirmed position in the Office of Management and Budget; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

1138. A letter from the Director, Peace Corps, transmitting the Corps' FY 2014 report, pursuant to Title II of the Notification and Federal Employee Antidiscrimination and Retaliation Act of 2002; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

1139. A letter from the Director, Office of Equal Employment Opportunity, U.S. Merit Systems Protection Board, transmitting the Board's No FEAR Act Data Tables for FY 2015; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

1140. A letter from the Acting Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, NMFS, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, transmitting the Administration's temporary rule — Fisheries of the Exclusive Economic Zone Off Alaska; Sablefish Managed Under the Individual Fishing Quota Program [Docket No.: 141021887-5172-02 and 140918791-4999-02] (RIN: 0648-XD818) received April 13, 2015, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Natural Resources.

1141. A letter from the Deputy Assistant Administrator for Regulatory Programs, NMFS, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, transmitting the Administration's final rule — Pacific Halibut Fisheries; Catch Sharing Plan [Docket No.: 141126999-5235-01] (RIN: 0648-BE69) received April 13, 2015, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Natural Resources.

1142. A letter from the Deputy Assistant Administrator for Regulatory Programs, NMFS, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, transmitting the Administration's final rule — International Fisheries; Western and Central Pacific Fisheries for Highly Migratory Species; Fishing Restrictions Regarding the Oceanic Whitetip Shark, the Whale Shark, and the Silky Shark [Docket No.: 130703588-5112-02] (RIN: 0648-BD44) received April 13, 2015, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Natural Resources.

1143. A letter from the Deputy Assistant Administrator for Regulatory Programs, NMFS, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, transmitting the Administration's final rule — Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act Provisions; Fisheries of the Northeastern United States; Black Sea Bass Fishery; Framework Adjustment 8 [Docket No.: 141103917-5223-02] (RIN: 0648-BE60) received April 14, 2015, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Natural Resources.

1144. A letter from the Deputy Assistant Administrator for Regulatory Programs, NMFS, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, transmitting the Administration's final rule — Fisheries Off West Coast States; Highly Migratory Fisheries; California Swordfish Drift Gillnet Fishery; Vessel Monitoring System and Pre-Trip Notification Requirements [Docket No.: 140528460-5122-02] (RIN: 0648-BE25) received April 13, 2015, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Natural Resources.

1145. A letter from the Acting Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, NMFS, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, transmitting the Administration's temporary rule — Fisheries of the Exclusive Economic Zone Off Alaska; Reallocation of Pollock in the Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands [Docket No.: 141021887-5172-02] (RIN: 0648-XD846) received April 14, 2015, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Natural Resources.

1146. A letter from the Acting Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, NMFS, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, transmitting the Administration's temporary rule — Fisheries of the Caribbean, Gulf of Mexico, and South Atlantic; Snapper-Grouper Resources of the South Atlantic; 2015-2016 Recreational Fishing Season for Black Sea Bass [Docket No.: 130403320-4891-02] (RIN: 0648-XD828) received April 14, 2015, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Natural Resources.

1147. A letter from the Deputy Assistant Administrator for Regulatory Programs, NMFS, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, transmitting the Administration's final rule — Fisheries of the Northeastern United States; Atlantic Mackerel, Squid, and Butterfish Fisheries; Specifications and Management Measures [Docket No.: 140902739-5224-02] (RIN: 0648-BE49) received April 14, 2015, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Natural Resources.

1148. A letter from the Secretary, Judicial Conference of the United States, transmitting for consideration the proposed ''Criminal Judicial Procedure, Administration, and Technical Amendments Act of 2015''; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

1149. A letter from the Assistant Attorney General, Office of Legislative Affairs, Department of Justice, transmitting a report titled ''Department of Justice Activities Under the Civil Rights of Institutionalized Persons Act FY 2014'' pursuant to 42 U.S.C. 1997f; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

1150. A letter from the Senior Attorney-Advisor, Office of Regulation and Enforcement, Office of the General Counsel, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Use of Electronic Chain of Custody and Control Form in DOT-Regulated Drug Testing Programs [Docket No.: OST-2015-0045] (RIN: 2105-AE35) received April 14, 2015, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

1151. A letter from the Vice President, Government Affairs and Corporate Communications, National Railroad Passenger Corporation, transmitting other materials, as required by 49 U.S.C. 24315(a)(2); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

1152. A letter from the Attorney-Advisor, U.S. Coast Guard, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's temporary final rule — Safety Zone; Cooper River Bridge Run, Cooper River, and Town Creek Reaches, Charleston, SC [Docket No.: USCG-2015-0040] (RIN: 1625-AA87) received April 13, 2015, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

1153. A letter from the Assistant Secretary for Legislation, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting the ''2012 Regional Partnership Grants to Increase the Well-Being of and to Improve the Permanency Outcomes for Children Affected by Substance Abuse: First Annual Report to Congress'', as required by the Child and Family Services Improvement Act, Pub. L. 112-34; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

1154. A letter from the Director, Office of Regulations and Reports Clearance, Social Security Administration, transmitting the Administration's final rule — Revised Listings for Growth Disorders and Weight Loss in Children [Docket No.: SSA-2011-0081] (RIN: 0960-AG28) received April 7, 2015, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Ways and Means.

1155. A letter from the Assistant Secretary for Legislation, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting a report titled ''Medicare National Coverage Determinations for FY 2014'' pursuant to Sec. 1869(f)(7) of the Social Security Act; jointly to the Committees on Energy and Commerce and Ways and Means.

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES ON PUBLIC BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

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

Mr. BISHOP of Utah: Committee on Natural Resources. H.R. 373. A bill to direct the Secretary of the Interior and Secretary of Agriculture to expedite access to certain Federal land under the administrative jurisdiction of each Secretary for good Samaritan search-and-recovery missions, and for other purposes (Rept. 114–75, Pt. 1). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

Mr. BISHOP of Utah: Committee on Natural Resources. H.R. 404. A bill to authorize early repayment of obligations to the Bureau of Reclamation within the Northport Irrigation District in the State of Nebraska (Rept. 114–76). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

Mr. BISHOP of Utah: Committee on Natural Resources. H.R. 533. A bill to revoke the charter of incorporation of the Miami Tribe of Oklahoma at the request of that tribe, and for other purposes (Rept. 114–77). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

Mr. BISHOP of Utah: Committee on Natural Resources. H.R. 984. A bill to amend the National Trails System Act to direct the Secretary of the Interior to conduct a study on the feasibility of designating the Chief Standing Bear National Historic Train, and for other purposes (Rept. 114–78). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

Mr. BISHOP of Utah: Committee on Natural Resources. H.R. 1168. A bill to amend the Indian Child Protection and Family Violence Prevention Act to require background checks before foster care placements are ordered in tribal court proceedings, and for other purposes (Rept. 114–79). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

Mr. BISHOP of Utah: Committee on Natural Resources. H.R. 1324. A bill to adjust the boundary of the Arapaho National Forest, Colorado, and for other purposes (Rept. 114–80). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

Mr. BISHOP of Utah: Committee on Natural Resources. H.R. 979. A bill to designate a mountain in the John Muir Wilderness of the Sierra National Forest as ''Sky Point'' (Rept. 114–81). Referred to the House Calendar.

Mr. CHAFFETZ: Committee on Oversight and Government Reform. Oversight Plans for All House Committees (Rept. 114–82). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

DISCHARGE OF COMMITTEE

Pursuant to clause 2 of rule XIII, the Committee on Agriculture discharged from further consideration. H.R. 373 referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

PUBLIC BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

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

By Mr. SAM JOHNSON of Texas (for himself, Mr. YOUNG of Indiana, Mrs. BLACK, Mr. REED, Mr. BOUSTANY, Mr. RENACCI, Mr. MARCHANT, and Mr. KELLY of Pennsylvania):

H.R. 1795. A bill to require the Commissioner of Social Security to make publicly available on-line tools to allow individuals eligible for disability benefits to assess the impact of earnings on the individual's eligibility for, and amount of, benefits received through Federal and State benefit programs; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Ms. MCCOLLUM:

H.R. 1796. A bill to withdraw all Federal land located within the Rainy River Drainage Basin in Minnesota from all forms of entry, appropriation, or disposal under the public land laws, location, entry, and patent under the mining laws and operation under the mineral leasing laws, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Natural Resources.

By Mr. SMITH of New Jersey (for himself, Mr. FATTAH, Mr. SALMON, Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia, Mr. MEADOWS, Mr. RANGEL, and Mr. WALBERG):

H.R. 1797. A bill to facilitate effective research on and treatment of neglected tropical diseases, including Ebola, through coordinated domestic and international efforts; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce, and in addition to the Committees on Foreign Affairs, and Financial Services, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. NEUGEBAUER (for himself, Mr. BABIN, Mr. CARTER of Texas, and Mr. FARENTHOLD):

H.R. 1798. A bill to prohibit the Department of the Treasury from assigning tax statuses to organizations based on their political beliefs and activities; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. ELLISON:

H.R. 1799. A bill to amend the Real Estate Settlement Procedures Act of 1974 to prohibit certain financial benefits for referrals of business and to improve the judicial relief for certain violations, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Financial Services.

By Mr. SAM JOHNSON of Texas (for himself, Mrs. BLACK, Mr. REED, Mrs. MIMI WALTERS of California, and Mr. MARCHANT):

H.R. 1800. A bill to require the Commissioner of Social Security to update the medical-vocational guidelines used in disability determinations; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Ms. KELLY of Illinois:

H.R. 1801. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to allow a tax credit for providing programs to kindergarten, elementary, and secondary students that promote economic and financial literacy; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. MCKINLEY (for himself and Mr. WELCH):

H.R. 1802. A bill to promote energy efficiency; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. POE of Texas:

H.R. 1803. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to make permanent the work opportunity tax credit for veterans and to allow an exemption from an employer's employment taxes in an amount equivalent to the value of such credit in the case of veterans; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. MCDERMOTT (for himself, Ms. MATSUI, Mr. KIND, Mrs. LOWEY, and Mr. THOMPSON of California):

H.R. 1804. A bill to protect the public, communities across America, and the environment by increasing the safety of crude oil transportation by railroad, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

By Mr. GIBSON (for himself, Ms. STEFANIK, Mr. SEAN PATRICK MALONEY of New York, Mr. KATKO, Mr. REED, and Mr. COLLINS of New York):

H.R. 1805. A bill to amend the Immigration and Nationality Act to simplify the petitioning procedure for H-2A workers, to expand the scope of the H-2A program, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. SMITH of Texas (for himself, Mr. LUCAS, Mrs. COMSTOCK, Mr. WEBER of Texas, Mr. MOOLENAAR, Mr. PALAZZO, Mr. HULTGREN, Mr. KNIGHT, Mr. BABIN, and Mr. LOUDERMILK):

H.R. 1806. A bill to provide for technological innovation through the prioritization of Federal investment in basic research, fundamental scientific discovery, and development to improve the competitiveness of the United States, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Science, Space, and Technology, and in addition to the Committees on Education and the Workforce, and Oversight and Government Reform, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. DANNY K. DAVIS of Illinois (for himself and Mr. BURGESS):

H.R. 1807. A bill to amend the Public Health Service Act to reauthorize a sickle cell disease prevention and treatment demonstration program and to provide for sickle cell disease research, surveillance, prevention, and treatment; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. CASTRO of Texas:

H.R. 1808. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to extend certain expiring provisions for 1 year; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Ms. DELAURO (for herself, Mr. DOGGETT, and Mr. LEVIN):

H.R. 1809. A bill to prohibit the award of Federal Government contracts to inverted domestic corporations, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, and in addition to the Committee on Armed Services, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Ms. JACKSON LEE (for herself and Mr. CONYERS):

H.R. 1810. A bill to revise the Uniform Crime Reports, and the National Incident-Based Reporting System, to direct the Director of the Federal Bureau of Investigation to include information in those reports pertaining to law enforcement-involved justifiable homicides, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. DEUTCH (for himself, Mr. HASTINGS, Mr. CICILLINE, Mr. VARGAS, Ms. PINGREE, Mr. CARTWRIGHT, Mr. LANGEVIN, Mr. MCDERMOTT, Ms. SCHAKOWSKY, Mr. CONYERS, and Mr. FARR):

H.R. 1811. A bill to amend title II of the Social Security Act and the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to make improvements in the old-age, survivors, and disability insurance program, to provide for cash relief for years for which annual COLAs do not take effect under certain cash benefit programs, and to provide for Social Security benefit protection; to the Committee on Ways and Means, and in addition to the Committee on Education and the Workforce, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. ENGEL (for himself and Mr. SALMON):

H.R. 1812. A bill to establish the Western Hemisphere Drug Policy Commission; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

By Mr. GOHMERT:

H.R. 1813. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to tax bona fide residents of the District of Columbia in the same manner as bona fide residents of possessions of the United States; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. GRIJALVA (for himself, Mrs. DINGELL, Mr. POLIS, Mr. HUFFMAN, Mr. THOMPSON of California, Mr. RUIZ, Mr. TAKAI, Ms. KUSTER, Mr. CARTWRIGHT, Ms. TSONGAS, Mr. FITZPATRICK, Mr. MEEHAN, Mr. GUINTA, Mr. GIBSON, Mr. COSTELLO of Pennsylvania, Mr. DOLD, Mr. REICHERT, Mr. LOBIONDO, and Mr. KING of New York):

H.R. 1814. A bill to permanently reauthorize the Land and Water Conservation Fund; to the Committee on Natural Resources.

By Mr. HARDY (for himself, Mr. AMODEI, Mr. HECK of Nevada, and Ms. TITUS):

H.R. 1815. A bill to facilitate certain pinyon-juniper related projects in Lincoln County, Nevada, to modify the boundaries of certain wilderness areas in the State of Nevada, and to provide for the implementation of a conservation plan for the Virgin River, Nevada; to the Committee on Natural Resources.

By Mr. HECK of Nevada:

H.R. 1816. A bill to exclude from consideration as income under the United States Housing Act of 1937 payments of pension made under section 1521 of title 38, United States Code, to veterans who are in need of regular aid and attendance; to the Committee on Financial Services.

By Mr. SAM JOHNSON of Texas:

H.R. 1817. A bill to prohibit the provision of performance awards to employees of the Internal Revenue Service who owe back taxes; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. KINZINGER of Illinois (for himself and Mrs. CAPPS):

H.R. 1818. A bill to amend the Public Health Service Act to provide grants to States to streamline State requirements and procedures for veterans with military emergency medical training to become civilian emergency medical technicians; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. LIPINSKI:

H.R. 1819. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to provide an exception for certain public-private research arrangements from the business use test for purposes of determining private activity bonds; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. BEN RAY LUJÁN of New Mexico (for himself and Mrs. LUMMIS):

H.R. 1820. A bill to authorize the Secretary of the Interior to retire coal preference right lease applications for which the Secretary has made an affirmative commercial quantities determination, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Natural Resources.

By Mr. NEAL (for himself, Mr. GUINTA, and Mrs. COMSTOCK):

H.R. 1821. A bill to provide certain protections from civil liability with respect to the emergency administration of opioid overdose drugs; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. PIERLUISI (for himself, Ms. PLASKETT, Ms. BORDALLO, Mrs. RADEWAGEN, and Mr. SABLAN):

H.R. 1822. A bill to extend the supplemental security income program to Puerto Rico, the United States Virgin Islands, Guam, and American Samoa, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. QUIGLEY (for himself, Mr. AGUILAR, and Mr. RUIZ):

H.R. 1823. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to allow the mortgage interest deduction with respect to boats only if the boat is used as the principal residence of the taxpayer; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. ROGERS of Alabama:

H.R. 1824. A bill to repeal the current Internal Revenue Code and replace it with a flat tax, thereby guaranteeing economic growth and fairness for all Americans; to the Committee on Ways and Means, and in addition to the Committee on Rules, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. ROONEY of Florida:

H.R. 1825. A bill to direct the Administrator of the Transportation Security Administration to prohibit certain employees of the Transportation Security Administration from using the title of ''officer'' and from wearing metal badges or uniforms resembling those of law enforcement officers; to the Committee on Homeland Security.

By Mr. SABLAN (for himself and Mr. HUFFMAN):

H.R. 1826. A bill to reauthorize the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Natural Resources.

By Mr. TAKANO:

H.R. 1827. A bill to allow funds under title II of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 to be used to provide training to school personnel regarding how to recognize child sexual abuse; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

By Mr. THORNBERRY:

H.R. 1828. A bill to provide a taxpayer bill of rights for small businesses; to the Committee on Ways and Means, and in addition to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mrs. TORRES (for herself, Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi, and Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN):

H.R. 1829. A bill to require the Secretary of Homeland Security to assess and submit to Congress a report on the ability of the Department of Homeland Security to convey information to, collect information from, and serve individuals with limited English proficiency; to the Committee on Homeland Security.

By Mr. ELLISON:

H. Res. 201. A resolution expressing the sense of the House of Representatives that a Global Marshall Plan holds the potential to demonstrate the commitment of the United States to peace and prosperity through poverty reduction in the United States and abroad; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

By Mr. BUTTERFIELD (for himself, Mr. PRICE of North Carolina, Mr. JONES, Mr. HUDSON, Ms. ADAMS, Mr. ROUZER, Mr. BYRNE, Mr. PETERS, Mr. BROOKS of Alabama, Ms. JACKSON LEE, Mr. HOLDING, and Mr. TROTT):

H. Res. 202. A resolution congratulating the 2015 national champions, the Duke University Blue Devils, for their win in the 2015 National Collegiate Athletic Association Division I Men's Basketball Tournament; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

By Mr. HASTINGS (for himself, Mr. RANGEL, Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN, Ms. KELLY of Illinois, Ms. MOORE, Mr. MCGOVERN, Mr. MURPHY of Florida, Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ, Ms. CLARKE of New York, Mrs. LAWRENCE, and Mr. PAYNE):

H. Res. 203. A resolution expressing support for designation of June 2015 as ''National Men's Cancer Awareness Month''; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Ms. LOFGREN:

H. Res. 204. A resolution expressing support for designation of May 13, 2015, as a national day of celebration of the diversity in the United States, known as Diversity Day in the Nation; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

By Mr. QUIGLEY (for himself, Mr. RUSH, Mr. DANNY K. DAVIS of Illinois, Mr. GUTIÉRREZ, Ms. DUCKWORTH, Mr. FOSTER, Mr. LIPINSKI, and Mr. KINZINGER of Illinois):

H. Res. 205. A resolution congratulating the administration, staff, students, and alumni of Roosevelt University on the occasion of the University's 70th anniversary; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

By Mr. TAKAI (for himself and Mr. BRIDENSTINE):

H. Res. 206. A resolution expressing support for designation of April 2015 as ''National Learn to Swim Month''; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

CONSTITUTIONAL AUTHORITY STATEMENT

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

By Mr. SAM JOHNSON of Texas:

H.R. 1795.

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

Clause 1 of section 8 of article I of the Constitution, to ''provide for the common defense and general welfare of the United States.''

By Ms. MCCOLLUM:

H.R. 1796.

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

Article I, Section 8, Clause 18, which gives Congress the power ''To make all Laws which shall be necessary and proper for carrying into Execution the foregoing powers.''

By Mr. SMITH of New Jersey:

H.R. 1797.

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

Article 1, Section 8, Clause 3

By Mr. NEUGEBAUER:

H.R. 1798.

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

Article I, Section 8, Clause 18

The Congress shall have Power to make all Laws which shall be necessary and proper for carrying into Execution the foregoing Powers; and all other Powers vested by the Constitution in the Government of the United States, or in any department or officer thereof

By Mr. ELLISON:

H.R. 1799.

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

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to Article I, Section 8, Clause 1 and Clause 3.

By Mr. SAM JOHNSON of Texas:

H.R. 1800.

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

Clause 1 of section 8 of article I of the Constitution, to ''provide for the common defense and general welfare of the United States.''

By Ms. KELLY of Illinois:

H.R. 1801.

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

USC Art. I, Sec. 8, Cl. 1 (''The Congress shall have Power To Lay and collect Taxes, Duties, Imposts and Excises, to pay the Debts and provide for the Common Defence and general Welfare of the United States[.]'') (This bill would provide a tax credit to entities that implement financial literacy programming for students—empowering said students, and in turn, improving the nation's ''general Welfare.'').

By Mr. MCKINLEY:

H.R. 1802.

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

According to Article I, Section 8, Clause 3 of the Constitution: The Congress shall have power to enact this legislation to regulate commerce with foreign nations, and among the several states, and with the Indian tribes.

By Mr. POE of Texas:

H.R. 1803.

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

Article 1, Section 8, Clause 1

By Mr. MCDERMOTT:

H.R. 1804.

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

Clause 3 of Section 8 of Article 1 of the United States Constitution

By Mr. GIBSON:

H.R. 1805.

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

Clause 3 and 4, of Section 8, of Article I.

By Mr. SMITH of Texas:

H.R. 1806.

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

Article I, Section 8, Clause 18:

The Congress shall have power to make all Laws which shall be necessary and proper for carrying into Execution the foregoing Powers, and all other Powers vested by this Constitution in the Government of the United States, or in any Department of Officer thereof.

By Mr. DANNY K. DAVIS of Illinois:

H.R. 1807.

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

This bill is enacted pursuant to the power granted to Congress under Article I of the United States Constitution and its subsequent amendments, and further clarified and interpreted by the Supreme Court of the United States

By Mr. CASTRO of Texas:

H.R. 1808.

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

Constitutional Authority—Necessary and Proper Clause (Art. I, Sec. 8, Clause 18)

THE U.S. CONSTITUTION

ARTICLE I, SECTION 8: POWERS OF CONGRESS

CLAUSE 18

The Congress shall have power . . . To make all laws which shall be necessary and proper for carrying into execution the foregoing powers, and all other powers vested by this Constitution in the government of the United States, or in any department or officer thereof.

By Ms. DELAURO:

H.R. 1809.

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

Article I, Section 8, Clauses 1 and 3 of the United States Constitution

By Ms. JACKSON LEE:

H.R. 1810.

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

This bill is enacted pursuant to the power granted to Congress under Article I, Section 8, Clauses 1, 3, and 18 of the United States Constitution.

By Mr. DEUTCH:

H.R. 1811.

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

Article I, Section 8, Clause 1 as interpreted by Steward Machine Company v. Davis and by Helvering v. Davis (''general welfare'' and general taxation).

By Mr. ENGEL:

H.R. 1812.

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

Article I, Section 8 of the U.S. Constitution

By Mr. GOHMERT:

H.R. 1813.

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

Article 1, Section 8, US Constitution:

To exercise exclusive Legislation in all Cases whatsoever, over such District (not exceeding ten Miles square) as may, by Cession of particular States, and the acceptance of Congress, become the Seat of the Government of the United States, and to exercise like Authority over all Places purchased by the Consent of the Legislature of the State in which the Same shall be, for the Erection of Forts, Magazines, Arsenals, dock-Yards, and other needful Buildings

By Mr. GRIJALVA:

H.R. 1814.

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

U.S. Const. art. I, sec. 8, cl. 3

To regulate Commerce with foreign Nations, and among the several States, and with the Indian tribes;

By Mr. HARDY:

H.R. 1815.

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

''clause 18 of section 8 of article I of the Constitution''.

By Mr. HECK of Nevada:

H.R. 1816.

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

The power granted to Congress under Article I, Section 8, Clause 18 of the United States Constitution, to make all laws which shall be necessary and proper for carrying into execution the foregoing Powers, and all other powers vested by the Constitution in the Government of the United States, or in any Department or officer thereof.

By Mr. SAM JOHNSON of Texas:

H.R. 1817.

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

Article I, Section 8, Clause 18, which states ''The Congress shall have Power To make all Laws which shall be necessary and proper for carrying into Execution the foregoing Powers, and all other Powers vested by the Constitution in the Government of the United States, or in any Department or Officer thereof.''

By Mr. KINZINGER of Illinois:

H.R. 1818.

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

According to clause 7 of Section 9 of Article I of the Constitution, Congress has the authority to control the expenditures of the federal government.

By Mr. LIPINSKI:

H.R. 1819.

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

Article 1, Section 8 and the 16th Amendment of the U.S. Constitution.

By Mr. BEN RAY LUJÁN of New Mexico:

H.R. 1820.

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

Article 4, Section 3, Clause 2

Article 1, Section 8, Clause 18

By Mr. NEAL:

H.R. 1821.

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

Article, 1 Section 8

By Mr. PIERLUISI:

H.R. 1822.

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

The constitutional authority on which this bill rests is the power of the Congress to provide for the general welfare of the United States, as enumerated in Article I, Section 8, Clause 1 of the United States Constitution; to make all laws which shall be necessary and proper for carrying into execution such power, as enumerated in Article I, Section 8, Clause 18 of the Constitution; and to make rules and regulations respecting the U.S. territories, as enumerated in Article IV, Section 3, Clause 2 of the Constitution.

By Mr. QUIGLEY:

H.R. 1823.

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

The constitutional authority on which this bill rests is the power of Congress to lay and collect taxes, duties, imposts and excises; as enumerated in Article I, Section 8, Clause 1 of the United States Constitution.

By Mr. ROGERS of Alabama:

H.R. 1824.

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

Clause 1 Section 8 of Article 1 of the United States Constitution and Amendment XVI of the United States Constitution.

By Mr. ROONEY of Florida:

H.R. 1825.

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

Per Article 1 Sec 8 of the Constitution: To regulate Commerce with foreign Nations, and among the several States, and with the Indian Tribes;

To make all Laws which shall be necessary and proper for carrying into Execution the foregoing Powers, and all other Powers vested by this Constitution in the Government of the United States, or in any Department or Officer thereof.

By Mr. SABLAN:

H.R. 1826.

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

Article I, section 8.

By Mr. TAKANO:

H.R. 1827.

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

Article 1, Section 8 of the Constitution of the United States.

By Mr. THORNBERRY:

H.R. 1828.

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

Article I, Section 8, Clause I: ''The Congress shall have Power To lay and collect Taxes, Duties, Imports and Excises, to pay the Debts and provide for the common Defence and general Welfare for the United States; but all Duties, imposts and Excises shall be uniform throughout the United States''

By Mrs. TORRES:

H.R. 1829.

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

Article 1, Section 8 of the U.S. Constitution.

ADDITIONAL SPONSORS

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

H.R. 9: Mr. SESSIONS.

H.R. 93: Mr. POE of Texas.

H.R. 114: Mr. DESANTIS.

H.R. 140: Mr. SANFORD.

H.R. 173: Mr. PALAZZO.

H.R. 174: Mr. YOUNG of Iowa and Mrs. WALORSKI.

H.R. 237: Mr. COOK, Mr. KEATING, Mr. PERRY, and Mr. RIBBLE.

H.R. 249: Mr. MILLER of Florida and Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ.

H.R. 267: Mr. RUSH.

H.R. 311: Mr. MASSIE.

H.R. 317: Mr. DESAULNIER.

H.R. 333: Mrs. BEATTY and Ms. MCCOLLUM.

H.R. 343: Mr. COURTNEY.

H.R. 363: Mr. SEAN PATRICK MALONEY of New York.

H.R. 379: Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN and Mr. LEWIS.

H.R. 427: Mr. COLLINS of Georgia.

H.R. 446: Mr. MURPHY of Florida.

H.R. 449: Ms. LEE.

H.R. 452: Mr. DOLD.

H.R. 453: Mr. HARRIS and Mr. KELLY of Pennsylvania.

H.R. 472: Mr. NOLAN.

H.R. 509: Mrs. BUSTOS.

H.R. 546: Mr. POLIS.

H.R. 556: Ms. SCHAKOWSKY.

H.R. 563: Mr. COSTA.

H.R. 571: Mr. CULBERSON.

H.R. 577: Ms. GRAHAM and Ms. MCSALLY.

H.R. 578: Mrs. BLACK.

H.R. 588: Mr. CURBELO of Florida.

H.R. 592: Mr. DOLD.

H.R. 605: Ms. SCHAKOWSKY and Mr. PRICE of North Carolina.

H.R. 606: Mrs. LAWRENCE.

H.R. 619: Ms. PINGREE and Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN.

H.R. 625: Mr. RIBBLE.

H.R. 649: Mr. MEEKS.

H.R. 662: Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN.

H.R. 692: Mr. JOHNSON of Ohio, Mr. BUCK, Mr. TIPTON, and Mr. EMMER of Minnesota.

H.R. 721: Mrs. ROBY, Mr. POCAN, and Mr. PALAZZO.

H.R. 775: Ms. LOFGREN.

H.R. 793: Mr. ALLEN and Mr. MARINO.

H.R. 797: Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York and Ms. WILSON of Florida.

H.R. 812: Mr. LABRADOR.

H.R. 817: Mr. NUGENT.

H.R. 820: Ms. KAPTUR, Mr. FOSTER, Mr. WELCH, Mr. MCKINLEY, Mr. JOYCE, Mr. LIPINSKI, Mr. DEFAZIO, Mr. TONKO, Ms. KUSTER, Mr. SCHRADER, Mr. BLUMENAUER, Mr. JONES, Mr. MCDERMOTT, Mr. LANGEVIN, Mr. HIGGINS, Mr. NOLAN, Ms. DUCKWORTH, Mr. RUSH, Mr.

SWALWELL of California, Ms. CLARK of Massachusetts, Mr. VISCLOSKY, Mr. GRIFFITH, and Mr. TURNER.

H.R. 825: Mr. WEBSTER of Florida.

H.R. 865: Mr. HECK of Nevada.

H.R. 868: Mr. KILMER, Mr. PALAZZO, and Mr. KING of New York.

H.R. 872: Mr. RIGELL.

H.R. 879: Mr. ALLEN.

H.R. 880: Mr. POLIQUIN, Mr. COSTELLO of Pennsylvania, Mr. ROUZER, Mr. JONES, and Mr. ABRAHAM.

H.R. 911: Mr. WALZ.

H.R. 921: Mr. MCKINLEY.

H.R. 923: Mr. SESSIONS and Mr. SALMON.

H.R. 928: Mr. BUCK, Mr. LAMBORN, Mr. MARINO, Mr. FLEMING, Mr. WALDEN, Mr. CONAWAY, and Mr. ROUZER.

H.R. 935: Mr. VEASEY.

H.R. 957: Mr. TROTT.

H.R. 971: Mr. QUIGLEY.

H.R. 973: Mr. THOMPSON of California and Mrs. NAPOLITANO.

H.R. 980: Mr. SCALISE, Mr. JOLLY, and Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi.

H.R. 985: Mr. NEUGEBAUER and Mr. NOLAN.

H.R. 987: Mr. SANFORD.

H.R. 1019: Mr. QUIGLEY.

H.R. 1037: Mr. COSTA.

H.R. 1062: Mr. WEBSTER of Florida, Mr. RODNEY DAVIS of Illinois, Mr. WESTMORELAND, Mr. VEASEY, and Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN.

H.R. 1078: Mr. AMODEI.

H.R. 1086: Mr. WESTMORELAND and Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN.

H.R. 1087: Mr. FRANKS of Arizona and Mr. FORTENBERRY.

H.R. 1111: Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia, Mr. HASTINGS, Ms. PINGREE, and Mr. MCGOVERN.

H.R. 1131: Mr. DESAULNIER.

H.R. 1151: Mr. ROE of Tennessee.

H.R. 1170: Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN and Mr. JONES.

H.R. 1218: Mr. NOLAN.

H.R. 1234: Mr. WESTERMAN.

H.R. 1269: Ms. JUDY CHU of California, Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN, Mrs. COMSTOCK, Ms. DELBENE, Mr. NEWHOUSE, Mr. PAYNE, and Mr. SIRES.

H.R. 1274: Mr. PETERS and Mr. O'ROURKE.

H.R. 1301: Mr. HUFFMAN.

H.R. 1309: Mr. TIPTON, Mr. OLSON, Mr. BARR, Mr. PITTENGER, Mr. CURBELO of Florida, and Mr. MESSER.

H.R. 1312: Ms. TSONGAS, Ms. BASS, Mr. TIPTON, Ms. BROWN of Florida, Mr. PERLMUTTER, Mr. KILMER, Mr. MASSIE, Mr. DENT, Mr. LANCE, Mr. ROGERS of Alabama, Mr. WHITFIELD, Mr. YOUNG of Alaska, Mr. LOWENTHAL, Mr. FARR, Mr. COHEN, Mr. TED LIEU of California, Mr. TAKAI, and Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi.

H.R. 1324: Mr. DESAULNIER, Mr. SMITH of Washington, Ms. JUDY CHU of California, Mr. BEYER, Mrs. LAWRENCE, Mr. YARMUTH, and Mr. TED LIEU of California.

H.R. 1336: Mr. PERLMUTTER.

H.R. 1358: Mrs. CAPPS.

H.R. 1365: Mr. HANNA, Mr. SESSIONS, Mr. GROTHMAN, Mr. SAM JOHNSON of Texas, and Mr. KLINE.

H.R. 1375: Mr. MCGOVERN.

H.R. 1378: Mr. YARMUTH.

H.R. 1384: Mr. BISHOP of Utah.

H.R. 1399: Mr. KING of New York, Mr. POLIS, and Mr. RANGEL.

H.R. 1415: Ms. JACKSON LEE, Mr. DEUTCH, and Ms. SLAUGHTER.

H.R. 1421: Mr. MEEKS and Ms. ESHOO.

H.R. 1435: Mr. MCGOVERN.

H.R. 1445: Mr. WEBSTER of Florida.

H.R. 1453: Mr. TIPTON.

H.R. 1464: Mr. CARSON of Indiana.

H.R. 1475: Ms. GRANGER.

H.R. 1476: Mr. MERCHANT, Mr. FRANKS of Arizona, Mr. RATCLIFFE, Mrs. LUMMIS, Mr. FLEMING, Mr. GIBBS, and Mr. RICE of South Carolina.

H.R. 1478: Ms. BORDELLO.

H.R. 1496: Ms. BORDELLO.

H.R. 1498: Mr. SHUSTER.

H.R. 1503: Ms. MAXINE WATERS of California and Mrs. TORRES.

H.R. 1531: Mr. SIMPSON.

H.R. 1538: Mr. MCCLINTOCK and Ms. DELBENE.

H.R. 1546: Mr. ROONEY of Florida.

H.R. 1547: Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN.

H.R. 1559: Mr. COSTELLO of Pennsylvania and Ms. ESTY.

H.R. 1568: Ms. ESHOO and Mr. DENHAM.

H.R. 1586: Mr. SCHIFF.

H.R. 1605: Mr. DESJARLAIS and Mr. MASSIE.

H.R. 1608: Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN.

H.R. 1624: Mr. CRAMER and Mr. ASHFORD.

H.R. 1625: Ms. ESTY.

H.R. 1635: Mrs. LAWRENCE, Mr. PERLMUTTER, Mr. RODNEY DAVIS of Illinois, and Mr. DELANEY.

H.R. 1650: Mr. MARCHANT and Mr. MULVANEY.

H.R. 1651: Mr. CHAFFETZ, Mr. AMODEI, Mr. HUFFMAN, and Mr. POLIS.

H.R. 1668: Mr. ROHRABACHER.

H.R. 1674: Ms. WILSON of Florida and Mr. CONYERS.

H.R. 1684: Ms. GRAHAM.

H.R. 1688: Mr. BRIDENSTINE, Mr. MASSIE, Mr. AMODEI, Mr. TED LIEU of California, Mr. TAKAI, Mr. BLUM, Mr. PERLMUTTER, and Ms. KUSTER.

H.R. 1694: Mr. COLLINS of New York.

H.R. 1695: Mr. HUELSKAMP, Mr. PALAZZO, and Mr. WESTERMAN.

H.R. 1713: Mr. HASTINGS and Mrs. LAWRENCE.

H.R. 1714: Mr. AMODEI, Mr. GARRETT, and Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN.

H.R. 1728: Ms. PINGREE.

H.R. 1734: Mr. KIND, Mr. KING of New York, and Mr. KLINE.

H.R. 1737: Mr. NEUGEBAUER, Mr. BISHOP of Georgia, Mr. BARR, Mr. COOPER, and Mr. DOLD.

H.R. 1759: Mr. BUCK.

H.R. 1772: Mr. SEAN PATRICK MALONEY of New York.

H.R. 1774: Ms. LEE.

H. J. Res. 43: Mr. LAMBORN, Mr. NEUGEBAUER, Mr. JODY B. HICE of Georgia, Mrs. BLACKBURN, Mr. JONES, Mr. HUELSKAMP, Mr. WALBERG, Mr. FLEMING, Mrs. ELLMERS of North Carolina, Mr. ADERHOLT, Mr. DUNCAN of Tennessee, Mr. PITTS, Mr. OLSON, and Mr. LIPINSKI.

H. Con. Res. 14: Ms. MAXINE WATERS of California.

H. Con. Res. 17: Mr. RICE of South Carolina, Mr. SHIMKUS, Mr. RIGELL, and Mr. ALLEN.

H. Con. Res. 19: Mr. REICHERT.

H. Con. Res. 28: Mr. HURT of Virginia.

H. Res. 28: Ms. JACKSON LEE and Miss RICE of New York.

H. Res. 54; Mr. DESAULNIER and Mr. KILDEE.

H. Res. 118: Mr. MEEKS.

H. Res. 130: Mr. ENGEL, Mr. POLIS, Mr. AMODEI, and Mr. WOMACK.

H. Res. 154: Mr. SIRES.

H. Res. 159: Ms. CLARK of Massachusetts.

H. Res. 161: Mr. DESAULNIER.

H. Res. 174: Ms. ESHOO.

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Senate

The Senate met at 9:30 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.

O God, our Protector, mountains shake in Your presence and islands skip for joy. We praise You because Your ways are just and true. Lord, You know our hearts and minds like an open book. Thank You for the security we have in You, for You alone remain our rock and refuge.

Lead our lawmakers on the road that You have chosen, providing them with strength for their journey. Keep them safe as You provide them with the patience to wait for Your harvest. Lord, help them in the making of our laws to execute justice for the oppressed and to set the captives free. Give us all the grace to love and pray, even for those who hurt and wrong us.

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 PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. PAUL). The majority leader is recognized.

SCHEDULE

Mr. MCCONNELL. Later this morning the Senate will move to go to conference with the House on the budget resolution. The vote on that motion will occur before lunch. After about 10 hours of debate, which is stipulated in the statute, we expect a series of votes on motions to instruct conferees on the budget. Senators should expect those votes later this afternoon or this evening.

HUMAN TRAFFICKING LEGISLATION

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, just hours ago, 100 percent of Senate Democrats followed the lead of Republicans and Democrats in the House, including NANCY PELOSI and the pro-choice caucus, in voting to endorse the bipartisan principle that Federal funds leaving the government should be subject to bipartisan Hyde language. Given that Americans overwhelmingly support what Hyde does, it is no wonder this principle has been applied by both parties—both parties—to appropriations and authorizing legislation for as long as anyone could remember.

We hope the Democrats' statement of support for Hyde in last night's Medicare vote will finally clear the way for passage of antislavery legislation they have been filibustering over the very same Hyde principle. It was never a morally tenable position. Never. Considering what we saw just 12 hours ago, it is no longer politically tenable either. Democrats couldn't possibly justify voting for Hyde language in order to keep doctors—as they did just hours ago—but then look an abused victim in the eye and tell her she is not worth it. OK to vote for Hyde to help doctors, but then not OK when it comes to victims of sexual trafficking.

Human trafficking is a serious problem in our country. It is hard for a lot of people to believe, but it occurs in every single State. I recently saw a news report about a local nonprofit that is worried about trafficking at big events such as the Kentucky Derby. ''They'll take a girl to one city for one to two weeks,'' an official with that group said, ''then they'll go to another city, and they just follow these circuits . . . it's really hard to get them out of it . . .''

Look, it is unconscionable for anyone to continue filibustering this human rights bill over a principle that has been a fixture—a fixture—in Federal law for decades, that was in the bill when Democrats endorsed it, cosponsored it, and voted unanimously to support it in committee, and that was endorsed again by Democrats just last night.

But just to ensure there are no possible excuses left to continue this filibuster, Senator CORNYN offered another compromise last night to eliminate any remaining pretext. His compromise ensures that, by supporting this bill, Senate Democrats would only be endorsing the same Hyde language that 100 percent of them just voted to support last night, less than 24 hours ago. Remember, this is essentially language endorsed by NANCY PELOSI and the pro-choice caucus.

It is actually the third compromise we have offered on the Senate floor to our friends across the aisle. First, we offered our colleagues a simple up-or-down vote last month to strike the language that they once were for before they decided to be against it. Then, before the recess, Senator CORNYN offered to make the monies in the fund subject to the appropriations process, something our Democratic colleagues had said was important to them.

So this is now the third compromise we have offered on the floor. It is time for our Democratic friends to show a little courage to finally bring their party's filibuster of antislavery legislation to an end. A large bipartisan majority of the Senate has already demonstrated its commitment to doing so, and all that is needed now are a couple more Democrats to join us. That is all that is needed now, a couple more Democrats willing to show the same level of compassion to enslaved victims

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

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they offered to doctors—to doctors—just a few hours ago.

As an official with the Coalition Against Trafficking in Women put it: ''Our Democratic colleagues should stop choosing a phantom problem . . .''—a phantom problem—''. . . over real victims.''

Because as the Los Angeles Times said:

> The Hyde Amendment has been the law for many years. A fight over whether a fraction of the projected millions of dollars in aid to victims of trafficking and hunters of traffickers can be used on abortion services seems fruitless, and the bill should not be derailed by such a fight.

This has gone on long enough. It is time for Senators of conscience to stand up and end this filibuster now.

A BALANCED BUDGET

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, on another matter, before Easter, the Senate passed a balanced budget. The House of Representatives did as well. The next step in the process is for each Chamber to appoint Members to a conference committee that can work out any differences between those bills, and then send unified legislation back to Congress for a final vote. We are taking that next step today.

Some of our friends across the aisle seem eager to use this opportunity to rehash some of the same votes we took in passing the budget. The outcome of those votes won't be different, so I am not sure what the point would be, other than to slow down the process for its own sake. So I would urge them to reconsider and decide if that is really what they want to do.

But either way—either way—the new Congress is determined to keep working to finalize the budget. After years of a Senate that often refused to even consider a budget, this is a big change. And it is another example of the new Congress that is back to regular order and back to work.

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The minority leader is recognized.

HUMAN TRAFFICKING LEGISLATION AND THE BUDGET

Mr. REID. The Republican leader talked about two issues: one, sexual trafficking, and, two, the budget. His statements regarding the two are illogical as anything can be. Illogical.

First of all, let's talk about sexual trafficking. Senators on this side of the aisle, with rare exception, are not wild about the Hyde amendment, but it has been the law of the land for some 30 years. And why is it the law of the land? Because it has been put in appropriations bills over these many years. But what my friend the Republican leader failed to mention is that if the Cornyn amendment or the Cornyn language were adopted, it would change women's reproduction rights permanently. You see, the Hyde amendment has always applied to taxpayer-funded money. But what Senator CORNYN, the author of this bill and this amendment, wants to do is direct this to private money. They are two totally different things. Hyde has never, ever in the past applied to private money—nontaxpayer dollars. So that is why my friend's argument is totally illogical. Illogical. It has no basis in fact. We are not going to stand by to enlarge this so-called Hyde amendment to private money.

Now we have tried. We have tried. Ten different offers have been made to Senator CORNYN and Senator MCCONNELL to work our way through this. There are many ways we can handle this. But they feel—my friend the Republican leader and the assistant Republican leader feel this is their opportunity to broaden Hyde. We are not going to allow that to happen. It would be wrong. We have made 10 separate offers of ways to get to yes, but Republicans appear unwilling to compromise about the Hyde language, and that is unfortunate.

To carry on the illogic of the Republican leader, every organization has a mission statement, a summary of their goals and values. Congress is no different. There are mission statements that are done every year and they are called a budget. We have our mission statement; the Republicans have theirs. The budget sets forth our core values as a party, a statement of our values that tells the American people what we really care about and whose side we are on. We are committed to a budget that puts the middle class first, a budget that supports hard-working families, creates jobs, and invests in our future. The Republicans, by contrast, are hell-bent on passing a budget that creates a war on the middle class and serves the interests of special interests and the superwealthy.

Let's take a look at what the Senate Republican budget does. Remember, this is their statement of core values, and their war on the average American from Reno to Las Vegas to Chicago to Louisville—it doesn't matter where you go—is an attack on the middle class. Why do I say that? It deprives more than 16 million Americans of health coverage. That is the first thing their budget does. It devastates Medicare. It makes Medicare something we would not recognize, and they do it, of course, at the expense of America's seniors. It cuts Medicaid and hurts millions of families who are not able to pay for their care.

Everyone thinks Medicaid is just for poor people. Some people don't think they have much value in our society and Medicaid is something that shouldn't get much of our attention. But a significant amount of Medicaid money goes to people who are in rest homes and convalescent centers. So the money they are whacking from Medicaid hurts not only the young but the old. It guts nutrition assistance. It guts food that can go to people who are hungry. It undermines job training and employment services for millions of American families. It cuts billions in financial aid for college students.

The Republicans not only want to cut aid to families as it relates to education, but then the debts they have accumulated, which are larger than credit card debt—they don't want to cut them any relief whatsoever. We have tried that lots of times. Our budget reflects that; theirs doesn't.

While the middle class is decimated by Senate Republicans—and who benefits? Special interests and the superrich. They are protected more than ever. The Republicans refuse to close a single loophole to reduce this deficit.

A single tax loophole they will not touch. They will not end tax breaks for companies that ship jobs overseas. They will not close loopholes for the wealthy, including hedge fund managers. They will not take away wasteful and unneeded tax breaks for the very powerful oil and gas industry. They are attacking the middle class while protecting the super wealthy. That is wrong.

Now, the Republican budget is also dishonest. I heard the Republican leader come here and boast. He boasted about the balanced budget they have. That is absolutely not true. Their budget does not balance the budget. It is simply dishonest to say so. The Republican budget claims to add more money for defense, but it does not.

It is no wonder that the New York Times called the Republican budget ''a trillion dollar con job.'' ''A trillion dollar con job'' is the Republican budget. I agree with the New York Times. In the coming days, as we move forward toward a conference—now remember moving forward toward conference has become kind of a joke around here because we do not have conferences like we used to. That is too bad.

There will be no meeting of the conferees. There will be no debate in open session as to how the budget should be changed. The Republicans will get to conference. There will be meetings held by the Republicans. Democrats will not be invited. If they are invited, it is pro forma: Here is what we have decided to do. The conferences, as we used to do them around here, do not exist. It is a rare occasion when they do.

We will not be looking into our efforts to try to improve the budget. We are not looking to obstruct the process to force another all-night vote-arama. We could. Under the rules we could offer endless, endless motions to instruct: 5, 6, 50, 100, 200. We could do that. We are not going to do that. But we will be offering a few motions to make clear where we stand on important issues.

For example, there will be an amendment that men and women who do the same work should be paid the same money. If my daughter works here and

a man works here and they do the same job, they should be paid the same amount of money. We have tried to do that. The Republicans have filibustered this five times over the last few years.

We are going to offer an amendment to provide sick leave to help families get through tough times. We are going to offer an amendment to ensure that same sex spouses have equal access to Social Security and veterans' benefits. We are going to offer an amendment to relieve the crushing burden of costly student loans. No one has worked harder on this issue than the assistant Democratic leader. I heard him yesterday talk about this at a meeting we had—the crushing, crushing costly student loans. We are going to offer an amendment to address the economic and national security threats posed by climate change.

In the West, we are in the midst of a 15-year drought. This is the 15th year. Lake Powell, the largest manmade lake in America, could go dry very quickly. Hundreds of thousands of acre feet of water will not go into that lake this year because of what is happening up in Colorado.

So when we are done offering what we feel should be ways to improve this dishonest budget that the Republicans put forward, the American people will have no doubt which party stands with the middle class and which stands with the special interests and billionaires. Yes, we have set forth what we believe are our core values, and we believe our core values are what the American people need.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

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

MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will be in a period of morning business for 1 hour, with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each, with the time equally divided, and with the Democrats controlling the first half.

The assistant Democratic leader.

150TH ANNIVERSARY OF ABRAHAM LINCOLN'S DEATH

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, it was 150 years ago today—150 years ago today—when who is called the last casualty of the Civil War died. He was a man who was born in the Presiding Officer's home State of Kentucky. He grew up for a part of his life in Indiana but spent his formative years in my State of Illinois.

He was a country lawyer, an unlikely Congressman who, because of a political deal, was given a chance to serve in the U.S. House of Representatives. He served only 2 years. He brought his family here to Washington for that experience.

They lived just across the street, in a boarding house where the Library of Congress now sits. His family did not like Washington in those days in the 1840s and returned back to his wife's home in Kentucky.

He stayed out here and served in Congress and liked it. He wanted to serve for a longer period of time but was reminded that this was not part of the agreement—only 2 years. So he left Washington, went back to Springfield, IL, practiced law, but continued to aspire to higher office.

In 1858, he ran for the Senate against a man named Steven Douglas. They had historic debates across the State of Illinois. When the votes were finally counted, Douglas was the victor, and this man returned to the practice of law. Just 2 years later, though, he was elected President of the United States.

He came to Washington at one of the most dangerous times in our history. The Civil War had started, and there was a question as to whether the Union could survive, whether the United States of America would survive. This simple country lawyer from what was considered the frontier of America in those days led our Nation during the most dangerous moments in our history.

He watched as more Americans died in that Civil War than in any war that we have ever witnessed. He saw a nation bitterly divided. The war raged on for years. There were moments—bleak and dark moments—when it looked as if the North would fail and the division of the country would begin.

But eventually the North prevailed in a victory that really the American people had given so much to achieve. In April of 1865, this was a tumultuous period. I commend to all of my colleagues a book written by Jay Winik, a Senate staffer entitled ''April 1865,'' if you want to get a feel for what it was like in America that month.

Many things occurred. The second inaugural address of this President is one of the most beautiful, touching, and moving speeches ever given by a President, where he turned toward the enemy who had fought the North for so many years and basically extended an olive branch when many others would have done just the opposite. ''With malice toward none'' and with ''charity for all,'' he gave that speech right outside here—right outside the Senate Chamber on the porch.

Then, in celebration of the victory of the Union, he and his wife attended a play not far from here, at Ford's Theatre. It was there that an assassin took his life. So 150 years ago today, Abraham Lincoln, the President of the United States, was assassinated. We have learned a lot from his life, from his leadership, and we enjoy the blessings of liberty and the Union today because that President and the men and women who stood by him saved the Union.

I reflect on this because I come from what is known as Mr. Lincoln's hometown of Springfield, IL. I am not an expert on Lincoln. I am just a fan, as so many people are, not only across the United States but around the world. I hope we can remember him just for a moment today and reflect on the need for all of us to extend an olive branch to our personal enemies and to our political enemies and try to find how to eliminate an enemy by making a friend, as Lincoln said.

LYNCH NOMINATION

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I cannot believe that Loretta Lynch still sits on this Executive Calendar of the Senate. It is put on our desk every day we are in session. She has been on that calendar for a longer period of time than any nominee for Attorney General in the last 30 years.

Senators can vote for or against Loretta Lynch to be Attorney General. That is their right. But an Attorney General nominee whose qualifications and character are unquestionable deserves better than the treatment she is receiving from this Senate. Ms. Lynch deserves a timely vote, just as other Attorney General nominees of other Presidents have received.

She was reported out of the Senate Judiciary Committee on February 26 in a bipartisan vote. Nine Democrats and three Republicans voted for this Presidential nominee. She has now been pending on the Senate calendar right here for 48 days—48 days on this calendar. Not one word has been spoken on this floor in derogation of this fine woman, this fine nominee.

The last seven Attorney General nominees combined—all seven of them—had to wait on the Senate floor for a total of 24 days—seven nominees, 24 days. For Loretta Lynch it is 48 days.

The Senate has confirmed other nominees while the human trafficking bill has been pending on the floor. There is no procedural obstacle. While that bill has been pending, the Senate has voted on nominees for Assistant Secretary of Transportation, Assistant Secretary of Commerce, the Federal Mine Safety and Health Review Commission, and the Federal Retirement Thrift Investment Board. And on Monday we voted on a Federal judge. It is routine for the Senate to consider nominees on the Executive Calendar while still considering legislation.

It has been 158 days—more than 5 months—since Ms. Lynch's nomination to be Attorney General was announced. A vote still has not been scheduled. This is far longer than any recent Attorney General nominee has had to wait. Janet Reno waited 29 days. John Ashcroft, a Republican nominee, waited 42 days. Alberto Gonzales, 86 days. Michael Mukasey, 53 days. Eric Holder, 64 days. But when it comes to Loretta Lynch, it is 158 days.

The last Attorney General nominee whose nomination took this long to process was Edwin Meese in 1984, who

faced questions and investigations relating to questions of ethics. There have been no such allegations—none—that have been raised against Loretta Lynch.

Senate Republicans have the capability to bring up nominations promptly. The majority leader, Senator MCCONNELL of Kentucky, can walk to this floor and within a minute call her nomination, and it will be voted on immediately. It is in his power to do it. Why will he not do it? Why will he not give this woman, who has such an extraordinary life story, a chance to serve as the first African-American woman in the history of the United States to serve as Attorney General?

There is no substantive reason—not one. I welcome any Republican Senator to come to the floor and make the case against Loretta Lynch. No one did it in committee. No one has done it on the floor. It is time for us to move forward and approve this nomination.

60TH ANNIVERSARY OF POLIO VACCINE

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, the Presiding Officer probably does not remember these days because of his age, but I do. When I was a child, polio was a scare that every family felt. I had friends in school who were stricken with polio. Some of them, in the most extreme cases, ended up in something called an iron lung. The Presiding Officer has probably seen pictures of it. It is an incredible situation where someone would be encased in this tube, this metal tube that would help them breathe.

Many were stricken with polio and ended up crippled, and their lives were compromised to some degree in those days because disabilities were not treated as well then as they are now. Parents did not know what to make of this. No one knew what caused polio. My mother, God bless her, had a theory that one of the things that might cause polio was playing in the street after a rainstorm in the flooded waters.

She would just ban me from doing that. ''That can cause polio,'' she said. That was my mother's theory. It was as valid as any other theory in those days. No one knew what was going on, what was causing it. Many Americans lived in fear of that infectious, viral disease that attacks the nerve cells and the central nervous system causing muscle wasting, paralysis, and sometimes death.

In 1952, nearly 60,000 children in the United States were reported to have polio, with more than 20,000 cases of paralysis. There was a panic about this epidemic. Families were afraid for their kids and the scientists struggled to understand the disease. Dr. Jonas Salk, a pioneer in the field of vaccine research, was recruited in 1947 by the University of Pittsburgh to be the director of virus research and to work on finding a polio vaccine.

His work caught the attention of Basil O'Connor, the president of the National Foundation for Infantile Paralysis, now known as the March of Dimes Foundation. The organization decided to fund Dr. Jonas Salk's work to develop a vaccine against polio. For 5 years, Dr. Salk worked tirelessly on this effort while the country donated their dimes to the foundation to support his work.

Then, on April 12, 1955, Dr. Thomas Francis, Jr.—an epidemiologist at the University of Michigan and a mentor to Salk—announced that Salk had discovered a polio vaccine that was safe and effective.

When the announcement was made, it was as if time stood still. I still remember it as a kid. Americans turned on their radios and TVs to hear the details. Department stores set up loudspeakers and judges suspended trials so everyone in the courtroom could hear this good news.

April 12 was deliberately chosen for the announcement because it marked the 10th anniversary of the death of the most famous polio survivor of all, former President Franklin Delano Roosevelt. Roosevelt also founded what would become the March of Dimes Foundation in 1938, without which Salk might not have been able to complete his work.

A massive field trial, the first of its kind, was conducted on over 1.8 million children to prove the vaccine was 80 to 90 percent effective. Church bells rang across the country, factories observed moments of silence, and parents and teachers wept to finally be relieved of this fear.

But it had only just begun. The U.S. Government invested heavily in mass production of the polio vaccine and led campaigns across the Nation to see that every kid was vaccinated. I hated the thought of getting a shot, but the notion that I would be protected from polio for life was certainly worth it.

As a result, polio was eradicated from the United States in 1979.

Sunday, we marked the 60th anniversary of the announcement of the discovery of the first safe and effective polio vaccine. In commemoration of that announcement, I submitted a resolution last month celebrating the discovery of the polio vaccine and supporting the efforts to eradicate that disease around the world.

The resolution also encourages Federal funding for the Global Polio Eradication Initiative for biomedical and basic scientific research so more lifesaving discoveries can be made. Thanks to the work of scientists funded by the CDC and nonprofit organizations such as the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, polio has been eradicated in all but a handful of the world's poorest nations.

The success of the polio vaccine shows us what medical research can accomplish. If we can do this with polio, then we can do it again.

I thank Senators KIRK, LEAHY, SHAHEEN, MURRAY, BOXER, COONS, MARKEY, ISAKSON, AYOTTE, and REED of Rhode Island for cosponsoring my resolution.

I also thank the March of Dimes, the American Academy of Pediatrics, the U.N. Foundation's Shot@Life campaign, the Rotary Club, and RESULTS for supporting this resolution.

But today, America's place as world leader in cutting-edge biomedical research is at risk. We no longer invest as we should in basic scientific research.

From 2003 to 2012, the U.S. investment in the NIH research didn't even keep up with inflation, and the number of research grants awarded by the National Institutes of Health has declined every year for the past 10 years.

This is shameful. It is shameful in a great Nation such as the United States, where we have seen achievements such as a polio vaccine, for to us walk away from medical research.

One decade ago, 30 percent of qualified NIH proposals were funded. Today, it is half that—15 percent, the lowest rate in America's modern history.

Dr. Francis Collins, who directs the National Institutes of Health, told me that inadequate funding of basic medical research will cause some of America's best young researchers to take their talents to other places and even other countries. It has already started.

We are on the verge of losing a generation of medical researchers in America. In 1982—listen—18 percent of NIH primary investigators, medical researchers, were under the age of 36—1982, 18 percent under the age of 36. Today, 3 percent are under the age of 36. Young researchers have given up.

If Congress and the President don't want to put money into the NIH, they are going to go someplace else. How many Jonas Salks are we losing because of our cuts to basic medical research? How many lifesaving discoveries are being delayed and ignored? With the right commitment, we can change this.

I tried to gather on the floor—during the debate on the budget resolution—a dozen different Senators who cosponsored amendments calling for more money for medical research. They were from both sides of the aisle: Senator COLLINS on the Republican side of the aisle, interested in Alzheimer's; Senator WICKER of Mississippi, also interested in medical research.

I brought them all together and said: Why don't we cosponsor the same amendment. We are all trying to reach the same goal. They agreed, and it passed unanimously on a voice vote as I hoped it would.

This is what we need to do. Dr. Collins spelled this out in clear terms. We need to increase the funding in biomedical research by 5 percent over inflation every year. Five percent over inflation for 10 years, Dr. Collins tells me, will dramatically change medical research in America.

Can we afford it? Can we afford a 5-percent real growth in biomedical research? Think about it for a second. Do you know what that will cost us over 10 years—5 percent real growth in biomedical research. It is going to cost us

$150 billion. That is a lot of money, isn't it?

Do you realize that once every 68 seconds in America someone is diagnosed with Alzheimer's? I didn't believe that when my staff told me. I checked it, and it is true. Once every 68 seconds an American is diagnosed with Alzheimer's, and we know what that means: for most of those patients, a steady decline to death, and for their families, the heartbreak of losing communication with someone they love and then caring for them in this state of Alzheimer's disease—once every 68 seconds.

Do you know what it costs us as a government to care for Alzheimer's victims last year, Medicare, Medicaid? We estimate $200 billion.

Now, step back, a 5-percent growth in biomedical research over 10 years will cost $150 billion. What if that research could find a way to delay the onset of Alzheimer's for months—maybe for years—and, God willing, find a cure.

What I am saying is whether it is Alzheimer's, cancer, heart disease, diabetes, each and every one of these is praying for and depending on medical research to give Americans who are stricken a fighting chance. It is up to us. We have to make that decision.

I would take this question to the Iowa caucus, to the New Hampshire primary, any State, any city in the Nation, and ask the crowd that you would assemble, that anyone assembles, what do you think is a high priority? Do you think biomedical research by our government is a high priority?

I know the answer, because every one of us lives in fear that someone we love will be diagnosed with a serious illness. You know the first questions you would ask that doctor: Doctor, is there a medicine, is there a surgery, is there something I can do, something that can be done?

And you pray, pray to God, that the doctor says: Yes, we have a new medication in clinical trials at the NIH. It is very promising, and this may be the answer for your son, your daughter, your wife, your mother, and your father. That is what this comes down to—real life, real family challenges.

The American Cures Act I introduced a couple of years ago sets this 5 percent funding goal. I have talked to my colleagues on both sides of the aisle and asked them to join me. This shouldn't be a Democratic idea, not a Republican idea. This is as basic as it gets.

The next great scientific and medical breakthroughs will be discovered by researchers if we fund the research, but it isn't just a matter of biomedical research at the NIH. I had a visit with Department of Energy Secretary Ernest Moniz, and over breakfast we talked about the American Cures Act.

He said: Senator, let me put in a word here. Do you know who develops the technology for diagnostic evaluations—whether it is MRIs, PET scans, and things of that nature? Do you know who develops the technology for the application of radiation therapy for cancer victims? A lot of it is done right here at the Department of Energy.

He awakened me to the fact that we think about NIH automatically in biomedical research—and we should. There is more to the story.

So I have really reached out and said: American Cures Act, 5 percent real growth for biomedical isn't enough. We need 5 percent growth when it comes to innovation, the next breakthrough when it comes to diagnosing breast cancer at an early stage, treating cancers with radiation, other things. The American Innovation Act would provide an annual budget increase of 5 percent for the National Science Foundation, the Department of Energy Office of Science, the Department of Defense science and technology programs, the National Institute of Standards and Technology Scientific and Technical Research, and the NASA Science Directorate.

You say to yourself, can we afford it? I will say what I know. I know that when we embark on scientific research of real value, it not only can cure disease, in the process it will create a company. It will create many companies. It could create many jobs in the right fields and develop our economy in the right way.

We are debating this now on the floor of the Senate. They are not debating it in Beijing. They have decided they are going to pass us. The Chinese have embarked on a medical program in medical research and other research, determined—within the next 20 years—to pass the United States.

Will we let that happen? The men and women of the Senate will make that decision, and the men and women of the House and the President.

All told, the American Innovations Act would invest $100 billion over 10 years; the American Cures Act, $150 billion—$250 billion.

How much money will we spend on our budget in that 10-year period of time? Somewhere in the range of $18 trillion to $20 trillion. This is a tiny, little decimal point, but what a difference it could make.

Some of my colleagues talk about burdening our children and grandchildren with debt. I agree. We shouldn't. But the way to reduce our deficit and grow our economy is not by killing research and innovation. It pays for itself many times over. We have cut the budget deficit by two-thirds since the start of the recession which we just went through 7 or 8 years ago.

Now it is time to close the innovation deficit. In the last years of Jonas Salk's life, he was searching for an AIDS vaccine. He didn't need to do that. His place in history was assured, but Jonas Salk wasn't content to rest on past achievement. After all, he was an American, and when his early efforts failed, he was undeterred. Jonas Salk said: ''You can only fail if you stop too soon.''

This is a decisive moment of a historic opportunity for America and for Congress. We must continue to invest in basic science and research in order to reap the rewards of decades of work by the best scientific and medical minds of the world. The only way we can fail is by stopping too soon.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

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

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

TAX DAY

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, it has been said that April is the cruelest month. I think that pretty much captures how Americans feel as tax day approaches each year. This year, Americans will spend 114 days working to pay their Federal, State, and local taxes. In other words, Americans may have submitted their Federal tax returns or be getting ready to submit them tonight, but they are still not done working off their taxes. In fact, Americans won't start earning a dollar for themselves until April 25, almost one-third of the way through the year.

Americans spend 6.1 billion hours every year trying to comply with the Tax Code. That is an average of 19 hours for every man, woman, and child in the United States or an average of 76 hours for a family of four. Almost half of small businesses spend more than $5,000 each year on tax compliance; that is $5,000 on top of their tax bill.

Paying taxes is never going to be on the top of Americans' list of favorite activities, but it doesn't have to be the torturous process it has become. The Tax Code takes too much time to comply with, and it takes too much money from hard-working Americans.

Comprehensive tax reform is long overdue. Unfortunately, instead of tax reform, under the Obama administration Americans have just gotten more taxes. The President's health care law created or raised taxes to the tune of more than $1 trillion over the first decade. Several of those taxes have hit families making less than $250,000 a year, despite the President's campaign pledge not to raise taxes on families making less than $250,000.

Let's take the ObamaCare medical device tax. Thanks to this tax, families are now facing higher prices on life-saving medical equipment such as pacemakers and insulin pumps. ObamaCare taxes are also driving up prices for families on essential drugs such as EpiPens and asthma medications. Other ObamaCare taxes are costing American families in other ways.

The ObamaCare employer mandate tax is discouraging employers from expanding and hiring, which means fewer

jobs and opportunities for American workers. Then there is the individual mandate tax that last year began hitting American families without government-approved insurance. For 2015, the individual mandate tax penalty is $325 per person or 2 percent of household income, whichever is greater. In 2016, that tax penalty will rise to $695 per person or 2½ percent of household income, whichever is greater.

But that is not all ObamaCare is bringing to tax season. This year, a full half of Americans receiving ObamaCare health insurance subsidies discovered they have to pay back some or all of their subsidies because they didn't estimate their income correctly. Ultimately, just 4 percent of households receiving subsidies had the correct subsidy advanced to their insurance companies. Unfortunately, the confusion and mistakes are par for the course for ObamaCare. The administration apparently finds the law so confusing that it sent out incorrect ObamaCare forms to more than 800,000 people. Yet the administration wants us to believe ObamaCare is somehow working.

We need to repeal this broken law and its trillion dollars' worth of taxes, and we need to reform our bloated Tax Code. We need to cut rates for families so that Americans can spend more of the year working for themselves and less of the year working for the Federal Government. We need to cut rates for businesses, both large and small. The U.S. currently has the highest corporate tax rate in the developed world. That puts American businesses at a huge disadvantage compared to their foreign competitors, and American workers suffer the consequences—lower wages and fewer opportunities. Reforming both corporate and individual tax rates would go a long way toward making American businesses more competitive and opening new opportunities and higher paying jobs for American workers.

Of course, any tax reform measure should include reforms to the IRS. From mishandled customer service to the Agency's most serious offenses—the First Amendment violations involving the deliberate targeting of groups for extra scrutiny based on their political beliefs—this Agency, the IRS, is long overdue for reform.

The IRS Commissioner himself, John Koskinen, was quoted in Monday's Washington Post as saying: ''We certainly can't afford to have taxpayer service be any worse than it is, although it is hard to imagine it being much worse than it is.'' That is a quote from the IRS Commissioner himself. When even the IRS Commissioner admits the Agency's taxpayer services can't get much worse, that is a signal the Agency is ripe for reform.

TRADE PROMOTION AUTHORITY

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, before I close, I would like to take a moment to talk about what I think is a bright spot for our economy, and that is bipartisan trade promotion authority. Previous free- and fair-trade agreements have been a boon to the economy, expanding opportunities for American workers and giving American farmers, such as many of those I represent in South Dakota, and manufacturers access to new markets for their goods. Nearly every one of those trade agreements was negotiated and enacted using trade promotion authority.

The idea behind trade promotion authority is very simple: Congress sets negotiating priorities for the administration and requires the administration to consult with Congress during that negotiating process. In return, Congress promises a simple up-or-down vote on the legislation instead of a lengthy amendment process that could leave the final agreement looking nothing like what was negotiated. That up-or-down vote is the key. That is what gives our trading partners the confidence to put their best offers on the table, which allows for a successful conclusion of negotiations.

Trade promotion authority expired in 2007. Republicans have been trying to get it reauthorized ever since. Currently, the administration is negotiating two key trade agreements—the Trans-Pacific Partnership and the United States-European Union trade agreement—that are unlikely to be concluded in the near future unless trade promotion authority is finally renewed. These agreements will expand opportunities for American workers and open new markets for American goods. A bipartisan reauthorization of trade promotion authority will help bring those agreements to a speedy conclusion, and that will be good news for American workers and American businesses.

The challenges facing our Nation are best solved when Members of both parties come together to find solutions for the American people. I look forward to continuing to work with my colleagues on trade promotion authority and other issues that will grow our economy, create better paying jobs for American workers, and increase the take-home pay of middle-income families in this country.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Missouri.

NUCLEAR AGREEMENT WITH IRAN

Mr. BLUNT. Mr. President, yesterday, the Senate Foreign Relations Committee reported the Iran Nuclear Agreement Review Act of 2015. To the surprise of many people, including me, it was unanimously reported, which makes me begin to wonder just how much Iran nuclear agreement review there will be in this act.

I was an original cosponsor of the Corker-Menendez bill that would give Congress and the American people a voice in what is likely to be the most significant nuclear arms agreement in this decade. I think the likelihood, as we move toward the agreement, as it appears to be structured, is that it won't be able to contain the desire of other people in the neighborhood—and maybe in other places in the world but certainly in the neighborhood—to be just as capable of producing a nuclear weapon as we allow Iran to be.

Supporting this bill does mean that Congress really gives the opportunity for these negotiations to advance, not Congress putting the brakes on these negotiations. Specifically, the bill would give Congress the opportunity to review and weigh in on a deal that has already been made. It does appear to prohibit the administration from removing sanctions while Congress reviews and while Congress votes on a final deal, if that is what Congress decides to do. It doesn't require Congress to vote, as I read it, but I look forward to having the people who unanimously voted for this in the Foreign Relations Committee explain how it really does involve the Congress as the Constitution would suggest the Senate would be involved. This does permit removal of sanctions only if the Congress passes a joint resolution approving the agreement, I have been told.

The new bill reported out of committee makes the following changes in the original bill. Under the new bill, the congressional review period isn't going to be 60 days, it would be 30 days. The new bill removes the provision requiring the administration to certify to Congress that Iran is not providing material support to terrorists plotting against the homeland or against U.S. entities.

We are continuing to be told: Well, that is a different topic. I don't know why that is a different topic at all. A nuclear-capable Iran that is supporting terrorism is obviously more dangerous than a nuclear-capable Iran that is not supporting terrorism. The weapon that you can see being built, the weapon that would compare to weapons we may have built, and other powers, in the past was perhaps not nearly as dangerous as the weapon being built that could be used by some terrorist.

This bill does appear to give Congress the ability to intervene but only to intervene after the parties have made the deal. I am not particularly offended by that. If this were a real treaty, the administration would obviously be negotiating that treaty and then would bring the treaty to the Senate for approval, as the Constitution requires and as has happened over and over again on treaties involving nuclear capacity, nuclear ability, nuclear build-up, or nuclear build-down. That is not a new thing for the Senate to deal with, but apparently nobody in the administration wants this to be this kind of treaty. Now, there is, apparently, a way to weigh in before it is implemented but in a way that I think we are going to have to look at very carefully if and when that legislation comes to the floor.

A nuclear-armed Iran, an Iran that is nuclear weapons capable—whether that is in 6 months or 12 months or monitored or unmonitored—is a major threat, in my view, to the United States. It is a major threat to our allies in the region. Lifting these sanctions only empowers Iran to have more influence in the region. The sanctions did bring Iran to the negotiating table, but they have been given a lot of breathing room since these negotiations started a couple of years ago. We wouldn't be negotiating, I don't think, if the sanctions hadn't been working.

With what has happened to oil prices, those sanctions would have had a more dramatic effect on the economy of a country in which we have every reason to believe the population is inclined to be very friendly toward the United States. They are educated, they are capable, and they have long-term ties with many of their family members in this country. But, of course, the population is not in control of the country; the country is controlled by a small group who has only one view of how the world can work, and, frankly, that small group appears to have only one view of what they think about the United States of America. If you listen to the comments the Supreme Leader, the religious leader, makes over and over again, that view is dependably negative about our country and our people and our system of government and our ability to live side by side with each other. So we should be concerned about that.

The agreement would allow them to continue to enrich uranium. It would allow them to retain centrifuges, which we said, by the way, we wouldn't do. That was a point we wouldn't negotiate away. It would allow them to continue to have thousands of centrifuges—something we also said we wouldn't allow them to do. It would allow them to continue developing new and better and more sophisticated ways to enrich uranium, to weaponize, to have the ability to create a weapon.

Frankly, it is not even clear what agreement has been agreed to. To listen to our description of the agreement is a very different description of the framework. There is no agreement, everybody agrees to that, but there is supposedly a framework.

This framework would build two very different houses. If we listen to their description of the agreement and we listen to our description of the agreement, we are looking at very different things.

This week, for example, the Supreme Leader saw this very differently than the President—the so-called deal—with respect to when the sanctions would be removed and what would be happening.

President Obama and Secretary Kerry have put a tremendous amount of effort into reaching an agreement—in fact, such amount of effort that it has been clear from the very start of the negotiations who wanted an agreement the most. What hasn't been clear and what isn't clear to me is why we are so eager to just check the box and move on here, and assume that sometime in the next few years Iran will become a friendlier state and will not want to head in a bad direction. Not only does it head Iran in a nuclear-weapons direction, but it heads many other people in the neighborhood in the direction of wondering if they have this capacity, why wouldn't we want to have this capacity?

Most Americans don't believe Iran will stick to a deal. Frankly, I have great questions about that myself.

Whether the President likes it or not, this is an international agreement with wide-ranging consequences. The Congress and the American people have a role to play here. The Foreign Relations Committee has made a proposal about what that role should be. But it seems to me that proposal is still a long way away from the constitutional protection that should be involved when we reach an agreement of this kind, or when we negotiate a treaty.

A number of us sent a letter a few weeks ago which got a lot of attention. I thought the reaction to that letter was pretty interesting.

The immediate reaction from the Secretary of State was: Well, this isn't a treaty, it is just an agreement. The Senate doesn't have to approve an agreement. The President would be bound by it, and it would be such a good agreement—according to the Secretary of State—that the next President would want to be bound by it as well.

This is a pretty significant moment to decide that we may or may not be bound by what is decided.

The Iranian Foreign Minister then was able to give us some sense of his understanding. I think the phrase he said the next day was: We know international law is what really matters here, not the law of any given country.

I have been all over my State, as many of us have, in the last couple of weeks. I don't think there is any courthouse, any coffee shop, or any gathering of people in Missouri where they would say: Well, really, international law is what we care about. We don't care about what the Constitution says when we are dealing with other countries.

Then 72 hours after that letter was sent, the President's Chief of Staff said: Really, the President would probably want to take this to the U.N., but he probably wouldn't want to take it to the U.S. Senate.

We will see how this debate goes on the proposal that the Foreign Affairs Committee is making, but it clearly does not bode in the direction of a treaty approved by two-thirds of the Members of the U.S. Senate. In my view, we are still a long way from a final agreement.

There seems to be a lot of disagreement as to what the framework means. But as we move toward that final agreement, our number one priority should be to do everything possible to prohibit Iran—whose influence in the world and the region is already disproportionate—from having the capacity to ever have a nuclear weapon. I hope our negotiators continue to keep that in mind, and I hope there is not nearly as much disagreement about the final agreement as there is about what the framework itself says.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Vermont.

THE BUDGET

Mr. SANDERS. Mr. President, later today, maybe as early as 11 o'clock or so, we are going to begin a discussion of the budget. As we know, the budget is a set of national priorities. A budget has to do with our vision of where America is and where America should be. We are now in the process of moving the budget to a conference committee between the House and the Senate.

When I think about a budget, I think about a document designed to address the problems facing our country. In that regard, I find the Republican budget that will likely pass to be totally inadequate, and a budget whose priorities are way, way out of place with where the American people are.

When we talk about the needs of America, the most significant need and the most significant economic problem we face is that for 40 years the American middle class has been in decline. Today we have over 40 million Americans living in poverty, almost more than at any time in the modern history of America. Our real unemployment is not 5½ percent; real unemployment is 11 percent. And despite the modest gains of the Affordable Care Act, we still have 35 million Americans who have no health insurance.

While millions of Americans work today longer hours for lower wages than used to be the case, despite a significant increase in productivity, what we are seeing as a nation is an obscene level of income and wealth inequality. That reality speaks to the fact that since the Wall Street crash of 2008, about 99 percent of all new income today is going to the top 1 percent. I know people find that amazing, but it is true. Which means that no matter what the GDP may be—2 percent, 5 percent—it doesn't really matter, because virtually all the new income goes to the top 1 percent.

In terms of distribution of wealth, what we are seeing in America today is worse and more unequal than any major country on Earth, and worse in America than at any time since the late 1920s. Today we have the top one-tenth of 1 percent owning more wealth than the bottom 90 percent. Unbelievable—the top one-tenth of 1 percent owning more wealth than the bottom 90 percent. Today we have one family owning more wealth than the bottom 42 percent of the American people—that is, the Walton family of Walmart.

A recent report came out by Forbes magazine which pointed out—and this is almost beyond belief—that the wealthiest 14 people in this country, Bill Gates, Warren Buffett, Koch brothers, others, saw their wealth increase between 2013 and 2015, a 2-year period, by $157 billion. That is just an increase in their wealth.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator's time has expired.

Mr. SANDERS. Mr. President, I will be back on the floor dealing with the budget as the ranking member, but I am happy to yield the floor at this point.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority whip.

HUMAN TRAFFICKING LEGISLATION

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, for the last several weeks we have been trying to get unstuck on an important piece of legislation that would combat modern-day slavery.

At a time, I think most people were unaware of this phenomenon of sex trafficking primarily of teenaged girls between the ages of 12 and 14. I think the country has become much more aware about this scourge, this dark side to our culture and our society, and much more interested in trying to figure out what we can do to address it.

At a time when we are really beginning to see some true bipartisan cooperation and progress here in the Senate—and I say that because of things like the budget we passed last night, which was a very important piece of legislation we passed to reform Medicare, particularly to improve access for our seniors to Medicare services performed by doctors and hospitals by making sure they had a predictable and sustainable reimbursement rate, and what happened yesterday in the Foreign Relations Committee, where we had a unanimous vote on Congress's prerogative to represent our constituents on having a voice on the very important negotiations taking place between Tehran and the United States and our allies on Iran's aspirations for nuclear weapon.

Then I think about other things that are happening that are encouraging here, after a long period of stagnation and dysfunction over the last 2 years. I think we are on the cusp of a breakthrough on trade. Why in the world wouldn't we want to be open to markets when basically 80 percent of the purchasing power of the world and 95 percent of the world's population lies outside of our shores? Why wouldn't we want to open those markets to our farmers and ranchers and our manufacturers—people who grow things and who make things—and wouldn't that be great for our economy and job creation?

So imagine my surprise when after these past few weeks we have been stuck on something that has enjoyed such broad bipartisan support as combating human trafficking. Senator after Senator has come to the floor and talked about this and why we ought to act to do something about it.

Just to refresh everyone's memory, what we are trying to do is pass the Justice for Victims of Trafficking Act. What it would do is create a victims compensation fund, in essence, from the fines and the penalties assessed against people who are engaging in child pornography and other sex-related crimes. In other words, it would address the demand side, and take the money from fines and penalties assessed against the demand side and use that to help the victims—to help them be rescued, and to help them heal and get on with their lives.

This legislation has enjoyed broad support outside of these Chambers. More than 200 different organizations—law enforcement organizations, victims rights organizations, faith-based groups, people who want to lend a helping hand to provide beds and a secure place to stay while people heal. Unfortunately, there is just not enough money. There is a huge need across America for the resources this legislation would provide. We estimate, based on historic data, that there could be as much as $30 million generated from the fines and penalties associated with the Justice for Victims of Trafficking Act that would then be available to be granted by the Department of Justice to help these victims.

So imagine my surprise when after Senator after Senator on both sides of the aisle endorsed this legislation—I think at last count we had 30 cosponsors, an almost equal number on the Democratic side as the Republican side. Then this legislation sailed through the Senate Judiciary Committee and got the unanimous vote of all Democrats and all Republicans. Then it came to the floor, and at least initially we bypassed the traditional procedures to bring legislation to the floor because all 100 Senators agreed that this was important enough and significant enough and urgent enough that we needed to act on it quickly.

So imagine my surprise when, all of a sudden, it was brought to my attention that some people objected to a provision in the legislation known as the Hyde amendment, which has been the law of the land for 39 years.

To refresh everybody's memory, in the very polarizing debate over abortion, this is the one consensus item that has been the law of the land for 39 years that Republicans and Democrats have voted for repeatedly. What it says is that no taxpayer dollars can be used to fund abortion except in the case of rape or in the case of the mother's health. Those are basically the exceptions. Do you know what? I cannot imagine that those exceptions would not apply in the vast majority of cases involving human trafficking because tragically they do involve rape, certainly sexual assault of a minor who is incapable by virtue of their tender age, unable to legally consent, and certainly people who are coerced into this sort of activity who do not want to be.

Notwithstanding the fact that the Hyde amendment itself would provide broad exceptions to provide health care services to the very victims we are talking about, some of our colleagues across the aisle said that what this bill does is it expands the Hyde amendment. The way it does it, they claim, is that it now would apply to the fines and penalties that would be assessed on criminals, primarily child pornographers, consumers, purveyors, and other people guilty of various sexual crimes. They claim that is somehow an expansion of the Hyde provision.

This is getting more and more baffling because actually last night, in an overwhelming vote—I think it was 92 votes in favor of the so-called doc fix and also funding community health centers and an extension of the Children's Health Insurance Program—the very same Hyde-type provision that was contained in the bill we voted on last night is contained in the amendment we are going to vote on tomorrow on the Senate floor. If this provision is good enough for doctors and hospitals, why in the world isn't it good enough for victims of human sex trafficking? I think the answer is obvious: It is and it should be.

In an effort to try to get us unstuck in order to try to catch a wave based on what we are doing generally here in the Senate—finally being productive and making things work—I have tried to take something that virtually all Democrats have voted for previously and to put that in the bill in order to eliminate their cause for concern. I am not going to question at this point whether it is a legitimate complaint. I, frankly, disagree. But let's get on with getting the bill passed and getting something important done.

This morning, I heard a familiar argument that was made by the Democratic leader, Senator REID. The good news is that I have made a change in the legislation that would directly address what the Democratic leader said is their main objection. Here is their objection. I don't agree with it, but here is what it is and here is what I have done to try to address it. Their claim is that the fines and penalties are private dollars, not public dollars, and that attaching the Hyde language to those fines and penalties is somehow an expansion of the Hyde provision.

As I said, I disagree with that, but what I would ask my colleagues to do is look at page 3 of the legislation, lines 3 through 7. What we have done to address their concern is to say that no longer will the fines and penalties associated with this fund be directly appropriated and paid out in grants to the victims of human trafficking. Instead, what page 3 of our amendment says—which we will vote on tomorrow, S. 178—this paragraph is entitled ''Transfers.'' It says:

In a manner consistent with section 3302(b) of title 31, there shall be transferred to the

Fund from the General Fund of the Treasury an amount equal to the amount of the assessments collected under this section, which shall remain available until expended.

What we tried to do in order to maintain the status quo on the Hyde amendment is say that the money which will actually be used to help the victims will now come from the general fund. It will be an amount equal to the fines and penalties that were going to be available under the original bill. But because of the objection, because of the stated concern, we are trying to find a way to get unstuck and keep our focus on these victims and not on some phantom objection based on—again, I am not going to reargue here today; I am just going to say we need to get this done, and this provision does that.

Mr. President, may I ask what the order of business is?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The time reserved for the majority under morning business has expired.

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent for an additional 5 minutes to speak in morning business.

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

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I will wrap up.

As I have told a number of our colleagues across the aisle who believe passionately in the importance of this topic, I think this amendment we will vote on tomorrow addresses their stated concerns. It certainly addresses the concerns stated by the Democratic leader this morning.

I would just say that of all the Senators on the other side of the aisle who agreed to cosponsor this legislation, who previously objected to voting on the bill and passing it—I would ask them to please take a close look at that provision. Again, page 3, lines 3 through 7 of my amendment now would provide that instead of the fines and penalties being directly appropriated into these programs for grant purposes, that money would come from a general fund of the Treasury in an equivalent amount of the fines and penalties. So, money being fungible, there is no loss of funds, but what we have done is we have tried to address their concerns, I think in a way that eliminates them.

All the Senators who cosponsored this legislation, for which I am very grateful—Senator KLOBUCHAR, Senator WYDEN, Senator COONS, Senator UDALL, Senator CASEY, Senator FEINSTEIN, Senator GILLIBRAND, Senator HEITKAMP, Senator SCHUMER, Senator BLUMENTHAL, Senator PETERS, and Senator DURBIN—I hope all of our Democratic friends who previously objected based on the original provision will take a look at this change because it does directly address their stated concerns.

Let's get this done. We will vote on this tomorrow. But I would rather not wait for that time. I would rather try to get this done today if we can. We might be able to do that by agreement if everyone agrees that this provision, this change, addresses those stated concerns.

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

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

CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. ENZI. Mr. President, I move to close morning business.

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

Morning business is closed.

CONCURRENT RESOLUTION ON THE BUDGET, FISCAL YEAR 2016

Mr. ENZI. Mr. President, I ask the Chair to lay before the Senate the message from the House requesting a conference on S. Con. Res. 11, the budget resolution.

The Presiding Officer laid before the Senate the following message from the House of Representatives:

Resolved, That the House insist upon its amendment to the resolution (S. Con. Res. 11) entitled ''Concurrent resolution setting forth the congressional budget for the United States Government for fiscal year 2016 and setting forth the appropriate budgetary levels for fiscal years 2017 through 2025.'', and ask a conference with the Senate on the disagreeing votes of the two Houses thereon.

Ordered, That Mr. Tom Price of Georgia, Mr. Rokita, Mr. Diaz-Balart, Mrs. Black, Mr. Moolenaar, Mr. Van Hollen, Mr. Yarmuth, and Ms. Moore be the managers of the conference on the part of the House.

Mr. ENZI. I move to disagree in the House amendment, agree to the request by the House for a conference, and authorize the Presiding Officer to appoint conferees.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The motion is pending.

Mr. ENZI. Mr. President, I wish to make some comments about the budget and the process.

Last month, the Senate Budget Committee took an important first step in helping to change the way we do business in Washington by reporting out a balanced budget. This is crucial as we begin to restore the trust of the American people.

This week, we will take the next step and start to work on a joint balanced budget resolution with our colleagues in the House that will expand America's economy and increase opportunities for hard-working families. A balanced budget approved by Congress will help make the government live within its means and set spending limits for our Nation. A balanced budget will also boost the Nation's economic output by more than $500 billion over the next 10 years. That is according to the nonpartisan Congressional Budget Office.

Why the urgency? Hard-working families are fed up with the President's spend-now-pay-later policy and are closely following our efforts to produce a balanced budget. Senate Democrats could only muster two budgets in 8 years, and we will soon have one after only 4 months. It is time to show taxpayers that Congress is committed to a balanced budget to make our government more effective and accountable, but we are running out of time.

Recent media reports note that the lawmakers in 27 States have passed applications for a constitutional convention to approve a balanced budget amendment. I have to add that there are new applications to do that same amendment in nine other States, and they are close behind.

Now, if just seven of those nine States approve moving forward on the balanced budget issue, it would bring the number of applications to 34 States. This would mean the two-thirds requirement under Article V of the Constitution would force Congress to take action. It is no wonder hard-working taxpayers across the country are feeling anxious.

Federal revenues have hit record highs. Yet we are on track to overspend by nearly $1 trillion a year. I think we are at the $560 billion level of overspending this year.

How much does Congress get to make decisions on? Congress spends about $4 trillion a year, but only gets to make decisions on $1 1/10 trillion. Now, if we overspend by over $500 billion, we are spending half more than what we take in. No family can exist very long by spending half more than they take in year after year after year.

We looked at the President's budget and the President increases taxes by $2 1/10 trillion and still gets a wider and wider and wider gap of overspending as time goes by to that trillion-dollar mark out there in 10 years.

Just this week, headlines around the country reported: ''Budget Deficit in U.S. Widens as Spending Exceeds Record Revenue.''

On Monday, the Treasury Department reported that spending by the Federal Government exceeded its revenue by more than $439 billion from October through March, which is $26 billion more compared to the same period last year. In fact, CBO is forecasting that for March our Nation spent more than $44 billion, up 19 percent from last year. We are getting more money, and we are spending more money.

American taxpayers understand we overspend. The more we overspend, the more debt we owe, and the more debt our children and grandchildren will owe. In fact, we have done this so consistently that it is not just our grandchildren and our children who are faced with the crisis, it is us as well—everybody in America.

I mentioned that we get to make decisions on $1 1/10 trillion dollars a year, which is $1,100 billion. If anybody knows how big $1 billion is, they know

how big $1,100 billion is. But that is all we get to make decisions on.

The amount of interest we paid last year was $235 billion. Interest doesn't buy you a thing, but we spent $235 billion on interest. Now, that is pretty close to 1 percent for the fee for that borrowing. So if $235 billion is 1 percent interest, what would the normal 5 percent cost? Every single dime we get to make a decision on. That means no defense, no education, no HELP. Everything will be by the wayside just so we can pay the interest on our debt. That is why we have to be concerned about the overspending that is happening.

American taxpayers understand that the more we overspend, the more debt we owe and the more debt our children and grandchildren owe. If that tax rate goes up, we will soon be responsible for paying off that debt at the expense of everything else America expects. This is why Republicans in Congress are focused on passing a balanced budget that will ensure that Washington will once again live within its means, just like hard-working families do every day.

Now, we don't get that balance for 10 years, but it moves toward that goal every year. Ten years is too long. For next year's budget, we are going to have to figure out better things to do to get it back into a framework where our interest will not exceed our expenditures. That is the interest exceeding the expenditures, not the revenue, and again we had a record revenue. That is why we are focused on passing a balanced budget, just like hard-working families do every day.

What does the Senate-passed budget do? Well, here is what it does: It balances the budget in 10 years with no tax hikes. It protects our most vulnerable citizens. It strengthens the national defense. It improves job growth and opportunity for hard-working families. It slows the rate of spending growth.

Now, it doesn't recede the spending growth, it slows the spending growth. That is the best we have ever been able to do in Washington. When we talk about a cut in Washington, what we are talking about is giving them less than what they asked for, not less than what they have.

It preserves Social Security by reducing spending in other areas to fully offset Social Security's rising deficit and encourages our Nation's leaders to begin a bipartisan, bicameral discussion on how to protect Social Security and avoid the across-the-board Social Security benefit cuts that will occur later under the law unless we take action, but that is something that has to be done jointly. There would be too much blame otherwise, and as far as the budget, the reason we have to preserve Social Security by reducing spending in other areas to offset Social Security is because we are not allowed to do anything with Social Security in the budget.

This budget will also protect our seniors by safeguarding Medicare from insolvency and extending the life of the Medicare trust fund by 5 years. It ensures Medicare savings in the President's health care law and makes sure those savings are dedicated to Medicare. If it comes from Medicare, it ought to go back to Medicare instead of seeing it go to more overspending on new programs that are outside of Medicare.

Our balanced budget continues funding for the Children's Health Insurance Program and creates a new program based on CHIP to serve low-income, working-age, able-bodied adults and children who are eligible for Medicaid.

It increases State flexibility in designing benefits and administering Medicaid Programs to encourage efficiency and reduce wasteful spending, and it provides stable and predictable funding so long-term services and support are sustainable both for the Federal Government and the States.

As the Senate and House begin budget negotiations next week, it is worth noting that the strong economic growth a balanced budget can provide will serve as the foundation for helping all Americans grow and prosper.

One of the goals of a Republican balanced budget is to make our government more efficient, more effective, and more accountable. If Congress does its job, we can have some flexibility and eliminate what is not working, starting with the worst first, and then we can eliminate and streamline what is left.

The reason I emphasized ''the worst first'' is because one of the things we talk about constantly is the need to prevent the sequester. In some cases, it is absolutely essential to prevent a sequester, but the sequester should have been done in the efficient way of eliminating the worst first. Instead, there was a memo that went out that said: Make it hurt. That should never happen in America. That is why we saw some of the decisions that came down that seemed pretty ridiculous.

One of the decisions that affected Wyoming was—I hope everybody will come and see the Grand Tetons—marvelous mountains that look like part of the Alps were transplanted over there and made a little bit taller. A lot of people like to stop and take pictures there regardless of the season—whether it is snow covered or the aspens are golden in the foreground or whether everything is lush and green, and, of course, you see wildlife all through that valley. Naturally, people like to stop and take pictures.

Well, a bunch of signs were printed up that said you cannot use the turnouts. A bunch of barricades were bought so you could not pull onto the turnout, and the sign said it would be illegal to park along the highway.

Where did the money come from for the barricades? Where did the money come for the signs that said we could not use the parking lots to take pictures? Well, I called to find out whose brilliant idea that was and why parking lots would be closed, and I was told that there would not be any garbage pickup. I suggested they just remove the garbage cans.

When people in Wyoming and across the Nation visit a national park, they can haul their garbage another 20 miles before they throw it out. That way the beautiful vista could still be photographed instead of people still parking along the highways to take those pictures and then getting ticketed. That is just one small example of cutting the most important first instead of the worst first. I am sure there are examples in every State.

It didn't just happen with facilities like that. The people at Head Start came to see me and said they got a 7.5-percent cut in the sequester. It was supposed to be 2.3 percent.

How did it get to 7.5 percent? After checking into it, it appears the Washington bureaucracy decided to keep more than their share of the money instead giving it to the kids across America who were supposed to have it. It did get restored, but the discouraging part was that when I asked the people who talked to me before how things were going, they said: Well, we got the extra money, but in order to meet the employer requirements in Wyoming for ObamaCare, we had to spend all of that money, so none of the kids happened to go back to Head Start. That was very disappointing. That is not the way to run a government and it is not the way to run a business. It should never have happened.

We need a budget that can eliminate waste and streamline what is left and start with the worst first.

Of course, another of my suggestions is that we have a biannual budget. Mr. President, $1,100 billion is too much money to look at in 1 year. Twelve bills to allocate that money to the different agencies are too many bills for us to handle in 1 year, particularly if they are going to get scrutiny.

I suggested we write the number of bills that we do and separate them into two packages of six and that we do the six tough ones right after the election, because we have a little more appetite for doing them then, and the six easy ones just before an election. Then we would be able to get all 12 of them and be able to scrutinize all 12 of them.

Why is that important? Well, in going through this budget process—and like I said, I only had about 8 weeks to start to put the budget together—one of the things I discovered was that we have a whole bunch of programs that are out of authorization. The ability to spend for them has expired, but that doesn't stop us from spending on them. It should at least constrain us a little bit.

Some of those programs go back to 1983. They expired in 1983, 1987, and on up to the present day. How many of them? Two hundred and sixty programs. There were 260 programs that we haven't looked at to see if we ought to continue to spend money on them or

if we ought to revise how we have been spending the money. If they have expired—most of them had been in existence for 6 years before they expired, and in those 6 years, we should have been able to find if there were any flaws or changes. Hopefully, there was somebody who was looking out for it and found some efficiencies that helped with the spending.

So there were 260 programs. Do we know how much that amounts to that we are still spending and there is no authority to spend? It is $293 billion a year. That is a year. Usually, when we talk about the budget we are talking about over 10 years. So that would only be $29 billion a year if it were over 10 years, but it is not. It is $293 billion a year of expired authorizations, expired permissions to spend money. We have to get that corrected as well.

One of the ways we can do that is through a biennial budget, so that we are looking at half of them in a year instead of everything the government does every year. The dollars have gotten so big that we can't get through them efficiently, effectively, and scrutinizing them as good accounting in a year.

There is one exception on that, which is that we look at defense every year. Defense is the most important constitutional requirement given to this body. So we would continue to do that each year. Incidentally, defense is the one authorization that is not out of authorization, and that is because we do it every year. I don't know how many decades we have done the authorization—the permission for spending—for defense.

Another troubling situation I discovered through this process was that there are some items that are not authorized that were in defense that we are spending money on anyway. I get comments from the people on the committee that looks over defense saying: How can they spend that money when we just did an authorization that said no, that is not one of the authorized items? So there are some problems we need to definitely work on with budgets. That is what we have done while putting this budget together, in trying to eliminate some of the inconsistencies we have, but we have not touched that $293 billion in unauthorized spending.

So when people say we need more money for the nondefense items, I want them to take a look at that $293 billion and see if they can't find $29 billion, $90 billion, whatever, out of $293 billion that they think might be more effectively spent in a different way.

I know when I came to Congress there were 119 preschool children's programs. Everybody has ideas for preschool programs, and they are good ideas. We know that if we teach kids better before they go to school, they do better in school, there are fewer dropouts, there is less crime, and the whole world is better.

There were 119 programs. Senator Kennedy and I worked on that, and we got it down to 69 programs. The ones we got rid of are the ones that were under our jurisdiction. So that left a whole bunch more. In the meantime, I have been able to work that down to 35 programs. And in the child care grant program last year, I got an amendment passed—it was one of 14 amendments that we considered—which required that those 35 go down to just 5 and that all 5 be put under 1 department. I am hoping that is what the administration is doing. That would save enough money to fund the truly preschool education programs really well, and that is what we need to do. There is a lot of money right there.

So if Congress does its job, we can have some flexibility and eliminate what isn't working, starting with the worst first, and then we can eliminate waste and streamline what is left. But to do this, first, Congress must do what it has not done in the past 8 years. It has to scrutinize every dollar for which they have a responsibility. If government programs are not delivering results, they should be improved, and if they are not needed, they should be eliminated. It is time to prioritize and demand results from our government programs. When these programs are reauthorized, I am hoping there is a matrix in there that says this is what we plan to do and this is how we will know if we got it done. Then we will have an easy evaluation of whether they are getting their job done. That is mostly what happens in the private sector, and it is an efficient way of doing it in the public sector as well.

I have made enough speeches about efficiency in government that I had someone come up to me and say: I hate to say this, but the job I am doing isn't worth having anybody do. He said: I am reluctant to mention it because if they eliminate that job, I am probably fired. Well, I took his suggestion, and I spoke to the right people and that job got eliminated, and he got promoted. That is what has to happen. We have to take the people who are innovative in government, who are figuring out ways to do things better and more efficiently and more effectively and move them into the positions where they can really do the job.

So that is what I am counting on. In the coming weeks, hard-working taxpayers will get to see something they have not had the chance to experience in the last 8 years, and that is an open and transparent legislative process. We are starting that process today with the appointment of the conferees for the conference committees, and we will have amendments this afternoon. Members of Congress from both the House and the Senate will come together as part of the Senate-House budget committee to create a balanced budget that will boost our Nation's economic output and help restore the promise of a government that is more effective and that will put more people to work.

A balanced budget will allow Americans to spend more time working hard to grow their businesses or to advance their jobs, instead of worrying about taxes and inefficient and ineffective regulations. Most importantly, it means every American who wants to find a good-paying job and a fulfilling career has the opportunity to do just that.

I look forward to joining my colleagues in both the Senate and the House—Republicans and Democrats—as we take this next step to deliver a government that is more accountable to each and every American.

I yield the floor and reserve the remainder of my time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. SULLIVAN). The Senator from Vermont.

Mr. SANDERS. Mr. President, let me applaud Senator ENZI and his staff for their very hard work.

I certainly agree with Senator ENZI that we need a government that is accountable, that we need to get rid of waste in government, and that we need to get rid of duplicative programs. I don't think there is any debate on that. I look forward to working with Senator ENZI and others to make that happen. However, the Republican budget is far, far more than that.

Today, I rise in strong opposition to the motion to go to conference on the budget resolution.

The budget resolution the Senate passed on March 27 moves this country in exactly the wrong direction, and the House budget resolution, in many respects, is even worse. The Federal budget is more than just a long list of numbers, although God knows there is a long list of numbers in the budget. The Federal budget is about our national priorities and about our values. It is about how we assess the problems facing our country, of which there are many—and I am not sure Senator ENZI would disagree with me if I laid it out—and how we go forward in addressing the problems on which there is a fundamental divide. That is what the Senate is now dealing with. What are the problems facing our country and how do we move forward?

Let me begin by saying that despite the modest gains of the Affordable Care Act, there remain in this country 35 million Americans who have no health insurance. That means that when they get sick, they may not be able to go to the doctor or they may end up going to the emergency room at very high cost.

I have spoken with doctors all over this country who tell me that when people don't have health insurance, because they delay going to the doctor, sometimes by the time they go into the doctor's office, it is too late. The doctor says: Why didn't you come in here 6 months ago when you noticed your symptoms? And they say: I don't have any health insurance; I couldn't afford it. So we are losing tens of thousands of people every single year who die—die—or become much sicker than they should be because they don't have health insurance.

The United States remains the only major country on Earth that doesn't

guarantee health care to all people. Thirty-five million Americans have no health insurance. What is the Republican solution to this problem? Well, it is a brilliant idea. They are going to end the Affordable Care Act and make $440 billion worth of cuts to Medicaid, which will result in 27 million Americans losing their health insurance on top of the 35 million we already have uninsured.

I know the newspapers are not particularly interested in it. We won't see it on network TV. That is the reality. They don't deny it. There are 16 million people covered by the Affordable Care Act who would lose their health insurance because this bill ends it. Then, a $440 billion cut to Medicaid, and another 11 million gone. Sixteen plus 11 is 27 million Americans. What is the idea? What happens to those people? How many of them die? How many of them suffer? It is not an issue for them. They are working on something. They have been working on something for about 15 years for health care. If it hasn't happened in 16 years, it isn't going to happen.

That is what is in this budget.

This budget denies over 2.3 million young adults the right to stay on their parents' health insurance plan until the age of 26. We used to have this absurd situation. My wife and I have health insurance to cover our kids, but when they turn 18, they are not on our plan. It is gone. Right now, young people are on the plan until they are 26. It is gone under this Republican budget.

We finally overcame a situation that is so vulgar it is hard to imagine that it existed in America, and that is that people who have serious illnesses such as cancer, heart disease or diabetes would walk into an insurance office and say: I need insurance. The insurance company would say: Oh, we can't cover you for your diabetes, your heart disease, your cancer because it is a preexisting condition and we don't want to pay out all of that money if it recurs.

Think about that, how crazy that is. What do people want insurance for? They want insurance to cover their needs. If I had breast cancer or colon cancer 5 years ago, sure, I want to make sure my insurance company covers that. It is a preexisting condition. Under the Affordable Care Act, we did away with that discrimination. That would come back. So all Americans who have serious health illnesses: Know that if what they put into this budget goes into effect, insurance companies can reject you.

Not only has this Republican budget ended the Affordable Care Act and made $440 billion in cuts to Medicaid, it would also increase prescription drug prices for 4 million seniors and persons with disabilities who are on Medicare Part D by reopening the doughnut hole. That means that at a time when senior poverty is increasing and so many seniors in Vermont—I speak to them all the time and I suspect it is the same in Wyoming or maybe not—are saying: I am living on $13,000, $14,000 a year; I have to heat my home in the winter—if you live in Vermont, you do—I have to buy food; I have to pay for medicine; I can't do it all. So we closed the so-called doughnut hole, which means that seniors would not have to pay out-of-pocket for their prescription drugs. The Republican budget reopens the hole. All over this country, seniors will be paying more for their prescription drugs.

The Republican budget not only undertakes a vast attack on health care in this country, which will decimate life for millions of people, but then on another issue of great consequence, education, it is equally bad.

A couple of months ago in my State of Vermont I held three townhall meetings at colleges and universities in the State to talk to young people about the cost of college and about student debt. In Vermont—and I suspect in the other 49 States as well—we have families who are struggling to afford to send their kids to college, and then we have others who are leaving college terribly deep in debt. Just yesterday, I was flying here from Burlington, VT, and I sat next to a woman who said her six kids went to college and graduate school, and all of them are deeply in debt.

So clearly, what a sensible budget does is two things. It says, first, how do we make college affordable so that young people will be able to get a higher education; and second of all, when they graduate, how do we lower student debt, which is today so oppressive?

The Republican budget does exactly the opposite. What the Republican budget does is cut $90 billion over 10 years in Pell grants. Pell grants are the major Federal program making it possible for low-income and working-class families to get grants to go to college. This would increase the cost of college education to more than 8 million Americans. Think about it. Our job is to lower the cost of college; this budget increases it.

At a time when working-class families in Vermont and all over this country are having a hard time finding good quality, affordable preschool childcare, the Republican budget makes significant cuts in Head Start which means that 110,000 fewer children would be able to enroll in that program. Under the Republican budget, 1.9 million fewer students would receive the academic health they need to succeed in school by cutting about $12 billion in cuts to the title I education program. Dropout rates in low-income communities all over this country for high school kids are atrocious. The Republican budget cuts significantly the funding that we put into public schools in low-income communities.

At a time when the middle class is disappearing and we have more people living in poverty today than at almost any time in modern American history, today there are millions of families who are struggling to put food on the table. I know maybe on Capitol Hill people don't know that, but that is a reality. People are making 9 or 10 bucks an hour. They have a few kids. They are having a very difficult time affording food—basic nutrition. We have an estimated 40 million people that are what they call ''food insecure.'' That means people who on any given week, any given month, depending on what is happening, have a hard time feeding their families. The Republican budget would make massive cuts in nutrition programs in this country by, among other things, cutting $10 billion to the Women, Infants and Children Program over the next decade.

I honestly have a hard time hearing people talk about family values and how much they love families and children, and you have a program which has done a really good job in terms of prenatal care for pregnant woman, making sure they get the health care and the nutrition they need, making sure their babies get the care they need. Who really thinks we should cut these programs? What kind of Nation are we or what kind of Senate are we that people would vote to cut these programs—not to mention massive cuts in the food stamp program.

But in the midst of all of these devastating cuts in health care, education, and nutrition that impacts working families, the Republican budget does something else which is quite incredible. And I suspect that people who are listening are saying: BERNIE SANDERS is being partisan; he is not telling the truth; it really can't be this bad. One of the problems we have is convincing people this is reality. This is reality. This is the Republican budget. I know the media doesn't write about it much, but that is what it is. In addition to making cuts to health care, nutrition, education, other programs, what else do they do?

At a time when the wealthiest 400 Americans—400 Americans—paid a tax rate of 16.7 percent in 2012, at a time when hedge fund managers pay a lower effective tax rate than working families, truckdrivers, and nurses, what the Republican budget does based on an amendment they did abolishes the estate tax. The estate tax provides a $269 billion tax break. For whom? For the middle class? Good. Low-income people? That is great. Not so. This repeal of the estate tax applies to the wealthiest—not 1 percent, but the top two-tenths of 1 percent. Republicans passed a tax proposal which impacts the top two-tenths of 1 percent and leaves nothing for 99.8 percent of Americans. Cut education, cut health care, cut nutrition, and give the tax breaks to billionaires. By repealing the estate tax, the average tax breaks for multimillionaires and billionaires would be about $3 million.

When you go around Vermont and you go around America, do people say: Hey, what we really need, what our

major priority is, is not to feed the hungry, not to make college affordable, not to create jobs, but to give a tax break to billionaires? That is in their budget.

Not only do they give a huge tax break to the wealthy—what else do they do? They raise taxes on low-income and working families—folks who do not make a whole lot of campaign contributions. What the Republican budget does is increase taxes by not extending the benefits we put into the earned income tax credit and the child tax credit. It allows those additional benefits to expire, which means that low-income and moderate-income families will pay more in taxes.

In fact, we estimate that tax hike for low-income and middle-income families will be about $900 apiece for more than 13 million families. Raise taxes to low- and moderate-income families and lower taxes for billionaires. Anybody believe those are the priorities that should be in a budget for the American people?

I will have more to say about this budget later. But the Republican budget does not address the significant problems facing America: how we create the millions of jobs we need, how we raise the minimum wage to a living wage, how we address pay equity so women workers don't make 78 cents on the dollar compared to men, how we rebuild our crumbling infrastructure. It doesn't address any of those issues. But what it does is make a bad situation worse. I would hope that my colleagues would have the courage to stand up to Wall Street, to stand up to the big money interests, and start defending the working families of this country and vote no on this resolution.

With that, Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Who yields time?

The Senator from Wyoming.

Mr. ENZI. Mr. President, as part of this discussion, I want to mention something that was very significant that happened last night. It happened after the press went to bed, I think, but a very important thing, and that is a thing called the doc fix passed. The SGR passed this body last night in a very bipartisan way, after a series of amendments that were open floor amendments. That is what is supposed to happen around here.

One of the reasons I mention that is, I have always said if you can't see a doctor, you don't have insurance at all. With the way we have been setting up Medicare payments for doctors, we have been driving them out of the profession. We have been eliminating doctors. We have been having doctors tell their kids don't become a doctor, because of what Congress is doing, holding them hostage every 6 months. That got taken care of last night.

I don't know, we have been doing that for, I think, about 18 years, just 1 fix at a time. So it is nice that we are finally able to make that permanent.

I mentioned that was Medicare. This is the first budget the Republicans have gotten to participate in in many years, but the Democrats got to work on the health care bill, and that was part of their budget. In fact, it was part of the reconciliation in the budget, which is a special way of passing something without 60 votes. In that budget they took $714 billion from Medicare, and they didn't put it into Medicare. There were just some comments about how the budget I worked on has a little over $400 million of Medicare savings. That Medicare savings is what the President suggested should be done in Medicare savings, and we put that Medicare savings back into Medicare. That is the only way you can save the fund.

So we have taken into consideration a lot of these issues. The cost of college—I have been through numerous hearings in the Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions Committee. I used to be chairman of the committee and I have been ranking member of the committee, and I expired my time as ranking member on that committee, but we did a lot of hearings on the cost of college. Probably the biggest suggestion I can have for people living in the East is send your kids West.

I was checking to see why more people couldn't get into community college on the east coast. I am not talking about the big colleges, which also have a very big problem on the number of students they can take and are very selective in what they take, but I found out that most of the community colleges were filled out here. Consequently, some for-profit colleges were able to charge considerably more than community college and we looked into ways to eliminate that practice. Of course, the way it got eliminated, if you did that to the public colleges as well, we would put them out of business. But I would mention that it is less expensive for an out-of-State student to go to the University of Wyoming or one of our community colleges than it is to get in-State tuition in most of the places in the United States.

There was a mention of estate tax. That is a recommendation that was put in as a deficit-neutral measure. I am not sure where the raising the taxes on the poor comes from, except for the comment that the extensions that we do annually on that weren't in there. There is a good reason why those aren't in there. We have provided a reconciliation instruction that would allow for tax reform, although the chairman of the committee said we are going to do that in a bipartisan way.

We are going to have tax reform that will take care of fairness and simplicity and accountability in our tax system. This is a particularly important time to talk about that. Today is tax day, and I hope everybody in America has or will file their taxes today. I know there has been some difficulty getting through on the lines to be able to talk to the IRS about tax problems, and I want to chastise the IRS a little bit for that. They are trying to show they need more money, instead of allocating personnel to where they are really needed. If they answer more questions right now, they don't have as many things they have to do later, and they will collect more money than if they don't answer those questions. The proper committee needs to take a look at whether they have adequate revenue to do their job, but again, there are inefficiencies there. They are talking about needing more money because when they audit, they are able to get $4 to $6 for every dollar they spend. They should be embarrassed. Public auditors in a company expect to get $15 to $20 per dollar that they audit. They have got to come up with a better selection procedure for who needs to be audited, and go after the big bucks. There are a number of things the IRS ought to do.

When I first came to Washington, I tried to talk to different agencies about inefficiencies they had. I was a freshman, so I had a lot of time to do some of those things. One of the agencies I wanted to look at as an accountant was the IRS. As a result of some of my meetings at the IRS, we had some hearings here about being taxpayer friendly. People might recall that the people who served as witnesses in the past had to be voice-modulated behind screens. That should not happen in America. We should have a tax system that people can comply with without the gestapo kinds of tactics that are sometimes used.

So we need to do something to make our tax system more efficient, more accountable, and fairer. I am convinced that Senator HATCH and Senator WYDEN, the chairman and the ranking member of the committee, are going to do some things on taxes, and I think the American people will like it. They are past due. They can end those complications and get more accountability, which will make the IRS's job a lot easier and also make it better for hard-working taxpayers in America.

So there are a lot of things a budget can do. I am hoping we will do them.

I yield the floor and reserve the remainder of my time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Vermont.

Mr. SANDERS. Mr. President, let me just pick up on a couple of the points my friend from Wyoming, Senator ENZI, made. The Republicans often say, and Senator ENZI said it now, that Democrats cut $714 billion from Medicare. To the best of my knowledge, not one penny involved in those cuts cut any benefits to the American people.

What the Affordable Care Act attempted to do—and maybe we made some progress, as Senator ENZI pointed out, last night with the so-called doc fix—is to make Medicare more efficient. What is wrong with that? What is wrong with saving money? What the American people want us to do is make

programs more efficient. In fact, Senator ENZI was talking about that a moment ago. He is right. But the idea, the implication, that those cuts resulted in benefit cuts is not accurate.

Furthermore, what some of that money—those savings—went to is filling, plugging the doughnut hole so that seniors would not have to pay money out of their own pockets for prescription drugs.

So if you could save money in a bureaucracy—and God knows the U.S. health care system is the most wasteful and bureaucratic of any in the world—if we can make the system more efficient, save money, put that money into helping seniors afford prescription drugs, what is the problem with that? I do not think so.

Senator ENZI talked about the IRS and people having difficulty making connections, which is clearly not right. He is right. He also mentioned, quite correctly, that for every dollar we invest in various parts of the IRS which do audits, we can make—what was that, $4 to $6? I think that is a pretty good investment. Most business people would say: All right, I can get $4 to $6 for every dollar that I invest. Let's do it.

I look forward to working with Senator ENZI and other Republicans to, in fact, do just that. We can argue about the Tax Code, and we will. But I think we don't argue that when people owe it, they should pay it. Right. We should change it if we do not like it.

So if we can invest a dollar into the IRS and get $6 to $4 back, I think that is a pretty good investment. Senator ENZI was right in saying that last night we passed a pretty good piece of legislation. Not perfect by any means. I had some serious concerns about it. I voted for it. One of the reasons I voted for it is it extended for another 2 years a program that I worked very hard on—that is, the Federally Qualified Community Health Center Program which is playing a huge role in providing health care and dental care and low-cost prescriptions drugs and mental health counseling to many millions of Americans in all of our 50 States. We got a significant increase. I fought very hard for a significant increase in that program as part of the Affordable Care Act that was going to expire.

As a result of yesterday's legislation, in addition to the doc fix, we have extended—and I see Senator BLUNT here, who has been active in that as well—we were able to extend for another 2 years funding for the Community Health Center Program, something that I think was important.

Senator ENZI was right. I think that is a step forward. But that should not be confused with the budget. The Republican budget is an unmitigated disaster—tax breaks for billionaires, cuts in programs that Americans desperately need, raising taxes for low-income working families.

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.

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

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

The Senator has 1 minute remaining.

Mr. ENZI. Mr. President, I yield back all time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. All time has been yielded back.

The question is on agreeing to the motion to disagree in the House amendment, agree to the request by the House for a conference, and authorize the Presiding Officer to appoint conferees.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. CORNYN. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from Texas (Mr. CRUZ), the Senator from Alabama (Mr. SHELBY), and the Senator from Louisiana (Mr. VITTER).

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

The result was announced—yeas 54, nays 43, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 145 Leg.]

YEAS—54

Alexander	Ernst	McConnell
Ayotte	Fischer	Moran
Barrasso	Flake	Murkowski
Blunt	Gardner	Perdue
Boozman	Graham	Portman
Burr	Grassley	Risch
Capito	Hatch	Roberts
Cassidy	Heller	Rounds
Coats	Hoeven	Rubio
Cochran	Inhofe	Sasse
Collins	Isakson	Scott
Coons	Johnson	Sessions
Corker	Kaine	Sullivan
Cornyn	King	Thune
Cotton	Kirk	Tillis
Crapo	Lankford	Toomey
Daines	Lee	Warner
Enzi	McCain	Wicker

NAYS—43

Baldwin	Heinrich	Peters
Bennet	Heitkamp	Reed
Blumenthal	Hirono	Reid
Booker	Klobuchar	Sanders
Boxer	Leahy	Schatz
Brown	Manchin	Schumer
Cantwell	Markey	Shaheen
Cardin	McCaskill	Stabenow
Carper	Menendez	Tester
Casey	Merkley	Udall
Donnelly	Mikulski	Warren
Durbin	Murphy	Whitehouse
Feinstein	Murray	Wyden
Franken	Nelson	
Gillibrand	Paul	

NOT VOTING—3

Cruz	Shelby	Vitter

The motion was agreed to.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Arkansas.

Mr. COTTON. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to speak for up to 10 minutes.

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

150TH ANNIVERSARY OF ABRAHAM LINCOLN'S DEATH

Mr. COTTON. Mr. President, today we honor the 150th anniversary of Abraham Lincoln's death. We all know the tragic story: On the evening of April 14, 1865, the 4-year anniversary of the beginning of the Civil War and just days after its end at Appomattox, President Lincoln was shot while attending the theater. The next morning, his last, labored breathing ceased.

His fanatically unreconciled assassin was enraged by Lincoln's achievements: his saving of the Union; his emancipation of the slaves; his forecast that the freed slaves would soon be voting; his rededication of the Nation to the Declaration and to the Constitution in which it is embodied. Lincoln lived for these things, and he also died for them.

Days earlier Lincoln's assassin, in attendance at the second inaugural, had ignored the reelected President's eloquent plea ''to finish the work we are in, to bind up the nation's wounds,'' doing so ''with malice toward none, with charity for all.''

A year-and-a-half earlier, dedicating the cemetery at Gettysburg, Lincoln had said that ''history would little note nor long remember'' what he said. Here he was wrong—or at least falsely modest—for the Gettysburg Address is among the most beautiful and memorable speeches in history. He called upon us to ''be here dedicated to the great task remaining before us,'' and ''that government of the people, by the people, and for the people shall not perish from the earth.''

His words call upon us still to take ''increased devotion'' from those at Gettysburg and every war since who gave ''the last full measure of devotion.'' Soon he would be among those honored dead, the final and most poignant casualty in the same war, and his death is another reason for us to renew our devotion to our great country.

We should think, then, about Lincoln's message, which is like the message of our Nation. On the question of equality, Lincoln was as precise as a mathematician and as lyrical as a poet.

Of equality and slavery, he said:

> As I would not be a slave, so I would not be a master. This expresses my idea of democracy. Whatever differs from this, to the extent of the difference, is no democracy.

Of equality and the Declaration, Lincoln said:

> I think the authors of that notable instrument intended to include all men, but they did not intend to declare all men equal in all respects. They did not mean to say that we are all equal in color, size, intellect, moral developments, or social capacity. They defined with tolerable distinctness, in what respects they did consider all men created equal—equal in ''certain inalienable rights, among which are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.'' This they said, and this they meant.

Now put these propositions together. We are unequal in most respects, but

we are equal in our rights. We own ourselves, and no one else may own us. We own the government, and the government does not own us. We are entitled to our lives with the talents that God gave us. Any form of government that interferes with these rights is wrong.

But in the world today are rogue nations that are growing in strength and violate these principles. They constitute a menace to our freedom and to civilization itself.

At home, our government grows ever greater in its size, in its reach, and in its expense. The law is flouted increasingly by high authority. And our people say with increasing intensity that they mistrust and even fear their government. It may be for the people, but it is less and less ''of and by'' the people.

On this 150th anniversary of Lincoln's death, let us be here reminded and dedicated to that cause for which Lincoln himself gave the last full measure of devotion. Let us dedicate ourselves, in Lincoln's words, ''to finish the work we are in,'' so that we ''may achieve and cherish a just and lasting peace among ourselves and with all nations.''

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

RECESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate stands in recess until 2 p.m.

Thereupon, the Senate, at 12:44 p.m., recessed until 2 p.m. and reassembled when called to order by the Presiding Officer (Mr. FLAKE).

CONCURRENT RESOLUTION ON THE BUDGET, FISCAL YEAR 2016—Continued

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Who yields time?

If no one yields time, the time will be charged equally.

The Senator from Vermont.

MOTION TO INSTRUCT

Mr. SANDERS. Mr. President, I send to the desk my motion to instruct conferees.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the motion.

The bill clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Vermont [Mr. SANDERS] moves that the managers on the part of the Senate at the conference on the disagreeing votes of the two Houses on the House amendment to the resolution S. Con. Res. 11 be instructed to insist that the final conference report include a deficit-neutral reserve fund for legislation related to retirement benefits, which may not include legislation cutting benefits under the old-age, survivors, and disability insurance program established under title II of the Social Security Act, increasing the retirement age, or privatizing the old-age, survivors, and disability insurance program.

Mr. SANDERS. Mr. President, as I mentioned earlier, I happen to believe the Republican budget we will be discussing today moves us in exactly the wrong direction. At a time when the middle class is in decline and the gap between the very rich and everybody else is growing wider, what the Republican budget does is make ferocious attacks on programs desperately depended upon by working families while at the same time providing outrageous tax breaks to the very wealthiest of the wealthy. That makes no sense to me at all.

One area where the Republican budget is negligent—one of many areas where the Republican budget is negligent—is in the issue of Social Security. Social Security is perhaps the most important and successful Federal program that was ever initiated. It is life and death to millions of seniors and people with disabilities in this country, and it has a history of enormous success. Before Social Security was established, about half of the seniors in this country lived in poverty. Today, while too high, that number is somewhere around 10 percent.

Unfortunately, in recent years what we have seen is an increase in senior poverty. We have seen many seniors struggling to pay their bills, to heat their homes, and to buy the medicine they need. It seems to me that in this moment, not only should we not be talking about cutting Social Security, as many of our Republican colleagues are, we should be talking about expanding Social Security benefits. I have introduced legislation to do just that. But today I rise to bring forth legislation—bring forth a motion to instruct the budget conferees to include a deficit-neutral reserve fund to protect retirement benefits by not cutting Social Security benefits, by not raising the retirement age, and by not privatizing Social Security. So in essence, what this motion to instruct says is that we go on record as Members of the U.S. Senate that we will not cut Social Security benefits, that we will not raise the retirement age, and that we will not privatize Social Security.

At a time of massive wealth and income inequality, when 99 percent of all of the new income generated in this country is going to the top 1 percent and when over half of the American people have less than $10,000 in savings, the last thing any Member of the Senate should be thinking about is cutting Social Security. Today, the average Social Security benefit is just $1,328 a month—not a lot of money.

Now, 20 percent of senior citizens are living on an average income of just $7,600 a year. Frankly, I don't know how anybody lives on an income of $7,600 a year. I don't know how you buy food. I don't know how you buy the medicine you need, how you take care of your basic needs. But that is the reality. More than one-third of our senior citizens rely on Social Security for virtually all of their income. In other words, Social Security for them—more than a third—is not just a small part of their total income, it is virtually all of their income. Two-thirds of American seniors depend on Social Security for more than half of their income.

The reality is, despite some of the rhetoric we hear around here or see on TV, we do not have a Social Security crisis. America has a retirement crisis. Given this reality, our job is to expand Social Security benefits, not cut them.

I have been distressed that in three out of the four major Budget Committee hearings held this year, Republicans invited witnesses who testified in support of cutting Social Security. John Engler, the head of the Business Roundtable, representing the CEOs of some of the largest corporations and Wall Street banks in this country, was one of the Republican witnesses. Mr. Engler and the Business Roundtable are the leaders of corporate America. These are the guys who make millions of dollars a year in salary. These are the guys who have huge retirement benefits. They are asking Congress to cut Social Security COLAs for senior citizens and disabled veterans and to raise the retirement age to 70 years of age.

Imagine that. People who are multimillionaires and have huge retirement benefits are coming to Capitol Hill and telling Members of Congress to cut Social Security. It turns out, in fact, that the CEOs of the Business Roundtable have retirement benefits of their own of some $88,000 a month. So we have the heads of large corporations who have retirement benefits of $88,000 a month—$1 million a year—and they are telling the Congress to cut benefits for people who are trying to survive on $14,000 a year. That is an outrage.

I am getting a little bit tired of being lectured by CEOs of large corporations who want to cut the Social Security benefits of elderly people. That is wrong.

I am also tired of hearing folks on TV say that Social Security is going broke. Well, the truth is Social Security is not going broke. Social Security has a $2.8 trillion surplus and could pay out every benefit owed to every eligible American for the next 18 years. Now, is 18 years a terribly long time? No, it is it not. Should we develop legislation to extend Social Security for decades after those 18 years? Yes, we should, and I have done that. But, please, I hope that my colleagues will not stand up here and tell us that Social Security is going broke because it is not.

I believe the American people feel very strongly that in these difficult times Social Security is a major safety net for so many of the elderly and disabled. When we vote tonight, our job is to send a very, very clear message that the Senate is not going to cut Social Security, it is not going to privatize Social Security, and it is not going to raise the age at which people get those Social Security benefits.

With that, I yield the floor for the Senator from Hawaii.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Hawaii.

Mr. SCHATZ. Mr. President, I thank the ranking member of the Budget Committee, the Senator from Vermont.

MOTION TO INSTRUCT

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to set aside the pending motion and call up my motion to instruct, which is at the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

The clerk will report the motion.

The bill clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Hawaii [Mr. SCHATZ] moves that the managers on the part of the Senate at the conference on the disagreeing votes of the two Houses on the House amendment to the resolution S. Con. Res. 11 be instructed to insist that the final conference report include the deficit-neutral reserve fund relating to ensuring all legally married same-sex spouses have equal access to the Social Security and veterans' benefits they have earned and receive equal treatment under the law pursuant to the Constitution of the United States in the concurrent resolution as agreed to by the Senate.

Mr. SCHATZ. Mr. President, 3 weeks ago, the Senate held an important vote on an amendment to the budget resolution, and 56 of our colleagues, including 11 Republicans, joined me in affirming the need for legislation to ensure that all legally married spouses, including gay couples, have access to Social Security and VA benefits that their families have earned.

This amendment passed with bipartisan support because it is fundamentally about fairness.

Imagine a veteran who served his country for decades fighting for equality and freedom around the world and he gets married in a State that allows gay marriage. If he is permanently disabled from his service, his spouse is eligible for veterans' spousal benefits. They have earned these benefits. But if they move or if they drive over the border from Florida into Georgia, for example, they lose those benefits. The same scenario applies to our seniors and their right to Social Security spousal benefits.

Why does this happen? Simply because the Federal right to these benefits happens to be defined in law with respect to the State of residence rather than the State of celebration of the marriage. In other words, eligibility for these Federal benefits is based on where you live, not where you were married. So we have one Federal right and two unequal outcomes based on the person's residence. This is the definition of unequal treatment under the law.

No one is denying that Americans earned their Social Security and veterans' benefits regardless of whether they are gay or straight. And since the Supreme Court's decision in the Windsor case struck down parts of the Defense of Marriage Act, no one can deny that the Federal Government is required to recognize all legal marriages.

For almost all Federal agencies, this went into effect right away. Gay married couples can now file joint taxes. In legal proceedings before the Federal Government same-sex spouses are given the same legal rights as all other spouses. Under the Family and Medical Leave Act, an employee can now take leave to care for a same-sex spouse. These are just a few of the ways that the Federal Government brought its policies into line with the law.

The Social Security Administration and the VA, however, are tripped up by an old wording in their authorizing statutes. Working together, we can fix this. We can pass legislation to ensure that all legally married couples receive equal treatment under the law regardless of where they live. The amendment that the Senate voted to include in the budget affirms the need for this legislation.

Allowing unequal treatment under the law goes against American values, and it goes against our Constitution. Equality under Federal laws should not end when you cross State lines. We are not debating whether gay marriage should be legal in all 50 States. That question is currently in front of the Supreme Court. We are debating whether a Federal right should be afforded to all Americans regardless of where they live.

For those who are concerned with preserving States' rights, I understand that perspective, but we should all support fixing the statutes governing Social Security and veterans' benefits. Fixing these statutes does not impact State law whatsoever. In contrast, by not fixing these statutes, the Federal Government is ignoring the laws of States that allow gay marriage. It actually does harm to States' rights to allow this situation to continue.

This is not an ideological proposal, and I should point out that the Senator from Washington, PATTY MURRAY, and the Senator from New Hampshire, JEANNE SHAHEEN—this was originally their idea. First, Senator MURRAY provided this as a piece of legislation on the Social Security side, and JEANNE SHAHEEN, likewise, presented this on the VA side. We worked together during the so-called vote-arama to merge these proposals into one because the same principle applies for both Federal benefits, which is that equal protection under the law should not depend on which of the 50 States an American citizen resides in. This is about treating veterans, disabled Americans, and our seniors equally, no matter where they live or what their sexual orientation may be.

I thank the Presiding Officer.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Vermont.

Mr. SANDERS. Mr. President, I yield time to the Senator from Ohio, Mr. BROWN.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Ohio is recognized.

Mr. BROWN. Mr. President, I thank the Senator from Vermont and also the senior Senator from Wyoming for their work.

MOTION TO INSTRUCT

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the pending motion be set aside and that my motion be sent to the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Hearing none, it is so ordered.

The clerk will report the motion.

The bill clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Ohio [Mr. BROWN] moves that the managers on the part of the Senate at the conference on the disagreeing votes of the two Houses on the House amendment to the resolution S. Con. Res. 11 be instructed to insist that the final conference report include the deficit-neutral reserve fund relating to ending ''Too Big To Fail'' bailouts for Wall Street mega-banks with over $500,000,000,000 in total assets, as set forth in amendment 994 to S. Con. Res. 11 (as agreed to by the Senate).

Mr. BROWN. Mr. President, this amendment, about which I asked to instruct the conferees, passed by a voice vote, and I appreciate the acceptance of it by Senator ENZI and Senator SANDERS during the vote 2 weeks ago. We know too big to fail is still with us. We know that it is really all about those megabanks that are over $500 billion in total assets. That is what my amendment speaks to.

In the 6½ years since Wall Street pushed our economy to the brink of collapse, the biggest banks have gotten, as we know, bigger.

Think about this statistic. Just 18 years ago, the 6 largest banks in the United States had assets equal to 18 percent of our Nation's gross domestic product. Today, the 6 largest banks have assets equal to 63 percent of our GDP, with an average of more than 5,000 legal entities operating in 57 countries.

These institutions are not just massive, too big to fail in terms of size. They are risky and complex. In many ways they are too big to fail, they are too big to manage, as we have seen from the mistakes they have made, and they are too big in many ways to regulate.

If a financial institution is too big to understand, then it is probably too complex to manage and too opaque to regulate. Dodd-Frank requires large banks to produce an annual living will explaining the bank's plan for its own rapid and orderly resolution through the bankruptcy process in the event of material financial distress or failure.

Last year, the largest 11 banks—all 11 of them—were informed that their living wills were insufficient. In other words, it was not clear to the regulators that these 11 banks would know how to go through resolution. That means they failed to show that their collapse would not cause devastating harm to our economy as a whole. It raises this question: What happens if one of these banks fails?

Today, I urge the Senate to instruct budget negotiators to create a deficit-neutral reserve fund to ensure that the largest Wall Street megabanks can be put through bankruptcy or resolution

without a taxpayer bailout. This is the amendment that Senator VITTER, my Republican colleague from Louisiana, and I spoke out about, and it was passed unanimously in the Senate a couple of weeks ago.

Congress should act on the remedies provided in the law for any bank that cannot produce a credible living will this year. We need to end the cycle that enables large, unsafe banks to enjoy government bailouts. The public is cynical about these too-big-to-fail banks. The public does not believe they are not too big to fail, if you will.

The cycle that allows Wall Street to pile up private profits while forcing American taxpayers to be ready and willing to pick up the tab for their losses and failures is outrageously bad public policy. The American people don't want Congress to wait until we are faced with another crisis. Congress needs to take action now to prevent future economic collapse and future taxpayer-funded bailouts.

As Senator SHELBY, the senior Republican who sits on the banking committee with me, told the Senate banking committee last month, if a bank is too big to fail, it is it probably too big to exist.

This motion to instruct will put the Senate on record that the American taxpayer should never ever again be on the hook for risks taken by megabanks.

I ask my colleagues to vote yes.

PAID SICK LEAVE

Mr. President, for too many Americans, a sick day means a day without pay. Each day workers across the country face impossible dilemmas. Do they go into work knowing the risks to their own health and to others around them or do they stay home and lose a paycheck? Do they send a sick child to school, knowing they are risking the health of their daughter and her entire classroom or do they jeopardize their job by taking a day off? This is a choice too many families face, and it needs to end.

Guaranteeing paid sick and family leave to all Americans would protect public health and increase economic security for millions of families.

In the 20th century, unions fought for workers' rights to collectively bargain—and often one of the protections they were bargaining for was paid sick leave. But after decades of attacks on our labor movement and on our middle class, most Americans are not protected by unions. Too often they have no protection if they have to miss work because of their own illness or that of their child.

43 million workers—including 2 million Ohioans—currently have no paid sick leave. Workers earning the lowest wages are the least likely to have paid sick days and are often unable to afford to take a day off when they or their children get sick.

Not only does this affect their own health, but these workers are often working in service jobs where they risk infecting others. They are often caring for seniors or children or working in stores, hotels, or restaurants where they risk food contamination.

Adults without paid sick days are 1½ times more likely than adults with paid sick days to report going to work with a contagious illness, according to the National Partnership for Women and Families. That's why the National Partnership for Women and Families and more than 100 employers support this legislation. And so do many business owners, who realize that healthy workers are often more productive workers.

But too many do not, and that is why I urge my colleagues to pass the Healthy Families Act. This legislation would end the agonizing choice faced by families by allowing workers to earn up to 7 days per year in paid sick time.

This plan is good for both workers and businesses. Employers already providing sick time would not have to change their policies as long as they meet the minimum requirements and businesses with fewer than 15 employees would be exempt.

We know that when workers are healthy, they are more productive, and providing sick days decreases turnover and gives employers safer, healthier, and more stable workplaces. Paid sick leave will also save precious health care resources.

When workers go in sick, they can spread illnesses like the flu, and they increase the risk of workplace injury. The American Journal of Public Health found that the lack of paid sick days contributed to an additional 5 million cases of H1N1 during the 2009 pandemic.

The Institute for Women's Policy Research found that paid sick days could decrease emergency room visits by 1.3 million each year, saving the country $1 billion in health costs. And most importantly, guaranteeing paid sick leave will give families the peace of mind that they can protect their jobs, their families, and their health. That is why it is far past time for us to finally guarantee paid sick leave for all of our workers.

My colleagues have all seen and heard me talk about my canary pin.

Our duty to protect our workers continues and our work is not yet finished. To truly embody the spirit of this pin, we must extend paid sick leave to all Americans—not just those lucky enough to be represented by a union or wealthy enough to have a high-wage job with protections.

No parent in America today should have to choose between a paycheck and a sick child. No worker should have to choose between his job and his health.

I urge my colleagues to join me in passing the Healthy Families Act without delay.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Vermont.

Mr. SANDERS. Mr. President, I yield to the Senator from Massachusetts.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Massachusetts.

Ms. WARREN. Mr. President, I thank the Senator from Vermont.

MOTION TO INSTRUCT

I ask unanimous consent that the pending motion be set aside and that my motion be sent to the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the motion.

The bill clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Massachusetts [Ms. WARREN] moves that the managers on the part of the Senate at the conference on the disagreeing votes of the two Houses on the House amendment to the resolution S. Con. Res. 11 be instructed to insist that the final conference report include a provision to make college more affordable for middle-class families by allowing borrowers with outstanding Federal and private student loans to refinance at the equivalent interest rates that were offered to Federal student loan borrowers during the 2013–2014 school year and to fully offset the cost of such a program by requiring millionaires to pay at least a 30 percent effective Federal tax rate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Wyoming.

Mr. ENZI. I ask unanimous consent that any time under quorum calls this afternoon be charged equally, regardless of who spoke last.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. ENZI. Mr. President, 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.

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

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

MOMENT OF SILENCE IN HONOR OF THE VICTIMS OF THE BOSTON MARATHON BOMBINGS

Ms. WARREN. Mr. President, 2 years ago today, the people of Boston came face-to-face with terror at the finish line for the Boston Marathon. The cowardly attack and its aftermath took four lives, injured many more, and forever changed the lives of the survivors and their families.

In the face of this horrific terrorist attack, Boston responded with courage and community. Our heroic first responders acted swiftly and their bravery saved many lives.

In the days, weeks, and months after the marathon, families and friends came together to lift each other up, to raise the spirit of our city, and to help us heal.

Now, 2 years later, Boston continues to move forward together. A jury just reached a verdict that is another step toward justice for victims and for their families. The strength and perseverance of survivors continues to inspire us, and our community works to keep alive the memories of Krystle Campbell, Lu Lingzi, Martin Richard, and Sean Collier.

Recently, Mayor Marty Walsh announced the city of Boston will now recognize April 15 as One Boston Day. One Boston Day is a chance to honor the victims and survivors of the marathon bombing and an opportunity for people to give back to the community through acts of service. This day helps us remember that in the face of tragedy and violence, our community responds with an open heart.

Next Monday, tens of thousands of people from across the Nation and around the world, once again, will come to Massachusetts for the 2015 Boston Marathon. Our Commonwealth, once again, will commemorate Patriots' Day with reenactments, baseball, parades, and celebrations.

Today, as we mark One Boston Day and the second anniversary of the attack at the Boston Marathon, we recall the spirit of strength and resilience that brought our city and our Commonwealth together, the same spirit of strength and resilience that helps us heal.

As a tribute to honor the victims and survivors of the attack at the 2013 Boston Marathon, I ask my colleagues to join Bostonians in a moment of silence at 2:49 p.m. today.

Thank you, Mr. President.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Massachusetts.

Mr. MARKEY. Mr. President, I would like to join Senator WARREN and the rest of the Senate in observing a moment of silence in honor of the victims of the Boston Marathon bombings.

The people of the United States will always remember the victims of the previous acts of terrorism that have occurred in the United States and will always stand together as one people. Two years ago today, three innocent people were killed and hundreds injured in two bombings that occurred during the running of the 117th Boston Marathon. On the happiest day in Boston, Patriots' Day, two bombs detonated by the two evil men took lives, limbs, and livelihoods away. That day, we lost Martin Richard, an 8-year-old boy from Dorchester; Krystle Campbell, from Arlington; and Lu Lingzi, who came to the United States from China; and 232 innocent people were also wounded in the bombings.

In the aftermath of the attacks, Officer Sean Collier, of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology police force, was assassinated by the two twisted individuals who bombed our city. Officer Collier wasn't just protecting the best and the brightest minds, he was the best and brightest, an impressive and loved officer who has been greatly missed on campus and in our community.

I want to express my deepest thanks to all of the men and women in law enforcement in Massachusetts and around the Nation for their unwavering determination, courage, and resolve to bring to justice those responsible for the Boston Marathon bombings. We were ''Boston Strong'' because we were Boston ready, with the best training and personnel available to save lives and to seek justice.

Many others responded decisively: the citizens of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, fire and rescue workers, caregivers, Armed Forces, and thousands more who, through their many expressions of care and compassion, brought forth comfort, hope, and the promise of recovery.

Today, under the leadership of Mayor Marty Walsh, the city of Boston is turning April 15 into a new tradition, honoring the resilience, generosity, and strength called One Boston Day. As Mayor Walsh said, ''It's a day everyone should come together, spread goodwill throughout the city and recommit ourselves to our deepest values.''

Mayor Walsh is right. This is a day for the citizens, businesses, and organizations in the city of Boston to display their humanity and draw neighbors together.

Thank you, Mayor Walsh, for helping all of us understand that the compassion and support we all felt that day should never be forgotten but instead should be a part of our lives every single day.

May the light of One Boston Day shine as an example of how our Nation responds to times of crisis.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will now observe a moment of silence in honor of the victims of the Boston Marathon bombings.

(Moment of silence.)

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

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

CONCURRENT RESOLUTION ON THE BUDGET, FISCAL YEAR 2016—Continued

MOTION TO INSTRUCT

Mr. SANDERS. I send to the desk my motion to instruct conferees.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection to setting aside the pending motion?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

The clerk will report the motion.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Vermont [Mr. SANDERS] moves that the managers on the part of the Senate at the conference on the disagreeing votes of the two Houses on the House amendment to the resolution S. Con. Res. 11 be instructed to insist that the final conference report include the provision in the concurrent resolution as agreed to by the Senate that provides for the establishment of a deficit-neutral reserve fund related to strengthening the United States Postal Service by establishing a moratorium to protect mail processing plants, reinstating overnight delivery standards, protecting rural service, allowing the Postal Service to innovate and adapt to compete in a digital age, or improving the financial condition of the Postal Service.

Mr. SANDERS. Mr. President, I move to instruct conferees on S. Con. Res. 11, a concurrent resolution on the budget for fiscal year 2016, to include in the conference report the provision in the concurrent resolution as passed by the Senate establishing a deficit-neutral reserve fund related to strengthening the U.S. Postal Service by establishing a moratorium to protect mail processing plants, reinstating overnight delivery standards, and protecting rural services.

During the so-called vote-arama, that amendment passed by voice vote. This time I hope we can get a strong rollcall vote on it because it is terribly important that we tell the Postmaster General of the United States that the U.S. Senate wants a strong and vibrant U.S. Postal Service.

What we are saying to the Postmaster General of the United States is pretty simple; that is, do not destroy up to 15,000 middle-class jobs, do not shut down up to 82 mail processing plants, stop slowing down mail service delivery in this country. Speed it up by reinstating strong overnight delivery standards for first-class mail.

I do not know about Arizona and I don't know about Wyoming, but I can tell you that in Vermont we have gotten a significant number of complaints from people who are upset by the slowdown of mail delivery standards. It is, to my mind, just unacceptable, and what we are saying now and will have to say in the months to come is you can't shut down another 82 processing plants, you cannot continue with these inadequate mail delivery standards, and it has to change. The American people and the business community are entitled to know that when they put a letter or document in the mail, it is going to get delivered in a prompt way. Today, that, sadly, is not the case.

For over 230 years and enshrined in our Constitution, the Postal Service has played an enormously important role for the people of our country and for our economy, and that mission today remains as important as it has ever been. The beauty of the Postal Service is that it provides universal service 6 days a week to every corner of our country, no matter how small or how remote. It will deliver mail on Wall Street and it will deliver mail to a home at the end of a back road in the State of Vermont.

The U.S. Postal Service supports, through its efforts, millions of jobs in virtually every sector of our economy. It provides decent-paying union jobs to some 500,000 Americans and, by the way, is the largest employer of veterans in this country.

Whether you are an elderly woman living on a dirt road in a rural area or you are a wealthy CEO executive on

Park Avenue, you get your mail delivered 6 days a week, and the American people pay for this service at a cost which is far less than any place else in the industrialized world. In other words, we get a pretty good bargain when we put a stamp on an envelope.

Unfortunately, despite the success and popularity of the Postal Service, it is under constant attack and has been under constant attack for years, including from those who would like to privatize the Postal Service and ultimately destroy it. Let's be clear. The same people who are attacking the Postal Service are often the same people who are attacking Social Security, Medicare, and so forth, and they essentially want to move to the privatization of virtually every major public institution in this country.

Today, the U.S. Postal Service is in the process of shutting down up to 82 mail processing plants and eliminating up to 15,000 decent-paying jobs. This is in addition to the 141 mail processing facilities that were closed between 2012 and 2013. In January, the Postal Service ended overnight delivery for first-class mail. It didn't get a whole lot of attention, but it happened.

The purpose of this motion is to put the Senate on record in strong opposition to these plant closings and to demand that the Postal Service reinstate strong overnight delivery standards and not destroy good-paying jobs.

We have been told that all of these horrendous cuts are necessary because the Postal Service is experiencing terrible financial problems. They are losing money every single year. Well, the truth is somewhat different. The major reason the Postal Service is in tough financial shape today is not because of email or the Internet, the major reason the Postal Service is hurting financially is because of a mandate signed into law by President Bush in December of 2006, during a lameduck session of Congress that forces the Postal Service to prefund 75 years of future retiree health benefits over a 10-year period. No other government agency or business in America is burdened with a mandate anywhere close to what the Postal Service has to expend, which is $5.5 billion a year. So the main point is that when you see articles telling you the Postal Service is having financial problems, the main reason—the overwhelming reason—is this necessity to prefund 75 years of future retiring health benefits over a 10-year period at about $5.5 billion a year. In fact, all—A-L-L—all of the so-called financial losses posted by the Postal Service since October 2012 are due to this prefunding mandate. That is it. Without that mandate, they would be making a modest amount of money.

We don't hear much about it, but I think it is very important for the American people to understand the reality of the finances in the Postal Service. Excluding the prefunding mandate, the Postal Service has actually made a $1.8 billion profit. So it is a modestly profitable operation excluding the $5.5 billion prefunding mandate.

Revenue at the Postal Service has been increasing in recent years. At a time when Postal Service revenue is going up, it makes no sense to eliminate thousands of jobs and slow down the mail service that millions of Americans rely on.

We should be working to strengthen the Postal Service and not to send it into a death spiral. Before this prefunding mandate was signed into law, the Postal Service was also profitable. In fact, from 2003 to 2006, the Postal Service made a combined profit of more than $5 billion.

I think there is broad bipartisan support, especially from Senators who come from rural areas and who understand just how important the Postal Service is to the people of our States.

Once again, when offered as an amendment at the vote-arama, this passed by voice vote. We are going to ask for a rollcall vote when the voting takes place. I hope we win this vote with a very strong vote and send a message to the Postal Service that we want our Postal Service to provide the quality mail service the American people deserve.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. TOOMEY). The Senator from Wyoming.

Mr. ENZI. Mr. President, that passed by a voice vote, which is considered unanimous around here. You cannot get more unanimous than that. I am hoping that out of the 10 to 13 votes we are going to have this afternoon, that some can be done on voice votes. I do not think there is anybody who disagrees with what the Senator has said about closing the postal plants and the extra time it is taking for deliveries. You can add to that how little money it saves because the employees who are in one town, even though their job got moved somewhere else, still have to be retained in that town at some job. It does not amount to much in the way of savings, but it really hurts in the way of efficiency, delivery, and trust in the post office.

So I think we will all be behind you on that one again. I hope that by the time we get to that, it will be a voice vote again.

MOTION TO INSTRUCT

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to set aside the pending motion and call up Senator BURR's motion, which is at the desk.

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

The clerk will report the motion.

The bill clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Wyoming [Mr. ENZI], for Mr. BURR, moves that the managers on the part of the Senate at the conference on the disagreeing votes of the two Houses on the House amendment to the resolution S. Con. Res. 11 be instructed to insist that the final conference report include a provision relating to addressing student loan debt, which may include reducing overlapping student loan repayment programs and creating a simplified income-driven student loan repayment option, as included in section 358 of S. Con. Res. 11, as agreed to by the Senate.

Mr. ENZI. I would mention that this is a side-by-side to Senator WARREN's amendment. I am hoping that at the time we vote, we can do 1 minute on each side so they have a chance for their explanation.

I now yield 10 minutes to the Senator from Arizona.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Arizona.

TRADE PROMOTION AUTHORITY

Mr. FLAKE. Mr. President, I rise today to discuss the need for the Senate to pass trade promotion authority legislation. It is no secret that trade matters in the ability of the United States and our businesses here to sell goods to foreign markets and to buy what we need from abroad to keep our businesses humming along right here at home and to keep Americans employed. This is paramount to our Nation's prosperity. You do not need to be an economist to see it. Anyone who owns an iPhone, drives a foreign car, or shops at Costco—everyone understands even in a small way that trade is beneficial to American companies and to customers alike. Likewise, American farmers and manufacturers and service providers want and need to sell their corn, cotton, beef, tractors, furniture, airplanes, their businesses and financial services to customers around the world who want and need them. Sadly, not all countries see it that way, and they throw up barriers to American goods and services. They do not want them entering their countries. That is why passing trade promotion authority is so important.

Increasing free trade levels the playing field for U.S. companies. It increases competition. It increases access to foreign markets.

According to the Office of U.S. Trade Representative, the United States is the world's largest economy, the largest importer, and the largest exporter of goods and services. In 2014, figures from the International Trade Administration show that the United States exported a record $2.35 trillion in goods and services.

For those of us who represent border States, this issue hits close to home. In recent years, Mexico has been America's third largest trading partner and our second largest export market. According to the Arizona-Mexico Commission, Arizona ports of entry are gateways to $41.6 billion in U.S.-Mexican trade annually, of which nearly $16 billion is attributed to Arizona's own trade with Mexico.

Simply put, without trade promotion authority, the United States would be forced to stand on the sidelines as other countries move forward with their own trade agreements. Without renewing fast-track authority, there is little chance of a successful resolution of the ongoing negotiations for the Trans-Pacific Partnership, or TPP. This agreement will allow American companies to do business more freely with some of the world's fastest growing economies.

As the Washington Post editorial put it this week, ''To this boon to the U.S. and world economies, add the fact that TPP would ensure that the Pacific Rim plays by U.S.-style rules and regulations rather than China's neo-mercantilist rules, and you have a compelling case for swift approval.'' I agree. But unless we pass trade promotion authority legislation, it will be difficult for the United States to become part of this vital partnership.

I am proud to continue to voice my support for free trade. I look forward to the Senate giving trade promotion authority careful consideration in the coming weeks.

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.

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

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

MOTION TO INSTRUCT

Ms. MIKULSKI. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the pending motion be set aside so that I may call up my motion, which is at the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

The clerk will report the motion.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Maryland [Ms. MIKULSKI] moves that the managers on the part of the Senate at the conference on the disagreeing votes of the two Houses on the House amendment to the resolution S. Con. Res. 11 be instructed to insist that the final conference report include a provision relating to amending the Equal Pay Act of 1963 to allow for punitive damages, limit the any factor ''other than sex'' exception, and prohibit retaliation against employees who share salary information, as included in amendment 362 to S. Con. Res. 11 (as not agreed to by the Senate).

Ms. MIKULSKI. Mr. President, I rise to offer a motion to instruct the conferees based on a bill that I have offered for the last three Congresses; that is, the Paycheck Fairness Act.

What does the Paycheck Fairness Act do? It finishes the job that we started with Lilly Ledbetter. It would, in fact, instruct the conferees to make three reforms:

No. 1, to advance the cause of making sure that women get equal pay for equal work. It would stop retaliation for sharing pay information. Often workers are harassed and humiliated just for asking about coworkers' salaries.

No. 2, it would stop employers from using any reason to pay women less: Oh, the guys do harder jobs. Women aren't breadwinners. OK, it is time for equal pay for equal work.

It would also allow for punitive damages for women who are being discriminated against when the only deterrent against pay discrimination is the threat of paying women backpay. Discrimination can be factored into the cost of doing business.

Yesterday was Equal Pay Day, something we, unfortunately, commemorate each year. It symbolizes that it takes 104 days longer in a year for a woman to earn what a man earned the previous year.

What does that mean? It means that for what a man earns in 365 days, it takes a woman 469 days to earn the same amount of money—104 days more.

We don't commemorate this day with joy but with a call to action. We need to make a change in the Federal lawbooks to finally get equal pay in the Federal checkbooks.

Now, we want this in the budget act because we know this will be an important way of dealing with a variety of issues. We worked on this legislation for a number of years and, quite frankly, we are frustrated. We are frustrated that time and again we are trying to advance this cause.

It started over 50 years ago. In 1963, Lyndon Johnson, moving on the civil rights legislation, thought that equal pay for women would be an easy thing to pass. At that time, only 11 percent of mothers were in the workforce. Now, there are over 70 percent of mothers in the workforce.

At that time, women were, again, paid 59 cents for every $1 a man earned. Well, we passed the Civil Rights Act. Now, 50 years later, we are up to 78 cents for every $1 a man earns. So it has taken us 50 years to advance 20 cents.

Well, that just doesn't work. The women in America feel sidelined, redlined, and pink-slipped for the way they are discriminated against, and then they face the harassment and intimidation when they simply ask questions to get the pay they deserve.

What we now know, again, is that the facts speak for themselves. Women earn 78 cents for every $1 a man makes. For women close to the retirement age, the wage gap increases to almost $14,000 a year. By the time she retires, the average woman has lost almost $400,000 in a lifetime of wages.

The impact is you get less in Social Security benefits, you have less in savings, and you face the grim possibility of poverty. What we also know is that this has a tremendous impact in terms of single mothers.

Over the weekend, there was a terrific article in the Washington Post saying if you wanted to eliminate poverty among children, you could take a major step in doing so if you closed the pay parity gap. In effect, by paying single women and single mothers equal pay for equal work, you could reduce the poverty rate among children by over 20 percent.

What a startling fact. Well, the fact is that we have been fighting for this for a long time.

I urge the adoption of this amendment. I think it makes important fiscal policy, and it is important for the family's checkbook and for our checkbook.

I wish to close with these remarks. I think it was the day before, in the New York Times. They were talking about how we are essentially subsidizing those people who are paid the minimum wage.

Now, my background is that I was a social worker. The Presiding Officer is familiar with that. But when you look at the four major components of government subsidies to the poor—Medicaid, TANF, the child care development subsidy, and there is one other thing that I just don't recall at this minute—for actually people who are working—oh, food stamps. Working every single day, they are eligible for government subsidies because they are not paid enough for what they do.

What we often find is that not only is the minimum wage a terrible place to begin, but as you move up the work ladder, often women are in jobs where they are paid less than the men who work beside them. As a result—and it often is the case—we end, then, by dealing with that by our paying for it in Medicaid, in food stamps, and earned income tax credit.

Now, I support those programs. I think when people are poor they need our help, but our goal is to make sure that if you were poor and you want to have a way to get ahead, we should help you.

If you want to be middle class, we should help you get there. One of the ways to do that is to make sure we pay equal pay for equal work.

I hope that my amendment is adopted. I could debate this in more ways, but year after year we come to the floor and we show the disparity between what women make from men for the same job.

This isn't just a woman's issue. Many men here support this. I can tell you who supports it: fathers. Fathers, fathers, fathers. Why do they support it? They work hard to make sure that in many instances their daughters get a break, try to get an education, try to get ahead only to find that although they shouldered the same responsibilities for car payments, paying off student loans, and all of that, they, in fact, are not paid equal pay for equal work. We can change that by voting for the Mikulski amendment in this budget bill.

I yield the floor.

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

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

MOTION TO INSTRUCT

Mr. BENNET. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the pending motion be set aside so that I may call up my motion.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, the clerk will report the motion.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Colorado [Mr. BENNET] moves that the managers on the part of the Senate at the conference on the disagreeing votes of the two Houses on the House amendment to the resolution S. Con. Res. 11 be instructed—

(1) to insist that the final conference report include provisions in the concurrent resolution as agreed to by the Senate for the establishment of deficit-neutral reserve funds relating to—

(A) responding to the causes and impacts of climate change, including the economic and national security threats posed by human-induced climate change; and

(B) Department of Defense initiatives to bolster resilience of mission critical department infrastructure to impacts from climate change; and

(2) to recede from the position of the Senate regarding provisions in the concurrent resolution as agreed to by the Senate for the establishment of deficit-neutral reserve funds that undermine the response to climate change, including prohibitions on the regulation by the Environmental Protection Agency of greenhouse gas emissions.

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

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

MOTION TO INSTRUCT

Mr. SANDERS. Mr. President, I send to the desk a motion to instruct conferees. I am offering this motion on behalf of Senator MURRAY.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection to setting aside the pending motion?

Without objection, the clerk will report the motion.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Vermont [Mr. SANDERS], for Mrs. MURRAY, moves that the managers on the part of the Senate at the conference on the disagreeing votes of the two Houses on the House amendment to the resolution S. Con. Res. 11 be instructed to insist that the final conference report include the deficit-neutral reserve fund for legislation to allow Americans to earn paid sick time in the concurrent resolution as agreed to by the Senate.

Mr. SANDERS. Mr. President, this is a motion to instruct budget conferees to keep in the bill the Senate-passed deficit-neutral reserve fund for legislation to allow Americans to earn paid sick time. This was an amendment which passed during a vote-arama of the Senate by a vote of 61 to 39. So it passed with pretty strong bipartisan support, and I would hope we could pass this language again.

The truth is, at a time when millions of Americans are working longer hours for lower wages, when our middle class continues to decline, we also have another serious problem in that only 53 percent of workers report having paid sick leave. Well, you know, people get sick. That is a fact of life, and it is unfortunate that only 53 percent of workers report having paid sick leave. This means people are going to work when they are not well. I don't know about you, but I am not enthused about walking into a restaurant where someone who may have the flu or have some other problem is serving food or preparing food. I don't think that is terribly healthy for this country, not to mention that when there are so many contagious illnesses out there, I don't know that we want to have people who are ill and contagious going to work.

So this is a very simple motion and basically reiterates what we had in the first discussion. Again, it won by 61 to 39.

All over this country, States and cities are in the process of enacting paid sick leave legislation, and they are seeing economic benefits from that. They have seen mothers more likely to return to work and higher employment in the leisure, hospitality, education, and health sectors.

So, again, this is the same language Senator MURRAY offered. I strongly support this motion, and I hope my colleagues will vote for it.

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

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

MOTION TO INSTRUCT

Mr. SANDERS. Mr. President, I send to the desk a motion to instruct conferees.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, the clerk will report the motion.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Vermont [Mr. SANDERS], for Mrs. MURRAY, moves that the managers on the part of the Senate at the conference on the disagreeing votes of the two Houses on the House amendment to the resolution S. Con. Res. 11 be instructed to insist that the final conference report include a provision to build on the Bipartisan Budget Act of 2013 and provide sequester relief in 2016 and 2017 by closing tax loopholes.

Mr. SANDERS. Mr. President, this motion is being offered on behalf of Senator MURRAY, and it would instruct budget conferees to build on the Bipartisan Budget Act and provide sequester relief in 2016 and 2017 by closing tax loopholes.

As the ranking member of the Committee on the Budget, I rise today to offer a motion to instruct conferees, on behalf of Senator MURRAY, to S. Con. Res. 11, the concurrent resolution on the budget for fiscal year 2016, to provide 2 years of sequester relief by closing tax loopholes. This is a concept, an idea I very strongly support. Many Members on both sides of the aisle are concerned that Congress will not be able to pass and enact appropriations bills at the sequester levels. The President's fiscal year 2016 budget provides sequester relief. Moreover, the President has indicated he will veto legislation that does not lift the sequester caps.

Discretionary spending has already been cut by $1.6 trillion, and nondefense discretionary spending is currently on track to be the lowest in 50 years. Nondefense discretionary spending is on track to be the lowest in 50 years.

Instead of continuing to cut nondefense discretionary spending, we need to increase funding for programs, such as education and infrastructure, that reduce income inequality and that create the millions of jobs we so desperately need. We can fund these investments by looking at wasteful spending in the Tax Code that has allowed major corporations to pay very little, if anything, in Federal income taxes.

Each and every year, we are losing well over $100 billion in revenue because large, profitable corporations and some of the wealthiest Americans in this country are stashing their profits in the Cayman Islands, Bermuda, and other offshore tax havens.

Further, the GAO has reported that the effective tax rate of large, profitable corporations is just 12.6 percent—much lower than the 35-percent statutory rate because of these tax loopholes. That is much lower than what millions of middle-class workers pay to the IRS because of the loopholes written into the Tax Code by corporate lobbyists.

In 1952, 32 percent of all of the revenue generated in this country came from large corporations. Today, that figure is down to just 11 percent. Right now, there are so many loopholes in our Tax Code that it ends up that many large corporations making billions of dollars in profit pay nothing—zero—in corporate taxes to the Federal Government.

As a few examples, General Electric made over $5.8 billion in profits in the United States last year but paid just nine-tenths of 1 percent of that amount in Federal income taxes. Time Warner made $4.3 billion in profits and paid nothing in Federal income taxes; in fact, it got a rebate of $26 million. Xerox made $628 million in profits in 2014 and paid nothing in Federal income taxes; in fact, it received a tax rebate of $16 million.

I strongly support this motion which has been introduced by Senator MURRAY to provide sequester relief, particularly for nondefense discretionary programs, and I would hope very much that this motion to instruct will receive wide bipartisan support.

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.

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

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

MOTION TO INSTRUCT

Ms. STABENOW. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the pending motion be set aside so that I may call up my motion, which is at the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

The clerk will report the motion.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Michigan [Ms. STABENOW] moves that the managers on the part of the Senate at the conference on the disagreeing votes of the two Houses on the House amendment to the resolution S. Con. Res. 11 be instructed to insist that the final conference report not include the Medicare cuts in the concurrent resolution as agreed to by the Senate, which would substantially increase out-of-pocket healthcare expenses for senior citizens, and not include the Medicare cuts in the concurrent resolution as agreed to by the House of Representatives, which would end Medicare as it currently exists by turning it into a voucher-based premium support system and eliminate the guaranteed healthcare benefits earned by the people of the United States.

Ms. STABENOW. Mr. President, my motion would instruct conferees to remove from the budget resolution any Medicare cuts that would increase out-of-pocket costs for senior citizens, eliminate guaranteed benefits, or make structural changes to Medicare by turning it into a voucher-based premium support system.

It is incredibly important that something as important as health care for senior citizens and those with disabilities be protected and honored. People are paying into this system. They have paid into this system their whole lives. They have the confidence of knowing that health care is available to them, those now on Medicare, and we need to make sure we are strengthening this health care system, not fundamentally changing it from a guaranteed system to some kind of a voucher system or making other kinds of changes that will cost people more money.

When we began this process, my hope was that we could have a spending plan that really would address the middle class and a budget resolution that would make it very clear that this is about giving every American a fair shot—a fair shot to stay in the middle class or to work hard and get into the middle class—that this is really about strengthening our country. We don't have an economy without a middle class. It is not the other way around. We don't have an economy without a middle class. That is the economic engine.

I was hoping for a budget that would reflect one of our core beliefs—that if you work hard in America, you are going to have a fair shot to be able to get ahead. But that is not what this budget is about. Unfortunately, this budget does not do that. Instead, Republicans have written a budget that continues to rig the system for the wealthy and the well-connected rather than creating opportunity for everybody to make it.

That is really the fundamental fight we have had through this whole budget process. How do we grow the economy? Is it the top down? Do we give to those one more time at the very top and hope that it trickles down and that somehow people who are working hard every day will actually feel it and have money in their pockets, or do we focus on the middle? Do we focus on those working hard to get into the middle class and create an opportunity to grow from the bottom up, which is the way we know the economies grow?

So I am deeply concerned about the cuts to Medicare in this budget. I am also deeply concerned about the other cuts to health care in this budget. We all wish we could control whether we get sick or whether our children get sick or whether moms and dads get sick, but the reality is that health care is an issue for all of us. It is not a frill; it is a necessity. Medicare has addressed that for seniors and people with disabilities in a way that gives them peace of mind and confidence in a quality medical system.

We just addressed through a bill last night the whole question of making sure that doctors are paid and that they are available to people who are on Medicare. We have another part of the health care system called Medicaid, which is a lifeline to so many Americans who continue to feel the effects of the great recession and are struggling for basic health care needs. In fact, 80 percent of the Medicaid Program spending—80 percent of the dollars—goes to seniors in nursing homes and in some way impacts all of us—friends, neighbors, relatives.

So we are looking at a budget on the Medicaid front—when we combine it all, eliminating the Medicaid expansion and having the other cuts in the budget—of a $1.2 trillion cut in the Senate budget. The Senate Republican budget cuts Medicaid health care—80 percent of which goes to seniors in nursing homes—by $1.2 trillion. It is even worse in the House. I worry when we are now looking at going to conference with the House of Representatives, where their combined cut was $1.7 trillion to Medicaid, of which most of the money goes to low-income seniors in nursing homes. They would then also turn it into a block grant and cut it on top of that, and we don't even know if it would get spent on health care.

Unfortunately, this budget, while not really balancing, is attempting to be balanced on the backs of the most vulnerable Americans in our country, and our seniors are taking a huge hit in this budget. The House cuts all together $316 billion and moves away from the guaranteed benefit to something that has been called vouchers or premium support or other structures that don't look like Medicare.

In the Senate, all together now, when you add it up and the effects of what was done last night, we are looking at a cut of $566 billion.

My amendment would stop that $566 billion cut in Medicare or at least it would instruct—I should clarify that. I wish it would just automatically stop it, but it would instruct the final conference committee to not move forward on that $566 billion in Medicare cuts. We are talking about Americans who have worked hard all their lives, and they have earned that health care benefit.

Let me also say that when we think about a budget that would reflect opportunity for everyone to get ahead or one that keeps a system rigged against the average American, we saw vote after vote where, unfortunately, colleagues on the other side of the aisle let opportunities slip away to provide real equal pay for women, equal pay for equal work. Yesterday was the day in which women finally made as much money in 2014 as a man made in 2014. It took the majority of women in this country until yesterday to make the same amount of money. We have an opportunity to fix that. The Republican colleagues said no. We had an opportunity to invest in rebuilding America—roads, bridges, water, sewer systems, crumbling infrastructure. Our distinguished ranking member is a champion on the issue of infrastructure. We had an opportunity to create millions of jobs and Republican colleagues said no. We had an opportunity to invest in education but instead we saw—and we see—a bill that takes away funding for Pell grants that doesn't help millions of Americans who are struggling to pay back college loans.

I just left a group of high school students from Brighton, MI, and the question I received was, What are you doing about the cost of college—and I am worried about the cost of college. I want to do the right thing. I want to go to school. They want to do what we are all asking them to do to get skills so they can compete in a global economy, be responsible adults.

Too many will come out of that college experience with more than enough debt to buy a big house, and then they will not be able to buy the house as they dig themselves out of debt.

We all know that in this bill, the Republican budget, both in the House and Senate, repeals the Affordable Care Act—between 16 million American people, health care gone, on top of all of the cuts to Medicare for senior citizens, senior citizens in nursing homes under Medicaid.

When we had an opportunity to close tax loopholes, I offered again my Bring Jobs Home Act to say a company

should not be able to move on paper out of this country and avoid paying their fair share to contribute to the services of America. They still breathe the air. They still drink the water. They still drive on the roads. They still get the educated workforce. But they move on paper, and now they are not a part of those contributing to America. I don't think that is very patriotic, frankly. We had a chance to close that and instead support the middle class, people working hard, increase their earned-income tax credit, and Republican colleagues said no.

So, unfortunately, we have in front of us a budget that says no to opportunity to the majority of Americans and yes to continued policies that, frankly, have not worked because they are focused on the privileged few.

If I might take just 1 more minute, I want to put my hat on as ranking member, former chair of the Senate Agriculture Committee, and say also that as a Member of the Budget Committee and the Agriculture Committee, I strongly urge the leadership in the Senate not to accept the reconciliation instruction related to agriculture and to, therefore, open the farm bill, all of the phases of the farm bill that we worked so hard to get passed in a bipartisan basis.

I commend the chairman for not including that reconciliation instruction in the Senate. I very much appreciate that, but the House does. We have Members on both sides of the aisle deeply concerned about reopening what is economic certainty. We have a lot of places that there is not certainty. But in rural America at least we have 5 years of economic certainty through the farm bill, and we have nearly 400 agricultural organizations led by the American Farm Bureau, food groups, conservation groups, nutrition groups that have asked us not to open the farm bill again in this process. I am very hopeful the Senate's position on that will be the position that is maintained.

I offer an amendment that we will be voting on Medicare. I think it will be wonderful if we came together and said no to the cuts in Medicare and that we would show that we understand what is at stake for that program. Also, I hope we will very clearly indicate that we want to stand with rural America and our farmers and make sure they do not have to worry about opening the policies of the farm bill until the 5 years on the farm bill has been completed.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. GARDNER). The Senator from Wyoming.

Mr. ENZI. I yield such time as the Senator from Nebraska needs to offer two motions. Those will be the last two offered, after which I think both sides are prepared to yield back their time and begin voting on the 13 different votes which we will be asking consent on when she finishes her speech.

I yield time to the Senator from Nebraska.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Nebraska.

MOTION TO INSTRUCT

Mrs. FISCHER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to set aside the pending motion and call up my motion, which is at the desk.

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

Which motion does the Senator wish to call up first?

Mrs. FISCHER. Equal pay.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the motion.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Nebraska [Mrs. FISCHER] moves that the managers on the part of the Senate at the conference on the disagreeing votes of the two Houses on the House amendment to the resolution S. Con. Res. 11 be instructed to insist that the final conference report include a provision relating to promoting equal pay, which may include preventing discrimination on the basis of sex and preventing retaliation against employees for seeking or discussing wage information, as included in section 356 of S. Con. Res. 11, as agreed to by the Senate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Nebraska.

MOTION TO INSTRUCT

Mrs. FISCHER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to set aside the pending motion and call up my motion, which is at the desk.

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

The clerk will report the motion.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Nebraska [Mrs. FISCHER] moves that the managers on the part of the Senate at the conference on the disagreeing votes of the two Houses on the House amendment to the resolution S. Con. Res. 11 be instructed to insist that the final conference report include a provision relating to a deficit-neutral reserve fund relating to tax credits for employers providing paid family and medical leave.

Mr. ENZI. 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. ENZI. 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. ENZI. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that all time be yielded back except for 5 minutes equally divided between the managers and that the Senate vote on the pending motions to instruct in the order listed, with 2 minutes equally divided in the usual form between each vote, and that all votes after the first in the series be limited to 10 minutes: No. 1 would be Brown on Wall Street banks; No. 2 would be Sanders, postal plant closures; No. 3 would be Burr, student loans; No. 4 would be Warren, student loans; No. 5 would be Sanders, Social Security; No. 6 would be Schatz, same-sex marriage benefits; No. 7 would be Bennet, climate change; No. 8 would be Fischer, side-by-side to Mikulski; No. 9, Mikulski, equal pay for equal work; No. 10, Fischer, side-by-side to Murray; No. 11, Murray, paid sick leave; No. 12, Murray, eliminate sequestration; and No. 13, Stabenow, Medicare cuts.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

The Senator from Vermont.

Mr. SANDERS. Mr. President, as I have indicated on many occasions, I think this Republican budget is, frankly, a disaster. It causes severe harm for some of the most vulnerable people in this country. It throws 27 million people off of health insurance. It forces elderly people to pay more for prescription drugs. It cuts $90 billion in mandatory Pell grants at a time when young people are struggling to be able to afford to go to college. Pell grants are one of the significant ways that they are able to go to college; $90 billion is cut. It cuts Head Start significantly, such that 110,000 fewer young children will be able to enroll in Head Start. It cuts title I education program money directed to schools with low-income kids, the schools who need help the most.

At a time when so many of our families are struggling to put food on the table, this budget cuts nutrition programs, including the WIC Program, by $10 billion. That is the nutrition program that goes to pregnant women, mothers, and infants. It makes other massive cuts in nutrition. It makes cuts in affordable housing. It makes cuts in job training.

Now, in the midst of all of this, what it does also, unbelievably, while wreaking havoc on the lives of millions of working families, it decides that we can afford to give huge tax breaks to the very, very, very wealthiest—the top two-tenths of 1 percent—by abolishing the estate tax which would provide $263 billion in tax breaks for the wealthiest two-tenths of 1 percent of the American people. But then, after giving huge tax breaks to the very, very, very rich, what it does is raise taxes for low-income and working-class families by increasing taxes by $900 apiece for more than 13 million families by allowing the expansion of the earned-income tax credit and the child tax credit to expire.

So massive cuts in health care, education, and nutrition for working families; huge tax breaks——

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator's time has expired.

Mr. SANDERS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent for one more minute.

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

Mr. SANDERS. As I was saying, huge tax breaks for millionaires and billionaires and then increased taxes for low-income and working people. This is moving the country in exactly the wrong direction.

Today, our side of the aisle brought forth 10 separate motions to instruct, which, if passed, would make this budget a much better document, and I hope very much that both sides of the aisle will support these motions.

With that, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Wyoming.

Mr. ENZI. Mr. President, I thank the ranking member for his cooperation to date and look forward to working with him on the conference committee, along with the Members of the House, both the Republicans and the Democrats. The purpose of that is to make this is a better budget bill.

I will reiterate that I had about 4 weeks to put it together and 4 months to get it done. We have not done one in 8 years, so it was quite a challenge. We are getting closer now, and today we will have an opportunity to voice some concerns. I am glad we are at this point. I look forward to working with the conferees.

I yield back any time.

BROWN MOTION TO INSTRUCT

The PRESIDING OFFICER. There is now 2 minutes equally divided prior to a vote in relation to the motion offered by the Senator from Ohio related to Wall Street banks.

Who yields time?

The Senator from Vermont.

Mr. SANDERS. Mr. President, this motion is being offered by Senator BROWN of Ohio. Our big banks are too big. The largest banks are now 38 percent larger than they were before the crisis. In terms of outstanding loans, one out of seven Americans is being pursued by a debt collector. U.S. banks are so big that the six largest financial institutions in this country today have assets of roughly $9.8 trillion, which is equivalent to 60 percent of the Nation's GDP.

Being big and powerful is good for the banks and bad for this country. For example, Bloomberg says the too-big-to-fail subsidy is massive. By being big, they get huge subsidies. It amounts to $83 billion a year, and that is why I support this provision to stop too big to fail.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Wyoming.

Mr. ENZI. Mr. President, this bill is cosponsored by Senator VITTER from our side. If a big bank fails under the Senator's reform, there is nothing that protects the taxpayers from having to save the bank. In other words, this approach does not do what many experts believe is needed, which is to expand the bankruptcy laws to permit an orderly disposition to failed banks without taxpayer bailouts.

I will note that the specific policies listed are all authorities that exist today in various financial regulatory agencies, and I believe all Senators support the goal of eliminating the risk of taxpayer bailouts.

Having said that, I ask that all the Republicans support this motion and offer to take it on a voice vote.

Mr. SANDERS. Mr. President, I ask for the yeas and nays.

Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The question is on agreeing to the motion.

The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. CORNYN. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from Texas (Mr. CRUZ) and the Senator from Louisiana (Mr. VITTER).

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Nevada (Mr. REID) is necessarily absent.

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

The result was announced—yeas 86, nays 11, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 146 Leg.]

YEAS—86

Ayotte	Gardner	Murphy
Baldwin	Gillibrand	Murray
Barrasso	Graham	Nelson
Bennet	Grassley	Paul
Blumenthal	Heinrich	Perdue
Blunt	Heitkamp	Peters
Booker	Heller	Portman
Boozman	Hirono	Reed
Boxer	Hoeven	Roberts
Brown	Inhofe	Rounds
Cantwell	Isakson	Rubio
Capito	Johnson	Sanders
Cardin	Kaine	Schatz
Carper	King	Schumer
Casey	Kirk	Scott
Cassidy	Klobuchar	Sessions
Cochran	Lankford	Shaheen
Collins	Leahy	Shelby
Coons	Lee	Stabenow
Corker	Manchin	Sullivan
Cornyn	Markey	Tester
Daines	McCain	Thune
Donnelly	McCaskill	Udall
Durbin	McConnell	Warner
Enzi	Menendez	Warren
Ernst	Merkley	Whitehouse
Feinstein	Mikulski	Wicker
Fischer	Moran	Wyden
Franken	Murkowski	

NAYS—11

Alexander	Crapo	Sasse
Burr	Flake	Tillis
Coats	Hatch	Toomey
Cotton	Risch	

NOT VOTING—3

Cruz	Reid	Vitter

The motion was agreed to.

SANDERS MOTION TO INSTRUCT

The PRESIDING OFFICER. There is now 2 minutes of debate equally divided prior to a vote in relation to the motion to instruct offered by the Senator from Vermont relative to postal plant closures.

The Senator from Vermont.

Mr. SANDERS. Mr. President, in the State of Vermont and I expect all over this country, especially in rural areas, what we have seen is a significant slowdown in mail delivery by the U.S. Postal Service. What this provision is about is the establishment of a deficit-neutral reserve fund which establishes a moratorium to prevent the shutting down of up to 82 mail processing plants all across this country. It is asking that we reinstate overnight delivery standards, undo what the Postal Service has done, that we protect rural services, and that we allow the Postal Service to innovate and adapt to compete in a digital age.

The basic financial problems of the Postal Service are that they have to pay $5.5 billion every year in retirement benefits. That program already has $50 billion in its account. Do away with that, and the Postal Service will make a modest profit.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator's time has expired.

The Senator from Wyoming.

Mr. ENZI. Mr. President, there is a huge concern, particularly in rural America, about the closing down of the processing centers in States. Our State no longer has a processing center. It takes at least an extra day to get the mail.

So I would urge my colleagues to accept this motion, and I would ask if the sponsor would take it by voice vote.

Mr. SANDERS. I have to call for a rollcall vote on this one.

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

Mr. SANDERS. Mr. President, I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. CORNYN. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from Texas (Mr. CRUZ) and the Senator from Louisiana (Mr. VITTER).

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from California (Mrs. BOXER) and the Senator from Nevada (Mr. REID) are necessarily absent.

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

The result was announced—yeas 85, nays 11, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 147 Leg.]

YEAS—85

Alexander	Franken	Murphy
Ayotte	Gardner	Murray
Baldwin	Gillibrand	Nelson
Barrasso	Graham	Peters
Bennet	Grassley	Portman
Blumenthal	Hatch	Reed
Blunt	Heinrich	Risch
Booker	Heitkamp	Roberts
Boozman	Heller	Rounds
Brown	Hirono	Sanders
Burr	Hoeven	Sasse
Cantwell	Inhofe	Schatz
Capito	Isakson	Schumer
Cardin	Johnson	Scott
Carper	Kaine	Sessions
Casey	King	Shaheen
Cochran	Klobuchar	Shelby
Collins	Lankford	Stabenow
Coons	Leahy	Sullivan
Cornyn	Manchin	Tester
Cotton	Markey	Thune
Crapo	McCain	Udall
Daines	McCaskill	Warner
Donnelly	McConnell	Warren
Durbin	Menendez	Whitehouse
Enzi	Merkley	Wicker
Ernst	Mikulski	Wyden
Feinstein	Moran	
Fischer	Murkowski	

NAYS—11

Cassidy	Kirk	Rubio
Coats	Lee	Tillis
Corker	Paul	Toomey
Flake	Perdue	

NOT VOTING—4

Boxer	Reid
Cruz	Vitter

The motion was agreed to.

BURR MOTION TO INSTRUCT

The PRESIDING OFFICER. There is now 2 minutes of debate equally divided prior to a vote in relation to the

motion to instruct by the Senator from North Carolina relative to student loans.

The Senator from North Carolina.

Mr. BURR. Mr. President, I rise to offer a motion to instruct conferees that would insist that the final conference report on the budget include a provision to address student loans. This very simple motion to instruct tracks the amendment introduced by me and Senators KING, WARNER, and ALEXANDER that was included in the budget resolution by a voice vote.

The Senate has already demonstrated its support by unanimously passing this under a voice vote.

I yield to my cosponsor, Senator KING.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Maine.

Mr. KING. Mr. President, I rise to support this amendment. This simply simplifies the repayment options for students under the present student loan program, which is, frankly, very confusing—up to nine different programs with confusing names and confusing terms. This boils it down to two simple ones: a fixed repayment schedule or a variable schedule based upon income. I should mention that I see this as an important stand-alone provision.

I am also going to support Senator WARREN's amendment on refinancing student loans.

I believe this is an important amendment. I urge my colleagues to vote yes.

Mr. BURR. Mr. President, I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Who yields time in opposition?

Mr. ENZI. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to yield back all time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, all time is yielded back.

The question is on agreeing to the motion.

The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. CORNYN. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from Texas (Mr. CRUZ) and the Senator from Louisiana (Mr. VITTER).

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 result was announced—yeas 97, nays 0, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 148 Leg.]

YEAS—97

Alexander	Brown	Cochran
Ayotte	Burr	Collins
Baldwin	Cantwell	Coons
Barrasso	Capito	Corker
Bennet	Cardin	Cornyn
Blumenthal	Carper	Cotton
Blunt	Casey	Crapo
Booker	Cassidy	Daines
Boozman	Coats	Donnelly
Durbin	Lankford	Rounds
Enzi	Leahy	Rubio
Ernst	Lee	Sanders
Feinstein	Manchin	Sasse
Fischer	Markey	Schatz
Flake	McCain	Schumer
Franken	McCaskill	Scott
Gardner	McConnell	Sessions
Gillibrand	Menendez	Shaheen
Graham	Merkley	Shelby
Grassley	Mikulski	Stabenow
Hatch	Moran	Sullivan
Heinrich	Murkowski	Tester
Heitkamp	Murphy	Thune
Heller	Murray	Tillis
Hirono	Nelson	Toomey
Hoeven	Paul	Udall
Inhofe	Perdue	Warner
Isakson	Peters	Warren
Johnson	Portman	Whitehouse
Kaine	Reed	Wicker
King	Reid	Wyden
Kirk	Risch	
Klobuchar	Roberts	

NOT VOTING—3

Boxer	Cruz	Vitter

The motion was agreed to.

WARREN MOTION TO INSTRUCT

The PRESIDING OFFICER. There is now 2 minutes equally divided prior to a vote in relation to the motion offered by the Senator from Massachusetts relative to student loans.

The Senator from Massachusetts.

Ms. WARREN. Mr. President, I support simplifying student loans—the motion that just passed 97 to 0—and I commend Senators KING and BURR, but it is not enough. We need to cut the interest rate on student loans. The Federal Government should not be making a profit off the backs of our kids who are trying to get an education.

This bill is paid for by asking millionaires and billionaires to pay taxes at the same rate as middle-class families.

This is a bill which really puts it to the Senate. Are we here to work just for the millionaires and billionaires or are we here to work for young people who are trying to get an education? This Senate works all the time for billionaires. Today, I hope we can make it work for our students.

I urge adoption of this motion.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from North Carolina.

Mr. BURR. Mr. President, I urge my colleagues to vote against the Warren motion. What the Senator wants to do is to create yet another repayment program, which ultimately ends up costing students more than the income-based repayment. She puts hundreds of billions of private debt on the Federal books and pretends the cost is free. Rather than fixing the maze of repayment programs, she adds to it with a new program that is ultimately less generous than the existing program. Whereas the Federal Government income-based repayment program and other related loan repayment programs will cap payments as a percentage of an individual's income, Senator WARREN's legislation would only lower the interest rate on those payments, potentially steering students into higher monthly payments than they face in those other programs. So I urge my colleagues to oppose the Warren motion.

I yield back.

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

Ms. WARREN. I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. CORNYN. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from Texas (Mr. CRUZ) and the Senator from Louisiana (Mr. VITTER).

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 result was announced—yeas 45, nays 52, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 149 Leg.]

YEAS—45

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

NAYS—52

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

NOT VOTING—3

Boxer	Cruz	Vitter

The motion was rejected.

SANDERS MOTION TO INSTRUCT

The PRESIDING OFFICER. There is now 2 minutes of debate equally divided prior to a vote in relation to the motion offered by the Senator from Vermont relative to Social Security.

The Senator from Vermont.

Mr. SANDERS. Mr. President, Social Security is arguably the most important Federal program we have. It is life and death to millions of senior citizens, people who have to figure out how they pay for food, how they heat their homes, how they pay for their medicine. Social Security is not going broke. It could pay out all benefits for the next 18 years.

What this provision does is make it clear that we go on record to not cut Social Security benefits, not raise the

retirement age, not privatize Social Security. Let's stand with the seniors of this country. Let us protect Social Security, not cut it.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Wyoming.

Mr. ENZI. Mr. President, under the budget rules we can't do anything to Social Security. So this doesn't provide permission or denial of anything that we can do at the present time. We cannot touch Social Security under the budget.

So I ask for the Senator to take a voice vote.

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

Mr. SANDERS. Mr. President, I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk called the roll.

Mr. CORNYN. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from Texas (Mr. CRUZ) and the Senator from Louisiana (Mr. VITTER).

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

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

The result was announced—yeas 84, nays 13, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 150 Leg.]

YEAS—84

Alexander	Feinstein	Murray
Ayotte	Fischer	Nelson
Baldwin	Franken	Paul
Barrasso	Gardner	Peters
Bennet	Gillibrand	Portman
Blumenthal	Graham	Reed
Blunt	Grassley	Reid
Booker	Heinrich	Risch
Boozman	Heitkamp	Roberts
Brown	Heller	Rounds
Burr	Hirono	Rubio
Cantwell	Hoeven	Sanders
Capito	Isakson	Schatz
Cardin	Kaine	Schumer
Carper	King	Shaheen
Casey	Kirk	Shelby
Cassidy	Klobuchar	Stabenow
Collins	Leahy	Sullivan
Coons	Manchin	Tester
Corker	Markey	Thune
Cornyn	McCain	Tillis
Cotton	McCaskill	Toomey
Crapo	Menendez	Udall
Daines	Merkley	Warner
Donnelly	Mikulski	Warren
Durbin	Moran	Whitehouse
Enzi	Murkowski	Wicker
Ernst	Murphy	Wyden

NAYS—13

Coats	Johnson	Sasse
Cochran	Lankford	Scott
Flake	Lee	Sessions
Hatch	McConnell	
Inhofe	Perdue	

NOT VOTING—3

Boxer	Cruz	Vitter

The motion was agreed to.

SCHATZ MOTION TO INSTRUCT

The PRESIDING OFFICER. There is now 2 minutes equally divided prior to a vote in relation to the motion offered by the Senator from Hawaii relative to same-sex marriage benefits.

Mr. ENZI. Mr. President, on this motion, I think we are willing to yield back all time and accept it on a voice vote.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, all time is yielded back.

The question is on agreeing to the motion.

The motion was agreed to.

VOTE EXPLANATION

Mr. CORKER. Mr. President, I would like the RECORD to reflect that had the vote on the Schatz motion to instruct conferees been conducted by a rollcall vote, I would have voted nay.

BENNET MOTION TO INSTRUCT

The PRESIDING OFFICER. There is now 2 minutes of debate equally divided prior to a vote in relation to the motion offered by the Senator from Colorado relative to climate change.

The Senator from Colorado.

Mr. BENNET. Mr. President, I rise to offer a very simple motion to instruct the budget conferees. It encourages the conferees to address the economic and national security threats posed by climate change. During our consideration of the budget, I offered an amendment that outlined these threats and highlighted the need to act. That amendment passed the Senate by a 53-to-47 vote. It was supported by both Republicans and Democrats. The same language should be included in the final budget conference.

During the markup, the Budget Committee adopted a complementary amendment which discussed the importance of climate change initiatives in the Department of Defense. The language should be included in the final budget resolution.

Let's make it clear that the Congress plans to respond to the serious economic and national security threats posed by climate change.

I urge a ''yes'' vote on this motion to instruct.

I yield the floor, and I ask for a voice vote.

Mr. ENZI. Mr. President, we are willing to accept it on a voice vote.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there further debate on the motion?

If not, the question is on agreeing to the motion.

The motion was agreed to.

FISCHER MOTION TO INSTRUCT

The PRESIDING OFFICER. There is now 2 minutes equally divided prior to a vote in relation to the motion offered by the Senator from Nebraska relative to equal pay.

The Senator from Nebraska.

Mrs. FISCHER. Mr. President, this motion takes an important step forward by providing necessary updates to current law regarding nonretaliation. The change was supported on a bipartisan during our recent budget debate.

This motion reinforces current law by banning gender discrimination under both the Equal Pay Act and title VII of the 1964 Civil Rights Act. Contrary to the claims of some, both of these laws enable women to sue for discrimination.

Furthermore, my motion contains language similar to President Obama's April 2014 Executive order stating that employees cannot be punished for exercising their First Amendment rights by speaking with employers or coworkers about their wages.

I cannot support the motion of the Senator from Maryland. It removes merit pay, which I believe provides women with opportunities to advance in their careers, and merit pay recognizes a woman's hard work and her contributions. It also eliminates any liability cap under the motion of the Senator from Maryland, which I believe benefits only attorneys and not families. For the first time we are able to do this.

I thank the Presiding Officer.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Who yields time in opposition?

Mrs. FISCHER. Mr. President, I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

All time has expired.

The question is on agreeing to the motion.

The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. CORNYN. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from Texas (Mr. CRUZ) and the Senator from Louisiana (Mr. VITTER).

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 result was announced—yeas 57, nays 40, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 151 Leg.]

YEAS—57

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

NAYS—40

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

NOT VOTING—3

Boxer	Cruz	Vitter

The motion was agreed to.

MIKULSKI MOTION TO INSTRUCT

The PRESIDING OFFICER. There is now 2 minutes of debate equally divided prior to a vote in relation to the motion offered by the Senator from Maryland related to equal pay.

The Senator from Maryland.

Ms. MIKULSKI. Mr. President, I have an alternative and far more comprehensive approach than the Senator from Nebraska just offered. Although I respect her and her advocacy for women, the Mikulski amendment in the well would really finish the job we started with Lilly Ledbetter. Yes, it would deal with the issue of harassment on the job if one asks for information, which the Fischer amendment only dealt with. My amendment would go several steps further. No. 2, it would provide punitive damages for women who have been wrongly denied equal pay for several years. No. 3, it also eliminates the false reasons people give for not paying equal pay for equal work.

The Mikulski amendment is more comprehensive, more robust, and will really finish the job and close the loopholes big corporations have had for years. So if my colleagues like the Fischer amendment, they will be crazy about the Mikulski amendment. Go all the way, not just part of the way.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Does anyone wish to speak in opposition?

Mr. ENZI. We yield back our time, and we will take a voice vote.

Ms. MIKULSKI. Mr. President, I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The yeas and nays have been requested.

Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The question is on agreeing to the motion.

The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk called the roll.

Mr. CORNYN. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from Texas (Mr. CRUZ) and the Senator from Louisiana (Mr. VITTER).

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 result was announced—yeas 44, nays 53, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 152 Leg.]

YEAS—44

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

NAYS—53

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

NOT VOTING—3

Boxer	Cruz	Vitter

The motion was rejected.

FISCHER MOTION TO INSTRUCT

The PRESIDING OFFICER. There is now 2 minutes of debate equally divided prior to a vote in relation to the motion offered by the Senator from Nebraska relative to paid sick leave.

The Senator from Nebraska.

Mrs. FISCHER. Thank you, Mr. President.

Workplace flexibility is a necessity for our 21st-century families, and Senator KING and I have come up with a proposal that I think really addresses this in a way that is voluntary and incentivizes businesses to truly help families, help those hourly workers meet the needs they are facing in this workplace environment and in their family environments.

I yield the rest of my time to Senator KING.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Maine.

Mr. KING. Mr. President, I rise in support of this amendment and in support of the United States finally joining the civilized nations of the world in providing for family leave for our citizens. I know this amendment doesn't go as far as some would like, but I believe it is very credible, enforceable legislation that can move forward and really change the lives of thousands and millions of people across this country.

I commend the Senator from Nebraska for bringing this amendment forward, and I intend to support it and urge my colleagues to do likewise.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Wyoming.

Mr. ENZI. Mr. President, if all time is yielded back, we would be willing to take a voice vote.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. If there is no objection, all time is yielded back.

The question is on agreeing to the motion.

The motion was agreed to.

MURRAY MOTION TO INSTRUCT

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, there will now be 2 minutes of debate equally divided prior to a vote in relation to the motion offered by the Senator from Washington relative to paid sick leave.

The Senator from Washington.

Mrs. MURRAY. Thank you, Mr. President.

Congress, we have to vote on an economy that works for all of our families, not just the wealthiest few. Today, 43 million Americans do not have access to paid sick days, and when they are sick, they have to choose between losing money out of their paycheck or toughing it out and showing up to work.

I was delighted that during our budget debate, a bipartisan majority—61 Senators strong—agreed that Congress should allow workers to earn paid sick days. The amendment that just passed is voluntary. It would only benefit a select number of people who work for employers who already do the right thing.

This amendment will make sure that we boost worker productivity and reduce turnover, which are benefits to both employers and employees. I urge my colleagues to vote for this in a strong vote.

Thank you, Mr. President.

I yield back our time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Who yields time in opposition?

Mr. ENZI. Mr. President, we would be willing to accept this on a voice vote, and we yield back all time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. All time having been yielded back, the question is on agreeing to the motion.

The motion was agreed to.

MURRAY MOTION TO INSTRUCT

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, there will now be 2 minutes of debate equally divided prior to a vote in relation to the motion offered by the Senator from Washington relating to sequestration elimination.

Mrs. MURRAY. Mr. President, Democrats and Republicans agree that the automatic spending cuts across defense and nondefense investments are terrible policy and need to be fixed. The bipartisan Budget Act we passed last Congress did exactly that for the past 2 years and offered us a template for how we can tackle this challenge in a bipartisan way, once again.

We do not need to rely on gimmicks in this budget or the hopes that we will somehow solve this later. We can fix this now in this conference. I urge my colleagues to support this vote instructing the conferees to roll back sequestration, allow the Appropriations Committee to do their work and not kick this can down the road for all of us to address later.

I urge its adoption.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Wyoming.

Mr. ENZI. Mr. President, there is a difference between how it got voted through last year, which was actually an appropriation rather than a budget. This does raise taxes in order to overcome the sequestration. So I am urging a ''no'' vote. We have agreed to have a voice vote on this one.

We yield back all time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. All time having been yielded back, the question is on agreeing to the motion.

The motion was rejected.

STABENOW MOTION TO INSTRUCT

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, there will now be 2

minutes of debate equally divided prior to a vote in relation to the motion offered by the Senator from Michigan relating to Medicare cuts.

Ms. STABENOW. Mr. President, my motion would instruct conferees to remove from the final budget resolution any Medicare cuts that would increase out-of-pocket costs for senior citizens, eliminating guaranteed benefits or making structural changes to Medicare by turning it into a voucher-based system or premium support system.

I think one of our greatest concerns in this budget, among many, is the fact that when you add it all up, there are $566 billion in Medicare cuts in this Senate resolution. Shockingly, it is more than even the House cuts. I would urge that we stand with people who pay into a health care system that works. They have earned those benefits. They are counting on those benefits.

Seniors and people with disabilities across the country need to know Medicare is an intact, guaranteed health care system for them.

I urge support for my motion.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Wyoming.

Mr. ENZI. Mr. President, I am going to urge my colleagues to reject this motion to instruct. I credit Senator STABENOW's instincts to approach the question of Medicare seriously. I am sure she knows we all take Medicare's future seriously. There are some problems with Medicare that need to be solved.

The budget shows Medicare's rate of growth for an average annual rate of 6.4 to 5.5 percent over the next 10 years. Why does the budget resolution adopt these numbers? Because Republicans and the President agree we must act on policies which extend the life of the Medicare trust fund.

The budget does this by adopting the President's goal of extending the life of Medicare's hospital insurance trust fund by at least 5 years. According to the Medicare trustees themselves, the hospital insurance fund could be insolvent as early as 2021, just 6 years from now.

Independent actuaries at the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid report that over the next 75 years, the Federal Government has promised more than $35 trillion in Medicare benefits. So Republicans joined with the President in looking to extend the life of the hospital insurance trust fund and make the Medicare program sustainable.

So I ask that you reject this motion to instruct.

Ms. STABENOW. Mr. President, if I might take just 1 more moment, I do not think I used all my time.

I just want to say for the record, the President of the United States is not supporting $566 billion in cuts to Medicare.

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

Ms. STABENOW. I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. CORNYN. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from Texas (Mr. CRUZ) and the Senator from Louisiana (Mr. VITTER).

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 result was announced—yeas 45, nays 52, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 153 Leg.]

YEAS—45

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

NAYS—52

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

NOT VOTING—3

Boxer	Cruz	Vitter

The motion was rejected.

The Presiding Officer appointed Mr. ENZI, Mr. GRASSLEY, Mr. SESSIONS, Mr. CRAPO, Mr. GRAHAM, Mr. PORTMAN, Mr. TOOMEY, Mr. JOHNSON, Ms. AYOTTE, Mr. WICKER, Mr. CORKER, Mr. PERDUE, Mr. SANDERS, Mrs. MURRAY, Mr. WYDEN, Ms. STABENOW, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Mr. WARNER, Mr. MERKLEY, Ms. BALDWIN, Mr. KAINE, and Mr. KING conferees on the part of the Senate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Wyoming.

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. ENZI. 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.

RECOGNIZING THE KILGORE COLLEGE RANGERETTES 75TH ANNIVERSARY

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I ask my colleagues to join me today in honoring the world famous Kilgore College Rangerettes on the occasion of their 75th anniversary.

In an effort to increase female enrollment and to keep fans in their seats during halftime at football games, Kilgore College Dean of Students B.E. Masters invited Gussie Nell Davis to create an all-women's precision dance-and-drill team. On September 19, 1940, the Rangerettes performed their first halftime show during a Kilgore College football game.

With their signature Western-styled red, white, and blue uniforms and cowboy hats, the Kilgore College Rangerettes brought show business to the football field. Their precise and graceful performances captured the hearts of the fans and pioneered a brandnew type of halftime show.

The Rangerettes have attained national and international recognition. Dubbed ''The Sweethearts of the Gridiron,'' the Rangerettes travel across the country performing at high-profile events, including every Cotton Bowl halftime show since 1951, the 60th Pearl Harbor Memorial Commemoration, Presidential inaugural events, and multiple Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parades. Their fame and prestige have spread across the globe with performances in Venezuela, the millennial St. Patrick's Day Parade in Ireland, and a 15-day tour of Romania.

The Rangerettes' achievements and honors have been highlighted in cover stories in magazines including Life, Newsweek, Esquire, Texas Monthly, and Texas 24/7. Additionally, they were featured in the Cinerama movie ''The Seven Wonders of the World.'' Today, they continue to set training and performance standards to which other drill teams aspire.

I am honored to congratulate the Kilgore College Rangerettes on their 75th anniversary and look forward to their continued tradition of excellence as they perform across Texas, the United States, and the world.

LYNCH NOMINATION

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, Loretta Lynch's nomination to be Attorney General has languished on the Senate floor for 48 days. This unnecessary wait time is twice as long as the last seven Attorney General nominees combined. Under any standard, she is not being treated fairly. For nearly 7 weeks, she has waited for her confirmation vote to be scheduled by the majority leader. She has now earned the support to be confirmed, and if the leader would simply schedule her vote, this eminently qualified prosecutor could get to work as our next Attorney General.

Last month, after Ms. Lynch's nomination had already been pending on the floor for weeks, the majority leader inexplicably chose to hold her nomination hostage until he got his way on a partisan provision in unrelated legislation. That Loretta Lynch is being denied a confirmation vote over human

trafficking legislation is a cruel irony since she has a proven record of prosecuting child rapists and human traffickers. If Members want a prosecutor with a deep commitment to fighting human trafficking, then they should support Loretta Lynch.

The American people deserve to know that while the majority leader said he would block a confirmation vote on Ms. Lynch until we passed unrelated legislation, the Senate has voted 74 times on other matters. If the Senate can vote on a Republican budget, legislation to increase payments to doctors, and on the confirmation of several other nominees, then of course we can and should vote on the nomination of our Nation's next chief law enforcement officer. There is simply no excuse.

Every additional day that Ms. Lynch's nomination languishes on the floor is another day Senate Republicans fail to govern responsibly. This Congress, it took more than 3 months for Senate Republicans to schedule a vote on a single judicial nominee. And even though the Senate finally did confirm a district court nominee this week, nine more judicial nominees are waiting to be considered. This is no way to respect the dedicated public servants who have been nominated and no way to treat our coequal branches of government.

The Republican leader has the opportunity to show the American people what we can do when we work together. He should call Loretta Lynch's nomination up for a vote without further delay.

Ms. COLLINS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to engage in a colloquy with my colleague from Maine.

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

JOB CORPS 50TH ANNIVERSARY

Ms. COLLINS. Mr. President, I am pleased to join Senator KING in recognizing the Job Corps program on its 50th anniversary. Job Corps helps at-risk young people ages 16 through 24 improve the quality of their lives through vocational and academic training. On August 30, 1964, President Lyndon B. Johnson signed legislation creating Job Corps. Today, one-half century later, generations of graduates in Maine and across America demonstrate why Job Corps has been one of our Nation's best investments.

Since its founding, more than 2.7 million young people have entered the Job Corps program with the determination to succeed and have graduated with the confidence and the skills to do so. The success rate is extraordinary. Nearly 86 percent of Job Corps graduates find employment in their fields, go on to higher education or serve our country in uniform. Job Corps students do not just learn a trade—they cultivate high aspirations and a commitment to service.

As I travel throughout Maine, I have extensive conversations with small business owners and workers about the challenges they face. While there is no doubt that our Nation's unemployment rate remains unacceptably high, I have met with employers in Maine who have jobs available but who cannot find qualified and trained workers to fill these vacant positions.

With two centers in Maine, Job Corps not only helps young people in our State gain the skills that lead to rewarding careers, but it also improves their lives, assists employers, and strengthens communities. The Penobscot Job Corps Academy in Bangor, ME, and the Loring Job Corps Center in Limestone, ME, have the capability to serve nearly 800 at-risk youth on a daily basis. Over the past several decades, these two centers have compiled an impressive record of success in preparing disadvantaged youth for the workplace or higher education.

The combination of skills, self-confidence, and determination Job Corps offers can help young people overcome the setbacks, obstacles, and failures that often are part of life. The focus on community service at both centers helps to create the involved citizens that are so important to Maine's future. These centers put these young men and women on a path to being successful and vital contributing members of our country.

Job Corps was founded on the noble idea that, if given the opportunity, the support, and the training, America's young people could overcome any obstacles and achieve. For 50 years, Job Corps graduates have turned that idea into reality. I congratulate Job Corps again on this accomplishment.

Mr. KING. Mr. President, I join the senior Senator from Maine in congratulating Job Corps on 50 years of service to our country's youth. Across the Nation, Job Corps provides training and career skills to economically disadvantaged young adults, helping them attain a high school diploma or equivalent and career technical training to prepare them for success in today's job market. This program is extremely important, giving young people who need a second chance the opportunity to forge a better career for themselves through hard work and meaningful study.

The Penobscot Job Corps Center in Bangor, ME, and the Loring Job Corps Center in Limestone, ME, have consistently proven to be outstanding assets to our State, helping young Mainers prepare to enter the workforce or pursue post-secondary education every year. Through a combination of unique learning experiences, these institutions are helping the next generation of Maine students work towards stable, long-term jobs.

In October of 2013 I was proud to congratulate the Penobscot Job Corps Academy for its certification as a Center of Environmental Excellence. This distinction recognizes Job Corps campuses that show leadership in implementing Job Corps' guiding principles for high performance green buildings. At the time, the Penobscot Job Corps was one of only two centers in the country to receive this distinction.

This initiative prompted Job Corps facilities across the United States to not only reduce their environmental impact, but to also teach their students to live and work sustainably. The skills and knowledge that students receive from this program will surely help them compete in an increasingly environmentally focused labor market.

Job Corps centers are an important facet of our workforce development system and have a proven record of success in preparing disadvantaged students to obtain and hold a job or pursue opportunities in higher education. I wish Job Corps another 50 years of success, and I am proud of the many young people in Maine and across the country who have used this program to make a better life for themselves.

The contributions of Maine's Job Corps centers simply cannot be overstated, and I look forward to watching their continued development.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

GREELEY HOLOCAUST MEMORIAL OBSERVANCES

• Mr. BENNET. Mr. President, this year marks 70 years since the spring of 1945, when Allied forces liberated concentration camps, a major milestone in the end of the Holocaust.

For more than 30 years, the Greeley Holocaust Memorial Observances has helped raise awareness of the atrocities of Nazi crimes and the perils of anti-Semitism, hatred, and intolerance. This month, the Greeley Holocaust Memorial Observances will continue its longstanding tradition of remembering the victims of the Holocaust, commemorating the end of this horrific part of our history, and educating Coloradans about the importance of the Holocaust with discussions, films, exhibits, and workshops. This year's events will include presentations by Holocaust survivor Nathan Taffel.

It is my pleasure to commend the Greeley Holocaust Memorial Observances Committee for their dedicated service to this critical cause and to congratulate the Committee on its 32nd Greeley Holocaust Memorial Observances, 70 years after the end of the Holocaust.•

RECOGNIZING EDGEWATER, NEW JERSEY FIRST RESPONDERS

• Mr. BOOKER. Mr. President, today I wish to recognize and pay tribute to the heroic first responders of Edgewater, NJ, and surrounding communities, who successfully extinguished one of the largest fires in the history of Bergen County. On Wednesday, January 21, 2015, a massive fire destroyed an apartment building and displaced over 1,000 Borough residents, leaving many homeless during the bitter mid-winter months.

At 4:20 p.m. that day, smoke billowed along the western skyline of the Hudson River as Edgewater first responders rushed to the scene of a 7-alarm fire. Mayor Michael McPartland declared a local state of emergency, and the Edgewater Fire Department fought to control the blaze, which ultimately destroyed 240 of the 408 apartments in the complex. While civilians and first responders reported no serious injuries, hundreds of residents lost their homes, pets, and possessions. Were it not for the quick response of Edgewater's dedicated first responders, there could easily have been loss of life, and property damage would have been far greater.

By the end of the event, 35 departments and agencies from across the region had responded to the call for help. Over 500 police officers, firefighters, emergency medical technicians, and other emergency personnel were on the scene, many of whom stayed until 7 a.m. the next morning. I would like to take this opportunity to recognize and honor some of these brave individuals for their fearless service to our community:

Chief of Police William Skidmore, head of the 27-member Edgewater police force, who made sure his officers secured the fire perimeter and controlled crowds, ensuring that both emergency personnel and residents remained at a safe distance.

Emergency Management Coordinator Robert Christiansen, who worked closely with Chief Skidmore to lead coordination efforts among the many county, State, and Federal emergency services that responded to the fire.

Fire Chief Tom Jacobson, who managed the overall firefighting response and coordinated 250 firefighters, 2 fireboats from the Fire Department of the City of New York, 2 Jersey City marine units, and 1 New Jersey State Police boat in fighting the blaze.

First Aid Squad Captain Kathy Frato, who led her team of EMTs in assisting residents and those firefighters who continued to battle the fire into the morning hours.

The firefighters of the Edgewater Volunteer Fire Department, who worked through the night to battle this massive blaze.

All of the first responders of the Edgewater Fire Department, Police Department, and First Aid Squad, in addition to the first responders from the 35 assisting municipalities, who helped to protect life and property. Their courage and commitment to their community is an example to all, and I could not be more grateful for their service.●

CONGRATULATING JOE VENTO

● Mr. HELLER. Mr. President, today, I wish to congratulate Grammy Award-winning musician Joe Vento on receiving the Century Award, an accolade well deserved in recognition of his many sacrifices. Mr. Vento has served both this great Nation and the city of Las Vegas throughout his life and is a true inspiration for all Nevadans.

Mr. Vento's passion for music began at an early age and had him playing the piano and accordion in New York by age 4. He later used his talents in a different setting, bringing the joy of music to those around him in time of war. Mr. Vento was in the U.S. Army Band near the end of World War II and served in World War II, the Korean war, and Vietnam. He received a battlefield commission of three stars from Marine Commandant Lew Walt during his time in Vietnam at a special concert for U.S. troops. Mr. Vento not only deserves recognition for his bravery in serving our country but also for his determination in providing entertainment for those courageously fighting for our freedom alongside him. His actions prove his selflessness and compassion for others.

There is no way to adequately thank the men and women who lay down their lives for our freedoms. I extend my deepest gratitude to Mr. Vento for his courageous contributions to the United States of America. His service to his country and his bravery and dedication earn him a place among the outstanding men and women who have valiantly defended our Nation. As a member of the Senate Veterans' Affairs Committee, I recognize that Congress has a responsibility not only to honor these brave individuals who serve our Nation but also to ensure they are cared for when they return home. I remain committed to upholding this promise for our veterans and servicemembers in Nevada and throughout the Nation.

Mr. Vento's service to others did not end on the battlefield. He spent the next 70 years bringing incredible music to the city of Las Vegas. In the 1950s, he began performing with the Three Sons and remained with the group for 27 years. He made numerous appearances on prestigious shows, appeared in command performances at the White House and Imperial Palaces in Tokyo and Beijing, and conducted performances with Victor Borge, Nelson Eddy, and the Veteran Tonight Show Big Band. He also performed at the Paris hotel in Las Vegas. Most recently, Mr. Vento has lent his musical talent to the Royal Resort just off the strip. Mr. Vento's unwavering commitment to the Las Vegas community will never be forgotten. His music will be legend for years to come.

Today, I ask my colleagues and all Nevadans to join me in congratulating Mr. Vento on his award and in recognizing his years of service to both the United States of America and the Las Vegas community. I wish him the best of luck in all of his musical years to come.●

TRIBUTE TO SAM KAPOURALES

● Mr. MANCHIN. Mr. President, I wish to recognize a dear friend, a dedicated public servant and a passionate West Virginia leader, Sam Kapourales, who is celebrating his 80th birthday on April 19, 2015. After proudly knowing Sam and his lovely wife Dee for more than four decades, it is a special privilege to celebrate Sam's vast achievements and his many years of steadfast service to Mingo County, to West Virginia, and to our Nation.

I have never met anyone more humble, community-minded and family-oriented than Sam. Throughout his 80 years, and still today, Sam has always answered the call of service. At every turn of the road—whether as the mayor of Williamson in Mingo County for nearly 21 years, as the prosperous business owner of Kapourales Properties, as a successful pharmacist or as an invaluable member of countless boards and organizations that focused on helping others and impacting our local communities—Sam has never lost touch with his faith, his family and those in need.

As a devout Mason, Sam has lead a life devoted to personal reflection, self-improvement and social betterment. He is a pure, true-blue West Virginian who has shown time after time that he loves his State and the people of West Virginia through his actions of service and philanthropy. For instance, Sam served as president of the Childhood Language Center in Charleston, where children with speech impediments could receive necessary treatments and services.

He also helped recruit much-needed medical services and physicians to the Tug Valley region as a sponsor of the Tug Valley Area Ambulance Service. And as proud Shriner and member of the Beni Kedem Temple in Charleston, even serving a term as Potentate—a true honor indeed—Sam helped raise funds to transport disabled, burnt or sick children to regional medical facilities. Sam and Dee even started a scholarship to provide additional educational opportunities for graduating seniors at Mingo Central High School.

Yet Sam's tireless community efforts do not even begin to stop there. Throughout the years, Sam served as a member on the West Virginia Board of Pharmacy, the West Virginia Health Care Authority Board, and the West Virginia Housing Development Authority Board. He was Director of the First National Bank of Williamson, the First Bank of Charleston, the Summit State Bank, and the Energy Services of America Corporation. He also chaired the advisory board of Southern West Virginia Community College of Nursing.

Because of his passion, discipline, and staunch work ethic, it is no surprise that Sam has been recognized for his community efforts multiple times throughout the years. Yet to Sam, he says that the greatest of honors bestowed upon him is being a recipient of the 33rd Degree of the Scottish Rite, which is only granted for exceptional service to Freemasonry. His entire life, I never knew Sam to turn down participating in worthwhile cause or helping a neighbor in need. And I truly think

that dedication stems from that of Sam's mission as a heartfelt Mason.

Sam's unwavering dedication to Mingo County and the Mountain State, accompanied by his innovative vision, inspirational spirit, and savvy aptitude, have helped countless West Virginians throughout the years. His loyalty, trustworthiness, and dedication know no bounds. So today, I join his wife Dee his two wonderful daughters, Stephie-Anna and Susanna, and all West Virginians in wishing Sam Kapourales a very happy birthday. I look forward to celebrating many more birthdays with my dear friend for years to come.●

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.)

MESSAGES FROM THE HOUSE

At 10:54 a.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Mr. Novotny, one of its reading clerks, announced that the House agrees to the concurrent resolution (S. Con. Res. 11) setting forth the congressional budget for the United States Government for fiscal year 2016 and setting forth the appropriate budgetary levels for fiscal years 2017 through 2025, with an amendment.

The message also announced that the House insists upon its amendment to the concurrent resolution (S. Con. Res. 11) setting forth the congressional budget for the United States Government for fiscal year 2016 and setting forth the appropriate budgetary levels for fiscal years 2017 through 2025, and asks a conference with the Senate on the disagreeing votes of the two Houses thereon; and appoints Mr. TOM PRICE of Georgia, Mr. ROKITA, Mr. DIAZ-BALART, Mrs. BLACK, Mr. MOOLENAAR, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Mr. YARMUTH, and Ms. MOORE as managers of the conference on the part of the House.

At 12:43 p.m., a message from the House of Representatives delivered by Mr. Novotny, one of its reading clerks, announced that the House has passed the following bills, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate:

H.R. 650. An act to amend the Truth in Lending Act to modify the definitions of a mortgage originator and a high-cost mortgage.

H.R. 685. An act to amend the Truth in Lending Act to improve upon the definitions provided for points and fees in connection with a mortgage transaction.

MEASURES REFERRED

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

H.R. 650. An act to amend the Truth in Lending Act to modify the definitions of a mortgage originator and a high-cost mortgage; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

H.R. 685. An act to amend the Truth in Lending Act to improve upon the definitions provided for points and fees in connection with a mortgage transaction; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

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–1152. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Difenoconazole; Pesticide Tolerances'' (FRL No. 9923–82) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 27, 2015; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC–1153. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Thiram; Pesticide Tolerance'' (FRL No. 9924–86) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 24, 2015; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC–1154. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Deltamethrin; Pesticide Tolerances'' (FRL No. 9924–60) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 24, 2015; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC–1155. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''2-Propanoic acid, 2-methyl-, 2-methylpropyl ester; Tolerance Exemption'' (FRL No. 9924–33) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 24, 2015; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC–1156. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Extension of Tolerances for Emergency Exemptions (Multiple Chemicals)'' (FRL No. 9924–40) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 1, 2015; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC–1157. A communication from the Associate Administrator of the Fruit and Vegetable Programs, Agricultural Marketing Service, Department of Agriculture, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Marketing Order Regulating the Handling of Spearmint Oil Produced in the Far West; Revision of the Salable Quantity and Allotment Percentage for Class 3 (Native) Spearmint Oil for the 2014–2015 Marketing Year'' (Docket No. AMS–FV–13–0087; FV14–985–1C IR) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 8, 2015; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC–1158. A communication from the Associate Administrator of the Fruit and Vegetable Programs, Agricultural Marketing Service, Department of Agriculture, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Marketing Order Regulating the Handling of Spearmint Oil Produced in the Far West; Revision of the Salable Quantity and Allotment Percentage for Class 1 (Scotch) Spearmint Oil for the 2014–2015 Marketing Year'' (Docket No. AMS–FV–13–0087; FV14–985–1A FIR) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 8, 2015; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC–1159. A communication from the Associate Administrator of the Fruit and Vegetable Programs, Agricultural Marketing Service, Department of Agriculture, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Fruit, Vegetable, and Specialty Crops—Import Regulations; Changes to Reporting Requirements to Add Electronic Form Filing Options'' (Docket No. AMS–FV–13–0093; FV15–944/980/999–1 IR) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 8, 2015; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC–1160. A communication from the Secretary of the Commodity Futures Trading Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Residual Interest Deadline for Futures Commission Merchants'' (RIN3038–AE22) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 1, 2015; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC–1161. A communication from the Assistant Secretary for Legislative Affairs, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled ''Annual Report on the Impact of the Homeland Security Act on Immigration Functions Transferred to the Department of Homeland Security''; to the Committees on the Judiciary; and Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–1162. A communication from the Assistant Secretary, Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to section 36(c) of the Arms Export Control Act (DDTC 15–010); to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC–1163. A communication from the Assistant Secretary, Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to section 36(c) of the Arms Export Control Act (DDTC 14–147); to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC–1164. A communication from the Assistant Secretary, Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to section 36(c) of the Arms Export Control Act (DDTC 14–140); to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC–1165. A communication from the Assistant Secretary, Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to section 36(c) of the Arms Export Control Act (DDTC 14–121); to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC–1166. A communication from the Assistant Legal Adviser for Treaty Affairs, Department of State, transmitting, pursuant to the Case-Zablocki Act, 1 U.S.C. 112b, as amended, the report of the texts and background statements of international agreements, other than treaties (List 2015–0029—2015–0031); to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC–1167. A communication from the Assistant Attorney General, Office of Legislative Affairs, Department of Justice, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled ''Report of the Attorney General to the Congress of the United States on the Administration of the Foreign Agents Registration Act of 1938, as amended, for the six months ending June 30, 2014''; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC–1168. A joint communication from the Secretary of Defense and the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, transmitting a request relative to issuing a travel restriction on senior officials' travel to Afghanistan for the period of June 1, 2015 through September 30, 2015; to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC–1169. A communication from the Assistant Secretary of Defense (Legislative Affairs), transmitting, a report of proposed legislation entitled ''National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2016''; to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC–1170. A communication from the Under Secretary of Defense (Personnel and Readiness), transmitting a report on the approved retirement of Lieutenant General Salvatore A. Angelella, United States Air Force, and his advancement to the grade of lieutenant general on the retired list; to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC–1171. A communication from the Under Secretary of Defense (Personnel and Readiness), transmitting a report on the approved retirement of Lieutenant General Thomas W. Travis, United States Air Force, and his advancement to the grade of lieutenant general on the retired list; to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC–1172. A communication from the Assistant Director, Senior Executive Management Office, Department of Defense, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to a vacancy in the position of Principal Deputy Under Secretary of Defense (Comptroller), Department of Defense, received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 1, 2015; to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC–1173. A communication from the Secretary of the Navy, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to the Program Acquisition Unit Cost (PAUC) and Average Procurement Unit Cost (APUC) for the Unitary and Baseline/BLU–108 variants of the Joint Standoff Weapon (JSOW) Program; to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC–1174. A communication from the Under Secretary of Defense (Acquisition, Technology, and Logistics), transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled ''2015 Annual Report to Congress on the Department of Defense Chemical and Biological Defense Program''; to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC–1175. A communication from the Assistant Secretary of Defense (Legislative Affairs), transmitting, a report of proposed legislation entitled ''National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2016''; to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC–1176. A communication from the President of the United States, transmitting, pursuant to law, a notice of the continuation of the national emergency with respect to Somalia that was declared in Executive Order 13536 of April 12, 2010; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC–1177. A communication from the Associate General Counsel for Legislation and Regulations, Office of Housing-Federal Housing Commissioner, Department of Housing and Urban Development, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Federal Housing Administration (FHA): Removal of Section 235 Home Ownership Program Regulations'' (Docket No. FR–5829–F–01) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 8, 2015; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC–1178. A communication from the Chairman, Federal Financial Institutions Examination Council, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Council's 2014 Annual Report to Congress; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC–1179. A communication from the President of the United States, transmitting, pursuant to law, a notice of the continuation of the national emergency with respect to South Sudan that was declared in Executive Order 13664 of April 3, 2014; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC–1180. A communication from the Secretary, Division of Corporate Finance, Securities and Exchange Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Amendments to Regulation A'' (RIN3235–AL39) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 31, 2015; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC–1181. A communication from the Secretary of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, a six-month periodic report on the national emergency declared in Executive Order 13224 of September 23, 2001, with respect to persons who commit, threaten to commit, or support terrorism; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC–1182. A communication from the Executive Director of the Office of Minority and Women Inclusion, Office of the Comptroller of the Currency, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Office's fiscal year 2014 Annual Report to Congress; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC–1183. A communication from the Executive Vice President and Chief Financial Officer, Federal Home Loan Bank of Chicago, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Bank's 2014 management reports; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC–1184. A communication from the Secretary of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to the export to the People's Republic of China of items not detrimental to the U.S. space launch industry; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC–1185. A communication from the Assistant Secretary for Export Administration, Bureau of Industry and Security, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Revisions to Support Documents Requirements for License Applications Under the Export Administration Regulations'' (RIN0694–AG00) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 24, 2015; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC–1186. A communication from the Secretary of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled ''Beyond Traffic 2045: Trends and Choices''; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–1187. A communication from the Secretary of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, two (2) reports relative to vacancies in the Department of Commerce, received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 8, 2015; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–1188. A communication from the Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Fisheries of the Exclusive Economic Zone Off Alaska; Reallocation of Pollock in the Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands'' (RIN0648–XD813) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 25, 2015; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–1189. A communication from the Deputy Assistant Administrator, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Fisheries of the Exclusive Economic Zone Off Alaska; Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands; 2015 and 2016 Harvest Specifications for Groundfish'' (RIN0648–XD587) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 25, 2015; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–1190. A communication from the Deputy Assistant Administrator, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Fisheries of the Exclusive Economic Zone Off Alaska; Gulf of Alaska; Final 2015 and 2016 Harvest Specifications for Groundfish; Final Rule'' (RIN0648–XD516) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 25, 2015; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–1191. A communication from the Deputy Director, Office of National Marine Sanctuaries, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Olympia Coast National Marine Sanctuary Regulations; Correction'' (RIN0648–BE48) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 25, 2015; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–1192. A communication from the Deputy Director, Office of National Marine Sanctuaries, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Expansion of Gulf of the Farallones and Cordell Bank National Marine Sanctuaries, and Regulatory Changes; Final Rule'' (RIN0648–BD18) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 25, 2015; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–1193. A communication from the Deputy Director, Office of National Marine Sanctuaries, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Gulf of the Farallones and Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuaries Regulations on Introduced Species'' (RIN0648–BC26) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 25, 2015; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–1194. A communication from the Associate Bureau Chief, Wireline Competition Bureau, Federal Communications Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Connect America Fund; Developing a Unified Intercarrier Compensation Regime'' ((RIN3060–AG49) (DA 15–249)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 31, 2015; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–1195. A communication from the Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Fisheries of the Exclusive Economic Zone Off Alaska; Pacific Cod by Vessels Using Jig Gear in the Central Regulatory Area of the Gulf of Alaska'' (RIN0648–XD800) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 24, 2015; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–1196. A communication from the Chairman, Federal Maritime Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the 53rd Annual Report of the activities of the Federal Maritime Commission for fiscal year 2014; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–1197. A communication from the Deputy Chief Management Officer, Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to a vacancy in the position of Director, Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation, received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 8, 2015; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC–1198. A communication from the Director of Regulations Policy and Management Staff, Food and Drug Administration, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Food and Drug Administration Regulations; Change of Addresses; Technical Amendment'' (Docket No. FDA–2015–N–0011) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 8, 2015; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC–1199. A communication from the Secretary of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, a financial report relative to the Generic Drug User Fee Amendments of 2012 for fiscal year 2014; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC–1200. A communication from the Director of Regulations Policy and Management Staff, Food and Drug Administration, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Advisory Committee; Anti-Infective Drugs Advisory Committee'' (Docket No. FDA–2009–N–0443) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 8, 2015; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC–1201. A communication from the Deputy Director, Administration for Children and Families, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Technical Regulation: Removal of Child Abuse and Neglect Prevention and Treatment Act Implementing Regulations'' (45 CFR Part 1340) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 31, 2015; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC–1202. A communication from the Assistant Secretary for Legislation, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled ''Fiscal Year (FY) 2014 Performance Report to Congress for the Medical Device User Fee Amendments of 2012''; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC–1203. A communication from the Division Chief of Regulatory Affairs, Bureau of Land Management, Department of the Interior, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Oil and Gas; Hydraulic Fracturing on Federal and Indian Lands'' (RIN1004–AE26) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 26, 2015; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

EC–1204. A communication from the Assistant General Counsel for Legislation, Regulation and Energy Efficiency, Department of Energy, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Acquisition Regulation: Technical and Administrative Changes to Department of Energy Acquisition Regulation'' (RIN1991–AC07) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 25, 2015; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

EC–1205. A communication from the Chief Human Capital Officer, Department of Energy, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to a vacancy in the position of Chief Financial Officer, Department of Energy, received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 2, 2015; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

EC–1206. A communication from the Chief Human Capital Officer, Department of Energy, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to a vacancy in the position of Director, Advanced Research Projects Agency Energy, Department of Energy, received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 2, 2015; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

EC–1207. A communication from the Chief Human Capital Officer, Department of Energy, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to a vacancy in the position of Under Secretary for Science, Department of Energy, received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 2, 2015; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

EC–1208. A communication from the Chief Human Capital Officer, Department of Energy, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to a vacancy in the position of Under Secretary of Energy, Department of Energy, received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 2, 2015; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

EC–1209. A communication from the Chief Human Capital Officer, Department of Energy, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to a vacancy in the position of Deputy Secretary, Department of Energy, received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 2, 2015; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

EC–1210. A communication from the Chief Human Capital Officer, Department of Energy, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to a vacancy in the position of Director of the Office of Science, Department of Energy, received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 2, 2015; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

EC–1211. A communication from the Chief Human Capital Officer, Department of Energy, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to a vacancy in the position of Assistant Secretary for Policy and International Affairs, Department of Energy, received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 2, 2015; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

EC–1212. A communication from the Chief Human Capital Officer, Department of Energy, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to a vacancy in the position of Principal Deputy Administrator, National Nuclear Security Administration, Department of Energy, received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 2, 2015; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

EC–1213. A communication from the Chief Human Capital Officer, Department of Energy, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to a vacancy in the position of Under Secretary for Nuclear Security, National Nuclear Security Administration, Department of Energy, received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 2, 2015; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources .

EC–1214. A communication from the Chief Human Capital Officer, Department of Energy, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to a vacancy in the position of Assistant Secretary of Energy (Fossil Energy), Department of Energy, received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 2, 2015; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

EC–1215. A communication from the Chief Human Capital Officer, Department of Energy, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to a vacancy in the position of General Counsel, Department of Energy, received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 2, 2015; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

EC–1216. A communication from the Chief Human Capital Officer, Department of Energy, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to a vacancy in the position of Assistant Secretary of Energy (Environmental Management), Department of Energy, received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 2, 2015; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

EC–1217. A communication from the General Counsel, Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Demand and Energy Data Reliability Standard'' (RIN1902–0261) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 9, 2015; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

EC–1218. A communication from the Deputy Assistant Administrator for Regulatory Programs, National Marine Fisheries Service, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''2015 Annual Determination to Implement the Sea Turtle Observer Requirement'' (RIN0648–BE35) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 8, 2015; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–1219. A communication from the Chief of the Listing Branch, Fish and Wildlife Service, Department of the Interior, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Endangered and Threatened Wildlife and Plants; Threatened Species Status for the Northern Long-eared Bat with 4(d) Rule'' (RIN1018–BY98) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 8, 2015; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–1220. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''National Oil and Hazardous Substances Pollution Contingency Plan (NCP); Amending the NCP for Public Notices for Specified Superfund Activities'' ((RIN2050–AG76) (FRL No. 9924–66–OSWER)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 27, 2015; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–1221. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Determination of Attainment of the 1-Hour Ozone National Ambient Air Quality Standard in the Southeast Desert Nonattainment Area in California'' (FRL No. 9925–32–Region 9) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 27, 2015; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–1222. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Regulation of Fuels and Fuel Additives: Cellulosic Waiver Credit Price and Minor Amendments to Renewable Fuel Standard Regulations'' ((RIN2060–AS48) (FRL No. 9924–71–OAR)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 27, 2015; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–1223. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Approval of Tribal Implementation Plan and Designation of Air Quality Planning Area; Pechanga Band of Luiseno Mission Indians'' (FRL No. 9924–45–Region 9) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 27, 2015; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–1224. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Approval and Promulgation of Implementation Plans; Texas; Public Participation for Air Quality Permit Applications'' (FRL No. 9925–19–Region 6) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 27, 2015; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–1225. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Approval and Promulgation of Implementation Plans; State of Missouri, Control of Sulfur Emissions from Stationary Boilers'' (FRL No. 9925–24–Region 7) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 27, 2015; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–1226. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Approval and Promulgation of Implementation Plans; State of Iowa; 2014 Iowa State Implementation Plan; Permit Modifications; Muscatine, Iowa'' (FRL No. 9925–60–Region 7) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 27, 2015; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–1227. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Approval and Promulgation of Implementation Plans; Alabama; Infrastructure Requirements for the 2008 8-Hour Ozone National Ambient Air Quality Standards'' (FRL No. 9925–53–Region 4) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 27, 2015; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–1228. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Approval and Promulgation of Federal Implementation Plan for Oil and Natural Gas Well Production Facilities; Fort Bethold Indian Reservation (Mandan, Hidatsa, and Arikara Nation), North Dakota; Correction'' (FRL No. 9923–70–Region 8) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 27, 2015; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–1229. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Approval and Promulgation of Air Quality Implementation Plans; Virginia; State Boards Requirements; Infrastructure Requirements for the 2008 Lead and Ozone and 2010 Nitrogen Dioxide and Sulfur Dioxide National Ambient Air Quality Standards'' (FRL No. 9925–46–Region 3) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 27, 2015; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–1230. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Approval and Promulgation of Air Quality Implementation Plans; State of Montana Second 10-Year Carbon Monoxide Maintenance Plan for Great Falls'' (FRL No. 9925–50–Region 8) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 27, 2015; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–1231. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Approval and Promulgation of Air Quality Implementation Plans; State of Montana Second 10-Year Carbon Monoxide Maintenance Plan for Billings'' (FRL No. 9925–51–Region 8) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 27, 2015; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–1232. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Approval and Promulgation of Air Quality Implementation Plans; Pennsylvania; Revision to Allegheny County Rules; Preconstruction Permit Requirements—Nonattainment New Source Review'' (FRL No. 9922–77–Region 3) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 27, 2015; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–1233. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Approval and Promulgation of Air Quality Implementation Plans; Idaho; Update to Materials Incorporated by Reference'' (FRL No. 9925–65–Region 10) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 27, 2015; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–1234. A communication from the Director of Congressional Affairs, Nuclear Regulatory Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Applications of Bioassay for Radioiodine'' (Regulatory Guide 8.20, Revision 2) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 24, 2015; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–1235. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Withdrawal of Partial Exemption for Certain Chemical Substances'' ((RIN2070–AK01) (FRL No. 9924–84)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 24, 2015; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–1236. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''TENNESSEE: Final Authorization of State Hazardous Waste Management Program Revisions'' (FRL No. 9924–83–Region 4) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 24, 2015; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–1237. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Revisions to the California State Implementation Plan, Placer County Air Pollution Control District and the Ventura County Air Pollution Control District'' (FRL No. 9924–73–Region 9) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 24, 2015; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–1238. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''National Priorities List'' (FRL No. 9924–32–OSWER) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 24, 2015; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–1239. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Approval, Disapproval, and Limited Approval and Disapproval of Air Quality Implementation Plans; California; Monterey Bay Unified Air Pollution Control District; Stationary Source Permits'' (FRL No. 9924–49–Region 9) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 24, 2015; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–1240. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Approval and Promulgation of Implementation Plans; Texas; Reasonably Available Control Technology for the 1997 8-Hour Ozone National Ambient Air Quality Standard'' (FRL No. 9925–13–Region 6) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 24, 2015; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–1241. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Approval and Promulgation of Implementation Plans; Pennsylvania; Plan Approval and Operating Permit Fees'' (FRL No. 9925–17–Region 3) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 24, 2015; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–1242. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Approval and Promulgation of Air Quality Implementation Plans; New Mexico; Albuquerque/Bernalillo County; Revisions to Emission Inventory Requirements, and General Provisions'' (FRL No. 9925–11–Region 6) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 24, 2015; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–1243. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''State of Washington Underground Injection Control (UIC) Program Revision Approval'' (FRL No. 9924–94–OW) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 1, 2015; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–1244. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''State of Tennessee Underground Injection Control (UIC) Program; Primacy Approval'' (FRL No. 9924–92–OW) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 1, 2015; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–1245. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Protection of Stratospheric Ozone: Listing of Substitutes for Refrigeration and Air Conditioning and Revision of the Venting Prohibition for Certain Refrigerant Substitutes'' ((RIN2060–AS04) (FRL No. 9922–26–OAR)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 1, 2015; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–1246. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''National Oil and Hazardous Substances Pollution Contingency Plan National Priorities List'' (FRL No. 9925–52–Region 8) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 1, 2015; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–1247. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Designation of Areas for Air Quality Planning Purposes; California; San Joaquin Valley; Reclassification as Serious Nonattainment for the 1997 PM2.5 Standards'' (FRL No. 9925–30–Region 9) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 1, 2015; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–1248. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Approval and Promulgation of Implementation Plans; Idaho'' (FRL No. 9925–77–Region 10) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 1, 2015; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–1249. A communication from the Assistant Attorney General, Office of Legislative Affairs, Department of Justice, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Department of Justice's 2014 Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) Litigation and Compliance Report; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

EC–1250. A communication from the Assistant Secretary, Office of Legislative Affairs, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled ''Report on Adjustments of Status Granted Under Section 13 of the Act of September 11, 1957''; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

EC–1251. A communication from the Assistant Secretary, Office of Legislative Affairs, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled ''Report on Adjustments of Status Granted Under Section 13 of the Act of September 11, 1957''; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

EC–1252. A communication from the Assistant Secretary, Office of Legislative Affairs, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled ''Characteristics of H–1B Specialty Occupation Workers''; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

EC–1253. A communication from the Assistant Secretary, Office of Legislative Affairs, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled ''Report on Adjustments of Status Granted Under Section 13 of the Act of September 11, 1957''; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

EC–1254. A communication from the Assistant Secretary, Office of Legislative Affairs, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled ''Detainees Not Seeking Asylum''; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

EC–1255. A communication from the Assistant Secretary, Office of Legislative Affairs, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled ''Report on Adjustments of Status Granted Under Section 13 of the Act of September 11, 1957''; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

EC–1256. A communication from the Assistant Secretary, Office of Legislative Affairs, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled ''H–2B Nonagricultural Temporary Worker Visa and Status''; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

EC–1257. A communication from the Director, Administrative Office of the United States Courts, transmitting, pursuant to law, an annual report on crime victims' rights; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

EC–1258. A communication from the Chief of the Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Allocation of Controlled Group Research Credit'' ((RIN1545–BL77) (TD 9717)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 10, 2015; to the Committee on Finance.

EC–1259. A communication from the Chief of the Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Employee Plans Compliance Resolution System Update Relating to Plans with Automatic Contribution Features'' (Rev. Proc. 2015–28) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 10, 2015; to the Committee on Finance.

EC–1260. A communication from the Chief of the Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Update of Weighted Average Interest Rates, Yield Curves, and Segment Rates'' (Notice 2015–24) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 27, 2015; to the Committee on Finance.

EC–1261. A communication from the Chief of the Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Treasury Decision (TD): Amendments to Excepted Benefits'' ((RIN1545–BM44) (TD 9714)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 27, 2015; to the Committee on Finance.

EC–1262. A communication from the Chief of the Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Applicable Federal Rates—April 2015'' (Rev. Rul. 2015–7) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 27, 2015; to the Committee on Finance.

EC–1263. A communication from the Chief of the Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Revenue Procedure: United States and Area Median Gross Income Figures'' (Rev. Proc. 2015–23) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 27, 2015; to the Committee on Finance.

EC–1264. A communication from the Secretary of Transportation, transmitting the report of proposed legislation entitled ''Generating Renewal, Opportunity, and Work with Accelerated Mobility, Efficiency, and Rebuilding of Infrastructure and Communities throughout America Act'' or the ''GROW AMERICA Act''; to the Committee on Finance.

EC–1265. A communication from the Executive Analyst (Political), Office of the Secretary, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to a vacancy in the position of Administrator, Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, Department of Health and Human Services, received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 31, 2015; to the Committee on Finance.

EC–1266. A communication from the Chief of the Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Corrections to Rev. Proc. 2014–59'' (Rev. Proc. 2015–24) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 10, 2015; to the Committee on Finance.

EC–1267. A communication from the Chief of the Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Section 911(d)(4)—2014 Update'' (Rev. Proc. 2015–25) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 27, 2015; to the Committee on Finance.

EC–1268. A communication from the Director, Office of Economic Impact and Diversity, Department of Energy, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Department's fiscal year 2014 report relative to the Notification and Federal Employee Antidiscrimination and Retaliation Act of 2002 (No FEAR Act); to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–1269. A communication from the Secretary of the Federal Trade Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Commission's fiscal year 2014 annual report relative to the Notification and Federal Employee Antidiscrimination and Retaliation Act of 2002; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–1270. A communication from the District of Columbia Auditor, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled ''District of Columbia Agencies' Compliance with Fiscal Year 2014 Small Business Enterprise Expenditure Goals''; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–1271. A communication from the Senior Procurement Executive, Office of Acquisition Policy, General Services Administration, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Federal Acquisition Regulation; Federal Acquisition Circular 2005–81; Introduction'' (FAC 2005–81) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 8, 2015; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–1272. A communication from the Chief Judge, Superior Court of the District of Columbia, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to the District of Columbia Family Court Act; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–1273. A communication from the Director, Employee Services, Office of Personnel Management, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Prevailing Rate Systems; Abolishment of the Portland, ME, Appropriated Fund Federal Wage System Wage Area'' (RIN3206–AN11) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 31, 2015; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–1274. A communication from the Chairman of the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Commission's fiscal year 2014 annual report relative to the Notification and Federal Employee Antidiscrimination and Retaliation Act of 2002; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–1275. A communication from the Director, Office of Economic Impact and Diversity, Department of Energy, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Department's fiscal year 2014 report relative to the Notification and Federal Employee Antidiscrimination and Retaliation Act of 2002 (No FEAR Act); to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–1276. A communication from the Director of the Peace Corps, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Peace Corps' fiscal year 2014 annual report relative to the Notification and Federal Employee Antidiscrimination

and Retaliation Act of 2002; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–1277. A communication from the Director, Government Publishing Office, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Office's Annual Report for fiscal year 2014; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–1278. A communication from the District of Columbia Auditor, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled ''Oversight Improvements Must Continue to Ensure Accountability in Use of Public Funds by D.C. Public Charter Schools''; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–1279. A communication from the Secretary to the Board, Railroad Retirement Board, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Railroad Retirement Board's fiscal year 2014 annual report relative to the Notification and Federal Employee Antidiscrimination and Retaliation Act of 2002 (No FEAR Act); to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–1280. A communication from the General Counsel, Government Accountability Office, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Office's fiscal year 2014 annual report relative to the Notification and Federal Employee Antidiscrimination and Retaliation Act of 2002 (No FEAR Act); to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–1281. A communication from the Secretary of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Department of Transportation's fiscal year 2014 annual report relative to the Notification and Federal Employee Antidiscrimination and Retaliation Act of 2002 (No FEAR Act); to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–1282. A communication from the Chairman, Dwight D. Eisenhower Memorial Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to the memorial construction; to the Committee on Rules and Administration.

EC–1283. A communication from the Under Secretary of Defense (Personnel and Readiness), transmitting a report relative to the Federal Voting Assistance Program's (FVAP) Annual Report to Congress; to the Committee on Rules and Administration.

EC–1284. A communication from the Chief of the Regulation Policy, Tracking, and Control Office of the General Counsel, Veterans Health Administration, Department of Veterans Affairs, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Reimbursement for Caskets and Urns for Burial of Unclaimed Remains in a National Cemetery'' (RIN2900–AO99) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 10, 2015; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

The following reports of committees were submitted:

By Mr. BURR, from the Select Committee on Intelligence:

Report to accompany S. 754, An original bill to improve cybersecurity in the United States through enhanced sharing of information about cybersecurity threats, and for other purposes (Rept. No. 114–32).

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. SHAHEEN:

S. 940. A bill to require the Secretary of the Treasury to study the feasibility of providing certain taxpayers with an optional, pre-prepared tax return, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. PORTMAN:

S. 941. A bill to provide for the termination of employment of employees of the Internal Revenue Service who take certain official actions for political purposes; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. PORTMAN:

S. 942. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to provide a deduction from the gift tax for gifts made to certain exempt organizations; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. PORTMAN:

S. 943. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to clarify that a duty of the Commissioner of Internal Revenue is to ensure that Internal Revenue Service employees are familiar with and act in accord with certain taxpayer rights; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mrs. BOXER (for herself, Mr. SANDERS, and Mr. MARKEY):

S. 944. A bill to amend the Atomic Energy Act of 1954 to prohibit certain waivers and exemptions from emergency preparedness and response and security regulations; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

By Mr. MARKEY (for himself, Mrs. BOXER, and Mr. SANDERS):

S. 945. A bill to amend the Nuclear Waste Policy Act of 1982 to provide for the expansion of emergency planning zones and the development of plans for dry cask storage of spent nuclear fuel, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

By Mr. KIRK (for himself and Mr. MENENDEZ):

S. 946. A bill to amend title 49, United States Code, to prohibit the transportation of horses in interstate transportation in a motor vehicle containing 2 or more levels stacked on top of one another; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

By Mr. INHOFE:

S. 947. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend the depreciation rules for property used predominantly within an Indian reservation; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. INHOFE:

S. 948. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to eliminate the taxable income limit on percentage depletion for oil and natural gas produced from marginal properties; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. CORNYN (for himself, Mr. HELLER, and Mr. ROBERTS):

S. 949. A bill to provide a taxpayer bill of rights for small businesses; to the Committee on Finance.

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

S. 950. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to provide for a refundable adoption tax credit; to the Committee on Finance.

By Ms. AYOTTE:

S. 951. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to clarify that a duty of the Commissioner of Internal Revenue is to ensure that Internal Revenue Service employees are familiar with and act in accord with certain taxpayer rights; to the Committee on Finance.

By Ms. AYOTTE (for herself, Ms. CANTWELL, Mr. PORTMAN, Mr. BLUNT, Mr. MERKLEY, and Mrs. SHAHEEN):

S. 952. A bill to provide for duty-free treatment of certain recreational performance outerwear, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. HELLER (for himself and Mr. REID):

S. 953. A bill to facilitate certain pinyon-juniper related projects in Lincoln County, Nevada, to modify the boundaries of certain wilderness areas in the State of Nevada, and to provide for the implementation of a conservation plan for the Virgin River, Nevada; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

By Mr. MANCHIN (for himself, Mr. VITTER, Mrs. CAPITO, and Mr. KAINE):

S. 954. A bill to establish procedures regarding the approval of opioid drugs by the Food and Drug Administration; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Ms. HIRONO (for herself and Mr. SCHATZ):

S. 955. A bill for the relief of Vichai Sae Tung (also known as Chai Chaowasaree); to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Ms. HEITKAMP:

S. 956. A bill to clarify the collateral requirement for certain loans under section 7(d) of the Small Business Act, to address assistance to out-of-State small business concerns, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship.

By Mrs. SHAHEEN (for herself, Mr. KING, and Ms. CANTWELL):

S. 957. A bill to increase access to capital for veteran entrepreneurs to help create jobs; to the Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship.

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

S. 958. A bill to amend the Small Business Act to provide for team and joint venture offers for certain contracts; to the Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship.

By Ms. CANTWELL (for herself and Ms. COLLINS):

S. 959. A bill to establish a tax credit for on-site apprenticeship programs, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Finance.

By Ms. HIRONO:

S. 960. A bill to amend title II of the Social Security Act and the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to make improvements in the old-age, survivors, and disability insurance program, and to provide for Social Security benefit protection; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. CARPER (for himself and Mr. BLUNT):

S. 961. A bill to protect information relating to consumers, to require notice of security breaches, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

By Mr. REED (for himself, Ms. AYOTTE, Mr. LEAHY, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, and Mr. MARKEY):

S. 962. A bill to extend the same Federal benefits to law enforcement officers serving private institutions of higher education and rail carriers that apply to law enforcement officers serving units of State and local government; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Ms. HIRONO (for herself and Mr. COONS):

S. 963. A bill to require the Chief Counsel for Advocacy of the Small Business Administration to submit a report on small business innovation; to the Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship.

By Mr. SANDERS (for himself, Mrs. BOXER, and Mr. MARKEY):

S. 964. A bill to amend the Atomic Energy Act of 1954 to provide for consultation with State and local governments, the consideration of State and local concerns, and the

approval of post-shutdown decommissioning activities reports by the Nuclear Regulatory Commission; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

By Ms. COLLINS:

S. 965. A bill to prohibit the use of funds by Internal Revenue Service to target citizens of the United States for exercising any right guaranteed under the First Amendment to the Constitution of the United States; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mrs. SHAHEEN (for herself and Mr. ISAKSON):

S. 966. A bill to extend the low-interest refinancing provisions under the Local Development Business Loan Program of the Small Business Administration; to the Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship.

By Mrs. SHAHEEN:

S. 967. A bill to require the Small Business Administration to make information relating to lenders making covered loans publicly available, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship.

ADDITIONAL COSPONSORS

S. 125

At the request of Mr. LEAHY, the names of the Senator from Wisconsin (Ms. BALDWIN) and the Senator from North Dakota (Ms. HEITKAMP) were added as cosponsors of S. 125, a bill to amend title I of the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968 to extend the authorization of the Bulletproof Vest Partnership Grant Program through fiscal year 2020, and for other purposes.

S. 235

At the request of Mr. WYDEN, the name of the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. BLUMENTHAL) was added as a cosponsor of S. 235, a bill to provide for wildfire suppression operations, and for other purposes.

S. 299

At the request of Mr. FLAKE, the name of the Senator from Hawaii (Ms. HIRONO) was added as a cosponsor of S. 299, a bill to allow travel between the United States and Cuba.

S. 384

At the request of Mr. CRAPO, the name of the Senator from Idaho (Mr. RISCH) was added as a cosponsor of S. 384, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to facilitate water leasing and water transfers to promote conservation and efficiency.

S. 439

At the request of Mr. FRANKEN, the name of the Senator from Virginia (Mr. KAINE) was added as a cosponsor of S. 439, a bill to end discrimination based on actual or perceived sexual orientation or gender identity in public schools, and for other purposes.

S. 525

At the request of Mr. CORKER, the name of the Senator from New Hampshire (Mrs. SHAHEEN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 525, a bill to amend the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 (22 U.S.C. 2151 et seq.) to reform the Food for Peace Program, and for other purposes.

S. 539

At the request of Mr. CARDIN, the names of the Senator from Illinois (Mr. DURBIN) and the Senator from Iowa (Mr. GRASSLEY) 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. 590

At the request of Mrs. MCCASKILL, the name of the Senator from Delaware (Mr. COONS) was added as a cosponsor 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. 611

At the request of Mr. WICKER, the name of the Senator from Illinois (Mr. KIRK) was added as a cosponsor of S. 611, a bill to amend the Safe Drinking Water Act to reauthorize technical assistance to small public water systems, and for other purposes.

S. 615

At the request of Mr. CORKER, the names of the Senator from Oregon (Mr. WYDEN), the Senator from Michigan (Mr. PETERS) and the Senator from Mississippi (Mr. COCHRAN) were added as cosponsors 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 name of the Senator from California (Mrs. BOXER) was added as a cosponsor 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. 637

At the request of Mr. CRAPO, the names of the Senator from Kansas (Mr. ROBERTS) and the Senator from Idaho (Mr. RISCH) were added as cosponsors of S. 637, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to extend and modify the railroad track maintenance credit.

S. 713

At the request of Mrs. BOXER, the name of the Senator from Delaware (Mr. COONS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 713, a bill to prevent international violence against women, and for other purposes.

S. 725

At the request of Mrs. BOXER, the name of the Senator from Maryland (Ms. MIKULSKI) was added as a cosponsor of S. 725, a bill to amend the Toxic Substances Control Act, and for other purposes.

S. 729

At the request of Mr. DURBIN, the name of the Senator from Michigan (Ms. STABENOW) was added as a cosponsor of S. 729, a bill to amend title 11, United States Code, with respect to certain exceptions to discharge in bankruptcy.

S. 743

At the request of Mr. BOOKER, the names of the Senator from Mississippi (Mr. COCHRAN) and the Senator from Kansas (Mr. ROBERTS) were added as cosponsors of S. 743, a bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to recognize the service in the reserve components of the Armed Forces of certain persons by honoring them with status as veterans under law, and for other purposes.

S. 751

At the request of Mr. THUNE, the name of the Senator from Kansas (Mr. ROBERTS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 751, a bill to improve the establishment of any lower ground-level ozone standards, and for other purposes.

S. 757

At the request of Mr. NELSON, the name of the Senator from Florida (Mr. RUBIO) was added as a cosponsor of S. 757, a bill to modify the prohibition on recognition by United States courts of certain rights relating to certain marks, trade names, or commercial names.

S. 774

At the request of Mr. MORAN, the name of the Senator from Nevada (Mr. HELLER) was added as a cosponsor 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. 804

At the request of Mrs. SHAHEEN, the name of the Senator from New Mexico (Mr. HEINRICH) was added as a cosponsor of 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.

S. 812

At the request of Mr. MORAN, the names of the Senator from Illinois (Mr. KIRK) and the Senator from Nevada (Mr. HELLER) were added as cosponsors of 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.

S. 843

At the request of Mr. BROWN, the name of the Senator from Massachusetts (Ms. WARREN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 843, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to count a period of receipt of outpatient observation services in a hospital toward satisfying the 3-day inpatient hospital requirement for coverage of skilled nursing facility services under Medicare.

S. 860

At the request of Mr. THUNE, the names of the Senator from Arkansas (Mr. BOOZMAN) and the Senator from Mississippi (Mr. WICKER) were added as cosponsors of S. 860, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to repeal the estate and generation-skipping transfer taxes, and for other purposes.

S. 867

At the request of Mr. MERKLEY, the name of the Senator from New Hampshire (Mrs. SHAHEEN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 867, a bill to improve student academic achievement in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics subjects.

S. 901

At the request of Mr. MORAN, the name of the Senator from Montana (Mr. TESTER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 901, a bill to establish in the Department of Veterans Affairs a national center for research on the diagnosis and treatment of health conditions of the descendants of veterans exposed to toxic substances during service in the Armed Forces that are related to that exposure, to establish an advisory board on such health conditions, and for other purposes.

S. 933

At the request of Mr. ALEXANDER, the name of the Senator from South Dakota (Mr. THUNE) was added as a cosponsor of S. 933, a bill to amend the National Labor Relations Act with respect to the timing of elections and pre-election hearings and the identification of pre-election issues, and to require that lists of employees eligible to vote in organizing elections be provided to the National Labor Relations Board.

S. RES. 116

At the request of Mr. GRAHAM, the name of the Senator from California (Mrs. FEINSTEIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. Res. 116, a resolution providing for free and fair elections in Burma.

STATEMENTS ON INTRODUCED BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

By Ms. CANTWELL (for herself and Ms. COLLINS):

S. 959. A bill to establish a tax credit for on-site apprenticeship programs, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Finance.

Ms. COLLINS. Mr. President, I wish to speak in support of the Apprenticeship and Jobs Training Act, which I have introduced with my colleague Senator CANTWELL. Few issues are as important to the American people as the availability of good jobs in our communities. Unemployment in Maine and across the country remains unacceptably high. It is crucial that we continue to improve job training initiatives to help people find jobs in fields with open positions.

Many business owners in Maine have told me that they have jobs available, but they cannot find qualified and trained workers to fill these vacant positions. One way for employees to acquire the skills needed to succeed in these in-demand fields is through apprenticeship programs. Apprentices gain hands-on experience that is invaluable to employers and can help workers secure a well-paying job.

According to the Department of Labor's Employment and Training Administration, more than 44,000 participants graduated from the apprenticeship system in fiscal year 2014. In Maine, there were almost 700 registered apprentices. That number, however, is likely insufficient to meet tomorrow's needs. One manufacturer in Maine estimates that nearly 2.7 million manufacturing employees are expected to retire in the next decade. We must do all we can to ensure that an adequate pool of skilled workers is available to fill these well-paying jobs.

Our bill helps achieve this goal by giving tax credits to businesses that hire apprentices. To ensure that workers are given adequate time to prove their value, the apprentice must be employed for seven months in order for a business to claim the credit. Our bill also provides incentives for experienced workers who spend at least 20 percent of their time passing their hard-earned knowledge on to the next generation. These workers would be allowed to receive some retirement income early, without facing tax penalties. Finally, our bill ensures that the brave men and women who defend our country are given credit for the skills they learn while serving. Training received while serving in the Armed Forces would count toward an apprentice's training requirement.

This bill would help better align the needs of our Nation's employers with potential employees to promote hiring and the creation of new jobs. I encourage all my colleagues to support this bill, and I am pleased to join Senator CANTWELL in introducing it.

By Mr. REED (for himself, Ms. AYOTTE, Mr. LEAHY, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, and Mr. MARKEY):

S. 962. A bill to extend the same Federal benefits to law enforcement officers serving private institutions of higher education and rail carriers that apply to law enforcement officers serving units of State and local government; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

Mr. REED. Mr. President, today I am reintroducing the Equity in Law Enforcement Act to extend Federal benefits to law enforcement officers who serve at private institutions of higher education and rail carriers. Through this legislation, these individuals would be eligible for many of the same benefits provided to public law enforcement officers, including line-of-duty death benefits and access to federal grant opportunities through the Department of Justice's Bulletproof Vest Partnership Grant and Byrne Justice Assistance Grant, JAG, programs.

In 1976, the Public Safety Officers' Benefits PSOB program was enacted to aid in the recruitment and retention of public safety officers. Recognizing the danger that law enforcement officers, firefighters, and first responders face while serving in our communities, the PSOB provides a one-time financial benefit to survivors of officers who die as a result of injuries sustained in the line of duty.

Although the officers protecting our private universities and railways face the same risks, they are currently not included in the PSOB program These brave individuals protect our communities every day, enforce the law within their jurisdiction, and receive similar training to their government counterparts. However, they are currently excluded from the line-of-duty federal death benefits available to law enforcement officers serving units of State and local governments, and from access to federal grant programs for protective body armor and other equipment.

Since 1960, approximately 35 college or university law enforcement officers have lost their lives while protecting our communities. While some families of officers that have been gravely injured while serving at public universities have received PSOB line-of-duty death benefits, the families of those who lost their lives while serving at private institutions have been ineligible. We should fix this inequity.

Inscribed on the National Law Enforcement Officers Memorial are the names of the heroes who gave their full measure while protecting our communities. This memorial includes Patrol Officer Joseph Francis Doyle, who was killed in the line of duty at Brown University in 1988, as well as the other officers who died while working at private universities and colleges and on our railways.

A recent name on the Memorial is Patrol Officer Sean Collier. Today, we mark the second anniversary of the Boston Marathon bombings, an act of terror that tragically killed three and injured hundreds of others. Three days after the bombings, during the manhunt for the attackers, Officer Collier of the MIT Police Department was shot and killed by the perpetrators on the university's campus. Officer Collier died while not only bravely serving the students and faculty of MIT. He was also serving the city of Boston, working with others in the law enforcement community during an exceptionally difficult time to keep the city and our nation safe. However, since he was employed by a private university, Officer Collier was not eligible for line-of-duty death benefits. To honor Officer Collier's service and sacrifice, this bill would be retroactive to April 15, 2013, the day of the Boston bombings.

I am pleased that Senators AYOTTE, LEAHY, WHITEHOUSE, and MARKEY have once again joined me in introducing this legislation, which would ensure that officers who have lost their lives protecting our communities and their families are eligible for the benefits associated with law enforcement work as well as access to the protective equipment they need. The bill would only apply to officers who are sworn, licensed, or certified to enforce the law within their jurisdiction, and is supported by the International Association of Campus Law Enforcement Administrators.

I urge our colleagues to join us in cosponsoring and passing the Equity in Law Enforcement Act.

By Ms. COLLINS:

S. 965. A bill to prohibit the use of funds by Internal Revenue Service to target citizens of the United States for exercising any right guaranteed under the First Amendment to the Constitution of the United States; to the Committee on Finance.

Ms. COLLINS. Mr. President, I rise to introduce a bill that would prohibit the IRS from the targeting any U.S. citizens for exercising their constitutional rights under the First Amendment.

The history of the IRS offers abundant examples of the Agency trampling on these rights. In the most recent controversy, which came to light in 2013, the IRS applied a heightened scrutiny to applications from conservative groups that were seeking tax-exempt status. Delaying these groups' applications suggests an attempt to chill the constitutional right of speech and association by groups that hold conservative views. No matter what your political views, the details that have emerged are truly alarming. The IRS admitted that it deliberately targeted conservative groups' applications for tax-exempt status for extra review if they included such words as ''tea party,'' ''patriots,'' or ''9/11'' in their names. It also acknowledged targeting applications from groups that criticized how this country is being run or whose purpose was to address government spending, government debt, taxes, or simply to make America a better place. These inappropriate criteria stayed in place for more than 18 months and resulted in substantial delays in processing the applications of many different groups. In some cases, the applications remained outstanding for more than 2 years.

The IRS also sought to compel some of the targeted groups to divulge their membership lists. IRS officials have subsequently admitted there was absolutely no reason for Agency personnel to have sought that kind of information.

Such behavior, unfortunately, is not a one-time aberration, and the targets have been on both sides of the aisle. A May 2013 Time magazine article noted that the IRS has been involved in scandals going back at least as far as the Kennedy administration, which used the service to investigate so-called rightwing groups. President Nixon employed a secret IRS operation to investigate and audit political opponents. During the Johnson administration, the IRS targeted some antiwar activists. In the decades since, a number of political activists from both the conservative and liberal ends of the spectrum, as well as whistleblowers, have been subjected to intimidating and discriminatory scrutiny by the IRS.

The IRS's history of abuses demonstrates that Congress must be ever-vigilant in protecting taxpayers. The Agency's power allows it to pervade the most sensitive aspects of Americans' private lives. Irrespective of whether those singled out are liberal or conservative, Democrat or Republican, Independent or Green Party members, regardless of their personal views, the targeting of private citizens for exercising their First Amendment rights is out of bounds and cannot be tolerated.

Seventeen years ago, when the IRS was accused of using abusive tactics towards taxpayers, Congress responded by passing the IRS Restructuring and Reform Act. That act created the Taxpayer Bill of Rights, strengthened taxpayer protections against unauthorized collection activities, and established an oversight board to ensure that taxpayers are properly treated by the IRS.

The bill I am introducing today builds on the 1998 act, as well as an amendment I authored in 2013, which became law, that prohibited the IRS from using funds provided through the fiscal year 2014 IRS funding bill to target American citizens for exercising their First Amendment rights. That prohibition on the use of funds was continued in the fiscal year 2015 funding bill, and the legislation I am offering today would make that prohibition permanent.

The First Amendment is one of our most cherished and sacred freedoms, and its free exercise must be vigorously protected.

It has been said the power to tax is the power to destroy. The American people cannot and will not tolerate any abuse of that power.

It is imperative that Congress act to make sure the power of the IRS is never again used to harass or abuse Americans for exercising their First Amendment rights. The bill I have introduced is tailored to that end. I urge my colleagues to support this bill.

AUTHORITY FOR COMMITTEES TO MEET

COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENT AND PUBLIC WORKS

Mr. ENZI. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Environment and Public Works be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on April 15, 2015, at 10 a.m., in room SD–406 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building, to conduct a hearing entitled ''Oversight Hearing: The President's FY 2016 Budget Request for Nuclear Regulatory Commission.''

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

COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS

Mr. ENZI. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Foreign Relations be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on April 15, 2015, at 9:30 a.m., to conduct a hearing entitled ''American Food Aid: Why Reform Matters.''

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

COMMITTEE ON HEALTH, EDUCATION, LABOR, AND PENSIONS

Mr. ENZI. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on April 15, 2015, at 10 a.m., in room SD–106 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building.

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

COMMITTEE ON HOMELAND SECURITY AND GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS

Mr. ENZI. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on April 15, 2015, at 10 a.m., to conduct a hearing entitled ''IRS Challenges in Implementing the Affordable Care Act.''

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

COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY

Mr. ENZI. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on the Judiciary be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on April 15, 2015, at 10 a.m., in room SD–226 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building, to conduct a hearing entitled ''The Need to Reform Asset Forfeiture.''

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

SELECT COMMITTEE ON INTELLIGENCE

Mr. ENZI. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Select Committee on Intelligence be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on April 15, 2015, at 2:45 p.m.

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

SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON AGING

Mr. ENZI. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Special Committee on Aging be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on April 15, 2015, at 1:30 p.m., in room SD–562 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building, to conduct a hearing entitled ''Catch Me If You Can: The IRS Impersonation Scam and the Government's Response.''

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

SUBCOMMITTEE ON SEAPOWER

Mr. ENZI. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Subcommittee on Seapower of the Committee on Armed Services be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on April 15, 2015, at 9:30 a.m.

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

SUBCOMMITTEE ON STRATEGIC FORCES

Mr. ENZI. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Subcommittee on Strategic Forces of the Committee on Armed Services be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on April 15, 2015, at 2:30 p.m.

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

UNANIMOUS CONSENT AGREEMENT—EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. ENZI. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed

to executive session at 2 p.m., on Thursday, April 16, to consider the following nominations: Calendar No. 1 and Calendar No. 51; that the Senate then vote without intervening action or debate on the nominations, the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table; that no further motions be in order; that any statements related to the nominations be printed in the RECORD; that the President be immediately notified of the Senate's actions, and the Senate then resume legislative session.

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

ORDERS FOR THURSDAY, APRIL 16, 2015

Mr. ENZI. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that when the Senate completes its business today, it adjourn until 10 a.m., Thursday, April 16; 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 then resume consideration of S. 178, with the time until 11 a.m. divided in the usual form; and finally that the filing deadline for all second-degree amendments to the Cornyn amendment be at 10:30 a.m.

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

ADJOURNMENT UNTIL 10 A.M. TOMORROW

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

There being no objection, the Senate, at 7:34 p.m., adjourned until Thursday, April 16, 2015, at 10 a.m.

NOMINATIONS

Executive nominations received by the Senate:

DEPARTMENT OF THE TREASURY

LINDA STRUYK MILLSAPS, OF NORTH CAROLINA, TO BE A MEMBER OF THE INTERNAL REVENUE SERVICE OVERSIGHT BOARD FOR A TERM EXPIRING SEPTEMBER 14, 2018, VICE PAUL JONES, TERM EXPIRED.

NATIONAL FOUNDATION ON THE ARTS AND THE HUMANITIES

THOMAS EDGAR ROTHMAN, OF MARYLAND, TO BE A MEMBER OF THE NATIONAL COUNCIL ON THE ARTS FOR A TERM EXPIRING SEPTEMBER 3, 2016. (NEW POSITION)

THE JUDICIARY

WILHELMINA MARIE WRIGHT, OF MINNESOTA, TO BE UNITED STATES DISTRICT JUDGE FOR THE DISTRICT OF MINNESOTA, VICE MICHAEL J. DAVIS, RETIRING.

FOREIGN SERVICE

THE FOLLOWING-NAMED PERSONS OF THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE TO BE CONSULAR OFFICERS AND SECRETARIES IN THE DIPLOMATIC SERVICE OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA:

PETER J. OLSON, OF MARYLAND
BENJAMIN I. PETLOCK, OF FLORIDA
NICOLAS RUBIO, OF FLORIDA

THE FOLLOWING-NAMED PERSONS OF THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE FOR APPOINTMENT AS FOREIGN SERVICE OFFICERS OF THE CLASSES STATED.

FOR APPOINTMENT AS FOREIGN SERVICE OFFICER OF CLASS ONE, CONSULAR OFFICER AND SECRETARY IN THE DIPLOMATIC SERVICE OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA:

CRAIG A. ANDERSON, OF WASHINGTON

FOR APPOINTMENT AS FOREIGN SERVICE OFFICER OF CLASS TWO, CONSULAR OFFICER AND SECRETARY IN THE DIPLOMATIC SERVICE OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA:

MIKE OKAMURA, OF VIRGINIA
PETER O'MEARA EVANS, OF VIRGINIA
MARCUS A. MCCHRISTIAN, OF VIRGINIA
ERIC JAMES MENDENHALL, OF VIRGINIA

FOR APPOINTMENT AS FOREIGN SERVICE OFFICER OF CLASS THREE, CONSULAR OFFICER AND SECRETARY IN THE DIPLOMATIC SERVICE OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA:

OMAR AHMED ALI, OF GEORGIA
KATHLEEN A. BRESNAHAN, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
ARLEEN GRACE R. GENUINO, OF CALIFORNIA
GABRIEL HONS-OLIVIER, OF FLORIDA
DIANE MARGARET KOHN, OF MICHIGAN
TRACEY R. THORNTON, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
JOSEPH W. A. VASQUEZ, OF ALASKA

FOR APPOINTMENT AS FOREIGN SERVICE OFFICER OF CLASS FOUR, CONSULAR OFFICER AND SECRETARY IN THE DIPLOMATIC SERVICE OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA:

FAREED A. ABDULLAH, OF GEORGIA
JAMES ROBERT ABESHAUS, OF FLORIDA
EMILY GRACE ABRAHAM, OF ILLINOIS
YVON ACCIUS, OF FLORIDA
JONATHAN DANIEL ADAMS, OF VIRGINIA
CASEY L. ADDIS, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
BOBBY (ROBERT) ADELSON, JR., OF FLORIDA
OMAR SYED AHMED, OF VIRGINIA
RACHEL A. AICHER, OF NEW YORK
CAROLINE A AMBERGER, OF FLORIDA
MATTHEW R. ANDRIS, OF NEW HAMPSHIRE
DAVID N. ARIZMENDI, OF FLORIDA
LAUREN BROOKS ARMENISE, OF MARYLAND
BRANDON C. BARON, OF FLORIDA
DEANNA KRISTINE BEARDEN, OF TEXAS
HARVEY LEWIS BEASLEY, JR., OF FLORIDA
ALISON L. BEHLING, OF WEST VIRGINIA
GEOFFREY N. BENELISHA, OF TENNESSEE
AARON S. BENESH, OF FLORIDA
ADAM RYDER BENZ, OF FLORIDA
SOMER BESSIRE-BRIERS, OF NEVADA
THOMAS DEE BEVAN, OF UTAH
RAIN CHE BIAN, OF NEW YORK
CORI BICKEL, OF GEORGIA
THOMAS M. BILLS, OF OHIO
IRMIE KEELER BLANTON III, OF FLORIDA
MATTHEW L. BLEVINS, OF COLORADO
CARLO WISE BOEHM, OF TEXAS
BENJIMAN C. BOHMAN, OF ARKANSAS
THOMAS CHARLES BOLLATI, OF FLORIDA
COREY BORDENKECHER, OF INDIANA
ADRIENNE C. BORY, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
JON BOWERMASTER, OF MICHIGAN
ERIN ELIZABETH BOYER, OF NORTH CAROLINA
ALEXIA MCNEAL BRANCH, OF CALIFORNIA
STEVEN ARTHUR CONNETT BREMNER, OF MISSOURI
M. ALLYN BROOKS-LASURE, OF VIRGINIA
THEODORE BROSIUS, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
THOMAS V.B. BROUNS, OF CALIFORNIA
ALISON SARAH BROWN, OF WASHINGTON
IAN T. BROWN, OF TEXAS
ANYA YAKHEDTS BRUNSON, OF FLORIDA
ZSOFIA BUDAI, OF MINNESOTA
CHRISTINE BUZZARD, OF OKLAHOMA
SARAH EMILY CALDEJON HAMILTON, OF TEXAS
JUAN MANUEL CAMMARANO, OF MARYLAND
JUAN CARLOS CAMPOS, OF FLORIDA
ALFRED JOHN CANIGLIA III, OF MISSOURI
AMELIA S. CANTER, OF TEXAS
CHRISTIAN HIRAM CARDONA, OF NEW YORK
ELLIOT ROSS CARMEAN, OF PENNSYLVANIA
DAVID RYAN CARR, OF OREGON
MELANIE ROSE CARTER, OF WASHINGTON
AMANDA J. CAULDWELL, OF CALIFORNIA
MICHAEL CAVEY, OF WISCONSIN
VICTORIA MORGANNE TYSZKA CEDENO, OF MICHIGAN
ANDREW CHAPMAN, OF NORTH CAROLINA
HOWARD H. CHYUNG, OF NEW YORK
EMILY KATHLEEN CINTORA, OF ARIZONA
BENJAMIN LEE COBURN, OF GEORGIA
WILLIAM BENJAMIN COCKS, OF FLORIDA
PAUL C. COLOMBINI, OF MARYLAND
PATRICK EVANS CONNALLY, OF WASHINGTON
JOSEPH G. CORDARO, OF TENNESSEE
SETH AARON CORNELL, OF PENNSYLVANIA
JOANNE ILENE COSSITT, OF CONNECTICUT
ROCCO COSTA, OF CALIFORNIA
LOGAN RISHARD COUNCIL, OF NORTH CAROLINA
GREGORY ROY COWAN, OF TEXAS
LISA MARGARET COWLEY, OF TEXAS
TODD WILSON ARDELL CRAWFORD, OF OREGON
ANDREW D. CROSSON, OF TENNESSEE
ROBERT J. CROTTY, OF WASHINGTON
EVA HELENE D'AMBROSIO, OF INDIANA
JACKSON C. DART, OF MICHIGAN
IRENE ARINO DE LA RUBIA, OF FLORIDA
CARRIE A. DENVER, OF VIRGINIA
JULIA SAMPSON DILLARD, OF CALIFORNIA
AMANDA WICKHAM DIXON, OF TENNESSEE
CHRISTOPHER J. DOSTAL, OF PENNSYLVANIA
RUTH LILLIAN DOWE, OF NEW YORK
MICHAEL JOSEPH DURNAN, OF FLORIDA
SHEILA-ANNE P. EBERT, OF NEVADA
JESSICA DAWN EICHER, OF COLORADO
DONYA SHANE ELDRIDGE, OF FLORIDA
BENJAMIN S. EMBURY, OF VIRGINIA
DONALD CLAYTON EMERICK, OF NEW HAMPSHIRE
RYAN SCOTT ENGEN, OF WASHINGTON
MARY CHRISTINE ERMEL, OF TEXAS
ANNA ESTRINA, OF VIRGINIA
JACQUES PAUL ETIENNE, OF NEW YORK
ALEXANDRA ELIZABETH EVANS, OF TEXAS
MONICA SAGEBIEL EWING, OF TEXAS
S. ADAM FERGUSON, OF UTAH
SAMUEL R. FERGUSON, OF UTAH
KEVIN CHRISTOPHER FISHER, OF UTAH
DOUGLAS GEORGE FOWLER, OF WYOMING
JASON O. FROHNMAYER, OF OREGON
KEVIN T. FUREY, OF MONTANA
MAIDA A. FURNIA, OF VIRGINIA
BRENDA B. GABRIEL, OF FLORIDA
SOPHIE YAN GAO, OF MASSACHUSETTS
MARC GARTNER, OF CALIFORNIA
PHILLIP M. GATINS, OF FLORIDA
JOSEPH P. GIBLIN, OF NEW YORK
DAMON MATTHEW GOFORTH, OF TEXAS
ARIEL M. GORE, OF ILLINOIS
NAIMA NILAJA MARIAMA GREEN, OF OHIO
ANDREW M. GRILLOS, OF CALIFORNIA
NATALYA IVANOVNA GROKH, OF VIRGINIA
GRETA L. GROMOVICH, OF KANSAS
SARAH REBECCA GROSSBLATT, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
CASSANDRA HAGAR, OF TEXAS
KRISTY L. HALLER, OF MARYLAND
JAMES W. HALLOCK, OF NEW YORK
JASON MATTHEW HAMMONTREE, OF CALIFORNIA
PAUL MICHAEL HANNA, OF FLORIDA
CHRISTINE L. HARPER, OF ALABAMA
VANESSA H. HARPER, OF CONNECTICUT
NOEL URBANO HARTLEY, OF TEXAS
HAKIM J. HASAN, OF OREGON
JOHN TRYGVE HAS-ELLISON, OF TEXAS
KRISTIN KARIN HAWKINS, OF VIRGINIA
ANNALIESE HEILIGENSTEIN, OF TEXAS
CHRISTOPHER D. HELMKAMP, OF VIRGINIA
CHARLES A. HENDRIX, OF MINNESOTA
JAMES M. HENRY, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
HEIDI HERSCHEDE, OF WISCONSIN
ZEHRA HIRJI, OF NEW YORK
JOHN OMAR HISHMEH, OF VIRGINIA
CHRISTIN HO, OF MASSACHUSETTS
KURT DANIEL HOLMGREN, OF VIRGINIA
DANIEL JOSEPH HORSFALL, OF TENNESSEE
BRIAN HOYT, OF CALIFORNIA
JULIA MAGDALENA HOZAKOWSKA, OF PENNSYLVANIA
TRAVIS A. HUNNICUTT, OF CALIFORNIA
SHARLINA HUSSAIN-MORGAN, OF NEW YORK
JASON S. HWANG, OF NEW JERSEY
THOMAS B. HWEI, OF CALIFORNIA
MEGAN R. IHRIE, OF TENNESSEE
GREG PARDO III, OF TEXAS
RYAN SCOTT INGRASSIA, OF CALIFORNIA
RYAN M. JANDA, OF MASSACHUSETTS
CYNTHIA L. JEFFERIES, OF TEXAS
JAMES WESLEY JEFFERS, OF WEST VIRGINIA
SAMANTHA ANN JENKINS, OF WASHINGTON
JEREMY R. JEWETT, OF WISCONSIN
CHRISTOPHER A. JONES, OF ILLINOIS
TODD HAROLD JUNGENBERG, OF TENNESSEE
ANDREA R. KALAN, OF TEXAS
IVAN FAIAMA KAMARA, OF ARIZONA
CHRISTOPHER A. KEELEY, OF UTAH
ANDREW E. KELLY, OF VIRGINIA
MATTHEW A. KELLY, OF NEW YORK
DEVIN JAMES KENNINGTON, OF MARYLAND
JOHN PAUL KILL, JR., OF GEORGIA
CRAIG P. KIM, OF WASHINGTON
MICHAEL KISELYCZNYK, OF NEW YORK
NOLAN S. KLEIN, OF TENNESSEE
JEFFREY KLICK, OF TEXAS
JOHN CHARLES KMETZ, OF OKLAHOMA
JOEL ERIK KNIGHT, OF NEW MEXICO
THOMAS D. KOHL, OF FLORIDA
DEREK R. KOLB, OF CALIFORNIA
DANIELLE KORSHAK, OF NEW YORK
LYNN CHUANG KRAMER, OF TEXAS
JINGPING LAI, OF CALIFORNIA
NATALIE BONJOC LEAHY, OF CALIFORNIA
ANDREW D. LEBKUECHER, OF MINNESOTA
STEPHEN F. LECOMPTE, OF TEXAS
CHUNG JOON LEE, OF CALIFORNIA
SONAM LIBERMAN, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
ELIZABETH SHIU-MING LIU, OF FLORIDA
EMMA CONDON LOMAX, OF MINNESOTA
BENJAMIN J. LOWENBERG, OF WISCONSIN
BONNIE M. MACE, OF IOWA
DANIELLE ANNE MANISCALCO, OF MASSACHUSETTS
RACHEL M. MARTINEZ, OF FLORIDA
THEODORE THOMAS MASSEY, OF VIRGINIA
ALEXANDER MAYER, OF TEXAS
MOLLY KATHERINE MAYFIELD BARBEE, OF FLORIDA
MATTHEW ROBERT MCALLISTER, OF PENNSYLVANIA
PATRICK CALEY MCCORMICK, OF TEXAS
DEBORAH M. MCFARLAND, OF ARIZONA
BRADLEY T. MCGUIRE, OF VIRGINIA
KERRY EVELYN MCINTOSH, OF VERMONT
DAVID DIXON MCKAY, OF UTAH
MAUREEN A. MCNICHOLL, OF VIRGINIA
THEODORE ANDREW MEINHOVER, OF MINNESOTA
MARC A.J. MELINO, OF WASHINGTON
MEGHAN E. MERCIER, OF FLORIDA
MEREDITH T. METZLER, OF TEXAS
ADAM L. MICHELOW, OF ARIZONA
KARL J. MILLER, OF FLORIDA
SCOTT M. MILLER, OF TEXAS
CATHERINE T. MILLER-LITTLE, OF TEXAS
MOLLY LYNN MITCHELL-OLDS, OF NORTH CAROLINA
YANG ZHANG MONTEIRO, OF FLORIDA
JAIME LYNETTE MOODY, OF LOUISIANA
KRISTINE MORRISSEY, OF MARYLAND
GRANT HANLEY MORROW, OF PENNSYLVANIA
KAITLIN D. MUENCH, OF CONNECTICUT
VINCENT M. MUT-TRACY, OF VERMONT
JULIE NAUMAN, OF FLORIDA
RAY PATRICE NAYLER, OF CALIFORNIA
BOBBIE S. NEAL, OF VIRGINIA

MARK L. NEIGHBORS, OF VIRGINIA
KEVIN D. NELSON, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
DANIEL WESLEY NEWMAN, OF NEW YORK
KRYSTLE WANITA ONIKE NORMAN, OF VIRGINIA
EMILY YASMIN NORRIS, OF MASSACHUSETTS
BRANDON RENE NUGENT, OF TENNESSEE
VAYRAM A. NYADROH, OF ILLINOIS
MARTIN N. OBERMUELLER, OF NEBRASKA
ALBERT FRANCISCO OFRECIO, OF CALIFORNIA
LARA A. O'NEILL, OF FLORIDA
MELISSA S. O'SHAUGHNESSY, OF FLORIDA
MARCIA Y. OUTLAW, OF ARIZONA
BENNY A. PADILLA, OF CALIFORNIA
DANIEL L. PALMQUIST, OF MINNESOTA
JACK PAN, OF NEVADA
CHARLES PARK, OF NEW YORK
CAROLYN JOY RATZLAFF PARKER, OF TENNESSEE
DIANA CHU PARTRIDGE, OF ARIZONA
STEPHEN PATRICK PAZAN, OF NEW JERSEY
DAVID D. PEMBERTON, OF INDIANA
MICHAEL PENNELL, OF TENNESSEE
DEAN R. PETERSON, OF NORTH CAROLINA
JESSICA BRIANNA PFLEIDERER, OF MINNESOTA
MARLENE HESS PHILLIPS, OF TEXAS
JEAN PHILLIPSON, OF VIRGINIA
JONATHAN PINOLI, OF FLORIDA
ALISANDE L. PIPKIN, OF NEW YORK
MICHAEL A. POINTER, OF LOUISIANA
MICHAEL JOHN POLYAK, OF MICHIGAN
KATHRYN STANSBURY PORCH, OF VIRGINIA
KIRK S. PORTMANN, OF WASHINGTON
CHRISTINE ANANDA PRINCE, OF CALIFORNIA
PAUL PROKOP, OF CALIFORNIA
SARAH R. QUINZIO, OF VIRGINIA
RENEE MICHELLE RAGIN, OF NEW YORK
HEIDI M. RAMSAY, OF VIRGINIA
JEFFREY R. RANDS, OF IDAHO
AJAY SHASHIKANT RAO, OF NEW MEXICO
KATHERINE REEDY, OF NEW YORK
CHRISTOPHER T. REYES, OF VIRGINIA
JOHN LUKE REYNOLDS, OF SOUTH CAROLINA
CHRISTOPHER M. RICHARDSON, OF SOUTH CAROLINA
ABIGAIL ELIZABETH RICHEY-ALLEN, OF MINNESOTA
ANNA ELIZABETH RICHEY-ALLEN, OF MINNESOTA
JEFFREY M. RIDENOUR, OF WASHINGTON
GLORIA P. RIGOR, OF VIRGINIA
BENJAMIN PATRICK RINAKER, OF NEBRASKA
NATHAN P. RINGGER, OF UTAH
DANIEL O'MALLEY RITTENHOUSE, OF NEW YORK
LASHANDA LELIA ROBERTS, OF MARYLAND
DAVID ANTHONY RODRIGUEZ, OF FLORIDA
SETH R. ROGERS, OF SOUTH CAROLINA
TANIA J. ROMANOFF, OF NEW HAMPSHIRE
HELEN VAN WAGONER ROSEMONT, OF VIRGINIA
ZACHARY R.S. ROTHSCHILD, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
LADONNA S. SALES, OF TENNESSEE
TODD BENSON SARGENT, OF VERMONT
RICHARD SAUNDERS, OF FLORIDA
TIMOTHY LINCOLN SAVAGE, OF CALIFORNIA
JOSEPH R. SCHALLER, OF WASHINGTON
ANDREW J. SCHEINESON, OF VIRGINIA
KATHRYN SCHLIEPER, OF WASHINGTON
SCOTT EVAN SCHLOSSBERG, OF CALIFORNIA
DEMARK F. SCHULZE, OF NEVADA
TAMARA L. SCOTT, OF MARYLAND
BRIAN A SELLS, OF OHIO
VIKRUM AARON SEQUEIRA, OF MASSACHUSETTS
ELIZABETH E. SHACKELFORD, OF MISSISSIPPI
SUJATA PRADEEP SHARMA, OF MASSACHUSETTS
ALEXANDER DANIEL PERRY SHARP, OF KANSAS
JEROME L. SHERMAN, OF NEW YORK
JASON MATHEW SHOW, OF TEXAS
JAMIE LEIGH SHUFFLEBARGER, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
JOHN THOMAS WOODRUFF SLOVER, OF COLORADO
CESAR GUILLERMO SORIANO, OF VIRGINIA
JUDITH CHRISTINE SPANBERGER, OF MINNESOTA
LANTA V. SPENCER, OF MASSACHUSETTS
MATTHEW RYAN STEELE, OF KANSAS
KRISTEN L. STOLT, OF VIRGINIA
BRIAN M. STRAIGHT, OF VIRGINIA
PAUL STRAUSS, OF CALIFORNIA
DANIEL STREBE, OF TEXAS
BRIAN J. STREET, OF FLORIDA
GEORGE JAMES SULLIVAN, OF NEW YORK
PAUL SWIDER, OF FLORIDA
MICHAEL CHARLES TAPLEY, OF TEXAS
ANOOD MEHMOOD TAQUI, OF CALIFORNIA
DENISE M. TAYLOR, OF PENNSYLVANIA
MORGAN C. TAYLOR, OF MONTANA
RONALD M. TAYLOR, OF VIRGINIA
DENIS TEST, OF MAINE
DARREN THIES, OF WISCONSIN
MARTIN K THOMEN IV, OF TEXAS
HEATHER JOY THOMPSON, OF NEW YORK
JAMES PORTER THROWER, OF FLORIDA
BRETT FORSTER THURMAN, OF ILLINOIS
MATTHEW A. TOTILO, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
JENNY GRAY TRAILLE, OF VIRGINIA
MATTHEW UPTON TRUMBULL, OF OHIO
EVELINE W. TSENG, OF NEW YORK
KAITLIN ELIZABETH TURCK, OF VIRGINIA
ERIN M. UZES, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
MAUREEN PATRICIA VAHEY, OF DELAWARE
JOHN S. VELA, OF VIRGINIA
WILBUR ARMEL VELARDE, OF CONNECTICUT
JOSHUA D. WAGGENER, OF TEXAS
KARIN S. WALLACE, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
MIMI WANG, OF PENNSYLVANIA
SHELLY WESTEBBE, OF FLORIDA
JASMINE N. WHITE, OF OHIO
HILLEARY CARTER WILLIAMS, OF VIRGINIA
KEVIN J. WILSON, OF GEORGIA
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BENJAMIN ASHER WITORSCH, OF VIRGINIA
ALICE ELIZABETH WOLFRAM, OF CALIFORNIA
DEREK WONG, OF MARYLAND
SUZANNE YUEH WONG, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
THOMAS TUNG-WEI WONG, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
MATT YARRINGTON, OF FLORIDA
SAMUEL S. YEE, OF CALIFORNIA
NIAMBI A. YOUNG, OF GEORGIA
WILLIAM QIAN YU, OF WASHINGTON
NADIA ZIYADEH, OF VIRGINIA
ANDREW J. ZVIRZDIN, OF NEW YORK

THE FOLLOWING-NAMED CAREER MEMBER OF THE FOREIGN SERVICE OF THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE FOR PROMOTION WITHIN THE SENIOR FOREIGN SERVICE TO THE CLASS INDICATED, EFFECTIVE JANUARY 27, 2012:

CAREER MEMBER OF THE SENIOR FOREIGN SERVICE OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA, CLASS OF COUNSELOR:

DANIEL M. PERRONE, OF MASSACHUSETTS

THE FOLLOWING-NAMED CAREER MEMBER OF THE FOREIGN SERVICE OF THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE FOR PROMOTION WITHIN THE SENIOR FOREIGN SERVICE TO THE CLASS INDICATED, EFFECTIVE JANUARY 27, 2013:

CAREER MEMBER OF THE SENIOR FOREIGN SERVICE OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA, CLASS OF COUNSELOR:

PAUL DAVID BROWN, OF TEXAS

THE FOLLOWING-NAMED CAREER MEMBER OF THE FOREIGN SERVICE OF THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE FOR PROMOTION WITHIN THE SENIOR FOREIGN SERVICE TO THE CLASS INDICATED, EFFECTIVE APRIL 15, 2014:

CAREER MEMBER OF THE SENIOR FOREIGN SERVICE OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA, CLASS OF COUNSELOR:

MATTHEW STEPHEN COOK, OF NEW JERSEY
HENRY KAMINSKI, OF CONNECTICUT

THE FOLLOWING-NAMED PERSONS OF THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE FOR APPOINTMENT AS FOREIGN SERVICE OFFICERS OF THE CLASSES STATED.

THE FOLLOWING-NAMED MEMBERS OF THE FOREIGN SERVICE TO BE CONSULAR OFFICERS AND SECRETARIES IN THE DIPLOMATIC SERVICE OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA:

ANTHONY S. AMATOS, OF VIRGINIA
BRITTANY L. ANDERSON, OF VIRGINIA
JASON L. ANDERSON, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
PAUL ANDERSON, OF VIRGINIA
TANYA R. AUSTIN, OF ILLINOIS
DANA BARNHILL, OF WASHINGTON
SHIRIN BASKEY, OF VIRGINIA
MARC D. BASKIN, OF VIRGINIA
BRANDON A. BATEMAN, OF WASHINGTON
SUSAN L. BEACH, OF VIRGINIA
HEATHER BEGGS, OF ALASKA
SAMANTHA ELIZABETH BESORA, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
ROBERT CHARLES BITTING, OF VIRGINIA
ANDRE P. BORDEAUX, OF VIRGINIA
TIMOTHY E. BOSTIC, OF VIRGINIA
JAMES S. BRADLEY, OF VIRGINIA
RHIANNON M. BRAMER, OF FLORIDA
MARGARET A. BRASWELL, OF VIRGINIA
TIMOTHY S. BROWN, OF MICHIGAN
KELLY RAYE BROWNE, OF VIRGINIA
A. ANTHONY BURRELL, OF VIRGINIA
LEO T. BUSH, OF VIRGINIA
ANDRES K. CALDERON, OF TEXAS
MARIA MONASIERA CAMACHO, OF NEW JERSEY
SPENCER KEITH CARGILL, OF VIRGINIA
MATTHEW CARNEY, OF VIRGINIA
RADHIKA CHANDRASEKARAN, OF MARYLAND
JENNIFER R. CHAPPELL, OF VIRGINIA
HOOJU CHOI, OF VIRGINIA
JENNIFER CHRISTIAN, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
JACQUELINE L. CHURA-BEAVER, OF VIRGINIA
CYBELE COCHRAN, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
KATHLEEN M. COLLIER, OF VIRGINIA
JEANNE COOPER, OF TEXAS
MATTHEW COTY, OF VIRGINIA
ERIC R. COULSON, OF CALIFORNIA
MICHELLE ANTOINETTE CRAFT, OF VIRGINIA
KENYA RENEE CRANFORD, OF VIRGINIA
IAIN ALEXANDER CRAWFORD, OF MARYLAND
EAVAN K. CULLY, OF NEW YORK
SARAH JOHANNA CUNNINGHAM, OF VIRGINIA
STEPHANIE L. D'ADAMO, OF VIRGINIA
MEGHAN E. DEAN, OF WASHINGTON
MICHAEL R. DESMOND, OF VIRGINIA
CONOR S. DICKINSON, OF MISSISSIPPI
HEATHER A. DIEHL, OF VIRGINIA
LEVI MICHAEL DRAKE, OF VIRGINIA
ANDREW SPENCER DUMM, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
SARAH ELIZABETH DUNN, OF VIRGINIA
GRANT S. EARNEST, OF VIRGINIA
AMBER ESSATHI, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
REBECCA A. FERNANDEZ, OF VIRGINIA
LAWRENCE FOSTER, OF MINNESOTA
BRIAN PAUL GALLO, OF FLORIDA
PAUL ST. PETER GARR, OF PENNSYLVANIA
JEFFERSON GEE, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
MATTHEW JOHN GERDIN, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
M. GEORGE GHOBRIAL, OF VIRGINIA
LAILA MARIE GILLAM, OF COLORADO
MATTHEW J. GODWIN, OF VIRGINIA
PAUL GORMLEY, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
SHIRLEY GREEN, OF TEXAS
BARRY S. GREENBERG, OF CALIFORNIA
LAWRENCE J. GROMAN, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
CHRISTOPHER JAMES GROTH, OF CALIFORNIA
CHARLES FITZGERALD HARRISON, OF SOUTH CAROLINA
TODD HEFFNER, OF VIRGINIA
BENJAMIN JAMES HILLBERY, OF VIRGINIA
BREANNE ASHLEY HITE, OF VIRGINIA
BRIAN J. HOLZER, OF NORTH CAROLINA
JOSHUA LOWELL HOOVESTOL, OF COLORADO
SONG HUANG, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
ALEXANDER S. HUGHES, OF MARYLAND
DARREN M. HUNTER, OF VIRGINIA
JEFFREY S. HYRE, OF VIRGINIA
MELY AIMEE JACOBSON, OF TEXAS
JAE-MAN JEON, OF VIRGINIA
FLORA YVONNE JOHNSON, OF VIRGINIA
MICHAEL C. JOHNSON, OF VIRGINIA
CESARE JORDAN, OF PENNSYLVANIA
KIMBERLY DENA KEARNEY, OF VIRGINIA
ABDUL W. KHALIEQUE, OF CALIFORNIA
SHANEICE KING, OF VIRGINIA
MICHAEL JAMES KLINE, OF VIRGINIA
AARON J. KREUL, OF VIRGINIA
SAVO LABAN, OF VIRGINIA
LORI JESSICA LABINE, OF VIRGINIA
WILLIAM R. LAGERGREN, OF TENNESSEE
ANH-THAO P. LAM, OF VIRGINIA
ALEXANDRA A. LANOUETTE, OF VIRGINIA
MICHAEL T. LAWSON, OF FLORIDA
JEFFREY DAVID LEARY, OF MARYLAND
AUSTIN LEWIS, OF TEXAS
TERRI M. LEWIS, OF VIRGINIA
DAVID S. LIN, OF VIRGINIA
GEORGE C. LIN, OF VIRGINIA
FRICKA KAICHY LING, OF MARYLAND
CLARENCE LOBDELL, OF TEXAS
YERI LOPEZ, OF WISCONSIN
HEATHER MARIA LORESCH, OF ILLINOIS
MICHAEL SEAN LOWE, OF VIRGINIA
CHRISTINA LOWRY, OF VIRGINIA
JAMES R. LOWRY, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
JOSEPH F. LUX, OF VIRGINIA
JENNIFER L. LYONS, OF VIRGINIA
BENJAMIN MACWILLIAMS, OF VIRGINIA
JOHN MALENA, OF NEW YORK
LESLIE A. MALLOY, OF MARYLAND
DOUGLAS T. MANN, OF VIRGINIA
BRIAN J. MARTIN, OF VIRGINIA
JESSICA MARTIN, OF CALIFORNIA
MEGAN MARTIN, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
DANIEL B. MARVIN, OF VIRGINIA
SARAH ELIZABETH MIELKE, OF NORTH DAKOTA
DANTE JAMES MILLER, OF VIRGINIA
JARED MANUEL MIRANDA, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
GENEVIEVE MOINUDDIN, OF VIRGINIA
FOREST CHAD MOORE, OF NORTH CAROLINA
CHRISTOPHER J. MUMOLA, OF MARYLAND
LIZA KATERINA NEGRIFF, OF VIRGINIA
WENDY E. NEWBY, OF VIRGINIA
TAMORA J. NOBILSKI, OF NORTH CAROLINA
GILLIAN SUSAN OAK, OF CALIFORNIA
BRIGID AKINYI OTIENO, OF NORTH CAROLINA
REBECCA A. OTIS, OF VIRGINIA
ELLEN MARGARET OTT, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
MICHAEL H. PAESANO, OF FLORIDA
LINDSAY MARIE PALADENI, OF OREGON
JANE PARK, OF VIRGINIA
LAURA PARRISH, OF VIRGINIA
MATTHEW T. PENNEY, OF VIRGINIA
VICTOR MANUEL PEREA, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
CHRISTOPHER FERNANDO PEREZ, OF VIRGINIA
STEPHANIE K. PETERSEN, OF NEW MEXICO
JONATHAN D. PITTMAN, OF MARYLAND
PETER ANDREW POPOVICH II, OF VIRGINIA
TRISHA LYONS PRESTO, OF MARYLAND
EUGENE A. QUARRIE III, OF VIRGINIA
MONIKA RAJ, OF VIRGINIA
JAMINA S. RAMIREZ, OF MICHIGAN
SAMIDHA REDKAR, OF OHIO
ALEXANDER M. ROSENBLATT, OF MAINE
JABEZ ROSS, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
MICHELLE ELYSE SAKS, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
LUIS GUILLERMO SALAS, OF CALIFORNIA
KIONDRA SAMPEY-SAGNA, OF NORTH CAROLINA
JASON CHRISTOPHER SCANGAS, OF VIRGINIA
ASHLEIGH ELIZABETH SCHAMBACH, OF VIRGINIA
SARAH SCHLECK, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
JOHN CHRISTOPHER SCHNIER, OF VIRGINIA
BRYAN EDMUND SCHUBERT, OF MASSACHUSETTS
CALVIN SCOTT, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
ALI MASUD SHAH, OF VIRGINIA
LESLIE A. SHIMER, OF VIRGINIA
JOHN V. SKERRY III, OF VIRGINIA
DAVID RAYMOND SKORSKI, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
WILLIAM A. SLOAN, OF SOUTH CAROLINA
JULIA MARIE SMART, OF VIRGINIA
NEAL C. SMILEY, OF VIRGINIA
CHRISTOPHER J. SMITH, OF WASHINGTON
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MATTHEW DAVID SMITH, OF OKLAHOMA
THOMAS ALAN SNYDER, OF MINNESOTA
KEVIN J. SOUSA, OF VIRGINIA
MICHELLE LEE SOWERS, OF VIRGINIA
KYLE MATTHEW SPECTOR, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
CARRIE C. SPIRAKUS, OF VIRGINIA
THOMAS E.K. SPOONER, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
CHRISTOPHER GEORGE STAFF, OF OREGON
WILLIAM E. STANGE, OF WASHINGTON
DONNIE PAUL STEVENSON, OF FLORIDA
GREGORY STEVENSON, OF VIRGINIA
JAMES G. STRAIT, OF VIRGINIA
MATTHEW A. SUMA, OF VIRGINIA
IRENE SWANSON, OF VIRGINIA
JAMES SWIFT, OF GEORGIA
SARAH RACHELLE TEPPERMAN, OF VIRGINIA
ESTHER TETRUASHVILY, OF NEW JERSEY
EMMA JANE TEWKSBURY-VOLPE, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
ANNA THIERET, OF VIRGINIA
TREVIS M. THOMPSON, OF VIRGINIA
ANTHONY TOLEDO, OF VIRGINIA

AMANDA SUSAN TOLLEFSON, OF WASHINGTON
CHARLOTTE FLEISHMAN TORRES, OF VIRGINIA
BANU ZERA TREFZ, OF FLORIDA
ZOE ROSE TREUER, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
EMILY ANNE TURNER, OF VIRGINIA
AMELIA BLISS VANDERLAAN, OF NEW HAMPSHIRE
GEORGINA VEGA, OF VIRGINIA
FREDERIC VELLUCCI, OF VIRGINIA
DANIEL EDWARD VERBOSKI, OF TEXAS
BRIAN T. WAITE, OF MARYLAND
BRETT G. WALKER, OF VIRGINIA
HOLLY WALKER, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
JEFFREY J. WALLACE, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
TRAVIS JAMES WARNER, OF KANSAS
BENJAMIN JOSEPH WEINER, OF TEXAS
RICHARD A. WESCH, OF TEXAS
PATRICK S. WHEELER, OF WASHINGTON
JONATHAN MARK WHITE, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
JEFFREY M. WILLEY, OF FLORIDA
MATTHEW L. WILLIGER, OF OHIO
JONATHAN WILSON, OF VIRGINIA
MELYSA WILSON, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
CLAUDIA T. WINANT, OF VIRGINIA
JOSEPH WITTERS, OF VIRGINIA
GRAHAM M. WOOD, OF VIRGINIA
JOHN DAVID WOOD, OF VIRGINIA
BECKY D. WOODSON, OF VIRGINIA
ALFRED K. YI, OF VIRGINIA
MIKE JOHN YOLER, OF MARYLAND
ELENA ZLATNIK, OF MONTANA

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

CONGRATULATING THE FRANCIS HOWELL GOLDEN GIRLS DANCE TEAM

HON. BLAINE LUETKEMEYER

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 15, 2015

Mr. LUETKEMEYER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to ask my colleagues to join me in congratulating the Francis Howell Golden Girls Dance Team, on their Class 6A State Championship win at the Missouri Dance Team Association competition.

These students and their coach should be commended for all of their hard work throughout this past year and for bringing home the state championship to their school and community.

I ask you in joining me in recognizing the Francis Howell Golden Girls Dance Team for a job well done!

MORTGAGE CHOICE ACT OF 2015

SPEECH OF

HON. ELIJAH E. CUMMINGS

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 14, 2015

Mr. CUMMINGS. Mr. Speaker, in the wake of the 2008 financial crisis, the Dodd-Frank Wall Street Reform and Consumer Protection Act included provisions that prohibited mortgage lenders from using their title insurance affiliates to gouge consumers.

Dodd-Frank created a new category of mortgages called Qualified Mortgages (QM). Lenders that issue these mortgages are granted special legal protection in exchange for keeping costs for consumers below a certain threshold. The costs considered under the QM standard encompass all compensation a mortgage lender receives—including title insurance costs a consumer pays to a company affiliated with a lender.

These provisions recognized an unfortunate reality: many lenders use their title insurance affiliates to charge consumers unnecessarily high fees. According to a 2007 report issued by the Government Accountability Office (GAO), for example, 70 cents of every dollar paid for title fees go toward lining the pockets of agents—not covering losses for the lender.

And the nature of the title insurance market has also opened the door to fraud against homeowners. Just recently in my home state of Maryland, the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau and the Maryland Attorney General negotiated a $35.7 million settlement against Wells Fargo and JPMorgan Chase after finding that loan officers at these banks received illegal kickbacks to steer customers to a Maryland-based title company.

Americans seeking to purchase a home deserve better from the title insurance market. And by including affiliated insurance fees in its definition of costs, the QM standard represents an important first step in protecting consumers from collusion and price-gouging.

Rather than strengthen these protections, however, H.R. 685 would create loopholes to exempt affiliated insurance fees from the QM cost definition and allow lenders to hit borrowers with hundreds and even thousands of dollars in unnecessary mortgage costs.

By rolling back protections for borrowers and raising mortgage costs, H.R. 685 would hurt homebuyers just as our housing sector is beginning to stabilize from the consequences of a financial crisis caused by unscrupulous and abusive practices. I urge my colleagues to reject this destructive bill.

RECOGNIZING MR. CHUCK KLAUSING ON HIS INDUCTION TO THE FOOTBALL COACHES HALL OF FAME

HON. BILL SHUSTER

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 15, 2015

Mr. SHUSTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Mr. Chuck Klausing of Indiana, Pennsylvania for his induction into the Football Coaches Hall of Fame.

Mr. Klausing began his 46-year coaching career in 1948 as head coach at Pitcairn High School before moving to Braddock High in 1954. Throughout the six years that followed, his teams at Braddock remained undefeated for 55 straight games, establishing a national record. They outscored their opposition 1471–302, won six consecutive Western Pennsylvania Interscholastic Athletic League championships, and were featured in Sports Illustrated.

Following his years at Braddock, Mr. Klausing went on to continued success as the head football coach at Indiana University of Pennsylvania from 1964 to 1969 and at Carnegie Mellon University from 1976 to 1985. While at Carnegie Mellon, he led the school to six conference championships and the NCAA Division III playoffs four times. He won television's National Coach of the Year awards in 1979 and 1983, and was inducted into the College Football Hall of Fame as a coach in 1998.

In addition to Mr. Klausing's coaching achievements, he is a veteran of World War II and holds a degree in education from Slippery Rock University. Mr. Klausing's induction in the Football Coaches Hall of Fame brings great distinction upon himself, his community, and the 9th District of Pennsylvania. I invite my colleagues to join me in offering congratulations for his many outstanding achievements over his career.

ANNIVERSARY OF BOKO HARAM KIDNAPPINGS

HON. DONALD M. PAYNE, JR.

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 15, 2015

Mr. PAYNE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today with my colleagues to recognize the one-year anniversary of the kidnapping of nearly 300 Nigerian girls by the terrorist group Boko Haram.

A year after this horrific act was perpetrated, 219 of the girls remain missing. Few know of their struggles and of the events in Nigeria, and the world's focus has largely shifted from rescue to remembrance.

But we have an opportunity, and a moral responsibility, to act. To ensure the safe return of these young girls and eliminate Boko Haram, so that no one else's child suffers at their hands.

The missing girls risked their lives in pursuit of education. Among them we see lawyers, doctors, teachers—future leaders of their country. We see our own daughters.

Today, I call on my colleagues not just to remember these girls, but to recommit to their rescue by passing legislation to combat Boko Haram.

STOPPING BOKO HARAM

HON. DAVID N. CICILLINE

OF RHODE ISLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 15, 2015

Mr. CICILLINE. Mr. Speaker, it has now been one year since the kidnapping of 270 Nigerian girls from their school dormitory.

In the time since then, thousands of Nigerian men and women have been captured, slaughtered, and raped simply for practicing their Christian faith or pursuing an education.

These horrific atrocities cry out for a response.

We need to continue to speak up and speak out until Boko Haram is defeated, and we bring back these girls.

Imagine, for a moment, facing the possibility of death every day because violent, militant extremists were wreaking havoc just outside your door.

Imagine, for a moment, having to leave behind everything you owned, all your possessions, your entire life, just to keep yourself and your family safe.

Imagine, for a moment, that your own loved ones were murdered simply for practicing their faith or going to school.

Yet, these are the realities of life for more than a million Nigerians today.

I applaud my colleague, Congresswoman FREDERICA WILSON, for her strong leadership on this issue, and I urge my colleagues to continue speaking out until Boko Haram is defeated and these girls are returned home.

FISHING ECONOMY IMPROVEMENT ACT

HON. GREGORIO KILILI CAMACHO SABLAN

OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 15, 2015

Mr. SABLAN. Mr. Speaker, today I am introducing the Fishing Economy Improvement Act. The bill reauthorizes the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act and makes a number of refinements, which I believe can help Magnuson-Stevens Act work even more effectively at ensuring that the United States of America has viable fish stocks and a thriving fishing economy today and into the future.

In developing the policy proposals in this bill I have worked closely with Mr. HUFFMAN, the Ranking Member on the Natural Resources Subcommittee on Water, Power, and Oceans. Together, we have sat through hours of hearings on a reauthorization of the Magnuson Act and heard problems identified and remedies suggested from a variety of groups with an interest in America's fisheries.

That experience has made clear that there are a number of areas where there could be bipartisan agreement on improvements that can be made to Magnuson. In this time of ''gridlock'' in Congress, I think it is important that we do not miss opportunities in areas where there is consensus.

So, for instance, the Fishing Economy Improvement Act proposes that we improve fisheries data collection through the use of electronic monitoring and that we overhaul the way that the federal government manages this data so that we get the most value from it. The Fishing Economy Improvement Act increases opportunities for public participation in the fishery management process by requiring widely accepted, modern-day practices such as live, online broadcasting of fishery council meetings. And the bill allows for data collected by states from recreational fishing to be incorporated into federal assessments of the health of fish stocks. These are all ideas that find wide agreement on both sides of the aisle and could further improve the effectiveness of the Magnuson-Stevens conservation and management practices we already have in place.

Of course, I also have a responsibility to the people I represent to look for improvements to our national fishing policies that could specifically yield improvements for the Northern Mariana Islands. One proposal in the Fishing Economy Improvement Act is to assure the interests of subsistence fishers, or what the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations refers to as artisanal fishers, are represented on the regional fishery management councils. The people of the Northern Mariana Islands are generally not involved in industrial scale fishing, but we have a tradition of livelihood from the sea that goes back for millennia and continues to this day. These island fishermen and women should have a seat on the Western Pacific Regional Fishery Management Council, right beside the industrial users—as should Native Alaska and Native American subsistence users on the other seven regional councils, where appropriate. This proposal, too, is an area of bipartisan agreement.

Pacific islanders also should have a more official role in the international organization that is responsible for managing and conserving tuna and other highly migratory fish in our region. For that reason, the Fishing Economy Improvement Act requires that one of the five U.S. seats on the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission always be held by a resident of American Samoa, Guam, or the Northern Mariana Islands. The seat would rotate among our three island jurisdictions.

I also believe that, when the rights to fish around the Northern Mariana Islands are sold, the fees should go directly to the government of the Northern Mariana Islands. Right now, some of those fees go to WestPac, the federal regional council, and WestPac has to use the funds for marine conservation. I am not opposed to conservation. We cannot have a strong fishing economy unless we manage stocks sustainably and maintain the overall health of the oceans. But revenues from Northern Marianas resources belong to the people of the islands. Their own government should decide the best use for those funds—not WestPac, a federal agency. My bill helps ensure that revenues from fishing around the U.S. Pacific islands, such as the Northern Marianas, go to people of those islands.

The people of the Pacific islands have a deep cultural tradition of decision-making by consensus. The tradition on the Northern American continent was often to move farther west when neighbors proved difficult. On tiny islands surrounded by vast oceans there is greater pressure to get along and find agreement.

In that spirit I am introducing the Fishing Economy Improvement Act. I ask that Members on both sides of the aisle consider whether there are areas in fishery management where we can find common ground. I look forward to reaching out to Mr. YOUNG of Alaska, who has also introduced legislation reauthorizing the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act. I know there are proposals in Mr. YOUNG's bill with which I can agree; and I believe there are ideas in the bill I have introduced that are in harmony with or could build upon the proposals in his bill.

RECOGNIZING THE 2015 INDUCTEES TO THE NORTHERN VIRGINIA FOOTBALL HALL OF FAME

HON. GERALD E. CONNOLLY

OF VIRGINIA
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 15, 2015

Mr. CONNOLLY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the Northern Virginia Football Hall of Fame and to congratulate the 2015 inductees and scholarship award recipients.

The importance of youth sports cannot be overstated. Participation in organized sports instills in our youth many values that will serve them well throughout life. These values include sportsmanship, teamwork, honesty, a sense of belonging, and, maybe most important, the work ethic developed by striving for success and working to achieve a common goal.

I commend the Northern Virginia Football Hall of Fame (NVFHOF) for providing opportunities for our children to succeed and be a part of a team. I also congratulate the following students, coaches and community leaders who are being inducted during the 25th Annual NVFHOF Awards Banquet:

$1,500 Scholarship Award Recipients: Ashleigh Holsworth (West Potomac HS), Ryan L. Bursiek (West Springfield HS), and Jonathan R. McVicker (Lake Braddock SS), and Mason Scoville (Westfield HS)

Fairfax County Football Hall of Fame 2015 Inductees: Michael Claussin (Springfield Youth Club, West Springfield HS, JMU, Jacksonville Jaguars, Buffalo Bills, and Washington Redskins), Vaughn Lewis (Edison HS Head Coach, Thomas Jefferson HS Head Coach, Stafford HS Asst, Coach), and Jeff Davey (Chantilly YA, Club Commissioner, Youth Football Head Coach)

Football Officials of the Year: Andre Jones (Fairfax County FOA), Rick Artigas (Northern Virginia FOA), and Anthony Wallace (D.C. Metropolitan FOA)

Karl Davey Community Achievement Award: John Reynolds (FCPS Athletic Training Programs Administrator)

Tom Davis Meritorious Service Award: Dan Sutherland (FCPA, Grounds Management Manager)

Gene Nelson Commissioner of the Year Award: David Hall (Commissioner, VYI)

High School Players of the Year: James Gibson, III (Westfield HS), Tyler West (Langley HS), Gerald Hulett, Jr. (South County HS), Matt Gallagher (Battlefield HS), Will Mejia (Falls Church HS), Nick Mathews (Patriot HS)

High School Coaches of the Year: Wayne Hogwood (Wakefield HS), Chris Haddock (Centreville HS)

Youth Sports Players of the Year: Malachi Galloway (Alex. Rec.), Aaron Saunders (American Pride YF), Dakwandre Marshall (Annandale Boys & Girls Club), Savion Whiting (Arlington FL), Nathan Smith, (BRYC), Pierre Johnson (CYA), Aidan Doherty (Dulles South YL), Bradley M. Brewington IV (Fairfax Police YL), Benjamin Pavek (Ft. Belvoir Youth Sports), Mike Pidgeon (Ft. Hunt), E. Claybyrne Prescot Sailor (Gainsville-Haymarket), Justin Gibson (Gum Springs), Stephen Schoenefeldt (Herndon Optimist Club), Christina Thompson (James Lee), William Scott Wolfe (Lee-Franconia), Spencer Irons (Manassas YFL), Mathew Moschella (McLean YF), Cameron Savage (RYA), Ethan Davies (SCAA), Matt Hunter (SYA), Ryan Lipton (Springfield Youth Club), and Chandler O'Rourke (VYI)

Youth Sports Coaches of the Year: Mike Johnson (VYI), Matt Huling (SYA), Chris Goings (CYA), and Ken Simmons (BRYC)

Youth Cheerleaders of the Year: Layla Menard (American Pride Youth Football), Payton Delean (Dulles South Youth League), Daisy Anderson (VYI) and Emma Sahlgren (VYI)

Mr. Speaker, I ask that my colleagues join me in congratulating the Northern Youth Football League as well as those students, coaches and community leaders who are being honored at this 2015 Hall of Fame celebration.

HONORING THE 150TH ANNIVERSARY OF FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH, BERKLEY

HON. ROBERT C. "BOBBY" SCOTT

OF VIRGINIA
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 15, 2015

Mr. SCOTT of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the 150th anniversary of First Baptist Church, Berkley in Norfolk, Virginia.

In 1865, thirty members of Bank Street Baptist Church began praying in a tent abandoned by Union soldiers after the culmination of the Civil War. These meetings were later moved to the homes of the various members. On April 15, 1868, these individuals received letters of dismissal from Bank Street Baptist and left to begin a new church led by Reverend Samuel S. Jones.

The new church was initially called Cedar Grove Baptist, receiving its name from the cedar trees that lined the road to the church. An empty plantation building served as the first church building and services were held in a large upper room. The congregation soon outgrew the plantation building and moved to a new worship hall on the corner of Pine and Walnut Streets. Reverend Richard Wright was elected the new pastor of Cedar Grove Baptist. Reverend Wright began fund-raising for a new hall of worship, but passed away prior to completion. Reverend Madison Lewis served as pastor for nearly 10 years and was leading the church at the completion of First Baptist Church Montaland. Unfortunately, the Montaland church building was devastated by a fire in 1908 and a new church could not be constructed until 1910. After the fire, the congregation met at the local Masonic Hall.

In 1910, the new church building, named First Baptist Church, Berkley, opened its doors to the Norfolk community. Throughout the church's entire history, First Baptist Church, Berkley has had a rich legacy of outreach. During the Great Depression, under the leadership of Reverend John Carter Diamond, the church helped feed the community by opening soup kitchens and bread lines. The church created a nursery and hired unemployed mothers to supplement their family income. With a focus on education, the nursery was converted into a church kindergarten.

In 1963, Reverend William Tyree, Jr. began his pastorship with a philosophy of educating the congregation. Under his leadership, several classes were created to benefit all members of the church. Through his strong belief in education, Reverend Tyree formed the Tri-Committee, which focused on the church's outreach into the community through social and civic engagement. Reverend Tyree recognized the need for a new church facility and led the congregation in an effort to build the current location of First Baptist Church, Berkley at Berkley Avenue and Culpepper Street, which opened on June 22, 1986. Reverend Tyree served the church for more than 32 years before his passing on December 23, 1994. His son, William D. Tyree, III, began his pastorship in May of 1996 and continues to serve the church today.

Over the last 150 years, 13 pastors have served the church's congregation—Rev. Samuel S. Jones, Rev. Richard Wright, Rev. Madison Lewis, Rev. H.L. Barco, Rev. Sutton Griggs, Rev. J.H. Randolph, Rev. W.R. Slade, Rev. Lafayette Sharpe, Rev. A.O. Bello, Rev. John Carter Diamond, Rev. Noel C. Taylor, Rev. William D. Tyree, Jr., and Rev. William D. Tyree, III.

Mr. Speaker, as First Baptist Church, Berkley of Norfolk, Virginia celebrates this historic milestone, the congregation can rejoice in 150 years of successful discipleship and public service in the Hampton Roads community. I would like to congratulate the 13th pastor of First Baptist Church, Berkley, Reverend William D. Tyree, III, and all of the members of the church's congregation on the occasion of its 150th Anniversary. I wish them many more years of fellowship and dedicated service to the community.

JEFFERSON MIDDLE SCHOOL ARCHERY TEAM

HON. RODNEY DAVIS

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 15, 2015

Mr. RODNEY DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the Jefferson Middle School Archery Team from Champaign, Illinois for the continued and outstanding success of their program.

At the state competition this past March, the Jefferson Archery Team brought home the state championship title in the middle school division for the third straight year.

The Jefferson Team had five individual medalists at the state competition as Breanna Velez took 3rd place and Maddy Brown took 4th place in the female division, while Luke Miller took 1st place, Spencer Weis took 2nd place, and Ivan Chu took 4th place in the male division.

I would like to congratulate these five outstanding archers on their success and the entire Jefferson Archery Team on their 3rd consecutive state title.

I am truly proud to represent this group of exceptional student-athletes, and I wish them the best of luck as they represent the entire state of Illinois in competition for the national title in May:

Spencer Weis, Breanna Velez, Chikako Barnes, Maddy Brown, Jacob Rosenbaum, Cayla Risinger, Joel Everett, Lucas Brown, Luke Miller, Clayton Knierim, Isaac Stevens, Olivia Geis, Noga Adar, Ben Hannauer, Nathan Yahnke, Tristan Summers, Trevor Boland, Benjamin Kirkland, Anthony Erlinger, Lauryn Henry, Nicole Olivier, Jacob Rice, Gage Miller, Henry Hornbrook, and Ivan Chu.

RECOGNIZING CHILD HOME AND COMMUNITY'S 35TH ANNIVERSARY

HON. MICHAEL G. FITZPATRICK

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 15, 2015

Mr. FITZPATRICK. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in recognition of 35 years of commitment to young mothers of Bucks and Montgomery counties by Child Home and Community.

Working with local schools and hospitals, Child Home and Community provides assistance and educational opportunities for young parents from all backgrounds to be better, healthier parents.

CHC's programs—including free childbirth classes, support groups, career counseling and other advocacy services—help address real needs in our communities and bring about tangible benefits for participants, including becoming "more likely to stay in school and graduate, find employment with good benefits, prepare their children for school and become productive members of the community."

As a supporter of this worthwhile organization and their more than three decades of dedication, it is an honor to mark their 35th anniversary and celebrate with them and the thousands of young families they have supported.

Congratulations and continued success in Bucks and Montgomery counties to everyone at Child Home and Community.

RECOGNIZING THE 2015 TOWN OF VIENNA POLICE DEPARTMENT VALOR AWARD RECIPIENTS PRESENTED BY THE FAIRFAX COUNTY CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

HON. GERALD E. CONNOLLY

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 15, 2015

Mr. CONNOLLY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize an outstanding group of men and women in Northern Virginia. These individuals have demonstrated superior dedication to public safety and have been awarded the prestigious Valor Award by the Fairfax County Chamber of Commerce.

This is the 37th Annual Valor Awards sponsored by the Fairfax County Chamber of Commerce. This event honors the remarkable heroism and bravery in the line of duty exemplified by our public safety officers. Our public safety and law enforcement personnel put their lives on the line every day to keep our families and neighborhoods safe. This year's ceremony will recognize 93 individuals in a variety of categories including: the Lifesaving Certificate, the Certificate of Valor, and the Bronze, Silver, or Gold Medal of Valor.

Three members of the Town of Vienna Police Department are being honored this year for their exceptional service.

It is with great pride that I submit the names of the following Valor Award recipients:

Certificate of Valor Recipients:

Police Officer John Digan

Police Officer Marcos Herrera

Master Police Officer Tim Seitz

Mr. Speaker, I congratulate the 2015 Valor Award Recipients, and thank each of the men and women who serve in the Town of Vienna Police Department. Their efforts, made on behalf of the citizens of our community, are selfless acts of heroism and truly merit our highest praise. I ask my colleagues to join me in applauding this group of remarkable citizens.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. BILLY LONG

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 15, 2015

Mr. LONG. Mr. Speaker, on the dates of February 24 through March 3 of this year, I was away from the Capitol tending to a family medical situation that required my presence. Due to these unforeseen circumstances, I was unable to vote on any legislative measures on the floor during this time.

On Motion to Suspend the Rules and Pass HR 212, Roll Call Vote #84, had I been present I would have voted yes.

On Motion to Suspend the Rules and Pass HR 734, Roll Call Vote #85, had I been present I would have voted yes.

On Ordering the Previous Question, Roll Call Vote #86, had I been present I would have voted yes.

On Agreeing to the Resolution H RES 121, Roll Call Vote #87, had I been present I would have voted yes.

On Motion to Suspend the Rules and Pass HR 1020, Roll Call Vote #88, had I been present I would have voted yes.

On Motion to Recommit with Instructions HR 529, Roll Call Vote #89, had I been present I would have voted no.

On Passage of HR 529, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to improve 529 plans, Roll Call Vote #90, had I been present I would have voted yes.

On Consideration of the Resolution H RES 125, Roll Call Vote #91, had I been present I would have voted yes.

On Ordering the Previous Question, Roll Call Vote #92, had I been present I would have voted yes.

On Agreeing to the Resolution H RES 125, Roll Call Vote #93, had I been present I would have voted yes.

On Approving the Journal, Roll Call Vote #94, had I been present I would have voted yes.

On the amendment of Mr. KENNEDY of Massachusetts, Amendment No. 67 to HR 5, Roll Call Vote #95, had I been present I would have voted no.

On the amendment of Mr. GROTHMAN of Wisconsin, Amendment No. 128 to HR 5, Roll Call Vote #96, had I been present I would have voted no.

On the amendment of Mr. CASTRO of Texas, Amendment No. 43 to HR 5, Roll Call Vote #97, had I been present I would have voted no.

On the amendment of Mr. QUIGLEY of Illinois, Amendment No. 96 to HR 5, Roll Call Vote #98, had I been present I would have voted no.

On the amendment of Ms. MOORE of Wisconsin, Amendment No. 40 to HR 5, Roll Call Vote #99, had I been present I would have voted no.

On Ordering the Previous Question, Roll Call Vote #100, had I been present I would have voted yes.

On Agreeing to the Resolution H RES 129, Roll Call Vote #101, had I been present I would have voted yes.

On Motion to Request a Conference on HR 240, Roll Call Vote #102, had I been present I would have voted yes.

On Approving the Journal, Roll Call Vote #103, had I been present I would have voted yes.

On Passage of HJ RES 35, Making furthering continuing appropriations for fiscal year 2015, Roll Call Vote #104, had I been present I would have voted yes.

On Motion to Instruct Conferees on HR 240, Roll Call Vote #105, had I been present I would have voted no.

On Motion to Suspend the Rules and Concur in the Senate Amendment to HR 33, Roll Call Vote #106, had I been present I would have voted yes.

On Motion to Suspend the Rules and Pass HR 294, Roll Call Vote #107, had I been present I would have voted yes.

On Motion to Table the Senate Amendment to HR 240, Roll Call Vote #108, had I been present I would have voted no.

On Motion to Recede and Concur in the Senate Amendment to HR 240, Making appropriations for the Department of Homeland Security for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2015, Roll Call Vote #109, had I been present I would have voted no.

On the amendment of Mr. MCCLINTOCK of California, Amendment No. 6 to HR 749, had I been present I would have voted yes.

On Motion to Recommit with Instructions HR 749, Roll Call Vote #111, had I been present I would have voted no.

On Passage of HR 749, To reauthorize Federal support for passenger rail programs, Roll Call Vote #112, had I been present I would have voted no.

OUR UNCONSCIONABLE NATIONAL DEBT

HON. MIKE COFFMAN

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 15, 2015

Mr. COFFMAN. Mr. Speaker, on January 20, 2009, the day President Obama took office, the national debt was $10,626,877,048,913.08.

Today, it is $18,152,013,569,439.51. We've added $7,525,136,520,526.43 to our debt in 6 years. This is over $7.5 trillion in debt our nation, our economy, and our children could have avoided with a balanced budget amendment.

CONGRATULATING MR. DAVID ROSELEIP ON HIS DECADES OF SERVICE TO AND RETIREMENT FROM THE WASHINGTON AGFORESTRY LEADERSHIP PROGRAM

HON. CATHY McMORRIS RODGERS

OF WASHINGTON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 15, 2015

Mrs. MCMORRIS RODGERS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the career and countless achievements of Mr. David Roseleip. A giant in Washington State, Dave spent his childhood in St. Ignatius, Montana before matriculating to Montana State University. Raised on a dairy and diversified crop farm with his twin brother, Dave's upbringing inspired him to pursue and attain a degree in Agriculture Science and Economics. After graduation, Dave moved to Spokane, Washington where he began his long and impactful career at Farm Credit Banks. While continuing to serve farmers at his day job, Dave enrolled in the first class of the Washington Agriculture and Forestry Education Foundation's Leadership Program which provides essential training to individuals engaged in farming, forestry, and fishing in Washington State.

Four years after graduating from the program, Dave became president of AgForestry. Under his stewardship, AgForestry continued its mission, providing outstanding services and resources to its students. In fact, during his tenure, Dave has overseen the recruitment and selection of Leadership Classes 7 through 37 and has proudly watched nearly 1,000 graduates of the program go on to successful careers in agriculture and forestry. Working tirelessly with the Washington State Legislature, along with various government departments and national organizations, Dave has ensured that the program's trips to Olympia and Washington, D.C. have been filled with engaging and enlightening classes and experiences. One of his greatest accomplishments as president of AgForestry was the coordination of ''International Seminars'' to nearly 45 different countries, giving students a greater understanding of global issues and the importance of American agriculture in the world.

Of course, Dave's incredible legacy extends beyond AgForestry. Dave joined forces with leadership from three other organizations in co-founding the ''International Association of Programs for Agricultural Leadership.'' In addition, Dave has served on the boards of Farming and the Environment, the Pacific Northwest Farm Forum, the Washington Biodiversity Council, and the Washington Agriculture Council. After more than 30 years of service to AgForestry, Dave will be retiring in June. His impacts will be long-felt in Washington agricultural and forestry circles, and his work is something that we can all take pride in. I wish both Dave and his loving wife, Jan, a long and happy retirement.

HONORING GWENDOLYN NERO LOPER

HON. BENNIE G. THOMPSON

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 15, 2015

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Mrs. Gwendolyn Nero Loper, the daughter of the late Malinda and Willis Nero, who graduated from Greenwood High School in 1946. She attended Tougaloo College from 1948 to 1952 graduating cum laude with a degree in sociology. She received a Master of Social Work degree from Howard University in 1955. She became one of the first Black social workers in Mississippi with a graduate social work degree.

This honoree's work experience as a social worker includes seven years with the Department of Human Services (the Welfare Department) and in 1966 she became the first Black social worker, employed with the Veterans Administration. After working thirty years at the V. A. Medical Center, she retired in 1995. She then worked four years as Field Instructor at Jackson State University in the School of Social Work's Master of Social Work Program.

Mrs. Loper's dedication to the field of social work earned several ''firsts'' to be recognized. These include: the first black woman appointed to the Mississippi Board of Mental Health, to represent the social work profession by Governor William Waller in 1974; she was reappointed by Governors William Winter and Bill Allain. She served in this position until 1994. On February 17, 1995, the Mississippi State Board of Mental Health named the Administration Building at the Hudspeth Regional Center in Whitfield, Mississippi, the Gwendolyn Nero Loper Administration Building. This, too, was the first time a building had been named in honor of a social worker in the State of Mississippi.

Among Mrs. Loper's other community involvements are the following: charter member of the Jackson National Council of Negro Women; past president of Delta Sigma Theta

Sorority and YWCA; life memberships—the NAACP, National Council of Negro Women, Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc., and Tougaloo National Alumni Association. She is the recipient of numerous awards and honors. Included are: Delta Woman of the Year (1965); Tougaloo Alumna of the Year (1975); Mississippi Chapter Social Worker of the Year (1976); Black Women's Political Action Community Service Award (1990); Howard University School of Social Work Outstanding Alumna (1998); Tougaloo Hall of Fame (1992); the Tougaloo Meritorious Leadership Award (2003); and the Outstanding Greenwoodian in Community Service Award (1998). She is active in her church, Farish Street Baptist, and the Jackson Chapter of the Links, Inc. She enjoys spending time with her family, especially her grandchildren.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing Mrs. Gwendolyn Nero Loper for giving back to the community.

RECOGNIZING THE 2015 TOWN OF HERNDON POLICE DEPARTMENT VALOR AWARD RECIPIENTS PRESENTED BY THE FAIRFAX COUNTY CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

HON. GERALD E. CONNOLLY

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 15, 2015

Mr. CONNOLLY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize an outstanding group of men and women in Northern Virginia. These individuals have demonstrated superior dedication to public safety and have been awarded the prestigious Valor Award by the Fairfax County Chamber of Commerce.

This is the 37th Annual Valor Awards sponsored by the Fairfax County Chamber of Commerce. This event honors the remarkable heroism and bravery in the line of duty exemplified by our public safety officers. Our public safety and law enforcement personnel put their lives on the line every day to keep our families and neighborhoods safe. This year's ceremony will recognize 93 individuals in a variety of categories including: the Lifesaving Certificate, the Certificate of Valor, and the Bronze, Silver, or Gold Medal of Valor.

Four members of the Town of Herndon Police Department are being honored this year for their exceptional service.

It is with great pride that I submit the names of the following Valor Award recipients:

Bronze Medal of Valor Recipients:

Police Officer Eliezer Calo

Special Police Officer Warrie Proffitt

Certificate of Valor Recipients:

Special Police Officer Mark Butler

Corporal Steven Brown

Mr. Speaker, I congratulate the 2015 Valor Award Recipients, and thank each of the men and women who serve in the Town of Herndon Police Department. Their efforts, made on behalf of the citizens of our community, are selfless acts of heroism and truly merit our highest praise. I ask my colleagues to join me in applauding this group of remarkable citizens.

IN HONOR OF THE CARIBOU FIRE AND AMBULANCE DEPARTMENT

HON. BRUCE POLIQUIN

OF MAINE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 15, 2015

Mr. POLIQUIN. Mr. Speaker, I am honored to rise today to congratulate the Caribou Fire and Ambulance Department on earning the 2015 Congressional Fire Services Institute/Masimo Excellence in Fire Service-Based Emergency Medical Services Award. This brave team of volunteer Mainers represents sound practice and dedication to protecting others day in and day out.

This top-tier department is tasked with covering 348 square miles, amounting to nine towns and 14,000 residents. The fire and medical units handle first response services for a vast rural district that houses sporting activities such as boating, hunting, ATV trails, and winter sledding. Furthermore, the department conducts emergency transfers by land and air from a local hospital to a trauma center 175 miles away.

Under Chief Scott Susi, the Caribou Fire and Ambulance Department boasts three five-person crews, along with 15 full time paramedics—a crowning achievement for a department hoping to expand without a corresponding financial burden on the communities it serves.

Community engagement directly corresponds to the success of this department. Sensitivity to the taxable impact of its operations and attendance at local council meetings are just two of the multitude of ways in which this department actively and uniquely works together with the region in which it serves.

The Caribou Fire and Ambulance Department serves as a model of efficient success for fellow Maine fire and Ambulance departments and for service men and women across our country.

RECOGNIZING NICOLE SHAH'S ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND DEDICATION TO COMMUNITY SERVICE

HON. BILLY LONG

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 15, 2015

Mr. LONG. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Nicole Shah for her outstanding service in the Springfield, Missouri, community and to congratulate her on receiving one of two 2015 Prudential Spirit of Community Awards for the state of Missouri and the President's Volunteer Service Award.

Nicole is president and co-founder of Every Teen Helps Inspire Change, also known as ETHIC. ETHIC was formed to help sick children and others suffering from serious illness. She and friends founded the non-profit two years ago while planning a service project for her school. She saw the need for teenagers in the community to have a constant opportunity for service. In the two years since ETHIC's founding, the group has raised $75,000 and has put the funds toward the purchase of a frozen treat machine at Springfield's Mercy Hospital for children undergoing chemotherapy to relieve pain from mouth sores. Other efforts have included organizing a fundraiser to help pay for 10 Nepalese patients' major surgeries as well as a painting project and auction to raise funds for Mercy Children's Hospital, St. Jude Children's Research Hospital and its local Ronald McDonald Houses.

The powerful impact ETHIC has had on the community continues to expand as more Springfield teenagers from area high schools join the cause. Nicole is responsible for recruitment, budgeting, group promotions and event planning for the non-profit and hopes to further spread the influence at the college level next year.

It is an honor to represent such fine young people as Nicole Shah. Nicole, at the age of 16, has had a positive impact on lives around the world. I look forward to hearing many more great stories from ETHIC and Nicole as the group moves forward. I congratulate her on this phenomenal achievement.

RECOGNIZING AUXILIARY BISHOP ROBERT EARL SMITH, SR., FOR HIS 49 YEARS OF SERVICE TO THE WHITE CLOUD EMPOWERMENT CENTER CHURCH OF GOD

HON. BILL HUIZENGA

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 15, 2015

Mr. HUIZENGA of Michigan. Mr. Speaker, it is a great honor to recognize Bishop Robert Earle Smith, Sr., for his commendable service to The White Cloud Empowerment Center Church of God and for his elevation to the Office of Auxiliary Bishop in the Church of God in Christ. It is fitting that we take a moment to recognize Bishop Smith's accomplishments and contributions to spreading the word of God all over Michigan and the United States.

Throughout his life, Bishop Smith has been deeply committed to serving God and his people. He moved to Michigan at the age of 14 and began attending Saint James Church of God in Christ. After graduating from Flint Northern High School, Bishop Smith served his country in the United States Air Force. Next he took college courses at the University of Maryland, Mott Community College, and the University of Michigan, Flint, where he continued to wholeheartedly pursue his ministry ambitions. He went on to serve as the Dean of the Flint branch of the C.H. Mason Bible College where he integrated faith and education. Bishop Smith recalls sharing his faith with thousands of people in an arena in Memphis, Tennessee, when he served as the vice-president of the Sunday School Convention.

Today, Bishop Smith serves as the pastor and preaches in two different Church of God in Christ locations in Michigan. For nearly fifty years, Bishop Smith has traveled 300 miles round-trip from his home in Flint to White Cloud in order to serve as the pastor of The White Cloud Empowerment Center Church of God in Christ. His devout dedication to the Lord is evident as he reaches out to pray for and assist the homeless, needy, youth, and the lost. His mission is to give love and compassion to anyone in need, which is reflective of the very walk of Jesus Christ.

Throughout his life and ministry, Bishop Robert Earle Smith, Sr., has been a shining

example of being a faithful follower of God. He has passionately dedicated his life to serving the Lord through ministry and evangelism. Bishop Smith, thank you for what you have done not only for the Church of God in Christ, but for all of Michigan and our country.

RECOGNIZING THE 2015 FAIRFAX COUNTY POLICE DEPARTMENT VALOR AWARD RECIPIENTS PRESENTED BY THE FAIRFAX COUNTY CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

HON. GERALD E. CONNOLLY

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 15, 2015

Mr. CONNOLLY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize an outstanding group of men and women in Northern Virginia. These individuals have demonstrated superior dedication to public safety and have been awarded the prestigious Valor Award by the Fairfax County Chamber of Commerce.

This is the 37th Annual Valor Awards sponsored by the Fairfax County Chamber of Commerce. This event honors the remarkable heroism and bravery in the line of duty exemplified by our public safety officers. Our public safety and law enforcement personnel put their lives on the line every day to keep our families and neighborhoods safe. This year's ceremony will recognize 93 individuals in a variety of categories including: the Lifesaving Certificate, the Certificate of Valor, and the Bronze, Silver, or Gold Medal of Valor.

Forty-eight members of the Fairfax County Police Department are being honored this year for their exceptional service. It is with great pride that I submit the names of the following Valor Award Recipients:

Silver Medal of Valor Recipients: Police Officer First Class Roberto Asencios; Police Officer First Class Kevin Gemmell; Police Officer First Class Ryan Quarto; Police Officer First Class Thomas Thompson; Police Officer First Class Nathan Van Husen; Sergeant Michael Gubesch; Police Officer First Class Kenyatta Momon; Police Officer First Class Tyler Timberlake

Bronze Medal of Valor Recipients: Police Officer First Class Gershon Ramirez; Sergeant Lieutenant Richard Buisch; Police Officer First Class Robert Marshall; Police Officer First Class Eric Runkles; Police Officer First Class Shannon Sams; Police Officer First Class Larry St. Clair; Second Lieutenant Jane Burns; Police Officer First Class Shawn Carroll; Police Officer Harrison Gamble; Police Officer First Class Edward George; Police Officer Anthony Capizzi; Police Officer First Class Sarah Hansen; Captain Graham McGowan; Master Police Officer Steven Carroll; Master Police Officer Jey Phillips; Second Lieutenant Jeffrey Reiff

Certificate of Valor Recipients: Police Officer Brian Geschke; Detective Brett Choyce; Detective Richard Early, Detective Stephen Sulzinski; Detective Brian Takagi; Police Officer First Class Richard Cash; Police Officer First Class Paul Stracke; Police Officer First Class Dustin Tewilliager; Lieutenant Jason Allegra

Lifesaving Certificate Recipients: Police Officer Michael Crutchman; Police Officer Jesse Katzman; Police Officer Tyler Spencer; Police Officer First Class Scott Abram; Police Officer First Class Daniel Bond; Police Officer First Class David Faulk; Police Officer First Class Sarah Hansen; Police Officer First Class Craig Quattrin; Police Officer First Class Gershon Ramirez; Police Officer First Class Leslie Schmitt; Police Officer First Class Timothy Schultz; Master Police Officer Mary Hulse; Master Police Officer Scott MacCaskill; Master Police Officer Howard Mergler; Master Police Officer Chris Musser; Master Police Officer Robert Urps; Second Lieutenant Dana Robinson

Mr. Speaker, I congratulate the 2015 Valor Award Recipients, and thank each of the men and women who serve in the Fairfax County Police Department. Their efforts, made on behalf of the citizens of our community, are selfless acts of heroism and truly merit our highest praise. I ask my colleagues to join me in applauding this group of remarkable citizens.

INTRODUCING A RESOLUTION TO RECOGNIZE JUNE AS MEN'S CANCER AWARENESS MONTH

HON. ALCEE L. HASTINGS

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 15, 2015

Mr. HASTINGS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to highlight an issue of growing concern to this nation: cancer among men, by introducing a resolution recognizing June as Men's Cancer Awareness Month.

Cancer is a deadly disease that does not discriminate. It impacts all demographics and every segment of our population. However, what I find extremely alarming is that cancer is claiming the lives of males of all races and ages at an alarming rate. One in 2 men will be diagnosed with cancer over the course of their lifetimes. Men face a 43.31 percent lifetime risk of being diagnosed with some form of cancer. Statistics show that men have a 22.83 percent chance of dying from cancer versus 19.26 percent of women. The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) estimates that nearly 300,000 men die annually as a result of cancer. Furthermore, African American men have the highest cancer incidence and mortality rates according to the CDC.

I ask my fellow Members of Congress to join me in shining a light on this deadly disease that is plaguing the men of our communities. These men are our fathers, grandfathers, brothers, uncles, sons, grandsons, and nephews. Recognizing and preventing men's health problems is not just an issue facing men, it also has a profound impact on the lives of wives, mothers, daughters, and sisters, and is truly a family issue. No one should ever be put in a position to have to prematurely bury their loved one.

Additionally, there are a number of consistent gender differences in cancer susceptibility. In fact, gender differences in cancer susceptibility are rarely publicized and often inadequately addressed. There are a number of common cancers that have the highest male-to-female (M:F) ratios, including colorectal cancers; cancers of the lung and bronchus; non-Hodgkin lymphoma, urinary and bladder cancers, and most alarming Kaposi sarcoma.

I was inspired to introduce this resolution by a constituent from my district, Mr. Joel Greshman, who founded the Not 1 Forgotten campaign in 2013, after losing two close friends and family members to cancer. Joel created the organization to encourage men to get regular check-ups in order to stay healthy and live longer. By joining Joel and others across the nation to bring greater awareness of cancer among men, it is my sincere hope that we can work together to better promote expanded advocacy, media campaigns and other events. The Not 1 Forgotten campaign has gained momentum in states and cities across our nation from Fort Lauderdale located in my Congressional district to Atlanta, Augusta, Chicago, Houston, Los Angeles, Miami Dade County, and New York.

The purpose of Men's Cancer Awareness Month is to heighten awareness and encourage early detection and treatment of cancer among men and boys.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support this critically important resolution and recognize June as Men's Cancer Awareness Month.

TRIBUTE TO CAPTAIN LUTHER RICE

HON. LUKE MESSER

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 15, 2015

Mr. MESSER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to the life of Captain Luther Rice, a veteran of the United States Marine Corps and a truly selfless Hoosier.

Luther was a devoted husband, father, and grandfather. He was married to his wife Barbara Anne Nehls Rice for 61 years. Together, they had three children and six grandchildren. Luther was also a proud Marine. He served in the United States Marine Corps for 23 years, eventually retiring with the rank of Captain in 1971. He completed one tour in Korea and two tours of duty in Vietnam, earning a Bronze Star with Combat "V" during his second Vietnam tour. Overall, Captain Rice was awarded an impressive 14 different medals during his career in the Marines.

After his distinguished military career, Luther started attending night and summer school at Indiana State University, where he earned his Bachelor's degree in 1977 and a Master's in K–12 education in 1978. Luther found a passion for education and was named principal of Connersville vocational school where he served from 1979 to 1983. He also taught at the Career Center in Versailles, Indiana, and was eventually appointed school principal there as well—a position he served in until his retirement in 1992. In 1991, Luther was appointed Judge of Aurora City Court by Indiana Governor Evan Bayh, a position he held for six years.

In his spare time, Luther enjoyed supporting fellow veterans in his community. Luther was a lifetime member of the Korean War Veterans Association and served as its National Director for six years. He also volunteered at Dearborn County Hospital for 17 years, where he eventually became President of the Dearborn County Hospital Community Foundation.

Today, it is my privilege to honor the life of Captain Luther Rice. My thoughts and prayers go out to Luther's family, and may God comfort those he left behind with His peace and strength.

HONORING BOLIVAR COMMUNITY ACTION AGENCY

HON. BENNIE G. THOMPSON

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 15, 2015

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor a remarkable Social Service Agency, Bolivar Community Action Agency which is located in Bolivar County, Mississippi.

Bolivar County Community Action Agency is a 501(C3) tax-exempt organization with a fifteen member board of directors composed of equal representation from the public, private and poor sectors. As a leading program in the State of Mississippi, Bolivar County Community Action Agency provides a variety of services ranging from preschool childcare to a senior companion program; from a homeless shelter to transitional housing; from a youth adolescent offenders program to a general education diploma program.

The Agency's principal activities for over forty years consists of carrying out Community Action Programs through grants received from the State of Mississippi Department of Human Services, the Federal Department of Health & Human Services, the Mississippi State Department of Education and other governmental and private funding agencies. Those programs consist of: Head Start, Early Head Start, Delta Workforce Investment Area In-School/Out-School Program, Aging & Senior Companion Division, Community Services Block Grant, Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program, Transitional Housing, Community Action Transitional Shelter, Community Action New Start and Adolescent Opportunity Programs.

In 2012 the Bolivar County Community Action Agency, Inc. Board of Directors appointed the first female and African American as Executive Director, Mrs. Elnora F. Littleton, who was a Head Start pioneer and aware of the agency's varied programs. Her testimony is one of success—who started over forty years ago as a high school graduate employed in the Head Start Program. Her ambition, dedication and passion for the betterment of low-income children and families in Bolivar County, Mississippi has served as stepping stones promoting her from Teacher's Assistant to Teacher; from Center Director to Nutrition Director, and from Education Director to Head Start Director.

Serving faithfully under the leadership of former Executive Director Billy J. McCain, Mrs. Littleton has witnessed transitions and development of Head Start's meager beginnings to a multi-million dollar program.

As Executive Director, Ms Littleton is responsible for programmatic and fiscal components that serve 843 children and families in Bolivar County.

To say the least, her accomplishments and accolades are impeccable. She is respectively known locally and nationally as "a person who gets the job done." Mrs. Littleton, along with the board of directors and staff, anticipates higher dimensions and a new direction for the agency that will not only impact the community and today's generation, but generations to come.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing an amazing social service organization.

RECOGNIZING THE 2015 FAIRFAX COUNTY OFFICE OF THE SHERIFF VALOR AWARD RECIPIENTS PRESENTED BY THE FAIRFAX COUNTY CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

HON. GERALD E. CONNOLLY

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 15, 2015

Mr. CONNOLLY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize an outstanding group of men and women in Northern Virginia. These individuals have demonstrated superior dedication to public safety and have been awarded the prestigious Valor Award by the Fairfax County Chamber of Commerce.

This is the 37th Annual Valor Awards sponsored by the Fairfax County Chamber of Commerce. This event honors the remarkable heroism and bravery in the line of duty exemplified by our public safety officers. Our public safety and law enforcement personnel put their lives on the line every day to keep our families and neighborhoods safe. This year's ceremony will recognize 93 individuals in a variety of categories including: the Lifesaving Certificate, the Certificate of Valor, and the Bronze, Silver, or Gold Medal of Valor.

Six members of the Fairfax County Office of the Sheriff Office are being honored this year for their exceptional service.

It is with great pride that I submit the names of the following Valor Award recipients:

Certificate of Valor Recipients:

Correctional Health Nurse Joan Dempsey;

PFC Sonya Claiborne;

PFC Michael Ittner;

PFC Teena Putman;

2nd Lieutenant Joseph Evans;

1st Lieutenant Charles Oakley

Mr. Speaker, I congratulate the 2015 Valor Award Recipients, and thank each of the men and women who serve in the Fairfax County Sheriff's Office. Their efforts, made on behalf of the citizens of our community, are selfless acts of heroism and truly merit our highest praise. I ask my colleagues to join me in applauding this group of remarkable citizens.

IN RECOGNITION OF DR. GLENN D. STEELE, JR., PRESIDENT AND CEO OF GEISINGER HEALTH SYSTEM

HON. MATT CARTWRIGHT

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 15, 2015

Mr. CARTWRIGHT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Dr. Glenn Steele, Jr., who will be retiring in June after a stellar, fourteen-year tenure as President and CEO of Geisinger Health System. Under his leadership, Geisinger grew and gained national recognition for its innovative approach to health care. Today, the company serves 2.6 million residents across 44 counties in Pennsylvania and employs almost 21,000 people. For his groundbreaking and imaginative leadership, Dr. Steele has been recognized as one of the most influential physician executives our nation has ever seen.

During his remarkable company leadership stint, Dr. Steele also served on the panel of health advisers for the Congressional Budget Office and contributed significantly to a host of prominent medical societies and organizations, including the American Surgical Association, the Institute of Medicine of the National Academy of Sciences, and the Roundtable on Value and Science-Driven Healthcare. He is an appointee to the Committee on the Governance and Financing of Graduate Medical Education, and, in February this year, Dr. Steele joined the ranks of the Millennium Health Advisory Board. He has also served as Chairman of the American Board of Surgery and President of the Society of Surgical Oncology.

Dr. Steele's work has earned him several national awards, including the CEO IT Achievement Award in 2005, the American Hospital Association's (AHA) Grassroots Champion Award in 2007, the 8th Annual (2010) AHA Health Research & Education Trust Award, and the Healthcare Financial Management Association Board of Directors' Award in 2011. He has been recognized in the Modern Healthcare's "50 Most Powerful Physician Executives" numerous times and has made other health care industry "most influential" lists repeatedly. Dr. Steele has additionally served on the editorial board of many medical journals and has authored or co-authored more than 480 scientific and professional articles—quite a career record!

It is an honor to recognize Dr. Glenn Steele for his many and ongoing accomplishments. I commend him for his innovative leadership in the field of health care and for his indispensable contributions to the high quality of life we enjoy in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.

INTRODUCING LEGISLATION TO HELP PREVENT HEROIN AND PRESCRIPTION DRUG OVERDOSES

HON. RICHARD E. NEAL

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 15, 2015

Mr. NEAL. Mr. Speaker, today I am pleased to come before the House to introduce legislation to exempt from civil liability emergency administration of opioid overdose-reversing drugs, like naloxone by people who prescribe or are prescribed them. I am pleased to be joined in my efforts by Senator MARKEY who has introduced a companion bill in the Senate.

Prescription drug overdoses have reached epidemic levels in this country. In the past ten years, opioid prescription has doubled. Every day 120 people die from drug overdoses fueled by prescription painkillers. Drugs like naloxone provide the means to counteract the effects of opioid overdoses. This is a life-saving treatment, but some are deterred from providing these drugs for fear of litigation.

When an opioid overdose occurs, administration of an opioid reversal drug is necessary to prevent death. But it must occur within a certain window of time before the chance of survival is lost. This is the time for quick action, not deliberations over the possibilities of a lawsuit. First responders and other "Good Samaritans" who have the means to treat an opioid overdose should not be dealt this burden.

The bill I am introducing today would protect treatment with opioid overdose-reversing

drugs by volunteers at opioid overdose programs, health care professionals, and individuals who administer the drug to a person who is or reasonably appears to have suffered an overdose. This will give first responders the resources they need to save lives.

This bill only protects those who prescribe opioid reversing drugs, or have been prescribed them. And it only covers circumstances in which someone is suffering or is perceived to be suffering from an opioid overdose. Reckless use of opioid reversing drugs will not be condoned.

Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the opportunity to address the House on this important matter and I assure my colleagues that I will continue my efforts in preserving all lives.

CONGRATULATING DR. JACK HOLMES ON 47 YEARS OF SERVICE AS A PROFESSOR OF POLITICAL SCIENCE AT HOPE COLLEGE

HON. BILL HUIZENGA

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 15, 2015

Mr. HUIZENGA of Michigan. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Dr. Jack Holmes and his commendable service to Hope College as a Professor of Political Science.

After graduating cum laude from Knox College with honors in political science, Professor Holmes went on to earn his Ph.D. in political science from the University of Denver. As a Captain in the U.S. Army in the Politico-Military Division at the Pentagon, Dr. Holmes researched major international political decisions affecting the army. After his work in Washington, he moved to Holland, Michigan, to teach at Hope College. After four years, however, he returned to Colorado to work as the District Assistant for Congressman Don Brotzman. This position entailed constituent relations as well as advising on foreign policy, minority, education, and environmental matters. Ever a true Flying Dutchmen though, Professor Holmes returned to Hope in 1975.

Professor Holmes' experiences in the public sector and his interest in American foreign policy and international relations were instrumental in creating his Mood/Interest Theory of American Foreign Policy. He has recently written a follow up to Mood/Interest Theory called Ambivalent America: Cyclical Interactions with Trends. Not only is Professor Holmes an excellent theorist, he has also co-authored a national government textbook American Government: Essentials & Perspectives as well as many other articles and journals. He has been heavily involved in the Hope College community, especially as faculty advisor to Model United Nations and to the Hope Republicans. Professor Holmes has also served as a political consultant and has been very involved with the Michigan Republican party.

Professor Holmes grew up in Colorado and returns each summer. As an avid outdoorsman he spends the summer months on his mountain ranch researching, writing, backpacking, fishing, and even teaching a course on wilderness politics.

Today, April 27, 2015, we recognize Professor Holmes for all of his tireless work and commitment to political science and to Hope College. I want to thank Professor Holmes for his service to Hope College, to Michigan, and to this country.

RECOGNIZING THE 2015 FAIRFAX COUNTY FIRE AND RESCUE DEPARTMENT VALOR AWARD RECIPIENTS PRESENTED BY THE FAIRFAX COUNTY CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

HON. GERALD E. CONNOLLY

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 15, 2015

Mr. CONNOLLY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize an outstanding group of men and women in Northern Virginia. These individuals have demonstrated superior dedication to public safety and have been awarded the prestigious Valor Award by the Fairfax County Chamber of Commerce.

This is the 37th Annual Valor Awards sponsored by the Fairfax County Chamber of Commerce. This event honors the remarkable heroism and bravery in the line of duty exemplified by our public safety officers. Our public safety and law enforcement personnel put their lives on the line every day to keep our families and neighborhoods safe. This year's ceremony will recognize 93 individuals in a variety of categories including: the Lifesaving Certificate, the Certificate of Valor, and the Bronze, Silver, or Gold Medal of Valor.

Thirty-two members of the Fairfax County Fire and Rescue Department are being honored this year for their exceptional service. It is with great pride that I submit the names of the following Valor Award Recipients:

Gold Medal of Valor Recipients: Technician Ryland Chapman, Technician Gregory Wood

Silver Medal of Valor Recipient: Master Technician George Moore, Cadet Justin Spears

Bronze Medal of Valor Recipients: Technician Davin Bridges; Technician Ian Brill; Technician Mark Deyneka; Technician Michael Eddy; Technician Thomas Feehan; Technician Michael Frames; Technician Timothy Kelly; Technician Michael King; Technician Heather Lefever; Technician Stephanie Leland; Technician Lawrence Mullin; Technician Timothy Pais; Technician Samuel Porter; Technician Robert Ritchie; Technician William Thurston; Master Technician Beverly Studds; Lieutenant Carlos Carrillo; Lieutenant Eric Craven; Lieutenant John McDonell; Lieutenant Michael Miller; Firefighter Jason Branham; Technician Louis Botha; Technician William Kight, Jr.; Master Technician Anthony Doran; Captain I Patrick Sheehan

Certificate of Valor Recipients: Technician Adam Armstrong; Firefighter Thomas Johnson

Lifesaving Certificate Recipient: Inspector George Martin, Jr.

Mr. Speaker, I congratulate the 2015 Valor Award Recipients, and thank each of the men and women who serve in the Fairfax County Fire and Rescue Department. Their efforts, made on behalf of the citizens of our community, are selfless acts of heroism and truly merit our highest praise. I ask my colleagues to join me in applauding this group of remarkable citizens.

COMMEMORATING THE 36TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE TAIWAN RELATIONS ACT

HON. MICHAEL K. SIMPSON

OF IDAHO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 15, 2015

Mr. SIMPSON. Mr. Speaker, I would like to acknowledge the anniversary of the Taiwan Relations Act (TRA) which was signed into law on April 10, 1979. For the past 36 years, the TRA has facilitated a partnership committed to increasing trade and investment as well as regional security. The TRA serves as the cornerstone of the relationship between the United States and Taiwan that has been of mutual economic, cultural, and strategic benefit.

Taiwan has been an important contributor towards economic and political security in Asia for decades, and continues to be a major and invaluable trading partner with the United States. Taiwan's citizens continue to benefit from self-governance and free-elections, and the open society and democracy of Taiwan allows for innovation and growth that puts it on competitive footing with the largest and most powerful countries in the world.

In celebrating another milestone in the relationship between the United States and the people of Taiwan, the 36th anniversary of Taiwan Relations Act (TRA); we not only say thank you, but make certain those provisions of the TRA continue to provide the security necessary to maintain the strength and character of one of our closest allies and economic partners. I am honored to recognize Taiwan on the 36th Anniversary of the Taiwan Relations Act, and I am grateful for our longstanding friendship and our shared commitment to promoting enduring stability and prosperity in the Asia-Pacific region.

CELEBRATING THE 100TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE COMMERCIAL METALS COMPANY

HON. KENNY MARCHANT

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 15, 2015

Mr. MARCHANT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to celebrate 100 years of a prosperous business model and the strong work ethic of the Commercial Metals Company (CMC), a metals company founded in 1915 in Dallas, Texas.

CMC is celebrating its 100th anniversary of business this year. This company started out in Dallas, Texas as a single operation in 1915 by a Russian immigrant named Moses Feldman. What began as a local recycling business grew into one of the top domestic steel manufacturers, fabricators and metals recyclers. CMC today is a Fortune 500 global metals company with operations in more than 20 countries with almost 200 facilities. It is an honor to have such a successful homegrown business in my district.

This impressive company wasn't always so prosperous and fortunate; like many businesses, there were lean times and great difficulties it had come in contact with. The stock market crash of 1929 slowed down CMC's plan for growth as it did the rest of the nation, but by the 1930s it was ready again to thrive.

The company clawed out of the economic hard times before exporting scrap iron to international markets. CMC also contributed hard work and necessary services to America's war effort during WWII. As Americans were instructed to take all scrap metal to be recycled for guns, tanks and ships, CMC used this as a means of helping and becoming part of the massive surge in manufacturing and producing on behalf of the war effort.

Structural Metals Inc. (SMI) played a significant part in CMC's success by aiding its domestic presence. SMI was founded in Seguin, Texas and was a building block for CMC's domestic steel manufacturing operations. CMC became the first secondary metals company to be listed on a major stock exchange in 1960. In 1963 CMC obtained a stake in SMI and entered into steel manufacturing. In the 1970s and 1980s CMC added several other aspects of the steel industry to its already impressive resume. With such expansion and growth CMC became a Fortune 500 company and never looked back. Again, I'm thankful to have a company with such history within my district.

Mr. Speaker, it is a pleasure to recognize the 100th anniversary of the Commercial Metals Company. I ask all of my distinguished colleagues to join me in celebrating this milestone in the company's history.

IN RECOGNITION OF MR. RICHARD POST

HON. ERIC SWALWELL

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 15, 2015

Mr. SWALWELL of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life of an exemplary scientist, Richard Post. Post was a remarkable physicist and inventor at Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory (LLNL) in Livermore, California.

Post was a passionate inventor who had his name on over 34 patents. In the 1970s he introduced the possibility of lightweight composites that could possibly store great amounts of renewable energy. In recent years, his research focused primarily on methods of storing renewable energy in a flywheel. Post's research sought to combat global warming by using flywheels to make renewable energy sources more accessible and affordable.

Post's extraordinary career spanned over 60 years. After World War II, when Post was stationed at the U.S. Naval Research Laboratory and assigned to Pearl Harbor, he completed his graduate studies at Pomona College and earned a Ph.D. in physics in 1950 from Stanford University.

Post spent a year at what would become Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory, working with Nobel Prize winners and noted nuclear physicist Herb York, who would become LLNL's first director. Post followed York to LLNL just months after the lab opened in 1952. In 1978 he received the prestigious James Clerk Maxwell Prize in Plasma Physics.

Post will long be remembered for his contribution to sustainable energy and his work and efforts will be continued by his colleagues at Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory. I invited my colleagues to join me in honoring the life of Dr. Richard Post.

CELEBRATING THE 132ND ANNIVERSARY OF EBENEZER BAPTIST CHURCH

HON. GERALD E. CONNOLLY

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 15, 2015

Mr. CONNOLLY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the 132nd anniversary of Ebenezer Baptist Church.

Reverend Lewis Henry Bailey, a freed slave, founded Ebenezer Baptist Church. After being separated from his family in Alexandria, Virginia, Lewis Henry Bailey was sold into slavery and spent all of his youth and early adulthood as a slave in the state of Texas. Upon his return to Alexandria, Virginia, after obtaining his freedom, Lewis Henry Bailey was reunited with his mother, not far from where he was sold into slavery. Bailey found employment with a railroad company and later graduated from Wayland College. In 1882, he was ordained as an itinerant minister at Ebenezer Baptist Church in Alexandria. With aspirations of sharing the Gospel with residents of the Town of Occoquan, Reverend Bailey walked to and from the town to hold religious services for the black members of the community. In appreciation of his tireless efforts, white members of the community provided land for a church and a place for Reverend Bailey to live. The Clerk of the Court for Prince William County approved the deed on March 8, 1883, and Ebenezer Baptist Church celebrates its anniversary on the first Sunday of March in recognition of this momentous occasion.

Bailey started the New School in Occoquan, serving as a precursor to the establishment of the New School Baptist Church, which later became Ebenezer Baptist Church. The cornerstone of the church was laid on the first Sunday in May 1883 and the building was dedicated in 1885. Reverend Bailey, who had long been the inspiration and driving force for the establishment of this church, led the congregation from 1885–1891. The church has endured setbacks and faced community challenges during its 132 year history. After the original church structure burned to the ground in 1923, Ebenezer Baptist Church was rebuilt in 1924 where it remains today in the same historical site. Ebenezer Baptist Church leadership and its members have played key roles in both promoting civic justice and raising awareness throughout Prince William County. The church was instrumental in the integration of the county's public schools in the 1960s. I was honored to include the oral histories of three members of Ebenezer Baptist Church in my recent Northern Virginia Civil Rights Archive project.

Throughout its history, Ebenezer Baptist Church has been led by pastors who have served the church and the congregation faithfully. It is my honor to enter into the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD the names of the governing pastors of Ebenezer Baptist Church since its founding in 1883: Reverend Lewis Henry Bailey, Reverend Wesley Jackson, Reverend J. E. Peterson, Reverend Francis Eager Pree, Reverend Bush, Reverend Roots, Reverend Reuben Hall and Reverend J.E. Morris. Most recently, on June 23, 1990, Reverend Charles A. Lundy was called to the pulpit to lead the church.

Under Reverend Lundy's leadership, Ebenezer Baptist Church has flourished. Due to significant membership growth from 120 to over 800 members in recent years, weekly worship at Ebenezer Baptist Church has been relocated to Telegraph Road to accommodate a growing church family.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that my colleagues join me in celebrating the 132nd anniversary of Ebenezer Baptist Church and in thanking the church and congregation for their contributions to our community.

RECOGNIZING THE 40TH ANNIVERSARY OF CAMBODIAN DAY OF REMEMBRANCE

HON. MIKE QUIGLEY

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 15, 2015

Mr. QUIGLEY. Mr. Speaker, as this April marks the 40th anniversary of the brutal Khmer Rouge regime's rise to power in Cambodia, I join Cambodian Americans to commemorate this tragedy in the community's past. As we solemnly recognize this moment for many we can also look at the hopeful future that lies ahead for the Cambodian American community.

The Khmer Rouge regime seized power in Cambodia four decades ago on April 17, 1975 and began a four year long reign of terror and systematic genocide. Upwards of 3.4 million innocent men, women, and children lost their lives at mass grave sites now known as the Killing Fields. Thousands of refugees escaped these atrocities and were given sanctuary in the United States; many came to the state of Illinois.

Thanks to the Cambodian Association of Illinois and our strong Cambodian-American community here in the United States, we are aware of the Cambodian genocide and its devastating effects. Organizations such as the Cambodian American Heritage Museum and the Killing Field Memorial carry out the vital mission of ensuring that we do not forget the atrocities of this period. The Cambodian community is committed to remembering and paying tribute to those lost in the Killing Fields while enhancing the public's awareness of these atrocities and healing the survivors and their families.

As Illinois and other states recognize April 17th as the Cambodian Day of Remembrance, I rise today to join my Cambodian American friends to commemorate the atrocities of the Killing Fields and to provide comfort and hope to the victims' families. Let us take this moment to recognize that group-targeted violence and bigotry still exist in nations across the world, and we cannot ignore its presence.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in solidarity with the Cambodian-American community in remembering those who were lost to the Khmer Rouge regime and in recognizing our hope for a more peaceful future.

IN RECOGNITION OF THE POTTSVILLE ROTARY CLUB'S 100TH ANNIVERSARY

HON. MATT CARTWRIGHT

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 15, 2015

Mr. CARTWRIGHT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the Rotary Club of Pottsville, which will celebrate its 100th anniversary this Friday, April 17, 2015. The club was chartered on May 1, 1915 as Club 157 in District 35, a district that included all of Pennsylvania, Maryland, Delaware, New Jersey, and the District of Columbia. The founding 64 members were led by President O. L. Underwood, Treasurer J. E. Gregory, and Secretary J. H. Zerbey, Jr. The Reading Rotary Club, which was established the prior year, was the sponsor of Pottsville's club.

In the early days of the club, the meeting places "Rotated" around Pottsville. The venues the club frequented included the Allan Hotel, the Necho Allen, the Penn Hall, and other spots in downtown Pottsville. Meetings also took place in communities outside of Pottsville including Long Run (now Schuylkill Haven), Tamaqua, Pine Grove, Normal Square, Hamburg, Shartlesville, and other towns.

The Rotary Club of Pottsville has supported the Rotary Foundation through the years and is proud to list 68 Paul Harris Fellows, each recognized for contributions to the Rotary Foundation. Since its founding, the Pottsville Rotary Club has supported Rotary International efforts to eradicate polio worldwide. In addition to helping fight Polio globally, the Pottsville Rotary Club has a history of helping locally. It was Pottsville Rotarians who organized the Schuylkill County Crippled Children Association in Pottsville. They promoted and sponsored the Schuylkill Campus of the Pennsylvania State University. They organized and sponsored the Rotary Little League, the Zerbey Rotary little league field, the Pottsville girls softball field in Forest Hills, and improvements at the Gordon Nagle little league and softball fields. The club also helped found the annual Charity Bowl all-star basketball games, which features boys and girls high school all-star teams.

It is an honor to recognize the Rotary Club of Pottsville on its 100th Anniversary. I am certain that the organization will continue to work for the improvement of our community and will be a big part of Pottsville and Schuylkill County's future.

ONE HUNDRED YEARS LATER, ARMENIAN GENOCIDE DENIERS PERSIST

HON. CHRISTOPHER H. SMITH

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 15, 2015

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, genocide is the most terrible crime a people can undergo, or another people can commit. It must never be forgotten—to forget it would be to dull our consciences and diminish our own humanity. It must never be denied, but fully acknowledged—otherwise any meaningful attempt at reconciliation will be thwarted.

Last weekend I was present as Brookdale College, the Center for Holocaust, Human Rights, and Genocide Education presented two exhibits and launched a book on the Armenian genocide. The exhibit A Journey to Life: Armenia teaches the history of the Armenian Genocide through the lives of local Armenian Genocide Survivors who settled in Monmouth County, while Illuminating Images: A Hundred Year Remembrance is an art exhibit created by middle school, high school and college students from across the county and beyond. The book released last weekend was Hundred-Year Commemoration of the Armenian Genocide: Celebrating the Lives of Armenian Genocide Survivors in Our Community, which features the personal histories of 54 Survivors who lived in Monmouth County. Everyone who contributed to these exhibits and this book has performed a great service to New Jersey—not only to Armenian-Americans, but to everyone, including those who deny the genocide. They opened paths to the truth, and therefore to a better future.

In September 2000 I chaired a hearing on the Armenian Genocide and co-sponsored legislation to finally put the United States on record officially acknowledging it. It was a four-hour hearing, the first hearing the House of Representatives ever held on the Armenian Genocide. The testimony I heard that day, and accounts of the atrocities I have read in the articles and books over the years have shocked me deeply. The resolution H. Res. 398—vigorously opposed by the Clinton Administration—never got a vote.

But just as shocking then is what we still see today: a completely political and callous campaign to deny the Armenian genocide.

In 1915, there were about 2 million Armenians living in what was then the Ottoman Empire. They were living in a region that they inhabited for 2,500 years. By 1923, well over 90 percent of these Armenians had disappeared. Most of them, as many as 1.5 million, were dead. The remainder had been forced into exile.

There is no lack of historical record. In fact, we only have to listen to the words of the US Ambassador to Turkey at the time, Henry Morgenthau, who called it a "campaign of race extermination."

We only have to listen to the British, French, and Russian governments who said the Young Turks committed a "crime against humanity," the first time in history that charge was ever made by one state against another.

And we only have to listen to the government of Turkey itself, which tried and convicted a number of high-ranking Young Turk officials for their role in what the Turkish government's indictment called, "the massacre and destruction of the Armenians."

When the term genocide was invented in 1944 to describe the systematic destruction of an entire people, its author Raphael Lemkin explained the term by saying it was "the sort of thing Hitler did to the Jews and the Turks did to the Armenians."

The campaign to deny this genocide—often driven by the Turkish government—is repulsive. It is a slap in the face to Armenians everywhere. It is this denial that keeps the Armenian genocide a burning issue and prevents much needed healing of old wounds. Armenians are unfortunately not alone in suffering the hurt and pain that stems from the denial of truth. The international community failed the victims of the Holocaust, China, the Soviet Union, Eastern Europe, Ethiopia, Rwanda, Bosnia, DRC, Darfur, Syria to name a few.

That means that we here in the United States, and that means not only the Congress but also the President, have the responsibility to speak truthfully and to speak boldly about the past in order to secure our future. We must write and speak the truth so that generations to come will not repeat the mistakes of the past.

Only 20 nations around the world have recognized the Armenian Genocide. That includes Canada as well as eleven EU countries including France, Germany Italy, Sweden, Belgium, the Netherlands, Lithuania, Poland, Slovakia, Greece and Cypress. Conspicuously absent from the list of nations that have officially recognized the Armenian Genocide is the United States of America.

When political leaders fail to lead or denounce violence, the void is not only demoralizing to the victims but silence actually enables the wrongdoing. Silence by elected officials in particular conveys approval—or at least acquiescence—and can contribute to a climate of fear and a sense of vulnerability.

History has taught us that silence is not an option. We must do more.

RECOGNIZING THE RECIPIENTS OF THE 2015 DALE CITY CIVIC ASSOCIATION COMMUNITY AWARDS

HON. GERALD E. CONNOLLY

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 15, 2015

Mr. CONNOLLY. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize the recipients of the 2015 Dale City Civic Association Community Awards.

The Dale City Civic Association was founded in 1967 to promote community initiatives. Today, the organization's purpose is to represent the interests of the residents of Dale City in a manner that benefits the entire community. Members do this through revitalization and beautification projects, land use advocacy, and volunteer responses to community needs.

The Association hosts an annual awards banquet to honor individuals and organizations that have shown exceptional devotion to the community and public service. It is my honor to submit the names of the recipients of the 2015 Dale City Civic Association Community Awards:

Business of the Year Award: The Dental Spa, Dr. Marvette Thomas

Catherine Spellane Citizen of the Year: Angela H. McConnell

Dale City Volunteer Fire Department, Cadet of the Year: Austin Prinbanic

Dale City Volunteer Fire Department, Emergency Medical Service Provider of the Year: Nikia Griffiths

Dale City Volunteer Fire Department, Firefighter of the Year: Christopher Berry

Dale City Volunteer Fire Department, Officer of the Year: Lieutenant Christopher Gardner Jr.

Dale City Youth Environmental and Conservation Award: Khrissa Chun

Ernestine S. Jenkins Lifetime Volunteer Achievement Award: Mary Louise Mawn

John D. Jenkins Youth Citizen of the Year: John Thomas Fitzgerald

Kathleen K. Seefeldt Community Service Award: Clarice J. Torian

Kathy Feeney Nurse of the Year: Bridget Rasmussen Trotman

Outstanding Youth Mentor and Advocate of Higher Education Award: Miranda "Randi" Manderson

Prince William County Department of Fire and Rescue, Career Emergency Medical Service Provider of the Year: Technician II Robert Seitz

Prince William County Department of Fire and Rescue, Career Firefighter of the Year: Captain Kim Stewart

Prince William County Police Department, Police Officer of the Year: Officer Robert White Jr.

Prince William County Public Schools, Elementary School Teacher of the Year: Katie Rivers

Prince William County Public Schools, High School Teacher of the Year: Thomas P. Tutwiler

Prince William County Public Schools, Middle School Teacher of the Year: Dawn Cajigas

Prince William County Sheriff's Office, Deputy Sheriff of the Year: Deputy Sheila B. Johnson

Mr. Speaker, I ask that my colleagues join me in commending the winners of the 2015 Dale City Civic Association Community Awards for their dedication to building and maintaining a healthy community. Each recipient has made a tangible imprint on Dale City, and, with these awards, we illustrate that their contributions have not gone unnoticed.

HONORING JUDGE JOHN WILCHIE

HON. BENNIE G. THOMPSON

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 15, 2015

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Judge John Wilchie from Tallahatchie County, MS.

Judge Wilchie was born in Glendora, Mississippi. Glendora is a small rural town in the Second Congressional District. The town is most notable for the Emmett Till Murder in 1955. Black history month is a month of recognition of African Americans who have made some type of historical contribution, big or small, in this country.

Judge Wilchie made black history in 1979 in Tallahatchie County when he was appointed as judge to finish the term of Judge JB Ray. The following year in 1980, however, he was elected as the first African-American Justice Court Judge in the county. He retired from the bench in 1984. Judge Wilchie received his education from Mississippi Valley State University as well as the University of Mississippi Judicial College in 2004. He helped to start the Sharkey-Hampton Lake Volunteer Fire Department where he served as Fire Captain and Chief. Currently, Judge Wilchie serves as the Co-chairman of the Tallahatchie County Emmett Till Memorial Commission, a member of the West Tallahatchie County P–16 Educational Board and the Chairman of the Tallahatchie County Branch of the NAACP.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me today in recognizing the historical contribution of Judge John Wilchie for being elected as the first African-American Justice Court Judge in Tallahatchie County, MS in the Second Congressional District of Mississippi.

INTRODUCTION OF THE WESTERN HEMISPHERE DRUG POLICY COMMISSION ACT

HON. ELIOT L. ENGEL

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 15, 2015

Mr. ENGEL. Mr. Speaker, today, I am pleased to introduce the Western Hemisphere Drug Policy Commission Act, a bill that will create an independent commission to evaluate U.S. policies aimed at reducing drug production and trafficking in the Western Hemisphere. A similar bill passed the House Foreign Affairs Committee unanimously last year and passed the House of Representatives unanimously on December 8, 2009.

I thank my good friend and colleague Congressman MATT SALMON, the Chairman of the Western Hemisphere Subcommittee, for being the lead Republican sponsor of this legislation.

With $15.7 billion spent on counternarcotics programs in Latin America and the Caribbean between 1980 and 2012, it is important to take stock of what has worked, what has not worked and what future U.S. drug policy should look like. This independent commission will be required to submit recommendations on future U.S. drug policy to Congress, the Secretary of State and the Director of the Office of National Drug Control Policy 12 months after its first meeting.

The time to examine U.S. drug policy is long overdue. While billions of U.S. taxpayer dollars have been spent over the years to fight the drug trade, illegal drug use in the United States remains high. In 2013, there were an estimated 24,573,000 illicit drug users in the United States. In particular, I am concerned by the dramatic increase in heroin use in our country. Attorney General Eric Holder has noted that heroin overdose deaths in the United States increased by an alarming 45 percent between 2006 and 2010.

On the supply side, nearly all cocaine consumed in the United States originates in South America while most of the heroin consumed here is from Colombia and Mexico. In addition, Central America and the Caribbean are key transit regions for drugs entering the United States.

To tackle our nation's horrific drug problem once and for all, we must have a better sense of what works and what does not work. Our partners in the Americas, who have worked closely with us in fighting drug trafficking for years, and the citizens of our great country, who deal every day with illegal drugs on their streets, deserve no less.

I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting this legislation.

THE FIRST 100 DAYS OF 114TH CONGRESS

HON. TED LIEU

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 15, 2015

Mr. TED LIEU of California. Mr. Speaker, unleashing the full potential of America means fully investing in the American people.

Unfortunately, the Republican plan for our country is to slash investments in education, transportation and manufacturing.

Rather than help the middle class, the Republican budget hurts ordinary Americans by giving a top 1% tax cut to the ultra-rich, which means the typical American family will end up paying more.

In contrast, the Democratic plan for our country invests in the quintessential American propositions of a good education, better infrastructure, and bigger paychecks.

For 100 Days, the majority party has engaged in special interest giveaways and shutdown brinksmanship.

Over the next 100 days, and every day after that, I will continue to stand—along with my fellow Democrats—for something else entirely:

A nation defined—a nation driven—by full investment in the imagination and industry of each and every American family.

I want to see Made in America, again.

RECOGNIZING PAULINE HUNTER ON THE OCCASION OF HER RETIREMENT

HON. GERALD E. CONNOLLY

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 15, 2015

Mr. CONNOLLY. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize and commend Pauline Hunter of Woodbridge, Virginia, on the occasion of her retirement following 28 years of exemplary federal service.

Ms. Hunter served the entirety of her career with the Department of Army as a civilian employee. During her career, Ms. Hunter has served in various positions, including Community Relations Chief, Transition Services Manager, Family Services Coordinator, Exceptional Family Member Program Coordinator, Mental Health Counselor and Education Counselor. In every position, she has excelled and used her expertise and professionalism to further the mission of the Department of Defense and our nation.

Assignments as both a military wife and civilian federal employee have taken Ms. Hunter around the world with tours in Heidelberg, Berlin, Fort Drum, Fort Myer, Fort Belvoir, the Pentagon, and most recently, the National Geospatial Intelligence Agency, where she has served as Event Manager for the past two years. Ms. Hunter has been a great ally to my office during our frequent visits to Fort Belvoir as well as in providing assistance to my constituents who live or work at the garrison, and I thank her for her responsiveness and service.

Ms. Hunter's deep-rooted commitment to the Department of Defense and the assistance provided to service members and their families began in the classroom. She earned her Bachelor of Science degree in Social Work from Tuskegee (Institute) University and went on to pursue a Master's of Science in Education from Fort Valley (State College) University.

Her passion for improving the lives of others is not restricted to efforts in the workplace. From serving as a volunteer tutor and board member with the Prince William Literacy Program to her devoted membership at First Mount Zion Baptist Church in Dumfries, Virginia, Ms. Hunter's tireless efforts have benefited her community. A native of Greenville,

Georgia, she has made Woodbridge her home, and both Prince William County and the 11th District of Virginia have benefited greatly from her many contributions.

Although Ms. Hunter has expressed interest in spending more time with her family, I encourage her to remain civically involved in Prince William County as her resolve and dedication are inspirational to all who have had the privilege of knowing her.

While her professional successes cannot be denied, the most important roles in Ms. Hunter's life have been as mother to Jennifer Hunter-Marshall and as Army wife of 42 years to Colonel (Retired) Cardell S. Hunter. I thank them for their support and sacrifices that have allowed Ms. Hunter to serve her country and her community.

I ask that my colleagues join me in congratulating Ms. Pauline Hunter and in expressing our appreciation for her years of dedication as a federal civil servant and community volunteer. I wish her continued success and a healthy and happy retirement.

RECOGNIZING THE 20TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE AVIATION MUSEUM OF KENTUCKY

HON. ANDY BARR

OF KENTUCKY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 15, 2015

Mr. BARR. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to commemorate the twentieth anniversary of the establishment of the Aviation Museum of Kentucky.

In 1978, a group of dedicated aviation enthusiasts founded the Kentucky Aviation Roundtable in Lexington, Kentucky, with the mission of preserving the legacy of the aviation and aerospace industries in the Commonwealth.

Through dedication, persistence, and the support of several generous benefactors, the Roundtable achieved its goal with the opening of the Aviation Museum of Kentucky, on the grounds of Blue Grass Airport in Lexington, on April 15, 1995. Today, the Museum is an educational resource for central Kentucky: hosting exhibits, lectures, and events related to aviation and aerospace history, design, and engineering.

The Museum's grand opening ceremony doubled as a reunion for survivors of the Doolittle Raid, honoring the airmen's sacrifices on April 18, 1942 as the first mission to strike the Japanese homeland following the attacks on Pearl Harbor.

Since that inaugural event, the Museum has continued to recognize men and women in the Commonwealth for their outstanding achievements in the fields of aviation and aerospace, establishing the Kentucky Aviation Hall of Fame in 1996.

The Museum looks not only to the past, but also to the future, inculcating a love of flying and engineering in Kentucky's youth by hosting Aviation Summer Camps throughout the Bluegrass. These programs have benefitted 5,360 young Kentuckians, encouraging them to pursue careers in aerospace industries.

Today, Kentucky's top export category is aerospace and the Commonwealth's universities are becoming leaders in the fields of manned and unmanned flight systems. The Aviation Museum of Kentucky helped foster this flourishing industry in our state and will continue to inspire future generations of aerospace workers in the Bluegrass.

As the Representative for the Sixth District of the Kentucky, I ask my colleagues in the House to join me in celebrating the twentieth anniversary of the Aviation Museum of Kentucky. Furthermore, I encourage my fellow Kentuckians to visit and take pride in this institution and its preservation of the aviation and aerospace heritage of the Commonwealth.

HONORING GAIL WRIGHT LOWERY

HON. BENNIE G. THOMPSON

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 15, 2015

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Mrs. Gail Wright Lowery, who was born in Hinds County, Jackson, Mississippi at Jackson State College's Clinic. She is the third child, and only daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Willie (Annie) Wright. Mrs. Lowery was reared on Nashville Street.

As valedictorian of her kindergarten class learning seemed always within easy reach. Early piano lessons taught by Mrs. Fannie Smith who lived on Randolph Street, caused Mrs. Lowery to have a love for music. She attended school at Morrison, and G. N. Smith Elementary. At Chastain, and Powell Jr. High she played the clarinet, and participated in the marching band.

High school years at Murrah kept her busy participating in many school activities such as the Blue Jackets, the pep squad at Murrah, where she served as captain. She entered her senior year ranked in the top 1% of her 1975 class and received the distinct honor of Who's Who at Murrah High.

Upon entering Jackson State University she served on the Mayor's Youth Council and was elected Miss Pre Law Club. With a full scholarship, she graduated in three years Magna Cum Laude, and pressed on to her goal of becoming an attorney.

In August of 1978, at the age of 20, Mrs. Lowery entered law school at Northwestern School of Law in Chicago, Illinois. While there she was active in and was elected as Chairman of Recruitment for the Black Law Student's Association. She was awarded the Doctorate of Jurisprudence in May of 1981, and successfully passed the Bar Examination that same year. Her legal career began at Central Mississippi Legal Services. After Legal Services, she worked for the Attorney General's Office, becoming the first black person to become Head of the Civil Litigation Division. In 1993 Mrs. Lowery started her own business as a practicing attorney with Lowery Law Firm.

Mrs. Lowery joined the Cade Chapel M. B. Church when she was eight years old and has maintained her membership there to the present. She has participated on the Usher Board, the Choir, the Trustee Board, Sunday school, and the Missionary Society.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing Mrs. Gail Wright Lowery for giving back to the community in which she was born and reared.

IN RECOGNITION OF PHYLLIS MUNDY FOR HER OUTSTANDING SERVICE IN THE PENNSYLVANIA GENERAL ASSEMBLY

HON. MATT CARTWRIGHT

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 15, 2015

Mr. CARTWRIGHT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor former Pennsylvania State Representative Phyllis Mundy. First elected in 1990, Phyllis served 12 consecutive terms as the representative for Pennsylvania's 120th District. Throughout her 24-year service in the General Assembly, Phyllis built a reputation as a champion of environmental protection and early childhood education.

While in Harrisburg, Phyllis was a legislative leader with signature policies that expanded care for senior citizens, improved the rights of foster children, provided stronger home visitation services for low-income expectant mothers, boosted pre-K education, cut property taxes, and expanded prescription drug coverage for seniors. As a Representative, Phyllis was beloved in northeastern Pennsylvania because of her highly responsive constituent services and her frequent attendance at public events important to local residents.

Before her career in the state house, Phyllis worked as a French teacher and a manager for Injection Molding Corp., a multi-million dollar manufacturing company. She served as president of the Wilkes-Barre chapter of the League of Women Voters, a Luzerne County Property Tax Reform Commissioner, and was active in the Junior League during the late 1980s. A 1970 graduate of Bloomsburg University, Phyllis earned two degrees—in secondary education and French.

Although Phyllis has retired from elected office, she remains active in promoting the welfare of her community. She currently serves on the boards of Maternal and Family Health Services, Luzerne County Head Start, the Area Agency on Aging, and the United Way's Success by Six, and she was also elected to the Vestry of St. Stephen's Episcopal Church.

It is an honor to recognize Phyllis Mundy and her exceptional work on behalf of Pennsylvania. The inspirational legacy she has left is a model for all who are interested in public service. I thank her for inspiring me, and I wish her the best in retirement.

RECOGNIZING THE 2015 VOLUNTEER FAIRFAX HONOREES

HON. GERALD E. CONNOLLY

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 15, 2015

Mr. CONNOLLY. Mr. Speaker, it is my honor to recognize Volunteer Fairfax and express my sincere appreciation to recipients of the 23rd Annual Fairfax County Volunteer Service Awards.

Established more than 40 years ago, Volunteer Fairfax matches the skills and interests of thousands of volunteers with the needs of local non-profit organizations. The success of this model and its impact on delivery of needed services is beyond question; Volunteer Fairfax has been rated as one of the most effective community service organizations in the nation.

In 2013 alone, more than 26,000 individuals volunteered directly through Volunteer Fairfax; an additional 2,700 employees from 12 corporations supported 29 local agencies. More than 1,000 non-profit and charitable organizations were served by Volunteer Fairfax, and the value of volunteer services provided exceeded $1.3 million.

Each year from this group of extraordinary ''Doers Who Do,'' Volunteer Fairfax selects a few exceptional individuals, groups, or organizations to be honored. It is my great pleasure to submit the following names of the 2015 Fairfax County Volunteer Service Awards honorees:

Community Champions:

Braddock District: Joanne Elder

Dranesville District: Steven Bloom

Hunter Mill District: Sahana Arkalgud

Lee District: Dixie Wright

Mason District: Winnie Lebo

Mount Vernon District: Shirley Short

Providence District: Ken Quincy

Springfield District: Stephen Beck

Sully District: Reverend Doctor Eugene Johnson

At-Large: Philip Church

Adult Volunteer 250 Hours & Over: Michelle Bond

Adult Volunteer 250 Hours & Under: Mike Harrison

Adult Volunteer Group: Library Friends Groups of Fairfax County Public Library

Corporate Volunteer Program: CACI Cares

Fairfax County Volunteer: David Kline

Fairfax County Volunteer Program: Fairfax County Animal Shelter

Family Volunteer: Colonel Edward and Mrs. Kimberly Bellem

Lifetime Achievement: Peggy Ferguson

Rising Star: Roberta Bucher

Senior Volunteer: Lawrence Kelly

Volunteer Program: Marketplace Volunteer Program

Youth Volunteer: Carolina Sosa

Youth Volunteer Group: Boy Scouts of America Troop 55

Integrate Individual: Pedro Velasco de Paz

RSVP Northern Virginia: Elizabeth Pokorny

In addition, Benchmark Honors will be awarded in four different categories to commend those who have contributed 100, 250, 500, or 1,000 hours of volunteer time to our community.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that my colleagues join me in commending Volunteer Fairfax for its decades of outstanding community service, as well as in congratulating the 2015 Service Award honorees and the thousands of other local volunteers for their incredible contributions to our community. Their selfless dedication is worthy of our highest praise and is one reason that our community is often ranked as one of the best places in the country to live, work, and raise a family.

HONORING THE MARINE RAIDERS OF MARINE SPECIAL OPERATIONS COMMAND

HON. DUNCAN HUNTER

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 15, 2015

Mr. HUNTER. Mr. Speaker, today, I stand and recognize the Marine Raiders of Marine Special Operations Team (MSOT) 8231, 2nd Marine Special Operations Battalion, Marine Special Operations Command who lost their lives during a training exercise on March 10, 2015. These young men represent the finest our nation has to offer, and we are forever indebted to them for their service.

On the morning of March 10, an Army National Guard-operated UH–60 Black Hawk helicopter embarked on a training exercise off the coast of the Florida Panhandle carrying seven members of MSOT 8231 and four members of the Louisiana National Guard, who were operating the helicopter. As part of a rigorous predeployment exercise, the Raiders were practicing special operations insertion techniques with two UH–60 aircraft. Sadly, it was on their training mission that the Marines and Guardsmen in one helicopter lost their lives.

As a unit with great distinction throughout the War in Afghanistan, MSOT 8231 first deployed in 2010 under Special Operations Task Force-West, operating from the City of Herat. While in Herat, MSOT 8231 primarily conducted Counter-Insurgency (COIN), Foreign Internal Defense (FID) and Direct Action (DA) activities within the Murghab District of the Badghis Province. After redeployment and reconstitution, MSOT 8231 deployed again in 2012 to Bala Murghab, in the Murghab District, where it built upon tactical and operational gains it and other MSOT's achieved on previous rotations.

MSOT 8231 continued building their Afghan partner's capacity, promoting good governance, and countering the insurgent initiatives in this highly remote and austere geographic slice of Afghanistan. During the 2012 deployment, MSOT 8231 was tasked with permanently closing their base and retrograding years' worth of hardware for consolidation at a larger base hundreds of miles south in Herat. Without a single paved road in the entire Badghis Province, this proved a difficult task. Nevertheless, MSOT 8231 completed the job and left Bala Murghab in the hands of the Afghan National Army, Police, and government.

After returning home, rebuilding and adding new personnel to MSOT 8231, the team again deployed in 2013 to western Afghanistan. Their most recent return to Afghanistan saw a change in tasks from previous deployments as they partnered with the highly regarded Afghan Commandos to conduct offensive activities against the Taliban. While the mission changed, their resolve did not, as consistent enemy combat persisted until the very end of their deployment. Even still, MSOT 8231 continued efforts to enhance their partners' capacity to operate effectively on their own. MSOT 8231 departed Afghanistan in June 2014; however, their focus never left the region.

Prior to any deployment, teams work together to hone and develop their skills, and when combat operations commence, the months of training leading up to deployment are finally put to test. For MSOT 8231, this meant building on the strong relationship established during previous deployments with the 1–244th Assault Helicopter Battalion, based in Hammond, Louisiana. On March 10, two Army National Guard UH–60 Black Hawks participated in a routine training mission; however, the mission turned out to be anything but routine, as only one Black Hawk returned.

On that day, our nation lost seven Marine Raiders. Not only did they accept the challenge of becoming the best that the Marine Corps has to offer, these Marine Raiders did so during a time of war. Along the way, the Marine Raiders of MSOT 8231 received such awards as the Silver Star Medal for Gallantry and Bronze Star Medals for valor, and all had Valor awards from their time fighting on combat deployments.

To the families, friends, and loved ones of Captain Stanford Shaw III, Master Sergeant Thomas Saunders, Staff Sergeant Marcus Bawol, Staff Sergeant Trevor Blaylock, Staff Sergeant Liam Flynn, Staff Sergeant Kerry Kemp, Staff Sergeant Andrew Seif, Chief Warrant Officer George Wayne Griffin, Chief Warrant Officer George David Strother, Staff Sergeant Lance Bergeron, and Staff Sergeant Thomas Florich, please know that we are a grateful nation. On countless training exercises, your brave warriors risked their lives to ensure the tip of the spear always remained sharp and ready for battle. And while the Marine Raider community lost these warriors, their service and sacrifice will never be forgotten. Never above you, never below you, always beside you. Semper Fi.

HONORING THE YAZOO FAIR & CIVIC LEAGUE

HON. BENNIE G. THOMPSON

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 15, 2015

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor a group of innovators who have shown what can be done through hard work, dedication and a desire to serve their community, the Yazoo Fair & Civic League. The Yazoo Fair & Civic League has served the Yazoo County community and the State of Mississippi through social and civic engagement.

The Yazoo Fair & Civic League's history date back to 1932; when R.J. Pierce and T.J. Huddleston decided to establish a county fair for black residents to enjoy. D.W. Lindsey assisted in sponsoring the first fair in October 1932. Three years later, Gov. Martin Conner signed the charter for the Yazoo Negro Fair Association. The group purchased land on Calhoun Avenue where an exhibit building was constructed.

During the early 60s, H.A. Scott was elected president, and H.C. Fouche was chosen as vice president. As president Scott faced several challenges. The biggest challenge was finances. The association was $67,500 in debt. In order to resolve the debt the property facing Calhoun Avenue and a plot west of Lamar Avenue was sold along with the exhibit building.

After these challenges were met the association had the vision for a community center. Also during this time the Yazoo Negro Fair Association became the Yazoo Fair and Civic League. Federal funding was used to construct the L.T. Miller Community Center which was completed in 1971. The large tract of unused space around the center was used to construct 48 apartments for elderly and disabled residents with a grant for over $1.5 million from HUD. The Lintonia Apartments opened in May of 1986. During the 1990s the association built H.A. Scott Apartments with about 80 units creating a very healthy tax base to the Yazoo area. Currently, the association has a 60 unit apartment complex in

Jackson, MS, 40 in Meridian and 30 in Clarksdale.

The Yazoo Fair and Civic League began as an effort to provide black Yazooans with a public place to hold community events during a time when they had nowhere else to go. Today, the Yazoo Fair & Civic League continues to provide a public facility for all of the community to enjoy, and the organization has expanded its mission to provide affordable housing to many residents. The association also manages the historic Oakes African American Cultural Center, which was home to the legendary Oakes Family in Yazoo City for over a century. A.J. Oakes, III deeded the home to the Yazoo Fair & Civic League in 1990, and the home has become a museum highlighting and celebrating local black history.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing the Yazoo Fair & Civic League for its dedication to serving others and giving back to the community.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. BILL HUIZENGA

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 15, 2015

Mr. HUIZENGA of Michigan. Mr. Speaker, I rise today regarding a missed vote due to a funeral on Tuesday, April 14, 2015. Had I been present for roll call vote number 149, H. Res. 189, the combined rule providing for consideration of H.R. 650—Preserving Access to Manufactured Housing Act and H.R. 685—Mortgage Choice Act, I would have voted ''yea.''

CELEBRATING THE GRAND OPENING OF THE PADRE DAM ADVANCED WATER PURIFICATION DEMONSTRATION PILOT PLANT

HON. DUNCAN HUNTER

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 15, 2015

Mr. HUNTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize an exciting event that took place in my district this past week on April 10, 2015, by the Padre Dam Municipal Water District. The Grand Opening of the Padre Dam Advanced Water Purification Demonstration Pilot Plant in Santee, California is an important and critical step in the overall effort by San Diego County to become more water independent as a region and maintain the very best in our water management practices.

We all know that California is currently in the midst of a severe multi-year drought, but ensuring our communities can rely on being provided with clean and healthy water has been the mission of Padre Dam for many decades. In fact, on this same day in 1962, founding General Manager of Padre Dam Ray Stoyer wrote to President Kennedy complimenting him on his commitment to the science of water management innovation and requesting his assistance in a groundbreaking water reclamation study and project at Padre Dam. President Kennedy supported the District's reclamation efforts and today the appropriately named Ray Stoyer Water Recycling Facility treats and recycles more than two million gallons of water per day. Over the years, these efforts have been recognized by the California Water Environment Association, which awarded this facility its ''California Plant of the Year'' designation in 2005, as well as naming it ''San Diego Plant of the Year'' multiple times in 1977, 1978, 1981, 2000, 2003, 2005, 2007, and 2010.

I am pleased to see that this proud tradition is being carried on with Padre Dam's most recent effort in its Advanced Water Purification Demonstration Pilot Plant. Funded through a $3 million state grant, this innovative project will test the feasibility of creating a new source of approximately 2,000 to 3,000 acre feet of purified water for East San Diego County. If successful, this project has the potential to provide up to 20% of our current drinking water demand via a locally-controlled, independent, drought-proof and environmentally sound water supply, thereby reducing our dependency on outside sources of imported water.

California's current drought conditions, coupled with San Diego's historical reliance on imported water, mandate that we pursue every alternative that will lead to the San Diego region expanding its resource portfolio and utilize an ''all the above'' approach to water management. This includes traditional efforts such as conservation and reservoir and aquifer storage, as well as taking advantage of new technologies and science in the areas of desalination and reclamation projects like the one developed by Padre Dam which we are today recognizing.

My colleagues, I ask that you join me in congratulating Padre Dam Municipal Water District for its forward-thinking vision and willingness to pursue new ideas on an old, but important, problem. Everyone at the District, from leadership to all members of staff, is making a direct positive impact in our community and I am confident that your investment will prove to be valuable in helping us reach both our short and long-term water management goals.

INTRODUCING THE CRUDE-BY-RAIL SAFETY ACT

HON. JIM McDERMOTT

OF WASHINGTON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 15, 2015

Mr. McDERMOTT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to introduce legislation to increase the safety of transporting crude oil by rail. Explosive growth in crude-by-rail transport in recent months has led to increased rail traffic and an unprecedented rise in rail accidents—sometimes with fatal results. This issue has affected communities across the nation and cemented the need to increase safety standards and accountability. Four derailments in the US and Canada in under a month earlier this year underscored the urgency of action to curb the risks of transporting volatile crude oil.

The Crude-By-Rail Safety Act addresses a number of shortcomings in our approach to transporting volatile crude oil near and through many American towns and cities. It includes provisions to lower oil volatility, prohibits use of unsafe DOT–111 tank cars, strengthens tank car standards, improves oil spill response readiness, and increases fines for violating volatility standards and hazmat transport standards. It also requires disclosure of train movements through communities as well as the implementation of a confidential close-call reporting system to further increase the safety of transporting crude oil by rail.

Last summer, a derailment in my district in Seattle exposed the vulnerabilities in our current standards, and how easily we risk exposing our communities to danger from oily spills or fiery explosions. We risk too much—our urban centers, our clean waterways, our natural environment, our robust transportation network, our pocketbooks—in sitting back and waiting for an accident to wreak havoc on our communities. We must continue to fight for stronger standards and accountability, and this bill offers a comprehensive approach toward tackling this urgent threat. I urge my colleagues to support this legislation. Thank you.

HONORING THE DOOLITTLE RAIDERS

HON. J. FRENCH HILL

OF ARKANSAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 15, 2015

Mr. HILL. Mr. Speaker, following the December 7, 1941, attack of the U.S. Pacific Fleet at Pearl Harbor on Oahu, President Roosevelt sought and received from Congress authorization to declare war on Japan. In January 1942, Lieutenant Colonel James H. ''Jimmy'' Doolittle was selected to lead a top-secret retaliation attack on Japan. With just three weeks of special ''short field takeoff'' training, Doolittle's men set sail toward Japan aboard the USS *Hornet*.

On April 18, 1942, the *Hornet* was sighted by a Japanese ship and the Doolittle Raiders, as they would come to be known, set off on their mission—twelve hours early and some 150 miles from their planned launch position. Within one hour, these 80 volunteers, aboard 16 B–25 bombers, took off in the first U.S. air raid on Japan in World War II. The air raid resulted in the bombing of multiple military and industrial targets in Tokyo and other Japanese cities. Their mission a success, the crews headed for their rendezvous point in China.

Flying on fumes and facing poor weather, one plane diverted to Russia, and the fifteen others were forced to crash land. With the aid of Chinese civilians, most of these brave men reached safety, but not all of our famous flyers made it home. Three of the raiders were killed in action; and, of the eight that were captured, three were executed and one died in captivity. Their sacrifice and the success of this mission served as an essential boost to American morale, and the exploits of the Doolittle Raiders marked a critical turning point in the war in the Pacific.

Following their daring drama over Japan, the Doolittle Raiders spread out across the nation and globe. Some continued in the military, enjoying long careers into retirement. Others gave their lives in later service to their country, while still others rejoined civilian life as doctors, teachers, businessmen—serving their communities in every capacity.

Earlier this year, we lost two of the surviving Raiders, LTC Edward Saylor, and LTC Robert Hite. LTC Hite was one of the brave souls

who escaped Japanese captivity, and he also was a resident of my home state of Arkansas. Now, from the band of 80 young flyers 73 Aprils ago, only two living Raiders remain: Staff Sergeant David Thatcher and LTC Richard Cole. Retired LTC Cole served as copilot to LTC Doolittle aboard aircraft number one, and he, along with the other Raiders, was awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross. Retired Staff Sergeant David J. Thatcher served as the engineer-gunner to crew number seven, whose plane the ''Ruptured Duck,'' crashed just off the shores of the Chinese mainland. Sergeant Thatcher was awarded the Silver Star in 1942 for his bravery in caring for his injured crew members.

Earlier today, Congress conferred the Congressional Gold Medal on the Doolittle Raiders for their undeniable valor and sacrifice. These airmen and their extraordinary ''30 Seconds over Tokyo'' will never be forgotten. I am humbled to rise today to recognize these ordinary Americans that stepped up to attempt an exceptional mission. Col. Doolittle and his Raiders will fly forever in our hearts and minds as the best of American values of Duty, Honor, and Country. May God bless their memory and example to us all.

HONORING REVEREND HENRY HOLLEY'S LIFETIME OF SERVICE

HON. TOM PRICE

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 15, 2015

Mr. TOM PRICE of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, today I would like to speak in honor of a good friend, a committed patriot, and a great man of faith, Reverend Henry Holley. His remarkable lifetime of service is testament that putting your values to work can lead to real and demonstrable achievements in improving the lives of your fellow man. His tireless efforts to spread the word of God through the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association is worthy of our praise and deserving of our thanks.

Following his tour in the Pacific during World War II, Reverend Holley continued his service in the United States Marine Corps until 1966. Thereafter, he joined in common purpose with Reverend Graham. In due course, he was ordained into the Gospel ministry at Johnson Ferry Baptist Church, located in Marietta.

His ministry with Reverend Graham has sent him around the world, from Taipei to Hong Kong, from Manila to Tokyo. Notably, Reverend Holley organized the Korean 1973 Crusade in Seoul. On the last day of the Crusade, there were over 3.2 million people present to hear Reverend Graham in person.

Reverend Holley and his devoted wife Bettie have made their home in Marietta, Georgia for the past 44 years. They are blessed to have three children, four grandchildren and two great-grandchildren.

Mr. Speaker, in 2005, I had the real honor of introducing Reverend Holley before his opening prayer on the floor of this House. Now, I have the privilege of offering thanks, on behalf of all Americans, for his life's efforts. For today, in North Carolina, Reverend Holley is celebrating his well-deserved retirement. Reverend Holley has truly earned a reputation as living out the Gospel, not only in Georgia, but around the world.

IN RECOGNITION OF CHIEF MASTER SERGEANT DAVID A. WELLS

HON. RICHARD E. NEAL

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 15, 2015

Mr. NEAL. Mr. Speaker, I want to take this opportunity to recognize Chief Master Sergeant David A. Wells of Springfield, Massachusetts on the occasion his retirement from the United States Air Force Reserve. For the past 31 years, Chief Wells has proudly served his country with distinction and I am privileged to thank him on behalf of a grateful nation.

Chief Wells was raised and still resides in my hometown of Springfield. He graduated from the High School of Commerce in 1984 and entered the U.S. Army Infantry School at Fort Benning, GA shortly thereafter. During his time with the 187th Infantry Brigade out of Fort Devens, Massachusetts, he was deployed to various locations abroad including Iceland and Canada. By 1987, he had quickly moved through the ranks to become a Staff Sergeant.

In 1994, Chief Wells was transferred to the Air Force Reserve after the 187th Infantry Brigade was disbanded. He was first assigned to the 439th Engineering Squadron at Westover Air Reserve Base, only a few miles from his home in Springfield. Throughout his 11 years at Westover, he served in many roles as part of the Fire and Emergency Services Flight. In 2005, Chief Wells was assigned to the 22nd Air Force at Dobbins Air Reserve Base in Marietta, Georgia to become the Fire Emergency Deputy Fire Chief. In this position, he was charged with maintaining combat readiness for all Numbered Air Force Prime Base Engineer Emergency Force (BEEF) Fire Emergency units.

Chief Wells has also been deployed overseas to with U.S. operations in the Middle East. In 2002, he was deployed to Kuwait as part of Operation Southern Watch and then again in 2008 to Kirkuk, Iraq as part of Operation Iraqi Freedom. Chief Wells has been awarded numerous times for exemplary service over his career, including the Air Force Meritorious Service Medal, Air Force Commendation Medal, and the Army Commendation Medal.

While he may be retiring from the Air Force, Chief Wells will continue to serve his community as a captain in the Springfield Fire Department, as he has done for the past 26 years. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank Chief Master Sergeant Wells for his dedication to this country and I wish him all the best in his future endeavors.

SENATE COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Title IV of Senate Resolution 4, agreed to by the Senate of February 4, 1977, calls for establishment of a system for a computerized schedule of all meetings and hearings of Senate committees, subcommittees, joint committees, and committees of conference. This title requires all such committees to notify the Office of the Senate Daily Digest—designated by the Rules Committee—of the time, place and purpose of the meetings, when scheduled and any cancellations or changes in the meetings as they occur.

As an additional procedure along with the computerization of this information, the Office of the Senate Daily Digest will prepare this information for printing in the Extensions of Remarks section of the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD on Monday and Wednesday of each week.

Meetings scheduled for Thursday, April 16, 2015 may be found in the Daily Digest of today's RECORD.

MEETINGS SCHEDULED

APRIL 20

3 p.m.

Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs

To hold hearings to examine the 2020 Census, focusing on challenges facing the bureau for a modern, cost-effective survey.

SD–342

APRIL 21

9:30 a.m.

Committee on Armed Services

To hold hearings to examine the nomination of Peter Levine, of Maryland, to be Deputy Chief Management Officer of the Department of Defense.

SH–216

10 a.m.

Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry

To hold hearings to examine opportunities and challenges for agriculture trade with Cuba.

SR–328A

Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs

To hold hearings to examine surface transportation reauthorization, focusing on building on the success of the Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century Act (MAP–21) to deliver safe, efficient and effective public transportation services and projects.

SD–538

Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation

Subcommittee on Communications, Technology, Innovation, and the Internet

To hold hearings to examine advancing telehealth through connectivity.

SR–253

Committee on Foreign Relations

Subcommittee on State Department and USAID Management, International Operations, and Bilateral International Development

To hold hearings to examine improving the efficiency and effectiveness of the Department of State.

SD–419

Committee on the Judiciary

To hold hearings to examine improving accountability and oversight of juvenile justice grants.

SD–226

2:30 p.m.

Committee on Armed Services

Subcommittee on Emerging Threats and Capabilities

To hold hearings to examine Department of Defense policy and programs to counter threats to the United States from terrorism and irregular warfare.

SR–222

Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation

Subcommittee on Aviation Operations, Safety, and Security

To hold hearings to examine Federal Aviation Administration reauthorization, focusing on certification and U.S.

aviation manufacturing competitiveness.

SR–253

Committee on Veterans' Affairs

To hold hearings to examine fulfilling the promise to women veterans.

SR–418

APRIL 22

9:30 a.m.

Committee on Environment and Public Works

To hold hearings to examine the nomination of Vanessa Lorraine Allen Sutherland, of Virginia, to be a Member and Chairperson of the Chemical Safety and Hazard Investigation Board.

SD–406

10 a.m.

Committee on Appropriations

Subcommittee on Transportation, Housing and Urban Development, and Related Agencies

To hold hearings to examine proposed budget estimates and justification for fiscal year 2016 for the Department of Transportation.

SD–138

Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation

To hold hearings to examine how to better communicate weather to enhance commerce and safety.

SR–253

Committee on Energy and Natural Resources

To hold hearings to examine reauthorization of and potential reforms to the Land and Water Conservation Fund.

SD–366

Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs

To hold hearings to examine securing the border, focusing on understanding threats and strategies for the northern border.

SD–342

10:30 a.m.

Committee on Appropriations

Subcommittee on Department of Defense

To hold hearings to examine proposed budget estimates and justification for fiscal year 2016 for defense innovation and research.

SD–192

2 p.m.

Committee on Appropriations

Subcommittee on Department of Homeland Security

To hold hearings to examine proposed budget estimates and justification for fiscal year 2016 for Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA).

SD–138

2:30 p.m.

Committee on Armed Services

Subcommittee on Readiness and Management Support

To hold hearings to examine reform of the defense acquisition system in review of the Defense Authorization Request for fiscal year 2016 and the Future Years Defense Program.

SR–232A

Committee on Armed Services

Subcommittee on Strategic Forces

To hold hearings to examine Air Force and Navy nuclear programs and the implementation of nuclear enterprise review recommendations in review of the Defense Authorization Request for fiscal year 2016 and the Future Years Defense Program.

SR–222

Committee on Indian Affairs

To hold an oversight hearing on tribal transportation, focusing on pathways to safer roads in Indian country.

SD–628

APRIL 23

10 a.m.

Committee on Appropriations

Subcommittee on Departments of Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education, and Related Agencies

To hold hearings to examine proposed budget estimates and justification for fiscal year 2016 for the Department of Health and Human Services.

SD–124

Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation

Subcommittee on Aviation Operations, Safety, and Security

To hold hearings to examine Federal Aviation Administration reauthorization, focusing on airport issues and infrastructure financing.

SR–253

Committee on Finance

Subcommittee on Health Care

To hold hearings to examine the impact of the medical device tax on jobs, innovation, and patients.

SD–215

APRIL 28

10 a.m.

Committee on Energy and Natural Resources

To hold hearings to examine the Administration's Quadrennial Energy Review.

SD–366

APRIL 30

10 a.m.

Committee on Energy and Natural Resources

To hold hearings to examine S. 703, to reauthorize the weatherization and State energy programs, S. 720, to promote energy savings in residential buildings and industry, and S. 858, to amend the National Energy Conservation Policy Act to encourage the increased use of performance contracting in Federal facilities.

SD–366

2:30 p.m.

Committee on Energy and Natural Resources

Subcommittee on Public Lands, Forests, and Mining

To hold hearings to examine the Bureau of Land Management's final rule on hydraulic fracturing.

SD–366

Daily Digest

Senate

Chamber Action

Routine Proceedings, pages S2185–S2226

Measures Introduced: Twenty-eight bills were introduced, as follows: S. 940–967. **Pages S2220–21**

Measures Reported:

Report to accompany S. 754, to improve cybersecurity in the United States through enhanced sharing of information about cybersecurity threats. (S. Rept. No. 114–32) **Page S2220**

House Messages:

Budget Resolution—Motions to Instruct Conferees: Senate began consideration of the message from the House of Representatives to accompany S. Con. Res. 11, setting forth the congressional budget for the United States Government for fiscal year 2016 and setting forth the appropriate budgetary levels for fiscal years 2017 through 2025, taking action on the following motion and motions to instruct conferees proposed thereto:

Pages S2193–99, S2199–S2201, S2202–12

Adopted:

By 54 yeas to 43 nays (Vote No. 145) Motion to disagree in the amendment of the House to the concurrent resolution, agree to the request by the House for a conference, and authorize the Presiding Officer to appoint conferees. **Pages S2193–98**

By 86 yeas to 11 nays (Vote No. 146), Brown Motion to Instruct Conferees to insist that the final conference report include the deficit-neutral reserve fund relating to ending ''Too Big to Fail'' bailouts for Wall Street mega-banks with over $500,000,000,000 in total assets, as set forth in amendment 994 to S. Con. Res. 11 (as agreed to by the Senate). **Pages S2200–01, S2202–08**

By 85 yeas to 11 nays (Vote No. 147), Sanders Motion to Instruct Conferees to insist that the final conference report include the provision in the concurrent resolution as agreed to by the Senate that provides for the establishment of a deficit-neutral reserve fund related to strengthening the United States Postal Service by establishing a moratorium to protect mail processing plants, reinstating overnight delivery standards, protecting rural service, allowing the Postal Service to innovate and adapt to compete in a digital age, or improving the financial condition of the Postal Service. **Pages S2202–08**

By a unanimous vote of 97 yeas (Vote No. 148), Enzi (for Burr) Motion to Instruct Conferees to insist that the final conference report include a provision relating to addressing student loan debt, which may include reducing overlapping student loan repayment programs and creating a simplified income-driven student loan repayment option, as included in section 358 of S. Con. Res. 11, as agreed to by the Senate. **Pages S2203–09**

By 84 yeas to 13 nays (Vote No. 150), Sanders Motion to Instruct Conferees to insist that the final conference report include a deficit-neutral reserve fund for legislation related to retirement benefits, which may not include legislation cutting benefits under the old-age, survivors, and disability insurance program established under title II of the Social Security Act, increasing the retirement age, or privatizing the old-age, survivors, and disability insurance program. **Pages S2199–S2201, S2202–10**

Schatz Motion to Instruct Conferees to insist that the final conference report include the deficit-neutral reserve fund relating to ensuring all legally married same-sex spouses have equal access to the Social Security and veterans' benefits they have earned and receive equal treatment under the law pursuant to the Constitution of the United States in the concurrent resolution as agreed to by the Senate.

Pages S2200–01, S2202–10

Bennet Motion to Instruct Conferees to insist that the final conference report include provisions in the concurrent resolution as agreed to by the Senate for the establishment of deficit-neutral reserve funds relating to climate change. **Pages S2204–10**

By 57 yeas to 40 nays (Vote No. 151), Fischer Motion to Instruct Conferees to insist that the final conference report include a provision relating to promoting equal pay, which may include preventing discrimination on the basis of sex and preventing retaliation against employees for seeking or discussing wage information, as included in section 356 of S. Con. Res. 11, as agreed to by the Senate.

Pages S2207–10

Fischer Motion to Instruct Conferees to insist that the final conference report include a provision relating to a deficit-neutral reserve fund relating to tax credits for employers providing paid family and medical leave. **Pages S2207–11**

Sanders (for Murray) Motion to Instruct Conferees to insist that the final conference report include the deficit-neutral reserve fund for legislation to allow Americans to earn paid sick time in the concurrent resolution as agreed to by the Senate. **Pages S2205–11**

Rejected:

By 45 yeas to 52 nays (Vote No. 149), Warren Motion to Instruct Conferees to insist that the final conference report include a provision to make college more affordable for middle-class families by allowing borrowers with outstanding Federal and private student loans to refinance at the equivalent interest rates that were offered to Federal student loan borrowers during the 2013–2014 school year and to fully offset the cost of such a program by requiring millionaires to pay at least a 30 percent effective Federal tax rate. **Pages S2201–09**

By 44 yeas to 53 nays (Vote No. 152), Mikulski Motion to Instruct Conferees to insist that the final conference report include a provision relating to amending the Equal Pay Act of 1963 to allow for punitive damages, limit the any factor ''other than sex'' exception, and prohibit retaliation against employees who share salary information, as included in amendment 362 to S. Con. Res. 11 (as not agreed to by the Senate). **Pages S2204–11**

Sanders (for Murray) Motion to Instruct Conferees to insist that the final conference report include a provision to build on the Bipartisan Budget Act of 2013 and provide sequester relief in 2016 and 2017 by closing tax loopholes. **Pages S2205–11**

By 45 yeas to 52 nays (Vote No. 153), Stabenow Motion to Instruct Conferees to insist that the final conference report not include the Medicare cuts in the concurrent resolution as agreed to by the Senate, which would substantially increase out-of-pocket healthcare expenses for senior citizens, and not include the Medicare cuts in the concurrent resolution as agreed to by the House of Representatives, which would end Medicare as it currently exists by turning it into a voucher-based premium support system and eliminate the guaranteed healthcare benefits earned by the people of the United States. **Pages S2206–12**

The Chair was authorized to appoint the following conferees on the part of the Senate: Senators Enzi, Grassley, Sessions, Crapo, Graham, Portman, Toomey, Johnson, Ayotte, Wicker, Corker, Perdue, Sanders, Murray, Wyden, Stabenow, Whitehouse, Warner, Merkley, Baldwin, Kaine, and King. **Page S2212**

Justice for Victims of Trafficking Act—Agreement: A unanimous-consent agreement was reached providing that at approximately 10 a.m., on Thursday, April 16, 2015, Senate resume consideration of S. 178, to provide justice for the victims of trafficking, with the time equally divided in the usual form; and that the filing deadline for all second-degree amendments to McConnell (for Cornyn) Amendment No. 1120 to the bill be at 10:30 a.m. **Page S2224**

Deyo and Chaudhuri Nominations—Agreement: A unanimous-consent agreement was reached providing that at 2 p.m., on Thursday, April 16, 2015, Senate begin consideration of the nominations of Russell C. Deyo, of New Jersey, to be Under Secretary for Management, Department of Homeland Security, and Jonodev Osceola Chaudhuri, of Arizona, to be Chairman of the National Indian Gaming Commission for the term of three years; Senate vote on confirmation of the nominations, without intervening action or debate; and that no further motions be in order. **Pages S2223–24**

Nominations Received: Senate received the following nominations:

Linda Struyk Millsaps, of North Carolina, to be a Member of the Internal Revenue Service Oversight Board for a term expiring September 14, 2018.

Thomas Edgar Rothman, of Maryland, to be a Member of the National Council on the Arts for a term expiring September 3, 2016.

Wilhelmina Marie Wright, of Minnesota, to be United States District Judge for the District of Minnesota.

Routine lists in the Foreign Service. **Pages S2224–26**

Messages from the House: **Page S2215**

Measures Referred: **Page S2215**

Executive Communications: **Pages S2215–20**

Additional Cosponsors: **Pages S2221–22**

Statements on Introduced Bills/Resolutions: **Pages S2222–23**

Additional Statements: **Pages S2213-15**

Authorities for Committees to Meet: **Page S2223**

Record Votes: Nine record votes were taken today. (Total—153) **Pages S2198, S2208–12**

Adjournment: Senate convened at 9:30 a.m. and adjourned at 7:34 p.m., until 10 a.m. on Thursday, April 16, 2015. (For Senate's program, see the remarks of the Acting Majority Leader in today's Record on page S2224.)

Committee Meetings

(Committees not listed did not meet)

APPROPRIATIONS: MILITARY CONSTRUCTION AND MILITARY FAMILY HOUSING FOR SELECT COMBATANT COMMANDERS AND SELECT DEFENSE AGENCIES

Committee on Appropriations: Subcommittee on Military Construction and Veterans Affairs, and Related Agencies concluded a hearing to examine proposed budget estimates and justification for fiscal year 2016 for military construction and military family housing for select combatant commanders and select defense agencies, after receiving testimony from Major General Stephen A. Clark, USAF, Director of Force Structure, Requirements, Resources, and Strategic Assessments (J8), U.S. Special Operations Command, Major General Michael G. Dana, USMC, Director for Strategic Planning and Policy (J5), U.S. Pacific Command, Joseph B. Marshal, Jr., Director, Business Support Directorate, Defense Health Agency, and Brigadier General Kenneth E. Todarov, USAF, Deputy Director, Missile Defense Agency, all of the Department of the Defense.

APPROPRIATIONS: NATIONAL INTELLIGENCE AND MILITARY INTELLIGENCE PROGRAMS

Committee on Appropriations: Subcommittee on Department of Defense concluded a closed hearing to examine proposed budget estimates and justification for fiscal year 2016 for the national intelligence and military intelligence programs, after receiving testimony from James Clapper, Director of National Intelligence; and Michael Vickers, Undersecretary of Defense for Intelligence.

FUNDING THE DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY'S ROLE IN CYBERSECURITY

Committee on Appropriations: Subcommittee on Department of Homeland Security concluded a hearing to examine funding the Department of Homeland Security's role in cybersecurity, focusing on protection to partnership, after receiving testimony from Andy Ozment, Assistant Secretary for Cybersecurity and Communication, National Protection and Programs Directorate, and Luke McCormack, Chief Information Officer, both of the Department of Homeland Security; and Greg Garcia, Financial Services Sector Coordinating Council, Reston Virginia.

DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION REQUEST AND FUTURE YEARS DEFENSE PROGRAM

Committee on Armed Services: Subcommittee on SeaPower received a closed briefing on the major threats facing Navy forces and the Navy's current and projected capabilities to meet those threats in review of the Defense Authorization Request for fiscal year 2016 and the Future Years Defense Program, after receiving testimony from Charles P. Werchado, Deputy Director, Assessment Division (OPNAV N81), Vice Admiral Joseph P. Aucoin, Deputy Chief of Naval Operations for Warfare Systems (OPNAV N9), and Margaret G. Palmieri, Director, Integrated Fires (OPNAV N2/N6F3), Office of Chief of Naval Operations, all of the Department of the Navy, Department of Defense.

DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION REQUEST AND FUTURE YEARS DEFENSE PROGRAM

Committee on Armed Services: Subcommittee on Strategic Forces concluded a hearing to examine the National Nuclear Security Administration plans and programs in review of the Defense Authorization Request for fiscal year 2016 and the Future Years Defense Program, after receiving testimony from Frank G. Klotz, Under Secretary for Nuclear Security, and Administrator, Donald L. Cook, Deputy Administrator for Defense Programs, Anne M. Harrington, Deputy Administrator for Defense Nuclear Nonproliferation, and Admiral John M. Richardson, USN, Director, Naval Nuclear Propulsion, and Office of Naval Reactors, all of the National Nuclear Security Administration, Department of Energy; and David C. Trimble, Director, Natural Resources and Environment, Government Accountability Office.

NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION BUDGET

Committee on Environment and Public Works: Committee concluded an oversight hearing to examine the President's proposed budget request for fiscal year 2016 for the Nuclear Regulatory Commission, after receiving testimony from Stephen G. Burns, Chairman, and Kristine Svinicki, William Ostendorff, and Jeff Baran, each a Commissioner, all of the Nuclear Regulatory Commission.

AMERICAN FOOD AID

Committee on Foreign Relations: Committee concluded a hearing to examine American food aid, focusing on why reform matters, after receiving testimony from Dina Esposito, Director, Food for Peace, United States Agency for International Development; David Ray, CARE USA, Washington, D.C.; Vincent H.

Smith, Montana State University, Bozeman, on behalf of the American Enterprise Institute; and Stephanie Mercier, Farm Journal Foundation, Alexandria, Virginia.

IRS CHALLENGES IN IMPLEMENTING THE AFFORDABLE CARE ACT

Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs: Committee concluded a hearing to examine Internal Revenue Service challenges in implementing the Affordable Care Act, after receiving testimony from John A. Koskinen, Commissioner, Internal Revenue Service, Department of the Treasury.

BUSINESS MEETING

Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions: Committee continued consideration of an original bill entitled, ''Every Child Achieves Act of 2015'', an original bill entitled, ''WIOA Technical Amendments Act'', and the nominations of Ericka M. Miller, of Virginia, to be Assistant Secretary for Postsecondary Education, and Michael Keith Yudin, of the District of Columbia, to be Assistant Secretary for Special Education and Rehabilitative Services, both of the Department of Education, but did not complete action thereon, and will meet again on Thursday, April 16, 2015.

ASSET FORFEITURE REFORM

Committee on the Judiciary: Committee concluded a hearing to examine the need to reform asset forfeiture, after receiving testimony from Senator Paul; Darpana M. Sheth, Institute for Justice, Arlington, Virginia; Chuck Canterbury, Fraternal Order of Police, Washington, D.C.; Jonathan P. Bach, Cooley LLP, New York, New York, on behalf of the New York Council of Defense Lawyers; and Russ Caswell, Tewksbury, Massachusetts.

INTELLIGENCE

Select Committee on Intelligence: Committee met in closed session to receive a briefing on certain intelligence matters from officials of the intelligence community.

IRS IMPERSONATION SCAM

Special Committee on Aging: Committee concluded a hearing to examine the IRS impersonation scam and the government's response, after receiving testimony from Julie Brill, Commissioner, Federal Trade Commission; Alysa D. Erichs, Special Agent in Charge, Homeland Security Investigations Miami, Immigration and Customs Enforcement, Department of Homeland Security; Jason Moore, Auburn Maine Police Department; and Al Cadenhead, Charlotte, North Carolina.

House of Representatives

Chamber Action

Public Bills and Resolutions Introduced: 35 public bills, H.R. 1795–1829; and 6 resolutions, H. Res. 201–206, were introduced. **Pages H2268–69**

Additional Cosponsors: **Pages H2270–71**

Reports Filed: Reports were filed today as follows:

H.R. 373, to direct the Secretary of the Interior and Secretary of Agriculture to expedite access to certain Federal land under the administrative jurisdiction of each Secretary for good Samaritan search-and-recovery missions, and for other purposes (H. Rept. 114–75, Part 1);

H.R. 404, to authorize early repayment of obligations to the Bureau of Reclamation within the Northport Irrigation District in the State of Nebraska (H. Rept. 114–76);

H.R. 533, to revoke the charter of incorporation of the Miami Tribe of Oklahoma at the request of that tribe, and for other purposes (H. Rept. 114–77);

H.R. 984, to amend the National Trails System Act to direct the Secretary of the Interior to conduct a study on the feasibility of designating the Chief Standing Bear National Historic Trail, and for other purposes (H. Rept. 114–78);

H.R. 1168, to amend the Indian Child Protection and Family Violence Prevention Act to require background checks before foster care placements are ordered in tribal court proceedings, and for other purposes (H. Rept. 114–79);

H.R. 1324, to adjust the boundary of the Arapaho National Forest, Colorado, and for other purposes (H. Rept. 114–80);

H.R. 979, to designate a mountain in the John Muir Wilderness of the Sierra National Forest as ''Sky Point'' (H. Rept. 114–81); and

Committee on Oversight and Government Reform; Oversight Plans for all House Committees (H. Rept. 114–82). **Pages H2267–68**

Speaker: Read a letter from the Speaker wherein he appointed Representative Jolly to act as Speaker pro tempore for today. **Page H2215**

Recess: The House recessed at 10:32 a.m. and reconvened at 12 noon. **Page H2218**

Guest Chaplain: The prayer was offered by the Guest Chaplain, Reverend Kenny Gooden, Union Grove Baptist Church, Yadkinville, North Carolina. **Page H2218**

Suspensions: The House agreed to suspend the rules and pass the following measures:

Taxpayer Bill of Rights Act of 2015: H.R. 1058, amended, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to clarify that a duty of the Commissioner of Internal Revenue is to ensure that Internal Revenue Service employees are familiar with and act in accord with certain taxpayer rights; **Pages H2230–32**

IRS Email Transparency Act: H.R. 1152, amended, to prohibit officers and employees of the Internal Revenue Service from using personal email accounts to conduct official business; **Pages H2232–33**

Taxpayer Knowledge of IRS Investigations Act: H.R. 1026, amended, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permit the release of information regarding the status of certain investigations; **Pages H2233–35**

Ensuring Tax Exempt Organizations the Right to Appeal Act: H.R. 1314, amended, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to provide for a right to an administrative appeal relating to adverse determinations of tax-exempt status of certain organizations; **Pages H2235–36**

IRS Bureaucracy Reduction and Judicial Review Act: H.R. 1295, amended, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to improve the process for making determinations with respect to whether organizations are exempt from taxation under section 501(c)(4) of such Code; **Pages H2236–38**

Prevent Targeting at the IRS Act: H.R. 709, amended, to provide for the termination of employment of employees of the Internal Revenue Service who take certain official actions for political purposes; **Pages H2238–40**

Fair Treatment for All Gifts Act: H.R. 1104, amended, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to provide a deduction from the gift tax for gifts made to certain exempt organizations; and **Pages H2240–41**

Contracting and Tax Accountability Act of 2015: H.R. 1562, to prohibit the awarding of a contract or grant in excess of the simplified acquisition threshold unless the prospective contractor or grantee certifies in writing to the agency awarding the contract or grant that the contractor or grantee has no seriously delinquent tax debts, by a ⅔ yea-and-nay vote of 424 yeas with none voting ''nay'', Roll No. 156. **Pages H2241–43, H2251–52**

Meeting Hour: Agreed by unanimous consent that when the House adjourns today, it adjourn to meet at 9 a.m. tomorrow, April 16. **Page H2249**

Recess: The House recessed at 4:15 p.m. and reconvened at 4:29 p.m. **Page H2249**

Suspension—Failed: The House failed to agree to suspend the rules and pass the following measure:

Federal Employee Tax Accountability Act of 2015: H.R. 1563, amended, to amend title 5, United States Code, to provide that individuals having seriously delinquent tax debts shall be ineligible for Federal employment, by a ⅔ yea-and-nay vote of 266 yeas to 160 nays, Roll No. 157. **Pages H2243–49, H2252**

State and Local Sales Tax Deduction Fairness Act of 2015, Death Tax Repeal Act of 2015, and Bureau of Consumer Financial Protection Advisory Boards Act: The House agreed to H. Res. 200, the rule providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 622) to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to make permanent the deduction of State and local general sales taxes; providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 1105) to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to repeal the estate and generation-skipping transfer taxes, and for other purposes; and providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 1195) to amend the Consumer Financial Protection Act of 2010 to establish advisory boards, by a recorded vote of 242 ayes to 182 noes, Roll No. 155, after the previous question was ordered by a yea-and-nay vote of 240 yeas to 183 nays, Roll No. 154. **Pages H2223–30, H2250–51**

Senate Messages: Messages received from the Senate by the Clerk and subsequently presented to the House today appear on page H2219.

Quorum Calls—Votes: Three yea-and-nay votes and one recorded vote developed during the proceedings of today and appear on pages H2250, H2250–51, H2251–52, and H2252. There were no quorum calls.

Adjournment: The House met at 10 a.m. and adjourned at 7:42 p.m.

Committee Meetings

THE PAST, PRESENT, AND FUTURE OF SNAP: THE WORLD OF NUTRITION AND THE ROLE OF THE CHARITABLE SECTOR

Committee on Agriculture: Full Committee held a hearing entitled ''The Past, Present, and Future of SNAP: The World of Nutrition and the Role of the Charitable Sector''. Testimony was heard from public witnesses.

MEMBERS' DAY

Committee on Appropriations: Subcommittee on Defense held a hearing for Members of Congress. Testimony was heard from Chairman Miller of Florida and Representatives Lowenthal, Ted Lieu of California, Jolly, McGovern, Heck of Washington, Johnson of Georgia, Cook, Byrne, Carter of Georgia, Rothfus, Lawrence, and Wagner.

APPROPRIATIONS—SECURITIES AND EXCHANGE COMMISSION

Committee on Appropriations: Subcommittee on Financial Services and General Government held a hearing on Securities and Exchange Commission budget. Testimony was heard from Mary Jo White, Chair, Securities and Exchange Commission.

APPROPRIATIONS—EBOLA

Committee on Appropriations: Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education held a hearing on Ebola budget. Testimony was heard from Nicole Lurie, MD, Assistant Secretary for Preparedness and Response, United States Public Health Service, Department of Health and Human Services; Thomas R. Frieden, MD, Director, Centers of Disease Control and Prevention; Anthony S. Fauci, MD, Director, National Institute of Allergy and Infections Diseases, National Institutes of Health; and Robin Robinson, Director, Biomedical Advanced Research and Development, Deputy Assistant Secretary for Preparedness and Response, Department of Health and Human Services.

MISCELLANEOUS MEASURE

Committee on Appropriations: Subcommittee on Energy and Water Development held a markup on appropriations bill for fiscal year 2016. The bill was forwarded to the full committee, without amendment.

APPROPRIATIONS—IMMIGRATION AND CUSTOMS ENFORCEMENT

Committee on Appropriations: Subcommittee on Homeland Security held a hearing on Immigration and Customs Enforcement budget. Testimony was heard from Sarah R. Saldaña, Director, Immigration and Customs Enforcement.

MISCELLANEOUS MEASURE

Committee on Appropriations: Subcommittee on Military Construction, Veterans Affairs, and Related Agencies held a markup on appropriations bill for fiscal year 2016. The bill was forwarded to the full committee, without amendment.

APPROPRIATIONS—UNITED NATIONS AND INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

Committee on Appropriations: Subcommittee on State, Foreign Operations, and Related Programs held a hearing on United Nations and International Organizations budget. Testimony was heard from Samantha Power, United States Ambassador to the United Nations.

THE RISK OF LOSING MILITARY TECHNOLOGY SUPERIORITY AND ITS IMPLICATIONS FOR U.S. POLICY, STRATEGY, AND POSTURE IN THE ASIA-PACIFIC

Committee on Armed Services: Full Committee held a hearing entitled ''The Risk of Losing Military Technology Superiority and Its Implications for U.S. Policy, Strategy, and Posture in the Asia-Pacific''. Testimony was heard from Admiral Samuel J. Locklear, USN, Commander, U.S. Pacific Command; General Curtis M. Scaparrotti, USA, Commander, U.S. Forces Korea; and Christine E. Wormuth, Under Secretary of Defense for Policy.

THE ROLE OF SURFACE FORCES IN PRESENCE, DETERRENCE, AND WARFIGHTING

Committee on Armed Services: Subcommittee on Seapower and Projection Forces held a hearing entitled ''The Role of Surface Forces in Presence, Deterrence, and Warfighting''. Testimony was heard from public witnesses.

FISCAL YEAR 2016 NUCLEAR FORCES HEARING

Committee on Armed Services: Subcommittee on Strategic Forces held a hearing entitled ''Fiscal Year 2016 Nuclear Forces Hearing''. Testimony was heard from the following Department of Defense officials: Vice Admiral Terry J. Benedict, USN, Director, Strategic Systems Programs; Major General Garrett Harencak, USAF, Assistant Chief of Staff for Strategic Deterrence and Nuclear Integration; Arthur T. Hopkins, Acting Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Nuclear, Chemical, and Biological Defense Programs; and Robert M. Scher, Assistant Secretary of Defense for Strategy, Plans, and Capabilities.

SERVING STUDENTS AND FAMILIES THROUGH CHILD NUTRITION PROGRAMS

Committee on Education and the Workforce: Full Committee held a hearing entitled ''Serving Students and Families through Child Nutrition Programs''. Testimony was heard from public witnesses.

MISCELLANEOUS MEASURES

Committee on Energy and Commerce: Full Committee held a markup on H.R. 1734, the ''Improving Coal Combustion Residuals Regulation Act of 2015''; H.R. 906, to modify the efficiency standards for grid-enabled water heaters; and H.R. 1770, the ''Data Security and Breach Notification Act of 2015''. The following bills were ordered reported, as amended: H.R. 906 and H.R. 1770. The following bill was ordered reported, without amendment: H.R. 1734.

EXAMINING REGULATORY BURDENS ON NON-DEPOSITORY FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS

Committee on Financial Services: Subcommittee on Financial Institutions and Consumer Credit held a hearing entitled ''Examining Regulatory Burdens on Non-Depository Financial Institutions''. Testimony was heard from public witnesses.

CONFRONTING RUSSIA'S WEAPONIZATION OF INFORMATION

Committee on Foreign Affairs: Full Committee held a hearing entitled ''Confronting Russia's Weaponization of Information''. Testimony was heard from public witnesses.

MISCELLANEOUS MEASURES

Committee on Foreign Affairs: Subcommittee on Africa, Global Health, Global Human Rights, and International Organizations held a markup on H.R. 1150, to amend the International Religious Freedom Act of 1998 to improve the ability of the United States to advance religious freedom globally through enhanced diplomacy, training, counterterrorism, and foreign assistance efforts, and through stronger and more flexible political responses to religious freedom violations and violent extremism worldwide, and for other purposes; and H. Res. 50, calling for the release of Ukrainian fighter pilot Nadiya Savchenko, who was captured by Russian forces in Eastern Ukraine and has been held illegally in a Russian prison since July 2014. H.R. 1150 was forwarded to the full committee, without amendment. H. Res. 50 was forwarded to the full committee, as amended.

THE CONTINUING THREAT OF NEGLECTED TROPICAL DISEASES

Committee on Foreign Affairs: Subcommittee on Africa, Global Health, Global Human Rights, and International Organizations held a hearing entitled ''The Continuing Threat of Neglected Tropical Diseases''. Testimony was heard from Ariel Pablos-Méndez, M.D., Assistant Administrator, Bureau for Global Health, U.S. Agency for International Development; and public witnesses.

MISCELLANEOUS MEASURES

Committee on the Judiciary: Full Committee began a markup on H.R. 427, the ''Regulations From the Executive in Need of Scrutiny Act of 2015''; H.R. 1759, the ''All Economic Regulations are Transparent Act of 2015''; and H.R. 758, the ''Lawsuit Abuse Reduction Act of 2015''. The following bill was ordered reported, as amended: H.R. 427. The following bill was ordered reported, without amendment: H.R. 1759. The committee began consideration of H.R. 758.

ANALYZING MISCONDUCT IN FEDERAL LAW ENFORCEMENT

Committee on the Judiciary: Subcommittee on Crime, Terrorism, Homeland Security, and Investigations held a hearing entitled ''Analyzing Misconduct in Federal Law Enforcement''. Testimony was heard from Michael E. Horowitz, Inspector General, Department of Justice; John Roth, Inspector General, Department of Homeland Security; Herman E. ''Chuck'' Whaley, Deputy Chief Inspector, Office of Professional Responsibility, Drug Enforcement Administration, Department of Justice; and Mark Hughes, Chief Integrity Officer, Secret Service, Department of Homeland Security.

FEDERAL LAND ACQUISITION AND ITS IMPACTS ON COMMUNITIES AND THE ENVIRONMENT

Committee on Natural Resources: Subcommittee on Federal Lands held a hearing entitled ''Federal Land Acquisition and its Impacts on Communities and the Environment''. Testimony was heard from Robert A. Lovingood, Supervisor, First District San Bernardino County; and public witnesses.

EXAMINING THE FUTURE IMPACTS OF PRESIDENT OBAMA'S OFFSHORE ENERGY PLAN

Committee on Natural Resources: Subcommittee on Energy and Mineral Resources held a hearing entitled ''Examining the Future Impacts of President Obama's Offshore Energy Plan''. Testimony was heard from Pat McCrory, Governor, State of North Carolina; Abigail Hopper, Director, Bureau of Ocean

Energy Management, Department of the Interior; Emilie Swearingen, Commissioner, Town of Kure Beach, North Carolina; and public witnesses.

OVERSIGHT OF EFFORTS TO REFORM THE EXPORT-IMPORT BANK OF THE UNITED STATES

Committee on Oversight and Government Reform: Subcommittee on Health Care, Benefits and Administrative Rules; and Subcommittee on Monetary Policy and Trade of the Committee on Financial Services, held a joint hearing entitled ''Oversight of Efforts to Reform the Export-Import Bank of the United States''. Testimony was heard from the following Export-Import Bank of the United States officials: Michael T. McCarthy, Acting Inspector General, Office of Inspector General; Mark S. Thorum, Assistant Inspector General for Inspections and Evaluations, Office of Inspector General; Fred P. Hochberg, Chairman and President; and Nathan Sheets, Undersecretary for International Affairs, Department of Treasury; and Kimberly M. Gianopoulos, Director of Advocacy, International Affairs and Trade Team, Government Accountability Office.

THE TAXPAYER ADVOCATE'S ANNUAL REPORT

Committee on Oversight and Government Reform: Subcommittee on Government Operations held a hearing entitled ''The Taxpayer Advocate's Annual Report''. Testimony was heard from Nina Olson, National Taxpayer Advocate, Internal Revenue Service.

THE PRESIDENT'S UN CLIMATE PLEDGE: SCIENTIFICALLY JUSTIFIED OR A NEW TAX ON AMERICANS?

Committee on Science, Space, and Technology: Full Committee held a hearing entitled ''The President's UN Climate Pledge: Scientifically Justified or a New Tax on Americans?''. Testimony was heard from public witnesses.

TAX REFORM: ENSURING THAT MAIN STREET ISN'T LEFT BEHIND

Committee on Small Business: Full Committee held a hearing entitled ''Tax Reform: Ensuring that Main Street Isn't Left Behind''. Testimony was heard from public witnesses.

MISCELLANEOUS MEASURES

Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure: Full Committee held a markup on H.R. 1732, the ''Regulatory Integrity Protection Act''; H.R. 1471, the ''FEMA Disaster Assistance Reform Act of 2015''; H.R. 1472, the ''Integrated Public Alert and Warning System Modernization Act of 2015''; H.R. 1473, the ''John F. Kennedy Center Reauthorization Act of 2015''; H.R. 944, to reauthorize the National Estuary Program, and for other purposes; H.R. 336, to direct the Administrator of General Services, on behalf of the Archivist of the United States, to convey certain Federal property located in the State of Alaska to the Municipality of Anchorage, Alaska; H.R. 172, to designate the United States courthouse located at 501 East Court Street in Jackson, Mississippi, as the ''R. Jess Brown United States Courthouse''; H. Con. Res. 21, authorizing the use of the Capitol Grounds for the Greater Washington Soap Box Derby; H. Con. Res. 25, authorizing the use of the Capitol Grounds for the National Peace Officers Memorial Service and the National Honor Guard and Pipe Band Exhibition; and H.R. 1690, to designate the United States courthouse located at 700 Grant Street in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, as the ''Joseph F. Weis Jr. United States Courthouse''. The following bills were ordered reported, as amended: H.R. 1732 and H.R. 1471. The following legislation was ordered reported, without amendment: H.R. 1472, H.R. 944, H.R. 1473, H.R. 336, H.R. 172, H.R. 1690, H. Con. Res. 21, and H. Con. Res. 25.

AN OVERVIEW OF THE U.S. COAST GUARD'S MISSIONS

Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure: Subcommittee on Coast Guard and Maritime Transportation held a hearing entitled ''An Overview of the U.S. Coast Guard's Missions''. Testimony was heard from Vice Admiral Charles Michel, United States Coast Guard Deputy Commandant for Operations.

DENVER VA MEDICAL CENTER: CONSTRUCTING A WAY FORWARD

Committee on Veterans' Affairs: Full Committee held a hearing entitled ''Denver VA Medical Center: Constructing a Way Forward''. Testimony was heard from Lloyd C. Caldwell, Director of Military Programs, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Department of the Army; and Sloan D. Gibson, Deputy Secretary, Department of Veterans Affairs.

SPECIAL ACTIVITIES

Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence: Subcommittee on the National Security Agency and Cybersecurity held a hearing on special activities. This hearing was closed.

Joint Meetings

SMALL BUSINESS GROWTH

Joint Economic Committee: Committee concluded a hearing to examine if taxes are holding back small business growth, after receiving testimony from Brian Reardon, S Corporation Association, and Holly

Wade, National Federation of Independent Business, both of Washington, D.C.; Jody Fledderman, Batesville Tool and Die, Batesville, Indiana; Thomas A. Hoghaug, Signus Medical LLC, Chanhassen, Minnesota; and Martin A. Sullivan, Tax Analysts, Falls Church, Virginia.

COMMITTEE MEETINGS FOR THURSDAY, APRIL 16, 2015

(Committee meetings are open unless otherwise indicated)

Senate

Committee on Appropriations: Subcommittee on Departments of Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education, and Related Agencies, to hold hearings to examine proposed budget estimates and justification for fiscal year 2016 for the Department of Education, 10 a.m., SD–124.

Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies, to hold hearings to examine proposed budget estimates and justification for fiscal year 2016 for the National Aeronautics and Space Administration, 2:30 p.m., SD–192.

Committee on Armed Services: to hold hearings to examine U.S. Pacific Command and U.S. Forces Korea in review of the Defense Authorization Request for fiscal year 2016 and the Future Years Defense Program, 9:30 a.m., SD–G50.

Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs: to hold hearings to examine regulatory burdens to obtaining mortgage credit, 10 a.m., SD–538.

Committee on Energy and Natural Resources: to hold hearings to examine the Energy Information Administration's annual energy outlook for 2015, 10 a.m., SD–366.

Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions: business meeting to continue consideration of an original bill entitled, ''Every Child Achieves Act of 2015'', an original bill entitled, ''WIOA Technical Amendments Act'', and the nominations of Ericka M. Miller, of Virginia, to be Assistant Secretary for Postsecondary Education, and Michael Keith Yudin, of the District of Columbia, to be Assistant Secretary for Special Education and Rehabilitative Services, both of the Department of Education, 12:30 p.m., SH–216.

Committee on the Judiciary: business meeting to consider the nominations of Sally Quillian Yates, of Georgia, to be Deputy Attorney General, Department of Justice, Kara Farnandez Stoll, of Virginia, to be United States Circuit Judge for the Federal Circuit, and Roseann A. Ketchmark, to be United States District Judge for the Western District of Missouri, 10 a.m., SD–226.

Select Committee on Intelligence: to hold closed hearings to examine certain intelligence matters, 2 p.m., SH–219.

House

Committee on Energy and Commerce, Subcommittee on Health, hearing entitled ''Medicare Post Acute Care Delivery and Options to Improve It'', 10:15 a.m., 2322 Rayburn.

Subcommittee on Commerce, Manufacturing and Trade, hearing entitled ''H.R. ____, Targeting Rogue and Opaque Letters (TROL) Act'', 11 a.m., 2123 Rayburn.

Committee on Financial Services, Subcommittee on Housing and Insurance, hearing entitled ''The Future of Housing in America: Increasing Private Sector Participation in Affordable Housing'', 9:15 a.m., 2175 Rayburn.

Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, Subcommittee on Government Operations, hearing entitled ''The Worst Places to Work in the Federal Government'', 9 a.m., 2154 Rayburn.

Committee on Science, Space, and Technology, Subcommittee on Space, hearing entitled ''An Overview of the Budget Proposal for the National Aeronautics and Space Administration for Fiscal Year 2016'', 9 a.m., 2318 Rayburn.

Committee on Veterans' Affairs, Subcommittee on Economic Opportunity, markup on H.R. 473, the ''Increasing the Department of Veterans Affairs Accountability to Veterans Act of 2015''; H.R. 475, the ''GI Bill Processing Improvement Act of 2015''; H.R. 476, the ''GI Bill Education Quality Enhancement Act of 2015''; H.R. 1382, the ''Boosting Rates of American Veteran Employment Act''; H.R. 456, the ''Reducing Barriers for Veterans Education Act of 2015''; H.R. 474, the ''Homeless Veterans' Reintegration Programs Reauthorization Act of 2015''; H.R. 643, the ''Veterans Education Survey Act of 2015''; H.R. 1038, the ''Ensuring VA Employee Accountability Act''; H.R. 1141, the ''GI Bill Fairness Act of 2015''; H.R. 1187, to amend title 38, United States Code, to adjust certain limits on the guaranteed amount of a home loan under the home loan program of the Department of Veterans Affairs; and H.R. 1313, the ''Service Disabled Veteran Owned Small Business Relief Act'', 10 a.m., 334 Cannon.

Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence, Subcommittee on Department of Defense Intelligence and Overhead Architecture, hearing on NRO budget, 9 a.m., HVC–304. This hearing will be closed.

Subcommittee on Department of Defense Intelligence and Overhead Architecture, hearing on NGA budget, 10:15 a.m., HVC–304. This hearing will be closed.

Next Meeting of the SENATE

10 a.m., Thursday, April 16

Senate Chamber

Program for Thursday: Senate will resume consideration of S. 178, Justice for Victims of Trafficking Act, and vote on the motion to invoke cloture on McConnell (for Cornyn) Amendment No. 1120 to the bill at approximately 11 a.m. The filing deadline for second-degree amendments to McConnell (for Cornyn) Amendment No. 1120 to the bill is at 10:30 a.m.

At approximately 2 p.m., Senate will vote on confirmation of the nominations of Russell C. Deyo, of New Jersey, to be Under Secretary for Management, Department of Homeland Security, and Jonodev Osceola Chaudhuri, of Arizona, to be Chairman of the National Indian Gaming Commission.

Next Meeting of the HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

9 a.m., Thursday, April 16

House Chamber

Program for Thursday: Consideration of H.R. 622—State and Local Sales Tax Deduction Fairness Act of 2015 (Subject to a Rule), H.R. 1105—Bureau of Consumer Financial Protection Advisory Boards Act (Subject to a Rule), and H.R. 1195—Death Tax Repeal Act of 2015 (Subject to a Rule).

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