United States of America

Congressional Record

PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES OF THE 114th CONGRESS, FIRST SESSION

Vol. 161 WASHINGTON, THURSDAY, JULY 30, 2015 No. 122

House of Representatives

The House was not in session today. Its next meeting will be held on Friday, July 31, 2015, at 1 p.m.

Senate

THURSDAY, JULY 30, 2015

The Senate met at 10 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.

Eternal God, enthroned above all other powers, thank You for the gift of this day. Use our lawmakers for Your glory. May they find obedience to You not a burden but a delight. May they find the cost of loyalty to Your precepts not a trial but a privilege, as they discover in Your Words wings to uplift our Nation and world.

Lord, inspire our Senators to make decisions that will build monuments of moral excellence and courage for generations to come. Open their eyes to Your wisdom, as You continue to uphold our Nation with Your powerful hand.

We pray in Your Holy 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. ROUNDS). The majority leader is recognized.

NATIONAL WHISTLEBLOWER APPRECIATION DAY

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the consideration of S. Res. 236, which was submitted earlier today.

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

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 236) designating July 30, 2015, as ''National Whistleblower Appreciation Day.''

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

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the resolution be agreed to, the preamble be agreed to, and the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate.

The resolution (S. Res. 236) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

(The resolution, with its preamble, is printed in today's RECORD under ''Submitted Resolutions.'')

THE HIGHWAY BILL

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, many thought we would never get here, but we have. Later today, the Senate will pass a multiyear highway bill that does not raise taxes by a penny, and we will do it on a broad bipartisan basis. This is more than just another accomplishment for the Senate. It is a win for our country because the bill would cut redtape and streamline regulations, it would modernize infrastructure and advance research and innovation, it would enact new transparency measures to empower Americans to see how much of their tax money is actually being spent, and because it is a multiyear bill it would give States, cities, and towns the certainty they need to better plan road and bridge projects well into the future.

The multiyear nature of this legislation is one of its most critical components. It is also something the House and Senate are not united on. We all want the House to have the space it needs to develop its own bill because we all want to work out the best possible legislation for the American people in conference later this year. So we will take up a measure this afternoon to give them that space, while also delivering important relief to veterans.

The bill will extend a helping hand to heroes who need it by covering unfunded requirements the administration failed to budget for. I hope we will rally in support of veterans when that measure is considered, just as we continue to rally in support of a multiyear bipartisan and fiscally responsible highway bill we will pass today.

Some never thought this day would come, but thanks to the enduring dedication of Senators on both sides of the aisle—in particular, Senator INHOFE, Senator BOXER, as well as Senator THUNE, Senator NELSON, and Senator HATCH—it is here.

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

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NUCLEAR AGREEMENT WITH IRAN

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, on another matter, the purpose of the Iran Nuclear Agreement Review Act is to ensure Congress has a fully informed understanding of any comprehensive agreement reached between the administration and Iran. These are principles both parties endorsed when they voted overwhelmingly to pass that measure earlier this year. These are principles President Obama endorsed when he signed it into law. These are principles that need to be upheld.

That is why I recently joined Speaker BOEHNER, Senator COTTON, and Congressman POMPEO in calling on the administration to comply with the terms of this law by providing the Senate with the text of the two side agreements reached between Iran and the IAEA. That was more than a week ago, but we still have yet to receive it. Without this critical information, Republicans and Democrats in Congress may not be able to properly assess such a highly consequential deal with Iran. That is simply not acceptable. The administration needs to turn over the side agreements without delay. Let me say that again. The administration needs to turn over the side agreements without delay.

Even considering all this, the Senate has already begun its necessary oversight of the deal that will soon be before us. The Armed Services Committee held a hearing yesterday on the strategic and military implications of the deal. The Foreign Relations Committee also held a hearing yesterday to consider the alternatives to this agreement.

Today it will consider the implications of sanctions relief for Iran, along with Congress's ability to impose additional sanctions if Tehran persists in its support of terrorism. The Intelligence Committee has already embarked on a series of briefings and hearings that will help Congress determine whether the deal can even be verified.

As the review moves forward, we will continue working to assess the relative threat posed to the Greater Middle East and to the United States by an Iranian regime empowered with a threshold nuclear program and billions of dollars of additional resources. I know this worries a lot of Members in both parties.

Consider what the top Democrat on the House Foreign Affairs Committee said just this week:

> I'm troubled that what this essentially does is after fifteen years it legitimizes Iran as a nuclear threshold state. After fifteen years Iran can produce weapons-grade highly-enriched uranium without limitations and that is disturbing because what that means to me is it really doesn't prevent Iran from having a nuclear weapon. It just postpones it.

That is the top Democrat on the House Foreign Affairs Committee. He is not the only Democrat or Republican with these types of concerns. We will keep working for answers.

We will also keep pressing for a more fulsome revelation of the true extent of the possible military dimensions of Iran's nuclear program.

Understanding Iran's relative trustworthiness in the past will be critical to determining Iran's potential for trustworthiness in the future—whether, for instance, it can truly be trusted to live up to its commitments in today's agreement. Getting a fuller picture of Iran's past nuclear activities and research will also be important to ensuring the U.N. Security Council, which rushed to approve the comprehensive deal, has a more comprehensive understanding moving forward.

We will continue working hard to assess this agreement on behalf of the American people who absolutely deserve a say in a deal of this magnitude. At the end, Congress will take a vote and answer a simple but powerful question: Will this agreement actually make America and its allies safer?

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Democratic leader is recognized.

50TH ANNIVERSARY OF MEDICARE AND MEDICAID

Mr. REID. Mr. President, Republicans called it ''the beginning of socialized medicine.'' The Wall Street Journal accused Democrats and the President of ''politicking with a nation's health.'' One Republican Senator called the health care law ''brazen socialism.''

Further:

> It is not needed. It is socialism. It moves the country in a direction which is not good for anyone, whether they be young or old. It charts a course from which there will be no turning back. . . . It is not only socialism—it is brazen socialism.

You would think that based on the 50-plus times of trying to overturn ObamaCare, that is what the Republican Senators were talking about, but, no, that was Medicare. They weren't talking about ObamaCare; Medicare is what they were talking about.

Fifty years ago, President Lyndon Johnson signed into law Medicare and Medicaid. At that time, conservatives believed that access to health care through government was the worst possible decision any elected official could make—and so many Republicans, the same thing. In fact, Republicans still do feel that way. Even after decades of Medicare's success, they are still clamoring for the program's elimination or massive changes.

Jeb Bush—a frontrunner for the Republican Presidential nomination—called for ''phasing out'' Medicare. Where did he do this? At a Koch brothers rally in New Hampshire. Jeb Bush—a frontrunner for the Republican Presidential nomination—said let's phase out Medicare. How about that one?

For half a century, Republicans have continued to attack Medicare, despite all the good it has done. They have tried to privatize Medicare and turn it into a voucher system and reduce benefits for seniors. Republicans attacked the closing of the prescription drug doughnut hole and elimination of cost-sharing for preventative coverage simply because they were improvements made by the Affordable Care Act.

Republicans have repeatedly sought to destroy Medicaid, and Republican Governors have turned back millions of Federal dollars and denied their citizens, the most needy of all, coverage simply because of ideology.

This week they renewed their never-ending assault on women's health by trying to defund Planned Parenthood in reaction to a radical rightwing crusade by an extremist group. American women value Planned Parenthood because they know Planned Parenthood provides vital health care services to millions of women, but Republicans are choosing to disseminate access to the health services of women. Women need this health care to stay healthy.

Why are they doing it? I guess, to further their political agenda. When will the Republican attack on effective health care programs end?

Medicare and Medicaid have positively affected and even saved millions of Americans' lives. Before Medicare, nearly half of all seniors age 65 and older were uninsured. The elderly were discriminated against simply because of their age. If you were fortunate enough to have health insurance, you paid over 50 percent of the cost straight out of your pocket.

My first elected job was from Clark County. That is in Las Vegas, NV. I was chosen to be a member of the board of trustees of Southern Nevada Memorial Hospital—the largest hospital district in Nevada. After a year or so, I became chairman of the board of trustees. I was there when Medicare came into being. Prior to Medicare, more than 40 percent of all seniors who came into our hospital were required to have a brother, a son, a daughter, a mother, a father, a husband, a wife or a neighbor sign on the dotted line, saying: If that bill is not paid, we will guarantee it is paid.

We had a collection department in that hospital that was very aggressive and went after these people. That is how bad it was for seniors, but today, 50 years later, about 99 percent of seniors are insured and go to the hospital when they need care.

The cost during their working years is a small amount of out-of-pocket costs. The program that we call Medicare is a lifeline. Before Medicare and Medicaid, health care for millions of younger Americans was subject to racism and discrimination. A White American was 30 percent more likely to be admitted to a hospital than an African American. In fact, in many cases emergency response calls were subject to race confirmation before action. They

wanted to know where you lived, and if the color of your skin wasn't just right when you were brought to the hospital, you went on your way. Today the disparity in hospitalization rates between minorities and White Americans has decreased significantly.

Medicare and Medicaid have protected the health and well-being of millions of seniors, individuals with disabilities, low-income individuals, and millions of children.

In the past 50 years, Medicaid has grown to be the Nation's primary health insurance program for low-income individuals and families. Medicaid has grown to cover nearly 70 million Americans, including more than 40 million children.

Today Medicaid covers nearly half of all births in the United States and ensures that children receive the health care they desperately need in the early stages of their lives. By providing early childhood health care to millions, Medicaid has improved the long-term health of children and contributed to their overall quality of life.

Medicaid has also provided health care and long-term services to 16 million low-income seniors and individuals with disabilities. Medicaid pays for services that Medicare does not cover. It ensures that low-income seniors and individuals with disabilities have access to a wide variety of services. These options allow them to remain in their communities rather than relocate to nursing homes. But when they do have to go to a nursing home, the vast majority of people in convalescent centers in America are Medicaid recipients.

Sadly, 22 States have chosen not to expand Medicaid coverage, and this decision has hurt millions of people who can't afford health care any other way. Why do States and the Republican Governors of those States oppose this? Because it is part of ObamaCare.

To his credit, the conservative Republican Governor from the State of Nevada, Brian Sandoval, was one of the first Governors to sign on to this program. He didn't care if it was a Democratic program or a Republican program; it helped people in Nevada who needed help. I truly admire him for doing that. The expansion of Medicaid in States throughout the country would boost States' economic activity—and Brian Sandoval knows that—and create job growth, in addition to providing quality, affordable health care to vulnerable Americans. The State of Nevada is a relatively sparsely populated State. Almost 200,000 people are receiving the health care they need and would not have but for ObamaCare and Governor Brian Sandoval.

Medicaid expansion would benefit every State. The Affordable Care Act transformed Medicaid into a true safety net for vulnerable Americans. We should be expanding this coverage, not restricting it for partisan gain.

Medicare and Medicaid have protected Americans for 50 years, and our Nation is healthier and stronger because of its existence. But despite 50 years of undeniable Medicare and Medicaid success, Republicans remain committed to ending access to health care for those who need it the most.

We will be celebrating ObamaCare's success 50 years from now while Republicans call for the Affordable Care Act to be phased out, like Jeb Bush wants. In 50 years, will there be a Republican Presidential wanna-be out there saying ''Let's get rid of ObamaCare; let's phase it out''? I hope not.

Republicans have repeatedly engaged in politically motivated attacks designed to undermine the law that transformed our Nation's health care system. The Affordable Care Act has helped millions of Americans to gain access to quality health care. Since the Affordable Care Act was signed into law, 16.4 million Americans have gotten quality health care—many of them for the first time in their lives. The United States has seen the largest decline in the uninsured rate in decades, if not forever. In the last 18 months, the uninsured rate for nonelderly adults has fallen by 35 percent. Health care costs have grown at their slowest rate in 50 years. Patient safety initiatives are keeping Americans safe.

The Affordable Care Act is working. It is the law of the land, and that is not going to change. There have been more than 50 votes to repeal or undermine the Affordable Care Act and there have been repeated challenges to this law before the courts, but we have won on every level. The American people have won twice with the stamp of approval by the Supreme Court. Last month we witnessed the Supreme Court rule, as I have indicated, again for the second time in favor of the Affordable Care Act. It is here to stay. It is here to stay because the American people want affordable health care.

American seniors need affordable, accessible health care coverage, and they need it right now.

Five decades ago—50 years ago—President Johnson said:

> No longer will older Americans be denied the healing miracle of modern medicine. No longer will illness crush and destroy the savings they have so carefully put away over a lifetime so that they might enjoy dignity in their later years. No longer will young families see their own incomes, and their own hopes eaten away simply because they are carrying out their deep moral obligations to their parents, and to their uncles, and their aunts.

The Republicans have spent the last five decades fighting against President Johnson's dream. The Republicans are determined to roll back access to health care for Americans. It is hard to believe, but it is true. Just this week the Senate held a vote on whether to repeal this lifesaving program—again. It is clear that after 50 years, the Republicans have learned nothing.

We should be building on the success of Medicare, Medicaid, and the Affordable Care Act. We need to be expanding coverage to all Americans. We should be encouraging States to expand Medicaid access. Democrats are committed—just as President Johnson was half a century ago—to giving Americans the health care they need and deserve.

Will the Chair announce the schedule for today.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

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

HIRE MORE HEROES ACT OF 2015

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will resume consideration of H.R. 22, which the clerk will report.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

> A bill (H.R. 22) to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to exempt employees with health coverage under TRICARE or the Veterans Administration from being taken into account for purposes of determining the employers to which the employer mandate applies under the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the time until 12 p.m. will be equally divided in the usual form.

The Senator from Utah.

Mr. HATCH. Mr. President, soon we will vote on final passage of a bill that will provide a long-term solution to the shortfalls of the highway trust fund. If enacted, this bill will provide the longest paid-for authorization of highway and transportation spending in nearly a decade.

This bill is the result of an incredible amount of work by a number of Senators, including our distinguished majority leader as well as the chairman and ranking member of the Environment and Public Works Committee. I commend them for setting aside partisan differences to find a solution despite the cynicism and naysaying from some of our colleagues and others here in Washington.

I am also pleased to have been able to play a part in these efforts, working with Leader MCCONNELL to identify suitable offsets to pay for the reauthorization of the highway and transit programs. While the Finance Committee, which I chair, has jurisdiction over the funding stream for the highway trust fund, we had to cull together offsets from other areas and other committees in order to pay for this multiyear highway bill. This required the cooperation of multiple chairmen and committees, all working together toward a common goal.

One of the most remarkable things about this bill is that it provides 3 full years of highway funding without raising taxes or adding to the deficit. We have heard time and again that a long-term highway bill would only be possible if we included a big tax increase. With the upcoming final vote on this

bill, the Senate is about to prove otherwise, and it will do so with bipartisan support. This is how the Senate should operate, particularly when we are dealing with something as big and important as highway funding.

As I said last week, this bill represents a victory for good government and is yet another bipartisan win for the Senate under the current leadership. Like many of my colleagues, my hope is that eventually the House of Representatives will follow suit and work toward passage of a similar long-term highway bill so that we can come together, reconcile differences, and finish the job. While I know there are some divisions on the other side of the Capitol about the Senate's overall strategy and maybe even some of the particulars in our bill, I think we have shown that a long-term bill is a realistic goal and a preferable option to yet another short-term highway patch.

Once again, I am well aware of the desire of some in Congress and in the administration to marry long-term highway funding to some kind of tax reform. As the chairman of the Senate's tax-writing committee and its most outspoken supporter of tax reform, I think that idea has a lot of merit. I commend those who are thinking in those terms. Fortunately, this bill will provide just that opportunity while giving added certainty to our States as they plan their highway projects and to our builders and job creators looking to expand and hire more workers.

Put simply, the Senate's highway approach is a win for everyone. The House should consider our approach, and I hope they will.

Long story short, today is a good day. Today the Senate will accomplish something few thought possible. While the process has been a bit more difficult and divisive than many of us would have liked, I personally am very pleased to see the Senate function properly and govern responsibly.

There are a lot of things we can fight over here in Congress, but I think we can—or at least should—all agree on the need to come together to pay for our Nation's infrastructure. I am pleased to join with my colleagues—Senators from both parties—in taking a major step toward that goal today.

With that, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Maryland.

Ms. MIKULSKI. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that I be allowed to speak as in morning business for no more than 10 minutes.

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

Ms. MIKULSKI. I thank the Presiding Officer.

50TH ANNIVERSARY OF MEDICARE

Mr. President, I rise today to commemorate the 50th anniversary of Medicare. Fifty years ago, on July 30, 1965, President Lyndon Johnson signed into law the legislation to create Medicare. I say thank God for Medicare. It was a great idea 50 years ago, 50 months ago, 50 weeks ago, and 50 minutes ago.

I stand on the Senate floor to say that we must keep Medicare as Medicare and keep the integrity and solvency of Medicare. We cannot turn Medicare into a voucher; we cannot dilute it, phase it out, or eliminate it. And until my last vote is cast in the Senate, I will defend Medicare.

I saw what it meant. In the summer of 1965, I had just graduated from the University of Maryland School of Social Work. Change was in the air. The civil rights movement was making its progress toward history and moving forward. There were beginning doubts about the Vietnam war, and the Nation was recovering from the assassination of President Kennedy. President Johnson wanted to lead in a bold way, having had a landslide victory, and he said he wanted to create a great society. He knew that a great society meant that we had to have a great heart.

What we knew then, as we know today, is that people feared financial bankruptcy because of health care costs. They were terrified that a heart attack that resulted in hospitalization would bankrupt the family. They delayed the idea of getting cataract surgery, which then needed to be done in the hospital, not because they were afraid of the surgery but because they were afraid of the cost of surgery. If you were a small, independent business person over 65, you often had no health insurance. It didn't matter whether you were in agriculture or an urban small business.

Medicare changed all of that. Medicare protected people from two things. No. 1, it protected them so that they could go to a doctor when they needed to and have health care when they needed it. No. 2, it protected them from financial disaster.

Today, 55 million Americans—nearly every senior—have access to Medicare, including 1 million seniors.

What was so significant about that bill is that it provided universal access to doctors.

No. 2, it had no barriers because of preexisting conditions.

No. 3, it was portable because it was national. Whether a person was in Maryland or Utah or whatever State, Medicare was the national program, and it was viewed as an earned benefit.

America at that time had many things going for it. One was that we had a sense of self-confidence that we could really solve problems and meet the compelling needs of our country, and the other was that we had compassion.

One of my guiding principles, which I believed then as well, and that guided the Nation at that time was the guiding principle of honor thy father and mother. We knew that it was not only a great commandment to live by, but it was a good policy to live by. Therefore, we ensured that all Americans had access to health care, regardless of their income.

As I said, in the 1960s—1965 was the year that I actually graduated from the school of social work. I worked for a program called ''responding to the elderly's abilities and sicknesses otherwise neglected.'' It was called Operation Reason. Our job—a social worker and a nurse, one of my oldest friends from school—was to help elderly people know about the program and sign up for the program and help them use the program. It was the joy—the sheer joy—people experienced when they heard about this program, knowing that simply because they were American citizens, their needs would be taken care of, with a modest premium.

Part A was hospitalization—a safety net. In those days, care for significant illnesses had to be done in the hospital. The advances of medicine and medical technology has allowed us now to do less in the hospital, such as cataract surgery and other surgeries being done on an outpatient basis. Those advances weren't there in the 1960s. So people no longer had to fear the cost of hospitalization.

Then there was this program called Part B. That meant seniors had access to see a doctor, to see if they had diabetes, to see if they had high blood pressure, to see why they couldn't see those grandchildren or do their work on the family farm, the small business or in the factories that we had in those days. What they needed was maybe better eyesight—that cataract surgery. Maybe they were feeling old and slow not because of age but because they had diabetes or other issues. Then, of course, there was the cost of the dreaded ''c'' word—cancer.

My colleague and I worked in the neighborhoods to make sure we took care of how people could get to the facilities, know about those services, and know about those barriers. In those days, Baltimore seniors were struggling. When they retired, it was often the end of health insurance. It meant nearly half of the seniors were uninsured. They went to clinics, standing in very long lines, often shuttled back and forth from one clinic to another. They got their blood work here, they looked at their kidneys there, and they looked at their eyes here. Their concept of primary care was fragmented.

Before Medicare, millions of seniors, as I have said, were just one heart attack away from bankruptcy or one cancer diagnosis away from destitution. That was before Medicare.

Many were skeptical about Medicare. Once again, the other party fought it. They were wondering what it would mean. People were skeptical. Was this a big government move or was it a big opportunity? My job was to show them that this program was not about big government, but about government with a big heart.

After four months of operation, we had enrolled hundreds of people into this much needed program. And what

has it meant? Before Medicare, 48 percent of seniors had no health insurance. Today, only 2 percent are uninsured. Out-of-pocket costs have decreased. Before Medicare, seniors paid 56 percent of health care costs out of their pocket. Imagine what that meant if you were hospitalized in those days. Life expectancy is now 5 years longer. Death from heart disease has dropped. Our elderly poverty rate has declined. Seniors have access to more affordable drugs.

This isn't about numbers, and it isn't about statistics. It is about people. It is about the compelling needs of human beings. It is about government that says: I am on your side and at your side, and we are going to use our national resources, our national brain power, our national know-how to be able to create a program that you can participate in and that at the end of the day, your life will be better and our society will be improved.

I am really proud of what the Congress and the President did 50 years ago. I hope we have that same attitude again. It is not about big government; it is about government with a big heart.

I will say this: There are those who continue to talk about ending Medicare. Most recently, a Presidential candidate who I think has incredible ability—Jeb Bush—said he wanted to phase out Medicare. I don't get it. How do we phase out Medicare? Do we start first with age? Do we phase out 90-year-olds, and then the next year we phase out 80-year-olds? How do we phase it out? Do we phase it out by disease? OK, this year, no more diabetics; OK, this year, no more cancer patients—they really cost a lot of money. What does it mean to phase it out, and what are we phasing it out to?

Medicare cannot be privatized. We must continue it as a guaranteed benefit. Do we need to reform it, take a look at it, refresh it? The answer is yes. We have done that, such as when we added Part B. But I will say this: No matter what, thank God for Medicare.

When we go around this country, no matter how they feel about government or about Congress, people love Social Security and they love Medicare. We have to defend it. We have to make sure it is there as we need it.

So on this 50th anniversary of Medicare, let's come together to make sure we continue to be focused not on big government but on a sense of self-confidence and a belief in our country to solve big problems and that we continue to act like a country with a big heart. We can do it because we have done it in the past.

I will conclude by saying: Thank God for Medicare, and I thank God for the ability to be here on the floor of the Senate to defend it.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New York.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUEST—EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I have a unanimous consent request, but I am waiting for Senator GRASSLEY from Iowa, the chairman of the Judiciary Committee, to propound it, so I will speak first and then do the request.

I rise today to address the growing crisis of judicial vacancies in our Federal and district courts.

There are no values more American than the speedy application of justice and the right to petition the government for a redress of grievances. Frankly, neither of those can be achieved without justices and judges on the bench.

It is the job of the Senate to responsibly keep up with the need to confirm judges. Yet we have a 10-percent vacancy in judicial positions throughout the United States. We have 28 districts that are considered ''judicial emergencies.'' In my home State of New York, in the Western District, there is not a single active district judge—zero. The Western District has one of the busiest caseloads in the country. It handles more criminal cases than Washington, DC, or Boston or Cleveland. The delays for civil trials are by far the worst in the country. Yet they don't have a single active Federal district judge. If not for the efforts of two judges on senior status who are volunteering to hear cases in their retirement, the Western District would be at a full judicial standstill.

How have we gotten to this point? My friends on the other side of the aisle slowed the pace of confirmations when the Senate was under Democratic leadership, creating these backlogs, but we still pushed as many through as we could. Now, under the new Republican Senate, more than half the year into this new Congress, the Republican leadership has scheduled votes on only five Federal judges. It is July. They have scheduled votes on five Federal judges. That is a disgrace.

For context, in the seventh year of President Bush's Presidency, the Democratic Senate—we were in charge then—approved 25, compared to 5 here. That is a direct one-to-one comparison, apples to apples. At this point in President Bush's term, Democrats had confirmed five times the amount of judges that this Republican Congress—this Republican Senate—has confirmed. That is unacceptable.

Right now, there are 14 noncontroversial judges on the Executive Calendar, including 3 highly qualified judges for New York. I know these nominees. They are brilliant legal minds, experienced jurists and, above all, they are moderate.

Larry Vilardo and Ann Donnelly are two whom I have recommended, and LaShann DeArcy Hall was recommended by my good friend, the junior Senator from New York, KIRSTEN GILLIBRAND. They should all be confirmed, but we don't know if they will ever come up for a vote.

I wish to spend a moment telling my colleagues about these qualified judges.

Mr. Vilardo is a true Buffalonian and will be a credit to the bench in his hometown. He went to Canisius College, Harvard Law School, and was a clerk on the Fifth Circuit. He is fundamentally and classically a Buffalonian—salt of the Earth, honest, and grounded. Buffalo is in his bones; it is part of who he is. As with so many other people from the region, the city has made him tough, levelheaded, fair, and decent. As the first in his family to graduate from college, he adds an important element of socioeconomic diversity to the court. The people of the Western District of New York will be incredibly lucky to have him on the bench.

As perfect as Larry Vilardo is for the bench in Buffalo, so are Ann Donnelly and LaShann DeArcy Hall perfect for the bench in Brooklyn.

Judge Donnelly has dedicated her life to public service. She spent a quarter decade as a prosecutor in the prestigious Office of the District Attorney of New York County under DA Morganthal. I could tick off more of her accomplishments. The list would be long. She is more than a brilliant resume. She is at her core a kind, thoughtful, and compassionate person.

Let me say a word about LaShann DeArcy Hall. I can't take credit for her nomination to the Eastern District of New York. That goes to Senator GILLIBRAND. But I am proud to offer my strong support. She too has accumulated extensive and impressive legal experience as a partner in the international law firm of Morrison & Foerster. She is a veteran, having proudly served in the Air Force. She is a graduate of Howard University School of Law, and she is member of the board of visitors there.

Now, all of these nominees meet and even exceed my standard for judicial nominations in his or her own way. My standards are three: excellence—legally excellent, no political hacks; moderation—not too far right but not too far left; and diversity. Whenever we can get diversity on the bench, we should.

But they are not the only outstanding nominees we have on the floor. We have judges pending—candidates—for Missouri, California, represented by Republican Senators as much as by Democrats who are experiencing the same judicial emergencies and heavy backlog caseloads. Yet we have no indication they will ever be moved off the calendar.

This is about governing. In January, the distinguished and newly minted majority leader came before this body and said it was time to govern. We would do the budget by regular order. Things would return to normal in the Senate. We wouldn't fill the tree. Yet here we are, 7 months later, and we have approved five judges. That is it—five. Ten percent of the Federal and district judgeships across the country are vacant.

Confirming judges is part of the business of government, and right now the majority party is failing that responsibility to the American people. It has real consequences. In the Western District of New York, Judge Skretny, on senior status, has admitted that he is encouraging all cases to settle in pretrial mediation to lower caseloads. Criminal trials are prioritized while civil trials languish. The two retired judges in western New York are the only ones reading cases at the moment and spending far less time on each individual case than they would under normal circumstances. And defendants may be inclined to settle, admit guilt, and take plea deals rather than wait out a lengthy trial process. The same story line is playing out throughout the country. That is not how our justice system is supposed to work. As many of my colleagues have said so eloquently, the harsh truth of the matter is that for these petitioners, companies, and communities, justice is being delayed and thus denied.

In the Senate, we often invoke the principles upon which our country was founded: principles of individual liberty, justice, and equality in the eyes of the law. These words have to mean something. There shouldn't be political games standing in their way. The equal and fair application of justice is necessarily tarnished by a courtroom without a judge. It is as simple as that.

In conclusion, Democrats will not stand to watch our judicial system brought to its knees by the death of a thousand cuts. We have one week of legislative session before a month-long recess. I submit that we should not—cannot leave town having confirmed only five judges in what would be 8 months of this Congress.

Today I rise to request we move to New York's pending judicial nominations, but I also hope we will move the other Justices before and after New York's on the calendar. I would like to make this request, but I know my colleague from Iowa would like to answer it.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to executive session to consider the following nominations: Calendar Nos. 139, 140, and 141; that the Senate proceed to vote without intervening action or debate on the nominations in the order listed; that the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate; that no further motions be in order to the nominations; that any related statements be printed in the RECORD; that the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action, and the Senate then resume legislative session.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, reserving the right to object——

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Iowa.

Mr. GRASSLEY. Before I speak about reserving the right to object, I would like to have the floor immediately after the Senator from New York gives up the floor, if I could. Is there any objection to that?

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

Mr. GRASSLEY. OK. I want to reserve the right to object, and I will object.

I would like to make a few comments on the pace of judicial nominations. First of all, during President Obama's Presidency thus far the Senate has confirmed 313 judicial nominees. In contrast to that, there were 283 judicial nominees that the Senate had confirmed at this very same point of the previous Presidency. That is 30 more judicial nominees confirmed at this point than in the year 2007.

Concerning this year's pace, the Senate is simply following the standard that my colleagues on the other side established in that year, 2007. By this point in 2007, the committee had held six hearings for a total of 20 judicial nominees. So far we have held 7 hearings for a total of 21 nominees, 5 executive nominees, and 16 judicial nominees, including hearings on both the Attorney General and the Deputy Attorney General.

I would like to remind my colleagues that the Attorney General and Deputy Attorney General nominees took significantly more time to process on both staff and Members. So we are doing a little bit better than the pace that was set on the other side during the last 2 years of the previous Presidency. And I am trying to compare to the last 2 years of that Presidency to this Presidency.

I would also note that the nominees from New York are below other Article III judges on the Executive Calendar. As I understand it, our side has agreed to vote on the next judge on the calendar when we return.

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, would my colleague yield for a brief question?

Mr. GRASSLEY. I will yield. Of course, I will yield.

Mr. SCHUMER. I very much appreciate his courtesy.

I understand my colleague has talked about what has been done in the Judiciary Committee which he chairs. Does my colleague deny the fact that confirmed on the floor of the Senate in the year 2007, which he referred to, there were 25 at this time and only 5 have been confirmed by this Senate? Does my colleague deny that fact?

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, I would agree to that, and I will speak to that point right now. It is very appropriate that my colleague would know exactly what I was going to say to answer his question.

Mr. SCHUMER. Great minds think alike.

Mr. GRASSLEY. With respect to the judges on the Executive Calendar, everybody knows at the end of last year the Senate rammed through 11 judges, which under regular order—and regular order is very important in the U.S. Senate—should have been considered at the beginning of this Congress. That is what happened in 2006 when 13 nominations were returned to the President instead of being returned to the U.S. Senate in the next Congress. The end of 2006 is comparable to what was done at the end of 2014. Had we not confirmed those 11 judicial nominees during the lame duck last year, we would be roughly at the same pace for judicial confirmations this year compared to 2007. So put that in your pipe and smoke it, Senator SCHUMER.

We are moving at a reasonable pace. Therefore, I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

Mr. SCHUMER. Without smoking, Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Iowa.

GOVERNING IN THE SENATE

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, the Senator from New York gave very good words that I want to follow up on. He said that we were promised when Republicans took over we said things would be different in governing. They are different. I would just like to show the Senator from New York that promises made are promises kept. I think the best example of promises made was a January 2014 speech by the leadership of the Republicans where a speech was given that if there were Republican control of the United States Senate, then we would govern.

I think the best way to show that Republicans are governing is this: there were 370 House bills that died in the U.S. Senate under the leadership of the Democrat majority. We had 15 amendments with rollcall votes. So far this year, we have had over 160 rollcall votes on amendments.

We have passed over 40 bipartisan bills, reported over 160 bills out of committee, had 29 bills signed into law, and balanced the first budget for over a decade. Under Republican leadership, we had a budget agreement for the first time in 6 years, whereas under the Democratic majority we had one budget in 6 years. The law requires that we adopt a budget every year, and we have done that.

We made a promise that the Senate was going to function as a deliberative body, unlike the way it was run under the Democratic majority for the 6 years of this Presidency. From that standpoint, we have done that with the statistics that I just gave you.

The Senator from New York says we were promised a Senate that would govern, but the only metric he is using is whether judges are moving at the same pace as they did when they took over the U.S. Senate in 2007. And that is an inadequate way to measure how well the Senate is governing. We must look at all the work the Senate is doing. And the Senate is doing the good work we promised we'd do before the election. We have delivered.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Nevada.

Mr. HELLER. Mr. President, thank you.

We have had some interesting back-and-forth here this morning. We had a great message from our good Senator from Maryland, and we had the colloquy we just saw here on judicial nominees. I want to move in a little different direction to something I think is important.

As the previous speaker talked about, the current majority is getting things done. I want to talk about for the first time in 10 years what is going to happen on this floor today, and that is for the first time in 10 years we are going to pass a multiyear transportation bill without raising taxes.

Keep in mind, we have done short-term transportation efforts 33 times before we finally got to the next multiyear bill that will be passed on this floor today. I believe one of the core constitutional functions of the Federal government is to create the infrastructure necessary to conduct commerce, trade, and allow general transportation. I sit on three of the four Senate committees tasked with developing this highway bill that we will vote on today—the Finance Committee, the Commerce, Science, and Transportation Committee, and the Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs Committee. Because of this, infrastructure development is one of my top priorities while here in this Congress.

It has been a pleasure to work with Chairman INHOFE, to work with Chairmen THUNE, SHELBY, and HATCH over the past several months on this highway bill. I am very appreciative of our leadership team, particularly that of Leader MCCONNELL and Senator CORNYN for working to advance it before the authorities expire and the Congress adjourns for the August recess.

Moving forward with a highway bill that invests in our Nation's crumbling infrastructure, reduces congestion, and increases safety without adding to the national debt will create short-term jobs and long-term economic growth.

Western States like Nevada, which have experienced an unprecedented amount of growth over the past couple of decades, have the most to gain from this highway bill. Nevada is one of the fastest growing States in our Nation, adding nearly 850,000 people to that State in the last 15 years. In fact, the Silver State was the fastest growing State in the Nation in the decade of the 2000s, experiencing a 35-percent population increase. This growth, while exciting for the State, has posed additional strains on our transportation infrastructure system. From 1990 to 2013, vehicle travel on Nevada's highways has increased 141 percent.

It is also important to note that the Silver State's economy relies heavily on tourism. Travel spending adds nearly $60 billion to Nevada's economy annually, accounting for about 13 percent of the State's GDP. Safe and reliable roads and bridges in our State and throughout the country are crucial to growing our economy.

Our rapidly expanding State has a long list of infrastructure priorities to address. A multiyear highway bill will provide the resources and tools that will benefit high priority projects such as the Boulder City Bypass, the Carson City Freeway, and the I–15 widening in Las Vegas—which, by the way, is Nevada's busiest freeway. Under Nevada's most conservative budgetary plans, our Department of Transportation has identified over $9 billion of capital improvement projects over the next 20 years. Short-term patches will not put a dent in that work plan. Additionally, it is important to cut bureaucratic red tape that will speed up permitting and ensure that our Nation gets more roads, more bridges, more rail projects and other infrastructure developments for every dollar that we invest.

Over the past couple of months, I have worked diligently on my committees and with the Environment and Public Works Committee in a bipartisan manner to include a variety of Nevada and national safety priorities in the highway bill, which are included in the Senate bill that we will vote on today.

First and foremost of those priorities is the expansion of Interstate 11 to northern Nevada. I have been working for years with my colleagues in both the Nevada and Arizona delegations on Capitol Hill to move I–11 forward. In the 112th Congress, we were successful in including language in the last highway bill, MAP–21, to officially designate an interstate route connecting Phoenix and Las Vegas. These are the two largest cities that are not connected by an interstate highway system.

Let me say that again, Mr. President. Phoenix and Las Vegas are the two largest cities in America that are not connected with an interstate highway system.

I have been working diligently to extend the proposed highway to I–80 in northern Nevada. Earlier this year, I introduced the bipartisan, bicameral Intermountain West Corridor Development Act to extend the route north and worked with Chairman INHOFE to include it in the DRIVE Act. This full north-to-south, Canada-to-Mexico interstate system is a project of national significance, critical for our Nation's mobility, economy, and national defense. This extension will open even more markets for tourism and trade, create jobs and improve the economy for the entire Western United States.

I have also worked to include policies in the bill that will greatly benefit the Lake Tahoe region's transportation efforts. The Tahoe Basin is a unique area, shared by the States of Nevada and California but also heavily controlled by the Federal Government. In fact, the Feds are the largest land managers of the Lake Tahoe Basin, controlling 77 percent of the land. Under current law, Tahoe is not considered as one area, from a transportation perspective, because the size of Lake Tahoe separates the individual communities that surround the lake.

The growing tourism industry greatly benefits the local economy but also poses additional strains on the region's transportation system. The language included in both the EPW and banking titles ensures the population of California and Nevada communities surrounding the lake is considered a singular entity. This will greatly benefit local leaders as they seek additional resources to implement the Basin's innovative 21st century highway and transit plans.

As a member of the commerce committee, I also worked with Chairman THUNE on the Comprehensive Transportation and Consumer Protection Act, which was approved earlier this month in our committee and is also part of this bill. It includes important reforms that will enhance the safety of our roads and our railways.

I am pleased legislation I introduced with my friend from Massachusetts Senator MARKEY, Safety Through Informed Consumers Act, commonly referred to as the STICRS Act, was included in the commerce bill. This policy promotes the purchase of safer cars by requiring the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration to integrate crash avoidance technology information, such as active braking and lane tracking technology, onto the safety ratings listed on your car's stickers.

Consumers have a right to the most accurate and up-to-date information possible when making decisions on what cars to purchase. A separate five-star rating for crash avoidance technologies or an adjustment to the current rating system that would preclude a new car from getting five stars unless it has at least one of these new crash avoidance technologies will make it clear to every buyer whether the vehicle they are considering has the latest and the best in safety technology.

Senator SCHATZ and I have also teamed up on a safe streets amendment, aimed at improving pedestrian safety. Threats to pedestrian safety are increasingly becoming a problem in my State. The number of pedestrian fatalities has nearly doubled in the Silver State in just the last 3 years. In total, pedestrian fatalities are nearly one-quarter of our overall traffic fatalities. Nevada is the sixth most dangerous for pedestrians over the age of 65 years. I know our State regional transportation organizations are working diligently to address the pedestrian safety concerns. I hope our initiative will spur innovative transportation planning throughout the Nation that aims to improve bike and pedestrian safety.

Finally, I had a provision included in the bill that restores some sanity to the Department of Transportation's hours of service regulation. Under the existing rule, drivers of commercial motor vehicles are required to take a 30-minute break after most 8 hours of consecutive work. Industries such as

the ready mixed concrete industry, whose products are perishable, find it difficult to implement the HOS regulation given the unique conditions of their work.

Concrete is needed on a just-in-time basis. Once a delivery is started, it must be completed or the concrete may harden in the truck, causing thousands of dollars of damage in that vehicle. Concrete delivery often takes more than 2½ hours to complete. Mixer drivers are also unique in the commercial truckdriving industry, in that they typically spend only 40 percent of their time on duty actually driving. The other 60 percent is spent at the plant waiting to be dispatched, at the job site waiting on the contractor to receive the concrete or unloading the concrete itself. This one-size-fits-all regulation does not make sense. I am pleased my provision making this existing administrative exemption for perishable goods permanent has been included in the commerce bill.

I would be remiss if I did not mention some important rail infrastructure policies also included in the commerce bill. Freight rail plays a major role in Nevada's economy. The Silver State has 1,192 miles of rail track, and nearly 43 million tons of freight moves through the State each year via rail, supporting over 700 high-paying jobs. I was proud to team up with my friends Senator BLUNT and Senator BOOKER on two stand-alone proposals that are in the rail title.

First, the Track, Railroad, and Infrastructure Network Act, which streamlines permitting for the development of new railroad structure, is critical to ensure scant infrastructure dollars are spent efficiently and spent wisely. Additionally, the Railroad Infrastructure Financing Improvement Act implements a variety of good government reforms to the revolving loan program utilized to spur development of railroad infrastructure. The program is notoriously underutilized. I believe it is important that we ensure this valuable tool is reworked so it can be used for new freight and passenger rail development.

I strongly supported the rail reform title when it was approved by the commerce committee and believe it is important that we include rail as part of the surface transportation bill. Improving rail safety, expanding both passenger and freight rail infrastructure are critical components of Nevada's and our Nation's long-term economic development plans. A long-term surface and transportation bill is extremely important to the State of Nevada and also to our Nation.

Transportation efficiency and reliability is critical for our Nation's economic competitiveness, and the policies in the bill will help address the need to maintain, repair, and expand the national transportation system, but none of these important policies will get done if Congress kicks the can down the road.

Passing a strong multiyear bill in the Senate sends an important message to our colleagues in the House. I urge my colleagues to support the DRIVE Act. Again, I thank Leader MCCONNELL and Chairmen INHOFE, Senators THUNE, SHELBY, and HATCH for working with me on my priorities. They know how important it is that we enact policies that increase infrastructure efficiency, improve safety, and create jobs throughout the Nation. By passing this bill, we show the American people the Senate is back to work supporting policies to create jobs and spur economic development across our Nation.

I yield the floor.

PRIVATE SECTOR ENGINEERING AND DESIGN SERVICES

Mr. BOOZMAN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to engage in a colloquy with the distinguished chairman of the Environment and Public Works Committee on an amendment that I have filed to H.R. 22, the DRIVE Act.

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

Mr. BOOZMAN. Mr. President, as the chairman of the committee is well aware, private sector engineering and design services can play an important role in the development and maintenance of our Nation's transportation infrastructure. By supplementing the capabilities of engineers at State DOTs, private sector engineering and design services enable State and local governments to deliver projects more efficiently and with long-term cost savings.

In order to make better use of these private sector resources, I have introduced an amendment which will provide incentives to States that make use of innovative engineering and design approaches by bringing in the expertise of private sector companies. This amendment is intended to streamline and improve the efficient delivery of highway and bridge projects and would not increase Federal spending. In the last Congress, working with Senators BOXER and VITTER, the committee included this identical provision in the highway authorization bill that was unanimously approved by the Environment and Public Works Committee.

The language has not been included in the bill we are debating today, and while I recognize that many hard decisions have had to be made in order to achieve a bipartisan consensus on this bill, I ask for Chairman INHOFE's commitment to work with us as the DRIVE Act progresses to conference.

Mr. INHOFE. I thank the Senator for raising this issue and for his commitment to helping to pass a long-term surface transportation bill. The Senator is correct about the time constraints the Senate is under, as we must pass this bill before July 31. Unfortunately, that means we have been unable to include many worthy provisions in the DRIVE Act, such as his amendment, which I support as a means of improving the efficient delivery of Federal taxpayer dollars.

I share the Senator's enthusiasm for fostering the use of private sector expertise in transportation construction. While this expertise is useful at all times, it is particularly useful in the aftermath of natural disasters, when a State must act quickly to rebuild its infrastructure. This is something we are very familiar with in my home State of Oklahoma.

I thank the Senator from Arkansas for his leadership on this issue and he has my commitment that I will work with the Senator on this matter during our bipartisan conference negotiations with the House.

Mr. BOOZMAN. I thank the distinguished chairman for taking a moment to discuss this issue and I look forward to working with him on this bill.

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, today the Senate will approve a comprehensive, 6-year authorization for our Nation's transportation systems. It will give our States and local communities the ability to plan for investments in the critical infrastructure that supports our cities and towns, enables inter- and intrastate commerce, and creates jobs for American workers.

This bill is far from perfect; I have strong concerns about the lack of safety measures in this bill. The battle on whether to allow mammoth tractor trailer trucks—the equivalent of wheeled eight-story buildings—to drive alongside all the other motorists on some of our roads will come up again in the fall and so I will continue to fight to put safety first. I am concerned that this bill will undermine the goals of the National Environmental Policy Act. And I am concerned that, while we have before us a needed 6-year authorization, this transportation bill is funded only through 2018. I hope that as the Senate and the House conference a long-term transportation authorization bill, these concerns will be adequately addressed.

It is regrettable that some in Congress, for several years now, have done their utmost to undermine what used to be strong bipartisan support for responsible and timely reauthorizations and funding of the highway trust fund and our transportation infrastructure. The result has been a continuing era of stop-gap, short-term fixes, which hobble State and local transportation planning and which impose unending uncertainty on their vital work. How short-sighted, and how irresponsible. We must get back to that kind of consensus, and that kind of forward-thinking action.

A series of short-term patches do not provide States like Vermont—where the construction season is short, and the infrastructure needs are many—with the certainty they need to make needed repairs to the bridges, roads and byways that keep business moving and connect our rural towns and villages. This legislation, however, is the result of compromise on all sides. This bill protects the MAP–21 funding formula, which will benefit Vermont and maintain a level stream of Federal funding

for Vermont. I am also pleased the bill includes a 20 percent revenue provision dedicated to highway and transit growth, despite previous attempts to decrease it to 6 percent. I am also gratified that, in working with the relevant committee chairs, we were able in this final bill to remove unnecessary and harmful exemptions to the Freedom of Information Act, which remains the public's first line of defense in the right to know what their government is doing. Nowhere is the free flow of information more important than when the safety and wellbeing of every Vermonter—of every American—is at stake.

The House of Representatives now has an opportunity. They can kick the can down the road, beyond this year, or they can get to work, to devise a meaningful, reasonable long-term transportation authorization bill. Short-term authorizations will not adequately address our Nation's crumbling infrastructure. After investing billions of dollars in infrastructure development overseas, it is well past time to invest right here at home, in our own people and their communities, and in our own country. We need this certainty, and we need it now.

Ms. MIKULSKI. Mr. President, I support the bipartisan DRIVE Act because we can't make the perfect the enemy of the good. This bill will provide 3 years of funding and stability to States that want to plan major multiyear construction projects. This means badly needed jobs in construction for labor unions, contractors, engineers, and manufacturers of transportation materials. This is good news.

According to the American Society of Civil Engineers, Maryland's infrastructure has a C- rating. Our roads and transit have a C- rating and our bridges a B- rating. Nearly a quarter of Maryland's major roadways are in poor condition and 317 of our 5,291 bridges are structurally deficient.

In addition, Marylanders face some of the worst traffic congestion in the Nation. I commute every day from Baltimore to Washington and know how bad it has become. The Washington region is the No. 1 most congested area in the Nation and the Baltimore region is the fifth. These conditions cost Maryland's commuters between $1,200 and $1,500 per year.

We need at least $4 billion to replace the B&P and Howard Street tunnels in Baltimore. If we want to double stack these major rail arteries for the Port of Baltimore, we need $8 billion.

In 2013, the State of Maryland was forced to pass a gas tax. Sadly, today our statewide transportation needs still remain unmet. If we add up every Maryland county's No. 1 transportation priority, it equals $20 billion. Yet, we still have competing job corridor needs in the urban and rural parts of the State.

That is why I was hoping for a more substantial bill—a true shot in the arm to tackle our aging infrastructure and ease congestion. But I will vote for the DRIVE Act because doing nothing is unacceptable and short-term extensions do not provide the planning and funding certainty States need to put millions of workers on the job. These are jobs in construction, engineering, and manufacturing right here in the United States.

Bright spots in this bill for Maryland include the new formula-based freight program. These additional dollars will help the class I railroads in Maryland, CSX and Norfolk Southern, and our short line railroads. It also is good news for the operations at the Port of Baltimore.

I also appreciate the strengthened transit safety oversight role of the U.S. Department of Transportation for the Nation's metro systems. While I would have liked the Metro Senators' stronger amendment to be debated and adopted, the underlying bill is a good step in the right direction for safety. Safety is our collective No. 1 priority for the riders and workers of the Washington Metro system.

The bill gives the Secretary of Transportation the authority to establish minimum safety standards for the safe operations of metro systems. This builds upon what I was able to accomplish in MAP–21 working with Senators DODD, SHELBY, and MENENDEZ. We gave the department new authority to establish and enforce Federal safety standards focusing on railcars.

The bill also requires the Secretary to review the existing safety standards and protocols of metro systems. It requires a report to Congress with the findings, list of recommendations, needed legislative changes, and the action the Secretary will take to establish Federal safety standards.

Before I conclude, I would like to voice my disappointment that the DRIVE Act is not stronger on safety. I am a cosponsor of the Feinstein-Wicker amendment on double 33 truck trailers. Because of the parliamentary procedures to prevent consideration of amendments, including germane amendments, this amendment was not considered.

I am opposed to extending the length of double truck trailers. The State of Maryland prohibits operation of these trucks. I have heard from Maryland families who have lost loved ones in truck crashes. The Slattery family lost Mrs. Slattery and the crash left their son, Matthew, with severe brain damage. Mr. Slattery and Matthew came to the Appropriations Committee markup of the fiscal year 2016 Transportation, Housing and Urban Development and Related Agencies Appropriations Bill. Sadly, this same amendment failed by a tie vote of 15 to 15.

I also heard from Don Bowman, owner of D.M. Bowman, Incorporated, a family-owned trucking company in Williamsport, MD, and our State's fire service community. They all think double 33 truck trailers are a dangerous idea.

I commend Senator BOXER for her hard work on this bill. Passing this bill is the right thing to do for jobs and our economy.

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

Mr. INHOFE. Mr. President, I do appreciate the comments from the Senator from Nevada. It is a reminder that a lot of people think almost all of this act is from the Environment and Public Works Committee. About 75 percent is, but we do have the commerce committee, we have the banking committee, and the other provisions. A lot of people have been working on this, not just our committee.

I am glad we got a good vote yesterday. I think it is important that we have a strong vote because we certainly want to encourage the House—and I think the House will be taking up our bill. In fact, I think a lot of the staff people are working on that right now over on the other side. Anyway, the importance of this is significant. If we do not pass the DRIVE Act out of this Chamber, then what we are doing is reinforcing current law.

What is current law? Current law is short-term extensions. That means it is the worst possible outcome. It means no big projects, for one thing. We spent yesterday—most of the day yesterday, our comments were on the big projects, the big bridges, and those things that need to be done.

But the big projects—normally you are talking about between $700 million and $1.4 billion. They can't be done on short-term extensions. Logically, everybody knows that. They are not done. Our problem is, the last bill we passed was in 2005. It ran out in 2009. Since that time, it has been short-term extensions. So we have not gotten into any of the projects that have to be done.

The tendency, I guess, to do the hard things, is to wait until something collapses and a bunch of people die, such as happened in Minnesota. That could have been done before. That was done in the 2005 act in my State of Oklahoma, however, not until after a young lady was driving her car under one of our bridges and a bunch of concrete fell off and killed her, the mother of three children.

Why wait until a disaster occurs? The current law fails to provide the long-term certainties the States and cities are going to have to have on their big projects to get them off the ground. Current law funding has no growth, not even for inflation. The DRIVE Act provides growth in highway and transit programs to each State. The current law gives States and local governments no certainty. There have been 33 short-term extensions since the SAFETEA–LU bill was passed—that is 33. When you pass those extensions, as I said, it takes 30 percent off the top. Clearly, the conservative position is to have a long-term bill. You would not have the project delivery. The DRIVE Act eliminates the duplicative review

and expands categorical exclusions. We cannot do that with short-term extensions.

Transparency. That was a lot of work. What we don't want is, as we are spending money as the years go by and the months go by and the weeks go by—we have transparency built into this so people can have faith and know exactly what programs there are.

Innovation. The DRIVE Act prepares our Nation's transportation system for the future by promoting innovation across all aspects of the program. The transportation system will be stuck in reverse if we stick with the current law. The current law, now this is what we have been doing since 2009.

I think it is also worthwhile for us to keep in mind that there are some things I wanted in the bill that we could not get in. I wanted to change this 80–20 Federal match program. First of all, we had 60–40—that was not acceptable—and 70–30. I have to admit it was not the Democrats; it was the Republicans who objected to that. Consequentially, we had to go ahead and go back to 80–20. If this legislation does not pass, then it is still going to be 80–20 because that is current law. So that would not change.

Anyway, the freight section of this directs new funding toward freight transportation projects that provide the platform for our businesses to compete globally. The freight program sometimes does not get the attention. One of the good things about a transportation bill and the way we do this, and have done it historically, is we go to the States.

I can assure you that the Arizona Transportation Department knows a lot more about what their needs are than we do in our infinite wisdom here in Washington. So they don't get as concerned about freight programs and freight expenditures because they do not directly benefit the particular State it goes through, but they benefit the entire country.

We actually have a freight section in this that is very good. It hasn't been done before. I will go into greater detail about the new National Freight Program and what it means to America's economy. Today, the National Highway System carries more than 55 percent of the Nation's highway traffic and 97 percent of the truck freight traffic. Of the 4 million miles of public roads, the National Highway System represents only 5.5 percent. So what we are saying is, 5 percent of the roads out there transport 55 percent of the highway traffic and 97 percent of the freight traffic.

Americans depend on the well-maintained National Highway System that provides a critical connection between the urban areas and the rural areas. American businesses pay and estimate $27 billion a year in extra freight transportation costs due to the poor condition of the public roads, which increases shipping delays and raises prices on everyday products. Recognizing that this is the foundation for the Nation's economy and the key to the national ability to compete in a global economy, it is essential that we focus efforts to improve freight movement on the National Highway System.

The DRIVE Act includes two new programs to help the States deliver projects and promote the safety in that delivery. The bipartisan freight program levies its Federal investment by encouraging public-private partnerships and other creative financing approaches.

It also will create the first-ever freight-specific investment program, prioritizing investment in our commerce-moving network. The first new program is the National Freight Program. It is distributed by a formula that will provide funds to all States to enhance the movement of goods that go through their State.

This is something, as I have said, that has not been done before, and I haven't heard any objection. In fact, this isn't just State specific because this goes to the whole Nation, and so it is very popular. The program expands the flexibility for both rural and urban areas to designate key freight corridors, and it will help identify projects with a higher return on investment.

The second program that is new is the Assistance for Major Projects Program. It creates a competitive grant program to provide funds for the major projects. This is what we have been talking about the past several days, the very large projects that can't be done with short-term extensions. They are just neglected.

These new freight programs will only exist with the passage of the DRIVE Act, when it is enacted by Congress. It is time for us to become innovative and forward-thinking in how the Federal Government is using taxpayer dollars.

In talking about this type of program for States to improve the National Highway System, the DRIVE Act is the answer. It directly helps to relieve the freight bottlenecks around the country.

This is a chart of Chicago I–290, I–90, and I–94, the three intersections. This goes between those three. Look at it. It is all of these. I haven't even counted the lanes. Traffic is stopped, and it is just one of the congestions. When this happens, the average speed in this case is 29 miles an hour. In the morning and evening rush hour, it is 20 miles an hour. Then it talks about all of the pollution that is there. People are idling their engines while they are waiting in traffic.

There is a very similar situation in Houston, TX, the I–45. I have been on this one quite often, quite a few times. It is I–45 at U.S. 59. If you look at the chart, it is home to five of the top freight bottlenecks in the Nation. Texas is home to nine of them. The overall cost in conjunction with this to individuals in Texas is $671 million annually and 8.8 million hours of delay. The I–45 is ranked third by the congestion index.

We have an index, and people know how bad it is and how it compares to other States. That is why this has been so popular.

I–45 at U.S. 610 is ranked 15th. The average speed is below 39 miles an hour. For morning and evening traffic, of course, it is much less than that.

Fort Lee, NJ, I–95. Anyone who is in Washington and wants to go anyplace on the north coast—New York, Connecticut, and on up—they have to go all the way up on I–95. This particular intersection, which is in Fort Lee—this is the George Washington Bridge. It connects Fort Lee, NJ, to New York City. By congestion index, it is the second worst freight bottleneck in the Nation. The average speed is 29 miles an hour. I have been on that one before, and it is a very old bridge. When you drive over it, you worry about whether you are going to make it. The George Washington Bridge is the world's busiest motor vehicle bridge, carrying over 106 million cars a year.

The DRIVE Act, with the newly formed freight program, will make targeted investments in the infrastructure critical to moving commerce and alleviating these bottlenecks I just mentioned. These new programs invest in the infrastructure needed to move goods across the Nation.

When you look at the corridors and you look at the bridges—we actually had one presentation where we went over the 20 busiest of all the traffic-congested areas in the country.

We are going to have a vote in 40 minutes. It is going to be one of the most critical votes of the year. I have no doubt that it is going to pass. But I wanted to send the signal across America, to the House of Representatives, and to everyone else that we really care about infrastructure.

I repeat—I feel compelled to do so—there are a lot of people who don't realize that the conservative position is to vote for a long-term infrastructure bill because it costs about 30 percent off the top—and that is a figure no one has debated, no one has talked about—if you do it piecemeal with short-term extensions, along with not getting this.

The other thing is, we have that old document nobody reads anymore; it is called the Constitution. If you look up article I, section 8, it says—you know, we do a lot of things around this Chamber that our forefathers never envisioned. They said what we ought to be doing—and it says so right in the Constitution—is two things: defend America, and roads and bridges.

Well, that was foreseen by Dwight Eisenhower. I have here in the Chamber a picture of Dwight Eisenhower. Many of us who are old enough to remember or those of us who have studied World War II know what a hero this guy was when he came in as President of the United States. He wanted the first national system to be primarily for defense, for defending our Nation. He said: Yes, it will help the economy. Here is the quote he makes. He talks

about how this will be helpful to the economy. We all know that. There will be jobs, and people will be put back to work. But he also said—this was after World War II—that we have to move our goods and services around this country to defend this Nation.

I kind of have a dual role in this. The two major committees that I have—and I have served as the ranking member on both of them—are the defense committee, the Senate Armed Services Committee—and so I am very sensitive to the fact that there is a defense component to this bill we are going to be voting on today—as well as chairing the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

This is what he said back then. He said it is for defense purposes and it is something we have to have so that it goes in a uniform way across the Nation, not just for defense but for our economy. I would make one comment. You hear people say, and I used to say it myself—they talk about the program called devolution. Devolution is what a lot of people have looked at, and it sounds so good on the stump. Confession is good for the soul. I remember when I was the father of devolution, along with Connie Mack from Florida when we were both serving in the House. What that says is you repeal the Federal highway taxes and then you make them local taxes, you make them State taxes so the States are participating.

But there are two problems with that. One is, how do you get a uniform program across the country? Take Wyoming, for example. If they repeal their Federal tax, in order to make up for it, since there are very few people in Wyoming but there are a lot of roads, they would have to pass a 48-cent tax increase. That is not going to happen. Devolution is based on the assumption that all States will pass a tax increase, and that isn't going to happen.

So that is the other reason we really need to have this, and we will. We are going to pass this bill. I think in the final analysis the House will too.

I will share with you, I say to the Presiding Officer, that when we had our last bill, it wasn't all that good. It was only a 27-month bill.

I can remember going over there, after we passed that on the floor of the Senate, and I requested an audience with the members of the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee at the House, with the Republicans because there were a lot of them who were tea party Republicans, a lot of conservatives. I explained to them the same thing I just went over—the constitutional aspect of it as well as the cost of it and the fact that you cannot get projects done if you continue to do short-term extensions. When this came up in the House, every one of the 33 Republicans—all 33 of them—voted for it. I think that is what gives me confidence that when they see that there is a bill that we have passed out of this Chamber—you know, I was disappointed that the House was only going to be in session until Thursday; that is today. But they left last night; they moved it up a day. And I am not saying they did that so they wouldn't have to make a decision on this bill, but nonetheless that did happen.

I understand there are other Senators who wish to speak before the vote, and I certainly want to give them the opportunity. So I will conclude by saying that this is arguably one of the most important votes we will have. We are doing what the Constitution tells us to do. We are going to pass it, and it is going to happen.

I know there are two Members—one from the majority and one from the minority—who wish to speak. I think the majority leader will be coming in a matter of minutes too. So we do have several who want to be heard on this bill.

I think it is worth stating that 75 percent of the bill is in the Committee on Environment and Public Works. That is the committee I chair. When we developed this bill, we developed it over a period of time. They took about 4 months, and we worked on it. We took amendments, and we had major changes. In fact, I can remember going to the Republican conference and saying: If you have amendments, before this is passed out of our committee and goes to the floor, I think it is important for you to get your amendments in so we can make them a part of the bill and then later on part of the managers' package. Well, the managers' package didn't work as we wanted it to, and everyone knows there are problems that caused that.

But we argued. We discussed this bill. We put it together for about 4 months in the committee. On June 24, we passed that out of the committee unanimously. All 20 members of the Environment and Public Works Committee—all Democrats, all Republicans—all voted for it. That doesn't happen very often.

The ranking member, the ranking Democrat on the committee is Senator BOXER from California. Senator BOXER and I don't agree on very much, but we do agree on this. I mean, she is a very proud liberal, and I am a very proud conservative. What we have in common is this bill; that is about it. As soon as this bill is over—I was joking with a group this morning—I said then we will go back to fighting again. Maybe that is more fun.

But with all of the problems we have in this country right now, a lot of people don't realize that one of the greatest problems is the overregulation by the bureaucracies, the unelected bureaucracies. We have watched that coming. We have seen it particularly in this administration. Just look at what the EPA is doing to harm businesses that are trying to do the American thing and hire people out there. We have all of these regulations that are coming online. We have the water regulations.

This is kind of interesting because historically the regulations over water have always been a State function, with the exception of navigable waters. Well, I understand that. I think everyone else understands that. But there are always the collectivists, the liberals who want to bring all of that power into Washington and take it away from the States. In my State of Oklahoma, we do a lot better job than the Federal Government does, so we have been in a position to be able to continue to have that regulation of water as a State function.

About 5 years ago, Senator Feingold in the Senate and Congressman Oberstar—they are from Wisconsin and Minnesota—introduced a bill to take the word ''navigable'' out, which means then the Federal Government would have regulation over all the waters. We have areas in Oklahoma that are very arid. The other day, I was out in the panhandle, Boise City. You don't get anyplace drier than Boise City, OK. I was out there and I told them that if the Federal Government were doing this, they would probably find the time after a rain to declare the panhandle of Oklahoma a wetland because that is what they do. They want power. They want to expand their authority.

Anyway, they had this bill, and not only did we defeat the legislation to take the word ''navigable'' out, but we also defeated both the Senator and the House Member who were the sponsors.

I see my good friend from New York has arrived.

With that, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New York.

PLANNED PARENTHOOD

Mrs. GILLIBRAND. Mr. President, I rise to strongly oppose this cynical and opportunistic ploy to fulfill a longtime ideological goal to defund Planned Parenthood.

Let's talk facts, not rhetoric. The fact is no Federal funds can be used for an abortion. No Federal funds can be used for an abortion, except in the dire circumstances of rape, incest or the life of the mother.

Here is another fact. Only 3 percent of Planned Parenthood's work is dedicated to abortion services. The other 97 percent of their work is dedicated to preventive women's health services, such as STD testing and screenings, contraception, Pap tests, breast exams, cancer screenings, and other services, such as adoption referrals, pediatric care, and immunizations. So when someone says let's defund Planned Parenthood because they never liked that it ever existed, what they are saying to women, particularly low-income women, women in low-income communities, and many women of color is that they won't have access to a wide range of essential services because of an ideological desire to control what choices are being made by women and their doctors.

I fail to see the logic here. This exploitative movement, advanced by special interests, would effectively tell a

half million American women: Sorry, you can't have a breast exam this year. Of all the issues that we are going to debate on the floor right now, why are we debating this? Why are we telling 400,000 American women: Sorry, you won't be able to have a lifesaving screening for cervical cancer.

We have kids in all 50 States who are going hungry during summer vacation because their parents can't afford to have that extra lunch they normally got from school. We have college graduates who can't afford to start their lives, buy a home, get married, and have kids because they are drowning in student debt. We have men and women in this country who work 40 hours a week, with no vacation days, no sick days, and are still stuck in poverty. That is not my vision of the American Dream.

We have millions of hard-working Americans who have to quit their jobs and lose paychecks every time they have a family emergency. It doesn't matter if it is a new baby. It doesn't matter if their husband is dying of cancer. It doesn't matter if their mother is on her deathbed. They don't have access to paid family and medical leave. We are literally the only industrialized country that doesn't have paid leave.

This makes no sense in a country that believes if you work hard every day, you will be able to get into the middle class. That is simply not true for low-wage workers who are working 40 hours a week and are still below the poverty line and cannot meet those family needs because they have no paid leave.

But the issue this body wants to debate is defunding Planned Parenthood. This body wants to make sure that millions of women don't get basic access to health care. Whether or not to maliciously hurt an organization that provides vital health services to millions of American women—this is the issue our colleagues are using to threaten yet another government shutdown—controlling women's choices about their health, about their families, about their reproductive health care.

It is clear that some of my colleagues just want to roll back Roe v. Wade. That is their goal. That is their mission in life. It is ideologically driven and funded by special interests. That is their mission. But we should not return to the days when women had no medical independence.

Some of my colleagues will use any excuse they can to overreact and force this same tired old Planned Parenthood debate on us. But here is the fundamental truth about Planned Parenthood. Millions of women in this country—women in low-income communities, women of color, women in every State—rely on Planned Parenthood for basic health care—mammograms, cervical screenings, access to contraception, and family planning. They rely on it to prevent disease. They rely on it to detect disease. They rely on it to treat disease. We cannot and will not defund Planned Parenthood.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority whip.

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, over the last couple of weeks we have been discussing some pretty basic and important work that we need to do when it comes to our Nation's infrastructure—specifically, the highway bill that we will vote on and pass out of the Senate today.

I am very encouraged by the fact that the House of Representatives has now taken up the challenge of coming up with their own highway bill, and we are going to pass a 3-month temporary extension to give them the chance to do that and then to give all of us a chance to get to a conference committee and come up, hopefully, with an even better bill.

That is the way the Senate and the House are supposed to work, and that is why I am encouraged. I think the debate we have had over the highway bill is a good one, and I am glad to see, as I say, that we are on the right track.

In my State of Texas we know that good infrastructure and a working highway system are important for a number of reasons. First, it is important for public safety. Second, it is important for the environment. Third, it is important for the economy because when goods can flow freely across the roads and the highways and the freight lines in our State, it helps improve our economy and creates a more favorable condition for jobs.

When you come from a State such as mine, which is a fast-growing State, that growth requires the improvements, repairs, and modernization of our roadways to accommodate the visitors who come to our State, as well as those who move there—some 1,000 more each day. So that is why I am pleased this legislation will include resources that will make the lives of everyday Texans better.

Resources in this bill—which I should stress involves no tax increases—invest in interstates and freight routes and provide for much-needed border infrastructure projects to promote legitimate trade and travel flowing across our international border, while supporting economic development and improved quality of life.

WORK IN THE SENATE

This bill is just another reminder of the Senate's progress we have made in the 114th Congress under new management. This year, the Senate has made a lot of progress on key pieces of legislation. The fact is we are finally back working again in a bipartisan manner that provides real solutions for the American people.

I am proud to say that work includes things on a wide spectrum of priorities, including passing a budget for the first time since 2009, legislation that fights the scourge of human trafficking, a trade bill that will open up new markets for American-made products, and of course earlier this year, the Iran Nuclear Agreement Review Act, which was signed into law and freezes the administration's ability to lift sanctions on Iran until representatives of the American people have had a chance to carefully examine President Obama's deal.

As I mentioned a number of times, I have many concerns about this deal, and I will continue to remind the President of his own words when he said that no deal is better than a bad deal. I couldn't agree more, even though he and the rest of the administration are actively suggesting that the only real alternative to this deal is war—a statement which is demonstrably false.

I think, unfortunately, that is a scare tactic. I hope people of goodwill will be persuaded by the facts and not scare tactics, and I hope we will have that debate in September after all the Members of the Senate and the House have had a chance to thoroughly immerse themselves in the terms of this deal and are prepared to debate that on the floor of the Senate and on the floor of the House.

But our work is not over. Earlier this week, I cosponsored legislation, along with a number of my colleagues, which would provide additional money for women's primary health care services while at the same time defunding Planned Parenthood. I know I speak for many of my colleagues on both sides of the aisle when I say I was shocked, saddened, and disgusted at the several recent videos that depicted human life being reduced to spare parts for sale. This is a heartbreaking practice, and we cannot let it stand. We must stand up to protect the most vulnerable.

This bill does that by defunding Planned Parenthood, which has made a practice of taking aborted children and then selling the body parts for compensation. The one reason why this is so important is that, beyond the immediate disgust at these videos in the way that somehow this trafficking in human body parts has become a commercialized practice that Planned Parenthood engages in, since 1976 there has actually been a prohibition in U.S. law against the use of tax dollars to pay for abortion, except in some rare circumstances, and that is known as the Hyde amendment, named after Congressman Henry Hyde. This has been part of the law of the land since 1976.

What Planned Parenthood has done is taken tax dollars and claimed they have separated those tax dollars from the privately raised money they use that then finances abortion. They say: Well, we use the tax dollars for women's health services, and we don't use any tax dollars to pay for abortions. Well, we all know that is a convenient fiction, because money is fungible. The tax dollars paid by you, me, and all of us in the United States who are taxpayers goes into a single fund that

pays for the operation of Planned Parenthood—the largest abortion provider in America.

So this legislation is very important because it does take care of the primary care women's health services, but it defunds Planned Parenthood's abortion practice, consistent with the Hyde amendment, which has been the law of the land since 1976.

By doing it in this way, I would say that we are actually improving and increasing access for women to health care services through places such as our community health clinics. In my State alone, there are almost eight times more community health centers that could provide these primary care services to women than there are Planned Parenthood outlets. So this actually will increase access to primary care for women, while defunding Planned Parenthood's abortion practice, consistent with the Hyde amendment.

I hope this is legislation we can all unite behind. I would implore all of our colleagues, when we vote on this next Monday afternoon, to join us in getting on the bill by voting for cloture and then debating it and passing it.

While I am glad Congress has a clear way forward to meet our Nation's infrastructure needs on this bill, we have a lot more we need to do to protect and serve the American people.

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. INHOFE. 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. INHOFE. Mr. President, just one quick comment before Senator BOXER makes some remarks.

We have talked about this. We have talked about the significance of the upcoming vote. I just want to reemphasize to my conservative colleagues on the Republican side that this is something which is a conservative position. The only alternative to this is short-term extensions, which cost about 30 percent off the top.

So let's do in this vote what the Constitution tells us to do and take care of one of the two assignments that are given to us in article I, section 8 of the Constitution; that is, roads and highways.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from California.

Mrs. BOXER. Mr. President, I am very pleased to be here today. This has been a long and winding road to get to the point where we can pass a transportation bill which is a very good bill and which is very bipartisan. According to a formula, each and every one of our States will get more than they have in the past.

This is what our States are facing. This is a bridge between Arizona and California. I am sure my friend knows what happened. People commuting between our States have had to go 400 miles out of their way.

We cannot turn away from this vote today. I know and my friend from Oklahoma knows that each one of us would have written a different bill, but the process means we have to come together. This person says ''I don't like the process'' and this one says ''I don't like the pay-fors.'' Well, I am sure Senator INHOFE and I feel the same way, but we know that if we run into a construction worker who is unemployed and we say ''Well, we didn't vote for this because we didn't like the process,'' they would say ''I need a paycheck.''

So I am going to ask our colleagues to vote aye for three reasons.

First, let's get our construction workers back to work. We have so many of them—hundreds of thousands—who are out of work. The general contractors told us last week that in 25 States they are seeing layoffs of construction workers because we are not doing a long-term bill. So let's help our construction workers get back to work.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to have printed in the RECORD three letters of support from the Nation's leading construction unions and additional letters of support I received from the Transportation Construction Coalition and the Highway Materials Group.

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

[From the National Infrastructure Alliance, July 22, 2015]

H.R. 22—SENATE CLOTURE VOTE

(By Raymond J. Poupore, Executive Vice President)

The leading construction unions building our country's surface transportation infrastructure strongly urge a ''YES'' vote on the Motion to Proceed to debate H.R. 22—The DRIVE Act.

As persistent high unemployment still plagues the construction industry, we need a well funded, multi-year infrastructure bill to put hundreds of thousands of our members to work building critical highway and transit projects. It is our understanding that the transit title in this bill actually exceeds its traditional 20 percent share, despite rumors to the contrary.

Through this legislation, we can begin to address the most pressing needs facing our transportation infrastructure. Please support your constituent construction workers by voting to proceed on the DRIVE Act.

LABORERS' INTERNATIONAL UNION OF NORTH AMERICA,
Washington, DC, July 21, 2015.

U.S. SENATE,
Washington, DC.

DEAR SENATOR: On behalf of the 500,000 members of the Laborers' International Union of North America (LIUNA), I urge you to support the motion to proceed to consideration of a long term reauthorization of the federal highway and transit programs.

Last month, the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee unanimously approved S. 1647, the Developing a Reliable and Innovative Vision for the Economy (DRIVE) Act. Now is the time for the rest of the U.S. Senate to join together and embrace a bipartisan effort to invest in this Nation and reject the politics of division.

A long term highway bill will help provide necessary funds to improve America's crumbling transportation infrastructure. Our economy requires a functioning transportation network and with bridges literally falling apart and highways unable to handle current traffic volumes, America's transportation infrastructure is in dire need of a robust and sustainable investment.

Under the current extensions, the Highway Trust Fund is unable to fully fund these necessary repairs, making our highways and bridges more susceptible to further deterioration. A long term federal commitment to invest in the Nation's infrastructure and safety needs is essential.

I urge you to end the delays on political games and pass a long term highway bill before Congress leaves for vacation.

With kind regards, I am

Sincerely yours,

TERRY O'SULLIVAN,
General President.

INTERNATIONAL UNION OF OPERATING ENGINEERS,
Washington, DC, July 21, 2015.

Hon. HARRY REID,
Hart Senate Office Building,
Washington, DC.

Hon. CHARLES E. SCHUMER,
Hart Senate Office Building,
Washington, DC.

Hon. DICK DURBIN,
Hart Senate Office Building,
Washington, DC.

Hon. PATTY MURRAY,
Russell Senate Office Building,
Washington, DC.

DEAR SENATORS REID, DURBIN, SCHUMER, AND MURRAY: At this critical moment for America's transportation infrastructure, the International Union of Operating Engineers respectfully requests the support of Senate Democratic Leadership for immediate passage of a long-term highway and transit bill. Passage of the cloture vote today is a necessary step in order to have a debate on revenue options to fund the nation's biggest, most important infrastructure programs.

The model developed by the Environment and Public Works Committee in the DRIVE Act (Developing a Reliable and Innovative Vision for the Economy Act), both procedurally and substantively, should serve as the framework for Senate floor consideration. The bipartisan process led to a consensus and unanimous committee vote. The substance of the policy issues ensured that extreme measures from both the left and the right were rejected.

Aspects of the Commerce Committee markup were a serious disappointment, as you know. Similarly, consistent references to partisan revenue-raisers understandably make policymakers reluctant to engage in serious debate. While the sensitive nature of negotiations and legislative strategy leaves us with precious few details, we are assured that ''real revenue'' could be available to the program with bipartisan support. Serious revenue options must be on the table, and egregious, partisan provisions must be off the table. It is that simple, if we have any chance of success.

The DRIVE Act addresses what is perhaps the most pressing domestic economic issue of our time: reauthorization of a multiyear highway and transit program. The Act's legislative framework provides a six-year certainty to transportation planners, the construction industry, and its supply chain. It builds on important successes in MAP–21 by

expediting project delivery and making the approval process more transparent. Additionally, it creates a new, national emphasis on freight movement, and it targets resources at projects of national and regional significance.

As you know, we need a long-term solution. We cannot afford to wait. Thousands of Operating Engineers depend on these investments for their livelihoods. We cannot rely on ''aspirational thinking'' about comprehensive agreements that could include funding for this essential program.

The transportation advocacy community believes wholeheartedly that now is the time to build on the bipartisan momentum generated in the Environment and Public Works Committee to move a robust, long-term bill through the Senate before the summer break. We look forward to working with you to enact such a long-term highway and transit bill as soon as possible.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

JAMES T. CALLAHAN,
General President.

JULY 29, 2015.

DEAR SENATOR: The 31 national associations and construction trade unions of the Transportation Construction Coalition (TCC) urge you to support passage of the ''Developing a Reliable and Innovative Vision for the Economy (DRIVE) Act.'' The bipartisan surface transportation reauthorization bill would guarantee three years of increased highway and public transportation investment and provide further certainty to states by distributing six years of contract authority.

The Highway Trust Fund has suffered five cash flow crises requiring $65 billion in temporary cash infusions since 2008. With a sixth trust fund revenue shortfall less than a month away, seven states have delayed or canceled projects valued at $1.6 billion. Furthermore, the Congressional Budget Office projects the trust fund will be unable to support any new highway or transit spending in FY 2016 without remedial action.

This repeating cycle of uncertainty and piecemeal management undermines the ability of state transportation departments to implement multi-year transportation plans and discourages the private sector from making investments in new capital and personnel. By supporting the DRIVE Act, senators not only have an opportunity to stabilize surface transportation investment, but to do so as part of legislation that would enact a series of meaningful policy reforms to help grow the economy and promote improved mobility for all Americans.

The DRIVE Act includes provisions that would streamline the transportation project review process to expedite the delivery of needed highway and bridge improvements. The measure would also create a dedicated freight program and a major projects assistance program—both of which would help enhance U.S. economic competitiveness.

The members of the TCC remain concerned about the need to enact a permanent solution to stabilize and grow Highway Trust Fund revenue. The Senate surface transportation reauthorization construct would provide ample time to develop and enact such a plan while federal highway and transit investment is unthreatened over the next three years.

We strongly urge all senators to support the DRIVE Act to provide your states with the stable and growing resources they need to help them deliver the highway and public transportation improvements the U.S. economy and all Americans need.

Sincerely,

THE TRANSPORTATION CONSTRUCTION COALITION.

JULY 29, 2015.

STATEMENT OF THE HIGHWAY MATERIALS GROUP (HMG) AS THE DEADLINE NEARS ON HIGHWAY FUNDING REAUTHORIZATION

The Highway Materials Group applauds the efforts by all Senators—notably Majority Leader McConnell, Chairman Inhofe and Ranking Member Boxer and their staffs—in support of a long term reauthorization bill that increases funding for the nation's highways and transit systems.

We fully support final Senate passage this week and urge a YES vote on the bipartisan, multi-year Developing a Reliable and Innovative Vision for the Economy (DRIVE) Act which offers great hope to the modernization of our nation's infrastructure.

We urge House Transportation and Infrastructure Chairman Shuster and House Ways and Means Committee Chairman Ryan to utilize the hours of hearings, site visits and stakeholder input they have held and bring together their Committees soon after the August recess to produce a multiyear, fully-funded bill that warrants House support.

Most importantly, before departing for the August recess, we urge House and Senate leadership to unequivocally state their commitment to send to the President a well-funded, multiyear highway bill by the end of October.

The Highway Materials Group (HMG), comprised of nine national associations listed below, represent companies that provide the construction materials and equipment essential to building America's roads, highways, and bridges. We employ tens of thousands of men and women in well-paying American jobs, and we stand in support of this important legislative action.

American Coal Ash Association, American Concrete Pavement Association, Association of Equipment Manufacturers, Associated Equipment Distributors, Concrete Reinforcing Steel Institute, National Asphalt Pavement Association, National Ready Mixed Concrete Association, National Stone, Sand & Gravel Association, Portland Cement Association.

Mrs. BOXER. Mr. President, it is rare to have the National Association of Manufacturers and the Chamber of Commerce in agreement with the entire structure of the construction industry workers, all of those unions. I put their names into the RECORD. It is unique to have Mothers Against Drunk Driving in that coalition and to have the National Governors Association in that coalition and to have the mayors organization in that coalition.

My friend from Oklahoma and my friend from Illinois, Senator DURBIN, whom I thank from the bottom of my heart—we were kind of smiling the other day because we had the mayor of Oklahoma City and the mayor of New York ask us for a long-term bill; no more short-term extensions. That is the kind of coalition building we are seeing out in the country and one that I think we are living proof of here today.

So I will close with where I started. To me, this is the poster child for why we have to act today. There are more than 60,000 bridges that are obsolete or deficient. If we don't pass this bill today and the House doesn't take it up and pass it or something else similar to it or get to conference, we are back to, I think it is, the 34th short extension. That is doomsday—doomsday.

I am sad the House went out for a 5½-week break. It is the first time in 10 years they went out for an August break before August. I find it ironic that they went out even a day earlier so they are not there if we do, in fact, pass our legislation and send it over.

Why are they doing this? They need to act. I am encouraged that Speaker BOEHNER said that he has asked his committee to act. If we can do it over here, they can do it over there.

I will close with this: I am very pleased that we have reached this point. It has taken a lot of work and a lot of compromise. We had to give some ground, but we found common ground. We all believe this bill is so important for our Nation.

I urge everyone, regardless of how we voted before, to understand this is not what we want to see in America. We can't have more of these bridge collapses, and we can't have more of these streets falling apart. Now, 50 percent are in disrepair. This is the day.

I thank Senator INHOFE. I thank Senator DURBIN. I thank Senator MCCONNELL. I thank Senator NELSON. And later, when we finish with this, I will thank many others. The staffs have been unbelievable. We were working into the wee hours of the morning for the last week.

I also thank you, Madam President, for your role in this and your help in this. I am proud that I serve on the committee with you. We have worked well together. I hope we have a good vote, a solid vote for this bill.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mrs. FISCHER). All postcloture time is expired.

The amendment was ordered to be engrossed, and the bill to be read a third time.

The bill was read the third time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The bill having been read the third time, the question is, Shall the bill pass?

Mr. INHOFE. Madam 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 Senator is necessarily absent: the Senator from South Carolina (Mr. GRAHAM).

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

The result was announced—yeas 65, nays 34, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 260 Leg.]

YEAS—65

Alexander	Boozman	Cassidy
Ayotte	Boxer	Coats
Baldwin	Burr	Cochran
Barrasso	Cantwell	Collins
Bennet	Capito	Coons
Blunt	Cardin	Cornyn

Daines
Durbin
Enzi
Ernst
Feinstein
Fischer
Franken
Gardner
Grassley
Hatch
Heitkamp
Heller
Hirono
Hoeven
Inhofe
Isakson
Johnson
Kaine
King
Kirk
Klobuchar
Leahy
Manchin
McCain
McCaskill
McConnell
Mikulski
Moran
Murkowski
Murray
Nelson
Peters
Portman
Roberts
Rounds
Sanders
Schatz
Sessions
Shaheen
Stabenow
Sullivan
Tester
Thune
Tillis
Vitter
Whitehouse
Wicker

NAYS—34

Blumenthal
Booker
Brown
Carper
Casey
Corker
Cotton
Crapo
Cruz
Donnelly
Flake
Gillibrand
Heinrich
Lankford
Lee
Markey
Menendez
Merkley
Murphy
Paul
Perdue
Reed
Reid
Risch
Rubio
Sasse
Schumer
Scott
Shelby
Toomey
Udall
Warner
Warren
Wyden

NOT VOTING—1

Graham

The bill (H.R. 22), as amended, was passed.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader.

PROHIBITING FEDERAL FUNDING OF PLANNED PARENTHOOD FEDERATION OF AMERICA—MOTION TO PROCEED

Mr. MCCONNELL. Madam President, I move to proceed to Calendar No. 169, S. 1881.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the motion.

The bill clerk read as follows:

Motion to proceed to Calendar No. 169, S. 1881, a bill to prohibit Federal funding of Planned Parenthood Federation of America.

CLOTURE MOTION

Mr. MCCONNELL. Madam President, I send a cloture motion to the desk.

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

The bill clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on the motion to proceed to S. 1881, a bill to prohibit Federal funding of Planned Parenthood Federation of America.

Mitch McConnell, James M. Inhofe, Rand Paul, Pat Roberts, Ben Sasse, James Lankford, Joni Ernst, Daniel Coats, Cory Gardner, Steve Daines, Roger F. Wicker, Johnny Isakson, Lindsey Graham, Michael B. Enzi, Jerry Moran, Tim Scott, John Cornyn.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Oklahoma.

THE HIGHWAY BILL

Mr. INHOFE. Madam President, I know the Senator from California, Mrs. BOXER, and I both want to thank a lot of people who worked very hard. People don't realize how many people are involved. Quite frankly, a little bit of guilt always comes to me, because this is my sixth highway reauthorization bill, and it always ends up that I don't work as long as all the staff works. They are up many nights until midnight and many nights all night long.

This was a good bill. It was tough doing it. From this point forward, we have the opportunity to send it to the House. I have already had communication with some of the House Members who do want a multiyear bill. The staffs are working together as we speak to pull it together so we can pass one and get out of this long string of short-term extensions. They don't serve any useful purpose.

I wish to mention the names and to get them in the RECORD of those people who really put in the long hours. In my office is Alex Herrgott. He has been with me—we have been together, I guess—over a dozen years. He is the leader on our side. He put together a great team, including Shant Boyajian, who is the guy who was the transportation expert on our end, and he did a great job. We have had others just about as good as he is in the past, but they all sweat. This guy doesn't do it. He does it with a smile on his face. We have Chaya Koffman. She came with incredible experience. We couldn't have done it without her. It is equally important to thank David Napoliello and Andrew Dohrman. David and Andrew work for Senator BOXER and are experts within the office, working on this alongside our staff.

It is kind of interesting because Senator BOXER and I can't get any further apart philosophically. She is a very proud liberal, and I am a very proud conservative. We would be fighting like cats and dogs over these regulations that are putting Americans out of business. But, today, we think alike, and we are working together. I am so proud of her staff working with my staff.

Bettina. There is Bettina, and she is probably the No. 1 hard working person, sitting in the back here on that side, and whom we really appreciate. Some days I don't appreciate her, but I have all during this process.

So many others have made contributions to the success today. It is important to thank on my staff Susan Bodine, for her work on environmental provisions, and also Jennie Wright and Andrew Neely. I wish to thank my communications team, including Donelle Harder, Daisy Letendre, and Kristina Baum. They have to get the message out as to what we are doing, how significant it is.

People who are witnessing this today are witnessing the most popular bill of this entire year. We can go back to any of the 50 States, and they are all going to say the one thing we want is a transportation system. It is not just that they want this bill. This is what the Constitution says we are supposed to be doing. Article I, section 8 of the Constitution says to defend America and provide for roads and bridges, and that is what we accomplished today.

There are some others outside of our committee I want to thank: Chairman HATCH, Chairman THUNE, Chairman SHELBY, and their staffs, including Chris Campbell, Mark Prater, David Schweitert, Shannon Hines, and Jen Deci. I want to thank our leader, MITCH MCCONNELL, who really came through to put this at top priority. Without that priority, we couldn't have done it. I know Sharon Soderstrom, Hazen Marshall, Neil Chatterjee, Jonathan Burks, and Brendan Dunn were all involved.

If my colleagues would just permit me, 10 years ago today is the last time we passed a significant, multiyear bill. I remember standing right here at this podium, right when this moment came, and it was time to thank all of these people who worked so hard. All of a sudden the sirens went off and the buzzers—evacuate, evacuate; bomb, bomb. Everyone left, but I hadn't made my speech yet. So I stood there and made it longer than I probably should have. There is nothing more eerie than standing here in the Chamber when nobody else is here and everybody else is gone. After a while, I thought that I had better get out of here.

As I walked out the front door and down the long steps—they had already shut off the elevators and all of that; it was dark—I saw a bulk of a man walking away very slowly. I saw that it was Ted Kennedy. I said: Ted, we better get out of here; this place might blow up.

He said: Well, these old legs don't work like they used to.

So I said: Here, put your arm around my shoulders. And I put my arm out to steady him. Someone took our picture. It was in a magazine, and it said: Who said that Republicans are not compassionate.

I always think of that when I think of these bills. I say to my friend, Senator BOXER, with whom I have worked so closely during this time—and I actually enjoyed it: Any time we get a coalition between your philosophy and my philosophy, it has to be right. It was, and it is over.

I yield the floor to Senator BOXER.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from California.

Mrs. BOXER. Madam President, my friend and I have long worked together on infrastructure, and we did it this time under very difficult conditions. I would say to him that with his leadership on EPW, going to a markup, proving to the rest of the Senate that, in fact, our committee could work together, we got a 20-to-nothing vote. As a result of that, and as my friend has often said, our committee is really responsible for about 70 to 75 percent of the funding. So we were the key committee, and we proved that we could work together.

It was a little tougher on the other committees. That is when it took Leader MCCONNELL's leadership, Senator DURBIN's leadership, and we came together.

But I must say that those top staffers from Senator INHOFE's team, McConnell's team, Boxer's team, including Bettina Poirier, Neil Chatterjee, and

Alex Herrgott really—friendships forged—worked on, and it was a pleasure to work with them. I will never forget this as long as I live. This has been a highlight of my career, and I have been here a very long time.

I want to thank Andrew Dohrmann, David Napoliello, Tyler Rushforth, Jason Albritton, Ted Illston, Mary Kerr, Kate Gilman, Colin McCarthy, and Kathryn Backer in addition to Bettina, on my team. I want to thank Ryan Jackson, Shant Boyajian, Susan Bodine, Andrew Neely, and Chaya Koffman, along with Alex, on the Inhofe team. I want to thank Alyssa Fisher on the Durbin team. I want to thank Shannon Hines, Jennifer Deci, and Homer Carlisle on the Banking Committee team. I want to thank Kim Lipsky so much. What a job she did for BILL NELSON, and her team, Devon Barnhart and Matt Kelly, and Dave Schweitert on the Thune team.

Notice we said ''team.'' This was about teamwork. This was not about me, me, me or I, I, I. It was all of us in friendship, in sincerity. We never surprised each other. When we couldn't do this, something happened, we would tell each other, and we never left the room until we figured it out.

I will have more to write about this and say about it because truly these moments don't happen often around here. In my career this will stand out as truly spectacular—spectacular—the people who were so dedicated, and my friendship with my friend is just extraordinary. It stood the test of time. My new collegiality with MITCH MCCONNELL, which has not existed until now, this is a miraculous thing that has happened.

One of the things I have learned in life is it goes so fast and sometimes you don't mark those special moments. This moment will be forever marked with me and with my friends.

We now are going to look forward to working with our friends in the House. We are going to infuse our spirit over there. We are going to make sure they know we can work together and be friends, and it has already started, as ALEX has stated today.

So we are ready for the next phase, the next step. What is most important? We are going to make sure we have infrastructure that works for this Nation; that you and I, JIM, don't have to stand here and show tragic photos, bridge collapses, and hear terrible stories about construction workers who can't make it and have to have food stamps, and businessmen who have literally cried in my office because they have no certainty, they can't function, and they may have to shut down. This is not what we want.

We did the right thing for the country. It wasn't about us—we were the ones who made it happen—it was about America, and I couldn't be more proud.

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

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

REMEMBERING REVEREND CLEMENTA PINCKNEY

Mr. SCOTT. Mr. President, before I start my prepared remarks, I did want to note that today would have been the birthday of Pastor Reverend Clementa Pinckney, a friend of mine, who was the pastor of Emanuel 9, the Emanuel Church, the Mother Emanuel Church in Charleston, SC. Today being his birthday, I thought it would be a good opportunity to share with the public that we miss him. We thank God for the family and the amazing roles they have played in South Carolina and around this country.

Certainly, as we tackle issues going forward, I think we should keep in mind, bear in mind, the civility, the grace, and the compassion we saw from Reverend Pinckney and the way he tackled issues with such an important ingredient to keeping our communities together.

I hope as we discuss other challenging issues, we will have an opportunity to remember that civility, that notion that we are better together. The desire to build a bridge should be seen and displayed in the public forum as we discuss issues that sometimes pull at the very fabric of who we are as a nation.

SAFER OFFICERS AND SAFER CITIZENS ACT OF 2015

Mr. President, I rise to offer a solution. I will tell you solutions are hard to find at times, but today I think I have found a solution that will help law enforcement officers and our citizens go home safely. That solution is body-worn cameras to be worn by our law enforcement officers throughout this country. Just yesterday, in Cincinnati, we were unfortunately given yet another example of how important body cameras are when they are worn by law enforcement officers.

We, those of us who viewed the video, watched in disbelief as the officer shot the driver in the head. Difficult, difficult video to watch. Cincinnati officials said in their investigation of the death of Samuel Dubose, after being shot by the University of Cincinnati police officer, that body camera footage was invaluable. I want to say that one more time; that the police chief said, without any question, what allowed them to find conclusion, to actually arrest the officer, was the presence of a video that was undeniable.

Unfortunately, we have seen too many of these incidents around the country. I will tell you that I struggle with this issue sometimes because I have so many good friends who are officers, who serve the public every single day with honor, with dignity, and amazing distinction. I am talking about guys and young ladies who put on the uniform with pride. I see that pride as I walk through the neighborhoods as I talk to folks.

So many of our officers serve this Nation, serve their communities so well, keeping all of us safe, but sometimes, and too often we have seen recently, the videos suggest we have to take a deeper look. Our citizens deserve for us to take that deeper look. I think that without any question a body-worn camera will protect the public, but it will also protect the officer. That is why I am here today.

I have said a couple of times that if they say a picture is worth a thousand words, then a video is worth a thousand pictures. Let me say that one more time. If a picture is worth a thousand words, then a video is worth a thousand pictures. I believe strongly that an important piece of the puzzle to help rebuild trust with our law enforcement officers and the communities they serve is body-worn cameras.

I say it is only one piece of that very important puzzle because I do not know that there is a single solution. I have looked for a panacea, but I do not know if there is a panacea. As a matter of fact, I think there is not a panacea, but there are many critical steps we must take to tackle an array of issues confronting the distressed communities and challenging circumstances, whether it is poverty, criminal justice reform or, as we have seen on the video, instances of police brutality.

With body cameras, we have seen some amazing studies. At least one study has confirmed there is a 90-percent drop in complaints against officers. That is an astounding number, a 90-percent drop in complaints against officers. The same study shows there is a 60-percent drop in the use of force by officers. This should be good news for everyone on every side of the issue—if there are sides of the issue. I would suggest there are not sides to this issue.

There is not a Republican side, there is not a Democratic side, there is not a Black side, there is not a White side, there is only a right side and a wrong side. If we can find ourselves in a position where officers go home at night to a loving family, arms wide open, and citizens within the community go home at night to loving families and warm embraces, that perhaps the body-worn camera by officers will make this happen more every day someplace in our country.

With those sorts of numbers, how can we not figure out the best way to get these devices into the hands of our police officers? This does not even touch on the fact that when we ended up with the video, a very unfortunate video, on April 4, this year, my hometown, North Charleston, SC—a video of Walter Scott being shot in the back, it helped bring clarity to an incredibly painful situation.

That is why, after months of meetings with dozens of police organizations, civil rights groups, privacy

groups, and others, yesterday I introduced the Safer Officers and Safer Citizens Act of 2015. My goal is simple. It is to simply provide local and State law enforcement agencies with the resources to equip their officers with body-worn cameras. My legislation creates a dedicated grant program, fully paid for—I know there are those in the Senate, such as myself, who like those words ''fully paid for''—to help local law enforcement agencies purchase body cameras.

I am opposed, very opposed, to any notion that we should federalize in any way, shape or form local law enforcement. I believe local law enforcement should be in charge of local law enforcement and State law enforcement should be in charge of State law enforcement. But if we can provide some tools, some resources, to make sure the situation I described earlier from a positive standpoint of an officer going home to their house and members of the community going home to their houses after having an interaction, if there is a solution and/or an opportunity to see that happen more often, we should go there.

My grant program would provide $100 million over the next 5 fiscal years: $100 million each year, 2016 through 2021, and only requires a simple 25-percent match. It certainly suggests that we will give preferences to departments that are applying for grants. They will need to have their own policies in place regarding data retention, privacy requirements, and other areas because I believe local and State departments, as I have said, can best determine their own procedures around the body cameras.

As States and localities around the country implement body-worn camera programs, I believe this is the best way we can help—not take over but provide that seed capital, the resources to start a brand-new conversation all over the country about how many lives have been saved, how many folks get to go home.

I will say this on some other points. I had the privilege of speaking at the graduation of who I call my brother, who is the son of my mentor, John Moniz, who helped change my life when I was a kid on the wrong course for a long time—I had the privilege of speaking at Brian Moniz's graduation from the police academy just 2 years ago, July 18—a couple of years ago. He is an amazing young man who wants to serve his community. His brother Philip is also a fellow sheriff's deputy.

So when I think about the words I am speaking today, I don't think about it in legislative terms, I think about it in terms of real places and real people, such as my brothers and others who want to serve the country. But I also think about it in terms of real people who have suffered through those violent interactions.

I am thankful that cosponsors such as Senator LINDSEY GRAHAM of South Carolina and CORY BOOKER of New Jersey have joined me in making sure we start the conversation that I hope to continue with Senator GRASSLEY on this important topic.

I ask that we all remember the words of Mrs. Judy Scott, the mother of Walter Scott, who lost her son in my hometown of North Charleston. I have had the chance to speak to her on a number of occasions since the incident. She has taught me a lot. She has taught me the power of forgiveness. Very quickly afterward she showed no animus toward the officer. She was praying for the officer. She forgave the officer. But her request to me was a very simple request. It was simply that no more mothers have to unnecessarily bury their sons the way she did. That is a very simple request.

I think my body camera legislation will help us achieve that goal. I believe this legislation will protect citizens and law enforcement officers. It will bridge the gap that seems to be growing in some communities around the country. It will provide resources without taking over local law enforcement. I believe this is critically important, and the sooner we get there, the better off our Nation will be.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from North Carolina.

TRANS-PACIFIC PARTNERSHIP

Mr. TILLIS. Mr. President, as we speak, there are American trade negotiators in Hawaii from the Pacific Rim and South America negotiating the final terms of the Trans-Pacific Partnership, or TPP.

I rise today to speak about an element of those negotiations which I find troubling and which I believe, if it goes on its current path, will produce a gross injustice that will be harmful to American job creators and could potentially threaten the passage or ratification of the TPP.

I understand that the current proposal of the Trans-Pacific Partnership calls for discriminatory treatment of tobacco—specifically singling out an entire industry. It is an industry that is vitally important to my home State of North Carolina. Tobacco continues to be vitally important among North Carolinian agricultural exports, and the only path to sustaining this industry is to preserve the place for the American leaf in the world. The industry supports more than 22,000 jobs in North Carolina, my home State.

I rise today to defend farmers, manufacturers, and exporters from discriminatory treatment in our trade agreements. Today it happens to be tobacco, but I will do this for any crop for as long as I am in the Senate. I am well aware that many States aren't touched by tobacco farming or tobacco product manufacturing, but this is not just about tobacco; this is about American values and fairness.

I believe free trade is good, and a balanced free trade benefits all parties. For those who think free trade is bad for America, I don't agree. When America and Americans compete on a level playing field, we win the vast majority of the time. It is what we do.

But the United States, over the years, has tried to do more with these agreements than just haggle for market access and tariff productions. Over the past 30 years, the United States has commonly negotiated what is called the investor-state dispute settlement—or ISDS—language in a number of international agreements. The ISDS provisions are fairly simple. They give someone who believes their trade agreement rights have been violated by another government trading partner the ability to bring a claim against that government before an international arbitration panel.

All kinds of offenses can be addressed through the ISDS process—protecting American-owned businesses by requiring our trading partners to meet minimum standards of treatment under international law; protecting American-owned businesses from having their property taken away without payment or adequate compensation; and protecting American-owned businesses from discriminatory, unfair, or arbitrary treatment. That is a fundamental protection. If these sound like American ideals, it is because they are. American ingenuity, combined with these values and ideals, has produced the world's greatest economy, the American economy.

Regions of the world that do not share the same views of due process, equality under the law, and protection of private property rights would do well to follow our model. It will make them a better trading partner, and it will help their economies thrive.

Yet, even the U.S. negotiators apparently want to be selective in applying these ideals, and that is really the root of the concern I have with the discussions going on now in Hawaii. We cannot afford to be selective when it comes to fairness. Our negotiators have concluded that while some investors are entitled to equal treatment under the law, others aren't. It is odd to me that this would be the posture of any nation, but it is particularly troubling that this is the current posture of the negotiators who were responsible for negotiating the Trans-Pacific Partnership.

It is ironic that the ideal of equal treatment and due process is being peddled with our trading partners as equal treatment and due process for everyone but some members of the minority. So let's say, my fellow Senators, that you are not from a State that is harmed by the current negotiations. You may feel comfortable that this could never happen to you, to a sector in your State's economy, but I believe you should be worried. The current proposal on the TPP creates an entirely new precedent, a precedent that will no doubt become the norm for future trade agreements where the negotiators get to pick and choose winners and losers and American businesses and American industries will suffer as a result. Once we

allow an entire sector to be treated unfairly in trade agreements, the question is, Who is next?

I hold a sincere belief that unfair treatment for one agricultural commodity significantly heightens the risk that more unfair treatment for another commodity lurks right around the corner.

I have not spoken with a single organization, agricultural or otherwise, that believes this sets a good precedent—quite the contrary. I encourage my colleagues to speak to their State's agricultural community and simply ask them what they think about setting this kind of standard.

To my fellow Senators—and, incidentally, I should say for those of you in the Gallery, we are working today; we are just outside of the Gallery. I know this is kind of like showing up at the zoo and one of your favorite animals being off of an exhibit. But they are out working; they will be back at about 1:45.

To get back to the script, if you believe that this unfair treatment is OK because it is about tobacco and that it is a fair outcome, I think you ought to think again because I will remind you—and our fellow Senators need to understand this—that Congress has spoken on this issue. We exist to make sure we take care of the voice that may not be heard, the minority who may be cast aside because of some agenda or because of it just being an easy negotiating tactic.

But in this particular case, Congress has spoken loudly. I will remind my Members that Congress has said opportunities for U.S. agricultural exports must be ''substantially equivalent to opportunities afforded foreign exports in U.S. markets.'' Now, with this trade agreement, if you have a trading partner agree with the behavior or decisions made in the United States, they are going to be subject to due process. But this trade agreement would actually allow our trading partners to not allow us to be held to that same standard in their country of jurisdiction and not go to international arbitration. Congress has stated that dispute settlement mechanisms must be available across the board, not selectively.

I also voted to give the President trade promotion authority to allow trade agreements like the TPP to move through Congress in a quick, orderly, and responsible process. That is the process we are going through right now. I did not vote to give our negotiators the freedom to indiscriminately choose when fairness should be applied and when it shouldn't be applied. The Congress has already spoken. I hope you will at least share the expectation that our negotiations carry out our will.

I applaud the efforts of the U.S. negotiators. I know it is difficult work, and I congratulate them for getting closer to completing the Trans-Pacific Partnership agreement. I hope, however, that they will consider the risk of losing support for the Senate to ratify the agreement.

In closing, I would offer this to anyone who believes my sticking up for tobacco or for equal treatment and American values is shortsighted: I want you to know that I would do this for any commodity, any category, and any industry. I hope our trade negotiators will work hard to ensure that American values are upheld in the final agreement they bring before Congress, and that goes for language in the entire agreement, even that which appears in the annexes and the footnotes.

I, for one—and I think many of my colleagues—am concerned with the current status of the trade negotiations in this particular area. There are a number of good things in it. This needs to be worked out. And I will not support and I will work hard against any trade agreement that departs from our core values.

VETERANS HEALTH CARE

Mr. SANDERS. Mr. President, I wish to address the status of VA health care and the Department's current budget shortfall.

I am grudgingly supporting the bill before this body to extend highway funding for 3 months and to provide budget transfer authority to VA because, without it, highway contracts in Vermont and all across the country will be halted and VA will be unable to provide health care services to our veterans. These initiatives are too important not to support, but I want to be on record as saying this is a very dangerous path to be treading down—playing politics with the VA's funding. It is disingenuous and is a disservice to the brave men and women who have served our country.

On July 31, 2014, 1 year ago tomorrow, the Senate passed the Veterans Access, Choice, and Accountability Act to address the crisis at the Department of Veterans Affairs. As chairman of the Veterans' Affairs Committee, one of my top priorities during the negotiation of that legislation was to ensure VA had the resources needed to prevent a similar crisis in the future.

I believed then—and I believe now—that, overall, the Department of Veterans Affairs provides high-quality health care; health care that veterans consistently give high satisfaction scores. But the crisis at VA last year was real—too many veterans were waiting far too long for care. And some VA employees were manipulating data to make it appear these wait times did not exist.

At the time, we took serious, important steps to address the crisis. We gave the Department tools to hold staff accountable, provided funding for veterans who had trouble accessing care at VA to get that care in the private sector, and gave VA resources to ramp up capacity—to hire health care providers and make improvements to the agency's crumbling infrastructure. The bill we passed last year was to ensure that a similar crisis wouldn't happen again.

But here we are, 1 year later, facing another crisis in VA health care. But this crisis is different. This is a funding crisis. A crisis Congress could have prevented.

Given the increased demand for care and volume of veteran patients, I hoped Congress would have understood the need at VA and provided the funding needed by the Department. But that hasn't happened. Instead, this Republican-led Congress underfunded VA by $1 billion in their budget resolution. And they have continued the bad policies of the Budget Control Act, subjecting VA to funding caps that hamstring the Department's ability to provide needed care.

And let me be clear about something here: these caps are arbitrary spending cuts and have nothing to with how much money VA actually needs to operate. And, despite common misconception, VA is subject to these caps just like every other Federal Department. I believe we must lift these caps. Lift them so VA has the money it needs to take care of veterans, period.

And if we are unwilling to lift the budget caps, we should at least be providing this funding through an emergency appropriation. We should be acknowledging that the caps mean we are coming up short—that Congress has insufficiently funded VA, tying their hands so they are left unable to pay for the health care services veterans want and need.

But instead, we are considering transferring money from one bucket at VA to another. The bill we are considering today will move money from the Choice Program to the general operating budget. Congress created the Veterans Choice Program to address a specific problem. And we provided $10 billion to fix that problem. And now, instead of lifting the budget caps or providing emergency funding for VA, we are just going to use the Choice Program as a piggy bank. We are simply robbing Peter to pay Paul. This approach is a short-term fix, keeping VA's doors open for the next 60 days. But is does nothing to address the long-term budget shortfall VA will face next year, and the year after that. And I worry, if we fail to act responsibly now, we'll be right back here in 2016 and again in 2017, when we will no longer have the luxury of being able to raid billions from the Choice Program, and our veterans will be no better off.

Not only is this method of funding VA irresponsible, my Republican colleagues are using this funding crisis to jam bad policies down our throats without careful consideration or a real debate. With just days to go before we adjourn for the August recess, and with our colleagues from the House having already skipped town, we are being backed into a corner—told the only way to get VA the money they need is to pass a bad piece of legislation filled with unrelated policies.

Last week, during a markup of legislation in the Veterans' Affairs Committee, Chairman ISAKSON stated multiple times that he wanted new policies to go through regular order, to be considered by the committee in a legislative hearing before being voted on by committee members and certainly before being voted on by the full Senate. He also stated numerous times that we should not be passing legislation without paying for it.

The Congressional Budget Office score of the bill appears to show the legislation is paid for. However, the reality is there are $1.2 billion in lost revenues included in the VA title of the bill that are being swept under the rug. These enormous, unnecessary costs are being covered up by offsets intended to pay for transfers from the general fund to the highway trust fund. These are not savings or revenue that will actually pay for the lost revenues in the VA title. They are savings and revenue intended to make much-needed repairs to roads and bridges. And I fully support those funds being used the way they were intended. But what I do not support is that we are turning a blind eye to $1.2 billion in costs in the VA title of this bill that have nothing at all to do with the funding shortfall at VA. So what are these policies that are so important that they should not be considered through regular order and take money out of critical transportation infrastructure projects?

They are anti-veteran, anti-small business provisions that threaten to strip veterans of their access to affordable health care and treat them as second-class citizens in the workplace while putting new administrative burdens on small business owners.

If Members really believe these unrelated policies are necessary, we should spend time on them. We should use the committee process that Senator ISAKSON talked about just last week in the Veterans' Affairs Committee markup to consider them through regular order. We should debate them on the Senate floor. But we should not link these politically motivated provisions to must-pass legislation to provide critical health care services to millions of veterans who need it.

It used to be the case that Congress kept veterans above politics. Despite fierce debate over going to war, we all agreed that when servicemembers came home from war, we would take care of them.

It is sad to say, that is no longer the case. Today, powerful political contributors like the Koch brothers are using veterans to push forward anti-worker, anti-union legislation under the guise of caring for veterans. They want to strip away the rights and protections of workers and will use any means necessary to accomplish those goals, even if it means using VA employees who serve veterans every day—and many of whom are veterans themselves—as the target.

Congress should stand up and be honest with the American people about the reason for the VA budget crisis—that members of this Chamber would rather stand here trying to score political points. They would rather use veterans as pawns to promote their anti-worker, anti-union, anti-health care agenda, even if it means closing hospitals and local clinics.

Let us not do that, instead let us say to the brave men and women who have served our country in uniform that we will put aside our differences and give VA the funding they need. Just as our veterans promised to fight for our country, we promised to take care of them when they came home. They fulfilled their promise to us. It is time for us to fulfil our promise to them.

Mr. TILLIS. 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. BLUMENTHAL. 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. BLUMENTHAL. Mr. President, in a couple of minutes we will be voting on a bill that includes a transfer of $3.4 billion within accounts of the Veterans' Administration to make possible, literally enable VA to continue providing health care for millions of veterans across the United States. We are in this situation because of, quite frankly, gross ineptitude in planning that can be characterized only as management malpractice.

This crisis emphasizes the importance of accountability, and I thank the chairman of the Veterans' Affairs Committee, Senator ISAKSON, for his leadership in addressing the shortfall and also in his cooperation in meeting the crisis and accountability of management that the VA continues to face.

This crisis must stop. Congress cannot be expected to continue to bail out the VA because of mismanagement and management malpractice.

In the longer term, there is a need for fundamental reform. There are some good ideas in this bill. I have supported many of them. I thank Senator TESTER for his leadership as well in framing a proposal that addresses these issues.

But make no mistake. This bill is only one small step toward the reform that I have been advocating and will continue to champion, and hope to continue to work on specifics to advance, as the ranking member of the Veterans' Affairs Committee.

Again, I thank my colleagues and our chairman.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senate has a previous order at this time.

Mr. BLUMENTHAL. I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Georgia.

Mr. ISAKSON. I thank the ranking member for his comments.

This is the first step for reform in the VA. We are beginning to move in the right direction.

I urge a ''yes'' vote.

SURFACE TRANSPORTATION AND VETERANS HEALTH CARE CHOICE IMPROVEMENT ACT OF 2015

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will proceed to the consideration of H.R. 3236, which the clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (H.R. 3236) to provide an extension of Federal-aid highway, highway safety, motor carrier safety, transit, and other programs funded out of the Highway Trust Fund, to provide resource flexibility to the Department of Veterans Affairs for health care services, and for other purposes.

The bill was ordered to a third reading, and was read the third time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The bill having been read the third time, the question is, Shall the bill pass?

Mr. ISAKSON. 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 legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. CORNYN. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from Tennessee (Mr. ALEXANDER), the Senator from South Carolina (Mr. GRAHAM), the Senator from Kansas (Mr. MORAN), and the Senator from Louisiana (Mr. VITTER).

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

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Hawaii (Mr. SCHATZ) is necessarily absent.

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

The result was announced—yeas 91, nays 4, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 261 Leg.]

YEAS—91

Ayotte	Ernst	Merkley
Baldwin	Feinstein	Mikulski
Barrasso	Fischer	Murkowski
Bennet	Flake	Murphy
Blumenthal	Franken	Murray
Blunt	Gardner	Nelson
Booker	Gillibrand	Paul
Boozman	Grassley	Perdue
Boxer	Hatch	Peters
Brown	Heinrich	Portman
Burr	Heitkamp	Reed
Cantwell	Heller	Reid
Capito	Hirono	Risch
Cardin	Hoeven	Roberts
Carper	Inhofe	Rounds
Casey	Isakson	Rubio
Cassidy	Johnson	Sanders
Coats	Kaine	Schumer
Cochran	King	Scott
Collins	Kirk	Shaheen
Coons	Klobuchar	Shelby
Cornyn	Lankford	Stabenow
Cotton	Leahy	Sullivan
Crapo	Manchin	Tester
Cruz	Markey	Thune
Daines	McCain	Tillis
Donnelly	McCaskill	Toomey
Durbin	McConnell	
Enzi	Menendez	

Udall	Warren	Wicker
Warner	Whitehouse	Wyden

NAYS—4

Corker	Sasse
Lee	Sessions

NOT VOTING—5

Alexander	Moran	Vitter
Graham	Schatz	

The bill (H.R. 3236) was passed.

VOTE EXPLANATION

• Mr. VITTER. Mr. President, I unequivocally support the passage of a 3-month extension to the Federal highway program. I would like the Record to reflect my support for the 3-month extension, as well as for a long-term highway bill. Unfortunately, I will be notably absent for the vote on the 3-month extension—but not without just cause. A week ago today, Lafayette, LA—a vibrant, wonderful city in the heart of Acadiana—was rocked by a senseless tragedy that took the lives of two of its residents. I believe it is imperative Louisianians come together as a community, and I will be in Lafayette today to stand with and support family members of the victims. Earlier today, the Senate passed its version of the highway reauthorization bill, known as the DRIVE Act. With the passage of the DRIVE Act and the 3-month extension today, the Senate has laid the foundation for Members of both Chambers to work together and produce a long-term highway reauthorization bill.•

PROHIBITING FEDERAL FUNDING OF PLANNED PARENTHOOD FEDERATION OF AMERICA—MOTION TO PROCEED—Continued

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Utah.

50TH ANNIVERSARY OF MEDICARE AND MEDICAID

Mr. HATCH. Mr. President, as you may have heard, today marks the 50th anniversary of both Medicare and Medicaid. While the last half century has seen a pretty robust debate about the merits of these programs, today there is no question that they provide significant and vital elements to our Nation's safety net.

This week many are celebrating the lives that have been saved and improved by Medicare and Medicaid over the last 50 years. While this is appropriate, I hope that we will also take the time to look at how these programs will function over the next 50 years.

Let's start with Medicare. Medicare is, quite simply, a massive program designed to provide care to our Nation's seniors. Currently, it covers more than 50 million beneficiaries—roughly one-sixth of the current U.S. population—and processes more than 1 billion claims a year.

Last week the Medicare board of trustees issued its report for 2015, which once again detailed the fiscal challenges facing the Medicare Program. For example, in 2014 alone, we spent roughly $613 billion on Medicare expenditures. That is roughly 14 percent of the Federal budget and 3.5 percent of our gross domestic product for a single health care program. In coming years, these numbers are only going to go up as more baby boomers retire and become Medicare beneficiaries.

Over the next 10 years, the trustees project that the number of Medicare beneficiaries will expand by 30 percent. We will spend roughly $7 trillion on the program as it expands, and by the end of that 10-year period we will be spending more on Medicare than on our entire national defense. Over the next 25 years, spending on the program as a percentage of GDP will grow by 60 percent, and by 2040 about $1 out of every $5 spent by the Federal Government will go to Medicare.

As spending on the program expands, so does its unfunded liabilities. Using the most realistic projections of the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services—remember, this is the government agency's most realistic projections—Medicare Part A by itself faces long-term unfunded liabilities of nearly $8 trillion. The story is even worse with Medicare Part B and Part D, which unlike Part A, do not have a dedicated revenue stream. Medicare's trustees estimate $24.8 trillion in additional taxes will need to be collected over the next 75 years to pay for Medicare Part B and Part D services.

When we look at the entire Medicare Program over the next 75 years, once again using CMS's most accurate projections, we are looking at $37 trillion of spending in excess of dedicated revenues. Those numbers are astronomical. They are too large to even comprehend. So rather than talk about the numbers in broad terms, let's talk about what they mean for seniors and beneficiaries.

As I mentioned, Medicare Part A, which includes the Hospital Insurance, or HI, Program has a dedicated funding stream. It is paid for by a 2.9-percent payroll tax split between employers and workers, and under ObamaCare that rate went up by an additional 0.9 percent on wages over $200,000 for single tax filers and $250,000 for married couples.

Due in large part to the financial downturn, Part A ran a deficit—meaning that expenditures for the program exceeded income from the tax—every year between 2008 and 2014. Last year that deficit reached $8.1 billion in just 1 year.

Because of the economic recovery and the increased tax rates, Part A is projected to generate surpluses between 2015 and 2023. However, after that, deficits are projected to return, and by 2030 the Part A trust fund will officially be bankrupt and the Medicare Program will be unable to pay full benefits to seniors. Let me say that again. In 15 years, Medicare Part A will be bankrupt.

All of this, of course, assumes that current law remains unchanged and Congress is unable to reform the program. I don't think I would be going too far out on a limb to suggest that reforms to Medicare are absolutely necessary if we are going to preserve the program for future generations. Furthermore, I don't think it would be outlandish to suggest that Congress should begin working on such reforms immediately to avoid future cliffs, standoffs, and the usual accompanying political brinkmanship. I am not the only one saying that.

The Medicare trustees themselves said in last week's report that ''Medicare still faces a substantial financial shortfall that will need to be addressed with further legislation. Such legislation should be enacted sooner rather than later to minimize the impact on beneficiaries, providers, and taxpayers.''

These are not the words of fiscal hawks in the Republican Congress. The Medicare board of trustees is comprised of six members, four of whom are high-ranking officials in the Obama administration, including Treasury Secretary Jack Lew, Labor Secretary Thomas Perez, Health & Human Services Secretary Sylvia Burwell, and acting Social Security Commissioner Carolyn Colvin.

All of these officials signed on to a report recommending ''further legislation'' to reform Medicare and suggesting that it happen ''sooner rather than later.''

Let's keep in mind that we are only talking about Medicare. I haven't said anything yet about Medicaid, our other health care entitlement program, which also faces enormous fiscal challenges. Currently, Medicaid covers more than 70 million patients, and that number is growing thanks to expansions mandated under the so-called Affordable Care Act. Since the passage of ObamaCare, more than a dozen States have chosen to expand their Medicaid Programs and enrollments have surged well beyond initial projections. This has a number of people worried about added costs and additional strains on State budgets, particularly when the Federal share of the expanded program is set to scale back in 2 years. Already, without the expansion under ObamaCare, Medicaid took up nearly one-quarter of all State budgets. That is right: Nearly $1 out of every $4 spent at the State level goes to Medicaid, and that number is going to get much higher.

In the recent years, combined Federal and State Medicaid spending has come in around $450 billion a year. By 2020, that number is projected to expand to around $800 billion a year or more, and with all of this expansion—that increased fiscal burden and instability—we are not seeing improvements in care provided by the program.

Put simply, Medicaid is probably the worst health insurance in the country and the President's health care law did nothing to improve the quality of care provided by the program. Fewer and fewer doctors accept Medicaid because

it pays them so little, and the program's reimbursement formulas for prescription drugs limit beneficiaries' access to a number of important medications.

Ultimately, we are going to be spending more and more on Medicaid in the coming years—and as a result expanding our debts and deficits—without providing better care for beneficiaries.

Between Medicare and Medicaid, we will spend more than $12 trillion over the next decade with precious few improvements to show for it. Former CBO Director Doug Elmendorf referred to these two programs as ''our fundamental fiscal challenge.'' If you look at the numbers and the dramatic expansion projected in the coming years, he was right. Keep in mind, we still have Social Security, which faces nearly $11 billion in unfunded liabilities over the long term as well as the exhaustion of one of its trust funds, the disability trust fund, by the end of next year and complete exhaustion by 2034.

Separately, these three major entitlement programs present unique challenges that have to be addressed in order to preserve them—and our Nation's safety net—for future generations. Combined, they threaten to swallow up our government and take our economy down with it.

Once again, these aren't doomsday scenarios. No one seriously disputes the fact that absent real and lasting reforms, our entitlement programs present real threats to our fiscal well-being. The disputes typically arise when we begin talking about the specifics of reform. Some would just as soon use the looming entitlement crisis as a political weapon to scare current and near beneficiaries into believing the other side wants to take their benefits away. Others support the idea of entitlement reform in principle but are too afraid to sign on to any specific proposals out of fear it would be used against them in the next election cycle.

This dynamic has resulted in a longstanding stalemate, where the possibility of real reform has, for years now, seemed remote. However, recently we have seen signs that it may in fact be possible to overcome this stalemate.

Earlier this year, Congress passed the Medicare Access and CHIP Reauthorization Act of 2015, a bipartisan bill, which among other things repealed and replaced the Medicare sustainable growth rate, or SGR, formula. Now, repealing SGR was, in and of itself, a significant improvement to the Medicare Program, but there are other Medicare reforms in the law as well. These include a limitation on so-called Medigap first-dollar coverage and more robust means testing for Medicare Parts B and D.

These aren't fundamental Medicare reforms, and they will not move the program from its massive projected deficits into future solvency, but keep in mind that for years the idea of bipartisan Medicare reform seemed like a pipedream. Yet with passage of the SGR bill, we were able to take a meaningful first step toward this all-important goal.

Of course, the first step is only a first step if it precedes additional steps, and that is what we need now. Congress must take additional steps to improve these programs and preserve them for our children and grandchildren. As the chairman of the committee with jurisdiction over these programs, I have been actively engaged in the effort to reform our entitlement programs.

In 2013, when I was still the ranking member, I put forward five separate proposals to reform Medicare and Medicaid. All of them were serious, commonsense ideas that had received bipartisan support in the recent past. I shared these ideas at every opportunity. I put out documents, fact sheets, and gave numerous speeches on the floor. I even passed them along directly to President Obama, although I didn't ever get a response from him. Two of those ideas were, at least partially, included in the legislation we passed to repeal SGR. The other three ideas, as far as I am concerned, are still on the table.

I have also teamed up with leaders in the House to call on the disability community and other stakeholders to help us come up with ideas to address the impending exhaustion of the Social Security disability trust fund. I have introduced legislation to improve the administration and fiscal integrity of the disability insurance program.

In other words, I stand ready and willing to work with any of my colleagues—from either party or from either Chamber—to address the coming entitlement crisis before it is too late. I have put my own ideas on the table, but I don't think the debate should be limited to my ideas. I invite all of my colleagues to come forward so we can work together to find solutions to these massive problems.

I know that when I think about these problems, my thoughts turn to my 23 grandchildren and 16 great-grandchildren—and everybody else's grandchildren and great-grandchildren—who will suffer from any promises we fail to keep and will pay the price of any mistakes we fail to correct.

On this landmark anniversary of the Medicare Program, I urge my colleagues to also consider future generations of Americans and the costs and burdens we will pass on to them if we fail in this endeavor.

With that, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

NUCLEAR AGREEMENT WITH IRAN

Mr. SULLIVAN. Mr. President, I rise to talk about the important agreement that we are debating here on the Senate floor—the Iran nuclear agreement. I want to begin by saying that there seems to be, as we debate this and as we hold hearings, a growing sense of frustration as we do what is really our sacred duty here in the Senate—to review, debate, and, ultimately, to vote on this agreement as to whether it is something that is going to keep our country secure or undermine the national security of the United States and our allies. This frustration stems from a number of sources. Let me just name a few.

First, I think many Democrats and Republicans feel there has been a dismissive attitude from the administration with regard to this agreement and a dismissive attitude, actually, towards the American people on whether the Congress should weigh in on this agreement, should represent their constituents on something that is this important to the national security of the United States of America.

I mention this because if you look at the last several months, every step of the way the administration has tried to cut out the role of the Congress. Initially, they said it was an Executive agreement and Congress would have no role. Well, I don't think our constituents liked that, and certainly, the Senate didn't like that. So we started debating the Iran Nuclear Agreement Review Act.

The President said he was going to veto it. Again, that was dismissive of this body and the American people. Fortunately, this body had a very strong veto-proof majority. We are debating it—but not because they wanted us to but because we are representing our constituents who know how important this is.

Then the agreement is taken to the United Nations before we weigh in on it at all. Members of the United Nations, citizens from other countries, are voting on this agreement before we had the opportunity. Again, bipartisan Democrats and Republicans said: Secretary Kerry, don't do that. It is an affront to the American people. But they did it. So we are debating it, and that is important. But that attitude of dismissiveness of this body and the people we represent is frustrating.

There is a second reason there is frustration in the Senate, and it stems from the fact that we are not sure that we are getting the straight scoop. We are not sure we are getting all the documents. The law requires every document to this agreement come to this body. Yet we found out 2 weeks ago that there is a very important agreement, the agreement between the IAEA and Iran on implementation of this agreement. How did we find out about that? One of my colleagues, Senator COTTON, got on a plane, went to IAEA headquarters in Vienna, and found that

out—again, frustration. We are not receiving all of the documents, as required by law, to be able to review.

Third, in terms of frustration, there is a sense that as we are doing our duty here, as we are digging into this agreement, as we are reading it, as we are reaching out to experts, as we are trying to understand it, as we are questioning administration witnesses at hearings, as we are doing our required and sacred due diligence, we are told time and again that the plain language of the agreement doesn't appear to mean what it means. This is frustrating. This is particularly true with regard to sanctions.

Let me give you a few examples. First we had a closed briefing. Almost every Member of the Senate came to that briefing a couple of weeks ago. There was a big question. Was there a grandfather provision with regard to sanctions; meaning, if you are a company and you rush to Iran right now and cut some deals and sanctions are later imposed, does the mere fact that you jumped in early mean that you are grandfathered away from these sanctions? Well, a lot of people had questions.

The Secretary of State looked at 100 Members of the Senate and said: There is no grandfather clause in this agreement. There is no grandfather clause in this agreement.

This is paragraph 37 of the agreement. I am just going to quote it, because it certainly sounds like a grandfather clause to me: ''In such event [that sanctions are reimposed], these provisions''—in this paragraph—''would not apply with retroactive effect to contracts signed between any party and Iran or Iranian individuals and entities prior to the date of application . . .'' That is when the agreement starts to be implemented.

That sounds like a grandfather clause. Now, maybe there are elements here, maybe there are special circumstances that make it not a grandfather clause, but the Secretary of State was in front of all of us saying that there is no grandfather clause. It is hard to square that with the plain language of this agreement.

Let me give another example—the much-touted snapback provisions in the agreement. Secretary Lew, the Secretary of the Treasury, has talked about how we have a strong snapback provision, how it is going to be prompt, and how it is powerful. These are terms that he has been using in testimony. In many ways I think Members of this body, Democrats and Republicans, see that the effectiveness of this entire deal might hinge on this so-called snapback provision. The more I read about our sanctions and how they work in this agreement, the more questions I have, because to this Senator the snapback provision seems to be an illusion. It actually seems to be aimed back at the United States. I don't think we should be calling it a snapback provision. Maybe it should be called the boomerang provision, because it is aimed at us.

Let me talk a little bit more in detail about this. First, the term ''snapback'' was not in the agreement. It is a good term—catchy—and sounds good. It is actually a term used in trade negotiations when a party violates a trade agreement. Trade agreements will have snapback provisions where we raise tariffs on goods immediately. That is a snapback. But that is not what is going on here. That is not what is going to happen here. The practical reality of sanctions, particularly economic sanctions, is that there is no snap when you put them in. It is a slog.

Let me give you an example. In my experience, I worked with many people at the beginning of our efforts in the Bush Administration, during 2006, 2007, and 2008, to start economically isolating Iran. What does that mean? Well, what we did is we leveraged the power of the U.S. economy in close coordination with the Congress of the United States, and we went to countries and companies that were big investors in Iran, say, in the oil and gas sector, and we told them that they needed to start divesting out of the largest sponsor of terrorism in the world or the Congress of the United States might look to sanction their company or limit their access to the American market. We were leveraging the authority of the Congress and the power of our economy to get countries—yes, many of which were our allies—such as Norway, Germany, France, and Japan to divest and economically isolate Iran. That took months and years to accomplish. It was a slog. There was no snap.

What do we see today? European companies—it is in the newspapers every day—European CEOs, senior administration officials in Germany, and government officials are already in Tehran. Already, there are companies looking to set up shop, looking to invest billions, as they did before. They are there now. This deal is not even done yet. They are there. They cannot wait, licking their chops to reinvest in one of the—not one of the biggest, the biggest terrorist regime in the world, which has done more to kill Americans than probably any country in the world in the last 30 years. Of course, this is disappointing, but this history is a reminder to all of us that the sanctions regime Secretary Kerry talks about—and we certainly did have Iran surrounded in terms of sanctions—which was a 110-percent-American-led sanctions regime, involving Democrats, Republicans, this Congress, and the Bush administration. Yes, a lot of credit goes to the Obama administration on this economic isolation of Iran, which is what brought them to the table to begin with.

If we reimpose sanctions, there certainly won't be a ''snap'' when it happens. It will be slow. It will be a slog again trying to convince reluctant Europeans, Russians, and Chinese to pull out of the market once again.

Finally, I just want to say one other thing, and it goes back again to the plain language of the agreement, where again the snapback provision, so-called snapback provision, seems aimed back at us, the boomerang provision.

I posed a hypothetical to Secretary Kerry, Secretary Lew in a closed session, in a Senate Armed Services session yesterday to try and get specifics on what would happen in certain situations. I gave them this hypothetical: Let's assume sanctions are lifted in the next 6 to 9 months. These are called Annex II sanctions. It is a huge list of sanctions, the most powerful sanctions our country has placed on Iran. All of them—financial, oil, market—are going to be lifted in 6 to 9 months. Let's assume that happens.

As we are already seeing, European companies, other countries, certainly the Chinese, Russians, Japanese, are going to be rushing into this market, investing billions once again. Assume the Iranian economy is going to start humming with all of this new investment, the lifting of sanctions. A senior Iranian official recently said they are looking for $120 billion of new investment by 2020. They are likely going to get a lot of it, and they are abiding by the deal—no violations of any of the nuclear aspects of this deal. Then, what I think is very likely, sometime within the next 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 years, Iran commits a major act of terrorism. Let's say they kill more American troops. Let's say they blow up a consulate or embassy somewhere. They are the world's largest state sponsor of terrorism. It doesn't look as though they want to do anything but continue to do that, so that is a very likely scenario. When that happens, this body reapplies sanctions. It looks at Annex II, some of our most powerful sanctions. We are very upset—bipartisan. We reapply sanctions. The President, whoever that is, signs it because that President, he or she is very upset, and we reimpose serious Annex II sanctions.

Now, what happens then? I think what is going to happen, very likely at that point, is Iran is going to look at this agreement, and they are going to cite either paragraph 26 or paragraph 37. Let me read you both of those. Again, this is the plain language of the statute.

Paragraph 37. Iran has stated that if sanctions are reinstated in whole or in part, Iran will treat that as grounds to cease performing its commitments under the entire agreement.

Another provision. Iran has stated it will treat the reintroduction or reimposition of the sanctions specified in Annex II as grounds to cease performing its commitments under the agreement.

That is in the agreement. So, you see, if we reimpose sanctions as part of the snapback, Iran can look at this agreement and say: I'm done. I'm walking. I can legally leave this agreement. They can legally leave this agreement with a humming economy, on the verge

of a breakout of a nuclear weapon, still being the largest state sponsor of terrorism, and they can say: Hey, I complied with the agreement. The United States reimposed sanctions. I told them what I was going to do, and they do it.

Again, bottom line, if we use the so-called snapback provision, it certainly appears from the language of this agreement that the deal is done. So I have asked Secretary Kerry and Secretary Lew twice now: How is that an improper reading of the agreement? Secretary Lew, the Secretary of the Treasury, is trying to argue we are reading that language wrong. He says Annex II sanctions—the big American sanctions, which are what has kept Iran down and what has brought them to the table—can be reimposed if they are reimposed for nonnuclear violations like terrorism.

When I read this agreement, that seems to be a bit of a stretch. Certainly there is a lot of ambiguity, but it is also clear the Iranians clearly won't agree with that reading. They don't agree with that reading. This was filed—I ask unanimous consent to have this printed in the RECORD. This is the Iranian letter dated 20 July 2015, to the United Nations Security Council. It is their interpretation of the agreement.

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

UNITED NATIONS SECURITY COUNCIL,
New York, NY, July 20, 2015.

Re Letter dated 20 July 2015 from the Permanent Representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

I have the honour to enclose herewith a text entitled ''Statement of the Islamic Republic of Iran following the adoption of United Nations Security Council resolution 2231 (2015) endorsing the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action'' (see annex).

I should be grateful if you would arrange for the circulation of the present letter and its annex as a document of the Security Council.

GHOLAMALI KHOSHROO,
Ambassador, Permanent Representative.

Re Annex to the letter dated 20 July 2015 from the Permanent Representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

STATEMENT OF THE ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF IRAN FOLLOWING THE ADOPTION OF UNITED NATIONS SECURITY COUNCIL RESOLUTION 2231 (2015) ENDORSING THE JOINT COMPREHENSIVE PLAN OF ACTION

1. The Islamic Republic of Iran considers science and technology, including peaceful nuclear technology, as the common heritage of mankind. At the same time, on the basis of solid ideological, strategic and international principles, Iran categorically rejects weapons of mass destruction and particularly nuclear weapons as obsolete and inhuman, and detrimental to international peace and security. Inspired by the sublime Islamic teachings, and based on the views and practice of the late founder of the Islamic Revolution, Imam Khomeini, and the historic Fatwa of the leader of the Islamic Revolution, Ayatollah Khamenei, who has declared all weapons of mass destruction (WMD), particularly nuclear weapons, to be Haram (strictly forbidden) in Islamic jurisprudence, the Islamic Republic of Iran declares that it has always been the policy of the Islamic Republic of Iran to prohibit the acquisition, production, stockpiling or use of nuclear weapons.

2. The Islamic Republic of Iran underlines the imperative of the total elimination of nuclear weapons, as a requirement of international security and an obligation under the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons. The Islamic Republic of Iran is determined to engage actively in all international diplomatic and legal efforts to save humanity from the menace of nuclear weapons and their proliferation, including through the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones, particularly in the Middle East.

3. The Islamic Republic of Iran firmly insists that States parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons shall not be prevented from enjoying their inalienable rights under the Treaty to develop research, production and use of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes without discrimination and in conformity with articles I and II of the Treaty.

4. The finalization of the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) on 14 July 2015 signifies a momentous step by the Islamic Republic of Iran and the E3/EU+3 to resolve, through negotiations and based on mutual respect, an unnecessary crisis, which had been manufactured by baseless allegations about the Iranian peaceful nuclear programme, followed by unjustified politically motivated measures against the people of Iran.

5. The JCPOA is premised on reciprocal commitments by Iran and the E3/EU+3, ensuring the exclusively peaceful nature of Iran's nuclear programme, on the one hand, and the termination of all provisions of Security Council resolutions 1696 (2006), 1737 (2006), 1747 (2007), 1803 (2008), 1835 (2008), 1929 (2010) and 2224 (2015) and the comprehensive lifting of all United Nations Security Council sanctions, and all nuclear-related sanctions imposed by the United States and the European Union and its member States, on the other. The Islamic Republic of Iran is committed to implement its voluntary undertakings in good faith contingent upon same good-faith implementation of all undertakings, including those involving the removal of sanctions and restrictive measures, by the E3/EU+3 under the JCPOA.

6. Removal of nuclear-related sanctions and restrictive measures by the European Union and the United States would mean that transactions and activities referred to under the JCPOA could be carried out with Iran and its entities anywhere in the world without fear of retribution from extraterritorial harassment, and all persons would be able to freely choose to engage in commercial and financial transactions with Iran. It is clearly spelled out in the JCPOA that both the European Union and the United States will refrain from reintroducing or reimposing the sanctions and restrictive measures lifted under the JCPOA. It is understood that reintroduction or reimposition, including through extension, of the sanctions and restrictive measures will constitute significant non-performance which would relieve Iran from its commitments in part or in whole. Removal of sanctions further necessitates taking appropriate domestic legal and administrative measures, including legislative and regulatory measures to effectuate the removal of sanctions. The JCPOA requires an effective end to all discriminatory compliance measures and procedures as well as public statements inconsistent with the intent of the agreement. Iran underlines the agreement by JCPOA participants that immediately after the adoption of the Security Council resolution endorsing the JCPOA, the European Union, its member States and the United States will begin consultation with Iran regarding relevant guidelines and publicly accessible statements on the details of sanctions or restrictive measures to be lifted under the JCPOA.

7. The Islamic Republic of Iran will pursue its peaceful nuclear programme, including its enrichment and enrichment research and development, consistent with its own plan as agreed in the JCPOA, and will work closely with its counterparts to ensure that the agreement will endure the test of time and achieve all its objectives. This commitment is based on assurances by the E3/EU+3 that they will cooperate in this peaceful programme consistent with their commitments under the JCPOA. It is understood and agreed that, through steps agreed with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), all past and present issues of concern will be considered and concluded by the IAEA Board of Governors before the end of 2015. The IAEA has consistently concluded heretofore that Iran's declared activities are exclusively peaceful. Application of the Additional Protocol henceforth is intended to pave the way for a broader conclusion that no undeclared activity is evidenced in Iran either. To this end, the Islamic Republic of Iran will cooperate with the IAEA, in accordance with the terms of the Additional Protocol as applied to all signatories. The IAEA should, at the same time, exercise vigilance to ensure full protection of all confidential information. The Islamic Republic of Iran has always fulfilled its international nonproliferation obligations scrupulously and will meticulously declare all its relevant activities under the Additional Protocol. In this context, the Islamic Republic of Iran is confident that since no nuclear activity is or will ever be carried out in any military facility, such facilities will not be the subject of inspection.

8. The Joint Commission established under the JCPOA should be enabled to address and resolve disputes in an impartial, effective, efficient and expeditious manner. Its primary role is to address complaints by Iran and ensure that effects of sanctions lifting stipulated in the JCPOA will be fully realized. The Islamic Republic of Iran may reconsider its commitments under the JCPOA if the effects of the termination of the Security Council, European Union or United States nuclear-related sanctions or restrictive measures are impaired by continued application or the imposition of new sanctions with a nature and scope identical or similar to those that were in place prior to the implementation date, irrespective of whether such new sanctions are introduced on nuclear-related or other grounds, unless the issues are remedied within a reasonably short time.

9. Reciprocal measures, envisaged in the dispute settlement mechanism of the JCPOA, to redress significant non-performance are considered as the last resort if significant non-performance persists and is not remedied within the arrangements provided for in the JCPOA. The Islamic Republic of Iran considers such measures as highly unlikely, as the objective is to ensure compliance rather than provide an excuse for arbitrary reversibility or means for pressure or manipulation. Iran is committed to fully implement its voluntary commitments in good faith. In order to ensure continued compliance by all JCPOA participants, the Islamic Republic of Iran underlines that in case the mechanism is applied against Iran or its entities and sanctions, particularly Security

Council measures, are restored, the Islamic Republic of Iran will treat this as grounds to cease performing its commitments under the JCPOA and to reconsider its cooperation with the IAEA.

10. The Islamic Republic of Iran underlines the common understanding and clearly stated agreement of all JCPOA participants that affirms that the provisions of Security Council resolution 2231 (2015) endorsing the JCPOA do not constitute provisions of the JCPOA and can in no way impact the performance of the JCPOA.

11. The Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran is determined to actively contribute to the promotion of peace and stability in the region in the face of the increasing threat of terrorism and violent extremism. Iran will continue its leading role in fighting this menace and stands ready to cooperate fully with its neighbours and the international community in dealing with this common global threat. Moreover, the Islamic Republic of Iran will continue to take necessary measures to strengthen its defence capabilities in order to protect its sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity against any aggression and to counter the menace of terrorism in the region. In this context, Iranian military capabilities, including ballistic missiles, are exclusively for legitimate defence. They have not been designed for WMD capability, and are thus outside the purview or competence of the Security Council resolution and its annexes.

12. The Islamic Republic of Iran expects to see meaningful realization of the fundamental shift in the Security Council's approach envisaged in the preamble of Security Council resolution 2231 (2015). The Council has an abysmal track record in dealing with Iran, starting with its acquiescing silence in the face of a war of aggression by Saddam Hussain against Iran in 1980, its refusal from 1984 to 1988 to condemn, let alone act against, massive, systematic and widespread use of chemical weapons against Iranian soldiers and civilians by Saddam Hussain, and the continued material and intelligence support for Saddam Hussain's chemical warfare by several of its members. Even after Saddam invaded Kuwait, the Security Council not only obdurately refused to rectify its malice against the people of Iran, but went even further and imposed ostensibly WMD-driven sanctions against these victims of chemical warfare and the Council's acquiescing silence. Instead of at least noting the fact that Iran had not even retaliated against Saddam Hussain's use of chemical weapons, the Council rushed to act on politically charged baseless allegations against Iran and unjustifiably imposed a wide range of sanctions against the Iranian people as retribution for their resistance to coercive pressures to abandon their peaceful nuclear programme. It is important to remember that these sanctions, which should not have been imposed in the first place, are the subject of removal under the JCPOA and Security Council resolution 2231 (2015).

13. Therefore, the Islamic Republic of Iran continues to insist that all sanctions and restrictive measures introduced and applied against the people of Iran, including those applied under the pretext of its nuclear programme, have been baseless, unjust and unlawful. Hence, nothing in the JCPOA shall be construed to imply, directly or indirectly, an admission of or acquiescence by the Islamic Republic of Iran in the legitimacy, validity or enforceability of the sanctions and restrictive measures adopted against Iran by the Security Council, the European Union or its member States, the United States or any other State, nor shall it be construed as a waiver or a limitation on the exercise of any related right the Islamic Republic of Iran is entitled to under relevant national legislation, international instruments or legal principles.

14. The Islamic Republic of Iran is confident that the good-faith implementation of the JCPOA by all its participants will help restore the confidence of the Iranian people, who have been unduly subjected to illegal pressure and coercion under the pretext of this manufactured crisis, and will open new possibilities for cooperation in dealing with real global challenges and actual threats to regional security. Our region has long been mired in undue tension while extremists and terrorists continue to gain and maintain ground. It is high time to redirect attention and focus on these imminent threats and seek and pursue effective means to defeat this common menace.

Mr. SULLIVAN. You want to know what the Iranians say about the reimposition of so-called snapback sanctions? Here is what they say: It is clearly spelled out in the agreement that both the European Union and the United States will refrain from reintroducing or reimposing the sanctions—now they are talking about Annex II sanctions—and restrictive measures lifted under the agreement. It is understood that reintroduction or reimposition, including through extension of the sanctions and restrictive measures, will constitute significant nonperformance which would relieve Iran from its commitments to this agreement in whole or in part.

My colleague Senator AYOTTE from New Hampshire yesterday asked Secretary Kerry and Secretary Lew about this provision. They did not give a clear answer because there is no clear answer. Right now there is huge disagreement between the United States and Iran on the language in the agreement on whether, to what degree, these so-called snapback provisions will work or will undermine our national security interests, which is what I believe they will do.

I have asked the administration to quit using that term. It is not in the agreement. The language makes clear that it is going to take years. There is no ''snap.'' If we ever use it, that is it for the agreement. They have not given the Members of this body a straightforward answer on that issue. We need to keep asking these kinds of questions. We need to keep doing our due diligence, but we need clarity. The American people need clarity, not spin, on critical issues such as this side IAEA agreement, which nobody seems to have read, and we certainly have not seen; the grandfather clause, which certainly looks like a grandfather clause, but now we are told by Secretary Kerry is not a grandfather clause; and perhaps, most importantly, this so-called snapback provision which I believe is illusory and is aimed at us, not at the pariah state that we are all concerned about, and that is Iran.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Maine.

Ms. COLLINS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senator from Delaware, Mr. COONS, and I be permitted to proceed as in morning business.

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

(The remarks of Ms. COLLINS and Mr. COONS pertaining to the introduction of S. 1911 are printed in today's RECORD under ''Statements on Introduced Bills and Joint Resolutions.'')

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Oregon.

50TH ANNIVERSARY OF MEDICARE AND MEDICAID

Mr. WYDEN. Mr. President, 50 years ago today, President Lyndon Johnson signed into law the Social Security Act amendments that created Medicare and Medicaid. Our country slammed the door on the days when far too many older people languished in poverty without the financial security that comes from affordable, high-quality health care. It was a day when sick, older people were warehoused on poor farms and in almshouses. Just picture that. On the edge of town we had older people, literally without a shred of dignity, in what came to be known as almshouses. But Lyndon Johnson and others said that had to be changed, and five decades ago it did. Today, more than 100 million Americans have access to high-quality health care thanks to Medicare and Medicaid.

We can measure the remarkable success of these programs in so many ways, but in my judgment, one of the most important and most appealing aspects of Medicare and Medicaid is their ability to grow, their ability to change, and their ability to evolve to meet the needs of our country. The reality is that Medicare in 2015 is very different from Medicare in 1965. Medicare in 1965 was about something like a broken ankle. If it was a serious break, you would be in the hospital—Part A. If it was not a particularly serious break, you would go to the doctor—that was Part B. That was Medicare circa 1965. Today, Medicare is about chronic illness, it is about cancer, it is about diabetes, it is about stroke, and it is about heart disease. You put Alzheimer's in, and that is well more than 90 percent of the Medicare Program. So it is a very different Medicare Program today than it was in 1965.

One of the aspects of Medicare and Medicaid I find so appealing is they have shown a certain ability, a sense of creativity, to always evolve with the times.

What I would like to do is take a few minutes to describe how I think Medicare and Medicaid are going to change in the next 50 years because I think there are some remarkable developments ahead. I see my wonderful colleague from the Senate Committee on Finance. She has been very involved in a number of these changes that have been so exciting in Medicare and Medicaid.

What I am going to do this afternoon is just take a few minutes to talk about four or five trends that I think

are going to be led by these two programs that have done so much for seniors and vulnerable people in our country.

The first is, I believe Medicare and Medicaid are going to lead a revolution in caring for vulnerable people at home. Our health care programs are going to give seniors more of what they want, which is to secure treatment at home where they are more comfortable. I think people are going to be amazed to see that seniors will get more of what they want, which is treatment at home—in Michigan, in Oregon, in Nebraska—and we now have hard information that it will be less expensive for older people to get what they want.

In the Affordable Care Act, I was able to author a provision with our colleague, the distinguished Senator from Massachusetts, Mr. MARKEY, the Independence At Home Program. This program has already shown it can save more than $3,000, on average, for every patient who takes part.

So picture that. This is not an example of reducing the Medicare guarantee—these guaranteed secure benefits that older people in every part of America rely on. This is about protecting the Medicare guarantee and doing it in a way that keeps seniors happier and costs less money. That is a pretty good package by anybody's calculation.

In my home State of Oregon, the Medicaid Program also has a smart policy that tracks this focus on caring for the vulnerable at home. In effect, what Oregon Medicaid has done is allow health care providers to offer services that go beyond what many might consider the textbook definition of a medical service. It is all about keeping people healthier at home and out of the emergency room. So instead of waiting to treat broken ankles or wrists, perhaps in a hospital emergency room, after a senior falls again and again and again, what we are now doing in Oregon Medicaid is saying the staff of this program will visit the senior's home and perhaps replace the broken floorboards or the dangerous rugs that are causing the seniors to slip again and again and go to the hospital emergency room.

Think about that. You could help a little bit at home by replacing a dangerous rug or you could have somebody slip and fall again and again and again and go to the hospital emergency room. Again, replacing that dangerous rug wouldn't probably meet the clinical definition of a medical service as it was always determined in years past, but now we are seeing it as part of having older people in a position to be at home, where they are more comfortable, for less money.

The second significant development where I think Medicare and Medicaid are going to lead is on pharmaceuticals. I think the pricing of prescription drugs in the future is going to be connected in some fashion to the value of treatment. We have seen remarkable changes in pharmaceuticals. The reality is that in the last 10 years we have seen real cures for illnesses where there was a death sentence perhaps a decade ago, but the sticker prices on some of these pharmaceuticals are astronomical. For so many working-class families and seniors of modest means, they look at these prices and say this just defies common sense, and they seem to get more expensive over time. Sometimes there is a six-figure pricetag.

The reality is Medicare and Medicaid weren't set up for these kinds of costs. The experts at the Congressional Budget Office are starting to ring the alarm bell, particularly about the health of Medicare Part D. Addressing this issue is going to take a lot of vigorous debate in the Congress, but it can't be ducked any longer.

Senator GRASSLEY and I have been working for about a year now in looking into SOVALDI, one of the hepatitis C drugs, which has had enormous ramifications for health programs—Medicare, Medicaid, and others—and we are continuing our work.

Third, in addition to pharmaceuticals and home care, I think Medicare is going to lead the revolution for open access to health care data. Again, Senator GRASSLEY and I have put a lot of sweat equity into the issue of data transparency in Medicare. It paid off in 2014, when the Obama administration, to its credit, opened up a massive trove of information. The wave of disclosure that began, particularly with doctors—and the Wall Street Journal reported this very extensively—must keep rolling forward.

The next step is turning open data into valuable tools and getting them into patients' hands. Health care data, packaged the right way, ought to help seniors and others choose doctors and nursing homes. It ought to help figure out which hospitals and specialists excel in certain areas, and it ought to help show exactly what you get for your dollar with various treatments or doctors.

Fourth, I believe Medicare is going to lead the debate on improving end-of-life care. All the roads with respect to end-of-life care, in my view, point toward patients having more choices and a better quality of life. In my view, we ought to make sure patients are in the driver's seat. In this regard, I was very pleased the Obama administration announced just a few days ago a real breakthrough in terms of end-of-life care. I think we have all had the debate. We certainly had that debate in the Affordable Care Act, where we heard about seniors not being given the opportunity to choose life, to choose cures, and they were going to, in effect, be receiving what amounted to death sentences.

In the Affordable Care Act, I was able to get included a provision that made it clear that is not what this debate would be all about. For the first time it would be possible for an individual who is receiving hospice care to also have the option for curative care. In other words, they would not have to sacrifice one for the other. That is very important to patients because even when patients are contemplating the prospect of hospice care, they want to know—because it is almost in our gene pool as Americans, as Nebraskans, and Oregonians—whether there may be a cure. Maybe our ingenuity will come up with a cure, and they want to have that hope. Now they are going to have it.

The result of the change is called concurrent care—the Care Choices model. For the first time patients and families will be in the driver's seat and they will not have to give up the prospect of curative care in order to get hospice. For the first time we are giving those who want treatment in hospice some real flexibility.

Next, I think Medicare is going to go further to protect Americans with catastrophic coverage. The reality is that millions of Americans who are younger than 65 are protected against the huge expense of an accident or serious illness. This is an area where I think Medicare, having led in so many areas with the kind of creative genius I have described—going to show the way on home care, pharmaceuticals, end-of-life care, and more access to data—that most advocates for seniors say Medicare has a little catching up to do. Seniors ought to have the safety of an out-of-pocket maximum in Medicare.

I know this is an area I very much look forward to talking to my colleague from Michigan about. She has been a wonderful advocate for seniors throughout all her career in public service. I think colleagues on the Committee on Finance of both political parties are going to say, if there is catastrophic protection in the private sector, it is high time we have it for seniors on Medicare. I think this is an area we will also be talking about.

I want to wrap up with one last point; that is, about Medicaid. I also believe more States are going to come around and expand their Medicaid Programs. It took nearly two decades for all 50 States to adopt Medicaid initially, so there is already a history of this unfolding over time.

When we look at the numbers, we see the proposition and the benefit of expanding Medicaid is not exactly some kind of theoretical notion. A new study shows there is a gulf opening in terms of access to health care between States that have expanded Medicaid and States that have not.

In our country, everybody should have access to medical care, regardless of their ZIP Code, but it is not only a question of what is best for the health of our people, it can often be pretty important to a State's economy. A recent study found that Kentucky and their cost of covering new Medicaid patients will be far outstripped by the other economic benefits of expanding the program. In my view, more States are

likely to do the right thing by their citizens and their economies, and the gulf between those States that cover individuals on Medicaid and those that do not will narrow.

Mr. President, I am going to close on a little bit of a personal note. My background is working with older people. Years ago I was director of the Oregon Gray Panthers. It was an extraordinary honor to be able to do this. Those were the days when if a town had a lunch program for older people, it was considered a big deal. Senator STABENOW was starting her career in the Michigan Legislature, and she remembers those days. It was a big deal when a town just had a lunch program where older people could congregate. That was considered a pretty serious array of senior services because you could get a few things there where older people got lunch.

So as we have heard, now we are looking at the opportunities for extraordinary innovation.

Elizabeth Holmes was here today and had a chance to visit with several Members. She has taken the whole notion of personalized medicine—and personalized medicine where in effect an individual could order their own test, and it costs only a few dollars. The State of Arizona has already embraced it. She is talking to government officials about something that would empower patients and would make sense from a health quality standpoint and from the standpoint of cost.

She is a young, very gifted woman. I believe she is a graduate of Stanford, my alma mater. I talked yesterday to her about this. I could just see the enthusiasm for the future of health care and what she has already been able to accomplish and what she is going to be able to do in the days ahead with this new focus on personalized medicine and tests that empower patients to make their own decisions about health care. As to the sums of money that are involved for the tests, I am not sure they are even going to be able to be processed by government computers because they are too small. We are going to save too much money. So there are going to be very exciting developments ahead for Medicare and Medicaid.

The last 50 years have been an extraordinary run for these programs. It is a personal thrill for me to have been involved in the early years of these programs. Now they are essential to the well-being of more than 100 million Americans.

We take this special day to kind of savor how much progress has been made from the days when America had poorhouses and almshouses for seniors to today, where Medicare is leading the way on home care and disclosing data and looking at new approaches with respect to health tests, such as what Elizabeth Holmes has been here to visit on. We can see that with Medicare and Medicaid, their particular genius is that they are always keeping up with the times and looking to new approaches that better meet the needs of older people and do it in an affordable fashion.

I will close by way of saying that I don't think there is a single area I have talked about—I know my colleague and the Chair are members of a different political parties—or I don't think there is a single issue that I have brought up here in the last 15 or 20 minutes that Democrats and Republicans can't find common ground on. In fact, Chairman HATCH in the Finance Committee, to his credit, has said that by the end of the year he wants Democrats and Republicans on our committee to produce a bill dealing with chronic illness—which, as I suggested, is what Medicare is all about and is responsible for 90 percent of the spending. So on that hopeful note, after an incredible 50-year run, I think the next 50 years are going to be even better. In the four or five areas that I have been talking about for a few minutes, I don't think there is a one of them where Democrats and Republicans can't find common ground.

I know my colleague from Michigan is waiting to speak. I will note as I wrap up that she has really been a leader in this field, particularly in getting Democrats and Republicans together. By the way, as she begins her speech, I would note that many Americans are going to receive better mental health care services in the years ahead largely due to the work—the bipartisan work—of my colleague on these issues.

So I am happy to wrap up my comments and look forward to hearing from my colleague from Michigan.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Michigan.

Ms. STABENOW. Mr. President, before my friend from Oregon leaves, I wish to make a couple of comments about our leader on the Finance Committee. Sitting and listening to him about his optimism and hopefulness really helps me have optimism so we can actually come together and get things done.

I can't think of anybody who, first of all, is more creative or willing to look at all kinds of ideas in order to be able to strengthen health care—Medicare, Medicaid—for quality and cost containment issues. Back during health care reform, I was proud to join Senator WYDEN on what I believe was an extremely thoughtful approach around health care. Again, I very much appreciate all that he does.

I have to say that I know he has reminded me many times about coming to the Senate and elected office from the early years with Gray Panthers and organizing for seniors. I come to public-service elected office after a big fight to save the county nursing home in Ingham County, Michigan. So we both came to public service fighting for health care for older Americans. It is my honor to continue to serve with him and also with the Senator from Pennsylvania, who has joined us on the floor as well.

I do in fact come to recognize the 50th anniversary of the signing of Medicare and Medicaid into law. I view these as great American success stories and the best about us in terms of our values. I think it is important, though, when we look at this, to sort of say: This is Thursday; we are going to do a ''Throwback Thursday'' moment here, and look at the context in which these programs were created.

There was the early 1960s. It was a time of great social upheaval. It was a time, frankly, of segregation and Jim Crow laws and a time also when there was no safety net for older Americans or Americans with disabilities when it came to the possibility of going to the doctor or getting the medical care that people needed. If someone was living in poverty, they simply could not afford to see a doctor to be able to get medical care for them or for their family.

But within the civil rights movement, our Nation became more attuned to the injustices of society for people of color as well as those in society who were struggling with illnesses—just basic health care needs—or with poverty.

In 1963, in his ''I Have a Dream'' speech, Martin Luther King challenged Americans to live out the true meaning of the creed of our Nation, the Declaration of Independence: that all men and women are created equal, and that all of us are entitled to life and liberty and the pursuit of happiness. I think that includes access to health care for ourselves and our families. Our country responded to that challenge through the passage of the Civil Rights Act and through the passage 50 years ago of legislation that created Medicare and Medicaid. This was a momentous event in our Nation's history. It demonstrated our willingness to take action to ensure that our Nation's laws were in line with our core values as a country. It is so important that we be working together to do that again. That is what we should be doing every day.

Let's remember that before the creation of Medicare, only half of our seniors had health insurance or could even find health insurance. That meant half of them were struggling probably to get the medical care they needed or they were going into an emergency room—which, by the way, is the most expensive way—to be treated rather than going to the doctor and getting preventative care and so on. We saw about half of our seniors and people with disabilities in that situation.

President Lyndon B. Johnson was the strong principled leader we needed in that moment, and 50 years ago he signed the Medicare bill into law. When he did, he said:

> No longer will older Americans be denied the healing miracle of modern medicine. No longer will illness crush and destroy the savings that they have so carefully put away over a lifetime so that they might enjoy dignity in their later years.

The Medicare Program really is a great American success story that connects all of us together—each generation—and each generation has done its part to strengthen that, including our own. That is why it is so important that we not go backwards at this time. This is where, unfortunately, we see a real difference here in the Senate and the House and in the political discourse more broadly, because we have seen, unfortunately, a Republican budget—House and Senate—that has passed this year with almost $500 billion in Medicare cuts, efforts to turn the system away from a universal program into something that—whether we call it vouchers or whether we have other names for it—would take away the confidence and ability for older people and people with disabilities to know they have health care, which is what Medicare is all about.

What we need to be doing instead of those things—and we even have Presidential candidates saying we should phase out Medicare. We should not be doing that. We should be working to ensure the programs' health and longevity so people are confident that, as they work and pay into the system—because, by the way, people are paying into this system—it will be there when they retire in terms of a health care system for them.

I also very much appreciate our ranking member in the Finance Committee talking about the new things we need to do. I will just mention one. When we look at Medicare, $1 out of $5 today is spent on Alzheimer's, as our ranking member knows. So many of us are working together. There are bipartisan efforts going on to tackle this question. Senator COLLINS from Maine and I have what is called the HOPE for Alzheimer's Act. Senator COLLINS is also working very hard and has in fact increased research, which is so important. But we need to know that we are doing everything we can to support Alzheimer's patients and their families and to find cures.

The exciting part is that we are seeing more and more opportunities through research. I have had so many conversations with researchers in Michigan and across the country. We are so close in so many areas to be able to break through if we don't go backwards on research funding, as unfortunately happens if we are not coming together and appropriately funding the budget.

So there are a lot of things we need to do: save dollars, increase quality, and make sure we are tackling the challenges right now of health care for older Americans. I am constantly reminded that in my State there are nearly half a million people right now who get their health care through Medicare and some 40 million nationwide.

I will talk for a minute now about the other path on that legislation, which is Medicaid. Now, that program came in response to a crisis in health care for low-income Americans and those with disabilities as well, and it has been nothing less than a lifeline for people, saving lives now for 50 years. During this last great recession that we had, there were so many families struggling to pay for basic health care needs that Medicaid literally was the saving grace that helped them and their families get back on their feet.

Medicaid is especially vital to women. Nearly half of all births in our country are funded through Medicaid. It gives young women access to preventative services such as cancer screenings.

I would also again thank our ranking member and our chairman for including legislation on Medicaid and a series of bipartisan bills that just passed the Senate Finance Committee. The Quality Care for Moms and Babies Act is about making sure we have quality standards across the country for low-income moms who are pregnant, going through prenatal care, delivery, and for babies. Senator GRASSLEY from Iowa is my partner in that effort.

It is also critical to note that on Medicaid, actually 80 percent of the dollars goes to long-term care for low-income seniors. As I said in the beginning, when I got involved in this whole process of public service and elected office, it was because of a nursing home that took Medicaid and helped low-income seniors be able to have a nursing home. In fact, 80 percent of Medicaid goes for seniors in nursing homes and long-term care.

Unfortunately, as with Medicare, what we have seen in the budgets is this: Rather than working together to strengthen Medicaid, we have seen countless attacks over and over to cut funding, to block grant the program. Over $1 trillion in the next 10 years to cut Medicaid was actually passed by the Republican majority in the House and the Senate.

That is not the direction we need to go in as we are celebrating the 50th anniversary of Medicare and Medicaid. We still have Governors who refuse to use funding that is available to them to cover their seniors in nursing homes under Medicaid or moms and babies, families—low-income working families.

We put into the Affordable Care Act the ability for people who are working in low-paying jobs to be able to have access to health care through Medicaid. Yet we still have 3.7 million Americans who can't get health care. It is not because the money is not there but because of politics. I think that is pretty outrageous.

Of the 3.7 million, 2 million are women. That is 2 million women who can't get health care services, whether it is screenings or mammograms, they can't get coverage for labor, delivery, and prenatal care. It is available. It is right there. It is not happening because of politics.

I am determined—as I know our ranking member is and my Democratic colleagues are as well—to make sure we are standing up for Medicare and Medicaid every single day. Medicaid is a program that allows 72 million Americans—including nearly 13 million working Americans, low-income working Americans who have gotten coverage because of the Affordable Care Act—to be able to go to bed at night with the knowledge that if their children get sick, they will be able to take them to the doctor or for any of us, if our parents or grandparents need a nursing home, they will be able to have one.

Medicaid and the Children's Health Insurance Program together provide 33 million children with the ability to see a doctor, to get the operation they need, to be able to have their juvenile diabetes taken care of or other health care issues.

Today is not just an anniversary of programs. I think it is an opportunity to recommit ourselves to the ideals that created these programs, the values that are behind these programs, and to say that health care is pretty important to families.

Now, 50 years ago we decided for our seniors we were going to make sure they could live in dignity in retirement and know they were going to be able to get the health care they needed. People are living longer and healthier lives. People are living today because of Medicare, Social Security, and Medicaid, all together. That is a great thing. We should be celebrating the fact that President Johnson, working with the Congress, got that done.

I believe this is the kind of approach we need to continue to strengthen for future generations. There is a huge divide right now about what to do on these programs, unfortunately, but I can say that we as Democrats are recommitting ourselves to a strong Medicare Program and a strong Medicaid Program for the future for American families.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Pennsylvania.

Mr. CASEY. Mr. President, I rise as well—as the senior Senator from Michigan just told us—to highlight and celebrate this anniversary, 50 years for both Medicare and Medicaid.

I am going to focus my remarks on Medicaid and to say, first, that contrary to what we often hear about an important program such as this, Medicaid is working. Medicaid is helping tens of millions of Americans. We can all come up with ways to make changes, and we probably will over the next couple of years, but Medicaid is maybe one of the most underrated health care programs in recent American history, for sure, and it is not simply millions who are benefiting from Medicaid but tens of millions. There are 68 million Americans who are Medicaid beneficiaries nationally and 36 million of them are children.

When folks talk about families and children and the priority we place on helping our families, I hope that means

strengthening Medicaid, not slashing it, not destroying it, and not taking some of the steps that have been proposed in Washington over the last couple years.

It is interesting, about 45 percent of all births in the country are paid for by Medicaid. So 45 percent of the babies born in America are on this Earth because they have the Medicaid Program to pay for the cost of the birth, which is not inexpensive. On the other end of the age spectrum, about 60 percent of nursing home placements in the country come through Medicaid. This isn't a program for someone else far away. This is a program that affects most of America. A lot of lower middle income families and others have the opportunity to place a loved one in a nursing home because of Medicaid, as well as what I said about the births.

Another way to think about Medicaid is the impact on children across the country—not only children in urban areas or children in communities where most families are low-income. When you examine both health care for children as it relates to Medicaid and to children who receive health care through the Children's Health Insurance Program—which in Pennsylvania we call CHIP—in rural areas that number is very high. There was a study done last fall that 47 percent of rural children get their health care from either Medicaid or from the CHIP program—actually, a higher percentage of the children in rural areas than in urban areas.

This is serious business when we talk about highlighting the benefits of Medicaid—not just celebrating an anniversary but celebrating working and having a sense of purpose and solidarity about preserving Medicaid for our families and strengthening it where we can.

One of the reasons Medicaid has been so successful over time is because of some of the strategies that were embedded in the program many years ago, especially as it relates to children. We know Medicaid serves children. It serves individuals with disabilities. In fact, that is a big number as well. Now, 8.8 million nonelderly individuals with disabilities are Medicaid beneficiaries nationally. It serves individuals with disabilities. But when you focus just on children as a segment of Medicaid, here is what we find in one of the strategies put in place years ago: The so-called EPSDT—Early Periodic Screening, Diagnosis, and Treatment Program—that benefit is of substantial significance for the future of our children and therefore the future of our country. Early periodic screening, diagnosis, and treatment is responsible for making sure vulnerable children receive quality and comprehensive care. Private insurance companies should emulate in their care what is provided in the so-called EPSDT.

Twenty-five million low-income children have access to this important program through Medicaid. What is it? I think it is evident from the name, but it is good to highlight what it means. First of all, the ''early'' part of it is the early access in identifying problems early. The second word is ''periodic,'' which means checking children's health at periodic age-appropriate intervals. ''Screening'' is self-evident, but maybe you don't remember what is behind the screening. It is providing physical, mental, developmental, dental, hearing, vision, and other screening tests to detect potential problems. The ''screening'' part of early periodic screening, diagnosis, and treatment is vital. ''Diagnostic'' is performing a diagnostic test to follow up when a risk is identified. ''Treatment'' is control, correct or reduce health problems when they are found.

This isn't just vital to the life of that child and his or her family and his or her ability to grow and learn in school and then succeed and get a job and contribute to our country, it is also important to the rest of us. We are going to be a much stronger country if children are the beneficiaries of preventative health care. We all know that. The data has been telling us that for decades. We are just starting to get about the business of finally, at long last, doing more preventative work in our health care system, just like Medicaid has been doing on behalf of children for many years. I think we are learning some lessons from Medicaid that can be applied to the rest of our health care system.

I know we are short on time because we have a number of people who want to make presentations today. I will reduce my remarks in this fashion. I will tell one story from my home State. Here is one example of a particular family, the Sinclair family. In this case, Owen Sinclair was born with a genetic defect with wide-ranging effects. His aorta wraps around his trachea and esophagus. He has trouble swallowing, jaundice, and has other organs that are malformed because of his condition. He needed extensive treatment at a specialized unit of the local children's hospital in Pennsylvania. After birth, he had to stay in the hospital on and off for most of the first 6 months of his life, but his parents' insurance only covered him for 30 days after birth. The tests and treatments and the surgeries and medications were far beyond the income of his parents. In the first 30 days, their copays alone were more than $15,000—30 days, $15,000. Medicaid literally saved this child's life. Owen Sinclair needs continuing testing, treatment, and nutrition support. The Sinclairs worry about their little boy, but at least they don't have to worry about going bankrupt because they love him and want him to get the medical care he needs.

That is the real world of the substantial and immeasurable benefits that Medicaid provides in the life of a child, the life of a family, and obviously in the life of our Nation's future.

We have to do more today than just celebrate 50 years. That is nice. We should all take time to celebrate, but we have to be committed and recommitted to the future of Medicaid, to strengthen it, to support it—not to undermine it and not to destroy the benefits we all know are vital to our children, vital to their future development, and vital to help them learn. If kids learn more when they are young, they are going to earn more later. We are all better off for that.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. BARRASSO). The Senator from Virginia.

Mr. KAINE. Mr. President, I also rise to celebrate this important anniversary. Fifty years ago today, President Lyndon Baines Johnson signed into law Medicaid and Medicare with my favorite President sitting next to him, President Harry S. Truman.

Mr. President, I came up and asked you a question, and I am proud to tell the whole Chamber, as everybody is listening, there is only, I think, one Member of the current U.S. Senate who was at the inauguration of LBJ, and it is the Presiding Officer, the Senator from Wyoming, who was at that inauguration in January of 1964.

Clearly, the signature of Medicare and Medicaid was one of President Johnson's and one of our Nation's proudest legislative achievements. Medicare is the landmark program which makes sure seniors have access to health care, and Medicaid is equally critical. It helps low-income seniors, children, and people with disabilities get their necessary health care.

Today I wish to talk about Medicaid. Others have spoken about Medicare earlier. Senator CASEY did a good job speaking about Medicaid, and I want to do the same because I have seen the success of Medicaid as a mayor and as a Governor, and now as a Senator, it is absolutely critical.

In 2014, as Senator CASEY mentioned, Medicaid provided health coverage to nearly 70 million Americans, including 1 million Virginians. In Virginia, about 600,000 children, 2 out of every 7 kids, are covered through Medicaid or its companion program CHIP. Medicaid is important. The Presiding Officer is a physician, so he knows that Medicaid is not just coverage to get health care when you need it, it is also about financial security because health care bills are often what push families into bankruptcy or into financially stressful situations, so the Medicaid coverage that covers 70 million Americans gives them financial stability.

Medicaid is about peace of mind. If you are completely healthy, but you are going to sleep at night wondering what will happen if your wife is in an auto accident or if your child becomes ill, that is a source of anxiety that is helped a little bit by having the coverage that Medicaid provides.

It is also for people with disabilities. This is important to note. It is about independence. A lot of citizens with disabilities, because they are able to be on Medicaid, are able to work part

time because Medicaid provides them with coverage that enables them to live independent lives. That is what Medicaid is about.

Now, today at 50, we think Medicaid is a given, but let me remind everybody that Medicaid was controversial when it was passed 50 years ago. In the House and Senate there were a lot of ''no'' votes, and Medicaid was an opt-in program, not a mandate. States could decide whether to opt-in or not. A lot of States chose not to be a part of Medicaid. They were the slowpoke States.

I think every family knows what I mean. Every family probably has a slowpoke. Frankly, I have a sister-in-law who is a slowpoke. If we are trying to go to church, a restaurant, or anywhere, we can always know that whatever time we say we will go, we will have this one family member who will likely be the slowpoke and hold everybody back.

Well, States were like that in 1965. A lot of States wouldn't sign on to Medicaid. By 1972, 7 years later, 49 States had embraced Medicaid, but the 50th State, Arizona, didn't embrace Medicaid until 1982. It took them 17 years to embrace Medicaid. Arizona was the original Medicaid slowpoke. So Medicaid is now 50 years old. It was controversial at first, increasingly accepted, and later embraced. It kind of sounds familiar to me.

The biggest change in the health care system since the signing of Medicaid and Medicare was the Affordable Care Act. The Affordable Care Act has so many benefits, such as protecting people with preexisting conditions, rebating premiums back to folks if they have to overpay their health insurers, making sure women don't have to pay different premiums than men, and there are so many other benefits. But the biggest benefit of the Affordable Care Act is that in the United States right now there are 16 million people with health insurance coverage who didn't have it before and are now able to walk around, go to work, and be with their families because of the expansion of Medicaid. Sixteen million is a very big number. I will put that in perspective. There are 16 million people who didn't have health insurance before and now have health insurance coverage because of the ACA. Sixteen million is the combined population of Alaska, Delaware, the District of Columbia, Hawaii, Idaho, Maine, Montana, Nebraska, New Hampshire, New Mexico, North Dakota, Rhode Island, South Dakota, Vermont, West Virginia, and Wyoming. The combined population of 15 States, plus the District of Columbia, has health care coverage because of the Affordable Care Act. But there is more to do.

One piece of the ACA is the ability of States to expand Medicaid to cover those who make up to $16,000 a year. It is optional, just as Medicaid was in 1965. Thirty-one States have embraced the Medicaid expansion, but as of today, we have 19 slowpokes, and I am sad to say that Virginia is one of the slowpokes. Despite the best efforts of our current Governor, working so hard to try to get the State to accept Medicaid expansion, so far the legislature has blocked him from doing so.

This is just like 1965, 50 years ago. There are States that get it and embrace the program, and then there are the slowpoke States.

I am here today not just to say happy birthday to Medicaid and Medicare, but to urge Virginia and the other slowpokes to get with the program. Here is what it would mean in Virginia: If Virginia accepts the Medicaid expansion, it will open up the possibility of health care coverage to another 400,000 people. It would provide health care, financial security, independence for those with disabilities, and peace of mind even when you are well. If all 19 slowpoke States get on board, an additional 4 million Americans would get health insurance, which would take the ACA coverage number up to 20. Those are all the States I mentioned earlier, plus the State of Nevada—16 States and the District of Columbia.

Now, you shouldn't be consigned to second-class health status in this country because you live in one of the 19 slowpoke States, especially since your taxpayers are paying taxes to provide you coverage.

Senator BROWN and I have authored a letter, which has been signed by many in this body, to the 19 slowpoke States. We asked them to join the program during Medicaid's 50th year. The program has an amazing legacy and a bright future. Don't be a slowpoke.

Remember how I said that Arizona was the original slowpoke? It was the last State—17 years later—to embrace Medicaid in 1982. Well, they may have been the original slowpoke, but when it came to the ACA, they learned something. Arizona—with a Republican Governor, two Republican Senators, a Republican State legislature, an overwhelmingly Republican congressional delegation, and votes for Republican candidates in Presidential elections—is not a slowpoke. Arizona has embraced the ACA. They are now a jackrabbit. Good for them. I hope Virginia joins them soon. I hope that all remaining 19 States join them soon, and I hope that 4 million more Americans can have health insurance coverage with the health, financial security, and peace of mind that that will provide.

I thank the Presiding Officer.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Ohio.

DRINKING WATER PROTECTION ACT

Mr. PORTMAN. Mr. President, I rise to talk about the Drinking Water Protection Act. This is commonsense, bipartisan legislation. Nobody opposes it on the merits, and it is urgent we get it done for my home State of Ohio and States all around the country.

What could be more important than having access to clean drinking water? There are a lot of pollutants in the water that contribute to not having clean drinking water. Of particular concern to us right now in Ohio are the toxins in the harmful algal blooms. This is blue-green algae that appears in both fresh water and saltwater. In the case of drinking water, unfortunately, it is finding its way into more and more fresh water bodies that provide drinking water.

This is something that is a big concern, not just for drinking water, but it can also cause illness or death in humans, pets, wildlife, and it is doing so, unfortunately, in my State of Ohio and around the country. If not confronted, these toxins will continue to contaminate our lakes and other fresh water bodies. Unfortunately, in Ohio we are all too familiar with this.

About a year ago, last summer, Toledo had to actually shut down the use of their water supply. They had to tell people there was a ban on drinking water. It was a big deal. Up to 500,000 people were affected. I was actually back home in Ohio because this happened over a weekend, and I filled up my pickup truck with bottled water and made a beeline for Toledo because people were desperate. I was able to pass out bottled water and also work with the local officials to try to get the testing done by EPA and to be sure that we could clean up the water supply.

It took a while, and you can imagine the impact on Toledo and the impact on so many other people now all over the northern part of Ohio who depend on Lake Erie for their water supply because they are wondering—again, this year we have a heavy toxic algal bloom forming. What is going to happen to their water supply?

Unfortunately, it not just Cleveland, Toledo, and cities along the lake. Celina, OH, which is further south but gets its water from Grand Lakes St. Marys, which is another fresh water lake. It is actually a reservoir and the water supply for Celina, among other things. Celina has spent over $400,000 annually just to combat the algae in Grand Lakes St. Marys.

Columbus was forced to spend over $700,000 to mitigate an algae outbreak at the Hoover Reservoir in 2013. Buckeye Lake in Ohio has also been affected by this. Again, it is not just Ohio; it is happening, unfortunately, around the country.

These harmful algal blooms continue to put public safety and health at risk. We have to keep our fresh water resources safe so our drinking water isn't threatened, and natural habitats and echo systems are protected.

By the way, this isn't just about drinking water either. Our waterways are important economic engines as well. Lake Erie, as an example, brought in $1.8 billion in business activity last year just through the fishing industry, and $226 million in taxes in 2013 alone. Tourism around the lake now supports one in four private sector jobs.

I was at Lake Erie last weekend, and I had the chance to go out on Lake Erie. I was out there with Captain Dave Spangler. This is Dave Spangler. Dave was the charter boat Captain of the Year in 2014, and the reason he became the charter boat Captain of the Year is not only because he is a great fishermen and knows how to find the fish, but he is a good steward of Lake Erie. He gets out there, along with other charter boat captains, and they actually monitor the quality of the water, including taking samples.

This is one of the samples that he took. This is what I saw when I was on Lake Erie. If you look at it, you can see that it is a jar. I was told I couldn't bring it on the floor today because I brought it back to DC with me from Ohio, but I wanted to have a photograph of it.

This is what it looks like. This is the blue-green algae that are in that water. This is the stuff that is cutting off the oxygen supply for the fish, creating toxins so you can't swim in it, and it is also contaminating the drinking water if you get too much of it, as we did last year. We are fearful that it might happen again this year because it is another bad year. The weather patterns were all wrong. There was a lot of rain early on; therefore, a lot of runoff, and now a lot of heat and stillness on the lake which creates the algal bloom. This is a real problem for us right now, and it is a real concern to the people I represent in Ohio but also to places all over the country that are dealing with this issue.

After we were out on Lake Erie, we hosted a townhall meeting where people came in from the area. This included not only fishing boat captains, but also small business owners, marina owners. It included people who are living along the lake, residents who are very concerned about the future of the lake. We had a bunch of experts there. We talked about the algal blooms and how to deal with it. It all came back to the fact that we have to take action at the local, State, and Federal levels.

We have passed legislation on this. We passed it last year. It has been helpful at the Federal level. We have come up with a new bill that will help to deal with this issue by forcing the Federal departments and agencies to work better together to come up with a report on how to better monitor what is happening, how to ensure that we have a strategic plan that actually identifies the human health risks from contaminated algal toxins and recommends feasible treatment options, including procedures on how to prevent algal toxins from reaching these local supplies in the first place, and of course to mitigate adverse public effects of algal toxins.

This is an appropriate role for the EPA. It is an appropriate role for NOAA, by the way, to do the monitoring because they have satellites that can help us to monitor what is happening on Lake Erie and other fresh water supplies for drinking water around the country.

This is a critical piece of legislation. It was introduced in the House by Congressman BOB LATTA. It was supported on a bipartisan basis in the U.S. House. They have already passed it in the House of Representatives. They passed it in February. It passed by an overwhelming vote of 375 to 37.

It then came over here to the Senate where SHERROD BROWN, my colleague from Ohio, and I had drafted legislation on this. I commend Senator BROWN, who was just down here on the floor. We were just talking about this legislation. We put it into the process here to begin getting it cleared by Democrats and Republicans back in March. So for 4 and ½ months, we have been trying to clear this legislation.

This week, I learned that the legislation is cleared, that nobody has substantive concerns with it, and we can finally move forward with it, and none too soon. We need this help, and we need it now. The people who live along the lake and get their drinking water from these reservoirs and other lakes I talked about are worried, and for some very good reasons. By the way, they are closing down beaches in my area because of this. There are pets and people who are seeing negative health effects from it.

We need to get the EPA more engaged and involved. We have a bipartisan way to do that. Again, it passed the House by an overwhelming 375 to 37 vote.

I am hopeful we can get this legislation passed tonight by a voice vote. We need to do everything we can to bring the Federal resources together, along with State and local governments and local conservation groups to combat this threat.

This is something, again, that is a no-brainer, as they say. It is one that everybody supports. It is one that is an urgent matter for us in Ohio. It is a matter that is of great concern to us right now. We need to get it moving, and it is one where we have bipartisan and bicameral support.

If we act tonight to clear this legislation and get it done, it will go to the President's desk for signature. And, of course, the President will sign it. Why? Because it is good, commonsense, bipartisan legislation that engages the EPA in an appropriate role to ensure that we can deal with these harmful algal blooms before they cause more damage and before we have another huge drinking crisis, just as we had last summer, in Toledo, OH.

So tonight I am going to ask my colleagues to pass this legislation. I am going to ask that there be a voice vote on it. I hope that this will go smoothly and that we can get this done.

Again, for 4½ months we have had this out there. Everybody has had a chance to look at it. There are no substantive concerns with it.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUEST—H.R. 212

So at this time I ask unanimous consent that the Senate now proceed to this legislation, which is H.R. 212, which is at the desk; that the bill be read a third time; and that the Senate vote on passage of the bill with no intervening action or debate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

The Senator from New Mexico.

Mr. UDALL. Mr. President, with great respect for my colleague from Oregon, I object. But I object because there is an additional bipartisan proposal that is out there and another unanimous consent request where this bill is paired with another bill.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUEST—H.R. 212 AND S. 1523

I ask unanimous consent that the EPW Committee be discharged from further consideration of H.R. 212, a bill to provide for the assessment and management of the risk of algal toxins in drinking water, and S. 1523, a bill to reauthorize the National Estuary Program; further, that the Senate proceed to their immediate consideration en bloc; that the Senate proceed to vote on passage of the bills and the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard to the request of the Senator from Ohio.

Is there objection to the request of the Senator from New Mexico?

Mr. PORTMAN. Mr. President, reserving the right to object, I don't know what the Senator from New Mexico is talking about, to be honest. He is my friend and colleague. I will say that I am from Ohio, not Oregon.

We just talked about the importance of this bill to Ohio. It is also important to Oregon and to the Senator's State of New Mexico and to other States around this country. There is no paired bill with this. I am talking about a bill that has been around here for 4½ months. It has been cleared. There are no substantive concerns. My understanding is that the Senator from New Mexico is talking about a bill that is still in committee. It has not even come out of committee. It is not a House bill. In other words, it hasn't been passed in the House. It is not going to go to the President's desk for his signature.

I would be shocked if my colleagues on the other side of the aisle say they are going to block this commonsense, bipartisan bill that Senator SHERROD BROWN and I have worked steadfastly on with both sides of the Capitol to get this done tonight on an urgent basis because we have to get it done. Ours has been out here for 4½ months; we didn't hear about yours until 45 minutes ago—45 minutes versus 4½ months.

If the Senator from New Mexico wants to block this for other reasons, he ought to say so. But if he is blocking it because there is a pairing—there is no pairing. Maybe he is trying to pair it with something in committee.

But let's get this done. This is not a difficult issue. This is one where we

have total agreement. There is no substantive concern. I would urge my colleague to allow us to get this done tonight, and then I am happy—happy—to work on this other bill, whatever it is—of course, we don't know because I just heard about it 45 minutes ago. In fact, I just directed the staff, because I just heard about it when I came here, to go ahead and run the hotline on the other bill. So we have already done that, and we will see what comes back. I know what is going to come back, which is people are going to say, probably on both sides of the aisle, we haven't had a chance to look at this. It hasn't been out for 4½ months; it has been out here for a couple of minutes. It was just a couple of minutes ago that we heard about it.

So I can't believe we are going to block this tonight in order to say we have to move something that is in committee, has not been passed by the House, will not go to the President for his signature, and has not been through any process, as this has been.

I urge my colleague and my friend to withdraw his objection.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection from the Senator from Ohio?

Mr. PORTMAN. Yes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

The Senator from New Mexico.

Mr. UDALL. Mr. President, just to clarify, the bill that it is being paired with is S. 1523. It is a bipartisan bill in the same committee. The proposal to pair them has come from the committee chairman, Chairman INHOFE. So that is the reason for the pairing. They are both sitting in the EPW Committee. The chairman believes this is the way to proceed.

That is the state of play as it is right now. I would say that with all due respect to my colleague from Ohio.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Ohio.

Mr. PORTMAN. Mr. President, I find it very strange that Senator INHOFE has somehow objected since he has signed off on this. It has been totally cleared. This has been cleared to have a voice vote and to have it done tonight. There is no objection from Senator INHOFE. He has cleared it. So I would check the Senator's sources on that.

I would just say I am really disappointed that this legislation that makes so much sense, that is needed right now in my home State of Ohio, is being blocked, and I don't know why it is being blocked. I assume there are some reasons that aren't being discussed tonight. This is very disappointing to me.

We are going to try this again on Monday. We are going to try it again on Tuesday. We are going to try it again on Wednesday. I would urge my colleagues on that side of the aisle to please allow us to get this done. Allow us to provide some relief right now.

If my colleague was up there with me in Lake Erie talking with these people—talking to the folks who had to go through this water crisis last summer; who are worried about what is going to happen this summer; who are being told they can't use the beaches; the fishing captains are worried about their businesses; the small businesses; the marinas; the folks who are not allowing their pets to walk along the lakes and drink the water—I think he would feel differently about it.

Let's get this done. This is not an example of something that should require some sort of partisan exercise. Let's do this in a nonpartisan way. Senator SHERROD BROWN and I have been working on this for 4½ months. I am disappointed we can't move it tonight—very disappointed—but I am very hopeful we can move it on Monday or Tuesday. We are going to keep trying, and I urge my colleagues to support it.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New Mexico.

Mr. UDALL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to be recognized for as much time as I may consume.

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

NUCLEAR AGREEMENT WITH IRAN

Mr. UDALL. Mr. President, today we are considering a diplomatic agreement about the future of a nuclear-armed Iran. Most of us in this body have strong opinions about that agreement. Some believe it will weaken our position. I believe the opposite, and I have come to the floor to express my support.

Republican and Democratic Presidents have all at times used the tools of diplomacy. Those efforts made us stronger and in some cases brought us back from the brink of nuclear disaster. President Reagan negotiated disarmament with the Soviet Union. President Nixon reengaged with China. President Kennedy used diplomacy—not war—to resolve the Cuban Missile Crisis. These were heroic initiatives. In each case, they were attacked for weakness, and in each case they made us safer.

I begin my remarks with the power of diplomacy because I want to echo points Senator DURBIN made so well last week. I urge my colleagues to review his remarks, to better understand the history and importance of diplomacy in our country. None of the historical deals we reference was perfect. All were fiercely attacked. But they made the world a safer place. They moved us forward. And this agreement will also move us forward.

When it comes to our relationship with Iran, there is much we need to do, but there is one thing we must do: Stop Iran from building a nuclear weapon, period. That is our priority. That is our goal. And that is what we all agree on.

The sanctions did what they were intended to do—they brought Iran to the table and enabled our diplomats to effectively stop Iran's nuclear weapons program. The results are clear: multiple centrifuges—ready to be disconnected; uranium levels—insufficient for a nuclear weapon or a quick breakout; and no access to plutonium.

This is a historic moment. This agreement has profound impact if we approve it and, make no mistake, if we fail to approve it, because let's be clear on one reality: This is a multilateral agreement. It was confirmed by the U.N. Security Council just last week. The sanctions regime cannot be sustained by U.S. action alone.

This is a time for careful review, and I hope we can take a step back and take a clear view. In this debate, we need to consider three basic points of the agreement: No. 1, what it does; No. 2, what it does not do; and No. 3, what it will require of us in the future. I wish to start by talking about what this agreement does.

To build a nuclear weapon, we need either weapons-grade uranium or plutonium, and we need infrastructure. Those are the pathways, and this agreement will block them all.

Before the negotiations began, Iran was well on its way to enough uranium, enriched to nearly 20 percent, for breakout to weapons grade—possibly within 2 to 3 months. With this agreement, the breakout time would increase to 1 year, giving the United States and the international community more than enough time to respond. Under this deal, Iran's uranium stockpile is cut by 98 percent. I will repeat. This is a surprising development. Under this deal, Iran's uranium stockpile is cut by 98 percent. Enrichment is limited to 3.67 percent for 15 years. Centrifuges are reduced by two-thirds. Enrichment capability at the Fordow facility will also be limited and closely watched. The International Atomic Energy Agency will be able to verify that Iran is abiding by its uranium limits by monitoring every stage of the nuclear supply chain. Plutonium will be blocked. The reactor core at Arak is a heavy water reactor and can produce plutonium. The core will be removed. Its openings will be filled with concrete in a way that the IAEA can verify—those international inspectors can verify—so it will not be used for plutonium application.

Critics rightly ask: How will we be sure? Iran has cheated before, and they may cheat again. That is why the P5+1 will be closely involved in the redesign and rebuilding of this reactor. If it has plutonium, we will know it. A modernized reactor will not use heavy water and will be limited to 3.67 percent enriched uranium. A violation at Arak would be nearly impossible to hide.

It doesn't stop there. Iran will have to abide by and ratify the additional protocol of the nonproliferation treaty before the deal is finalized. Contrary to detractors, this is not an 8-year or 10-year or 15-year deal but a deal that lasts.

We all agree on one thing: Verification is key. I don't think any of us have any illusions here. Iran has had a long and troubling history of deception.

I am pleased the administration included Secretary of Energy Moniz in these discussions. The Department of Energy is one of the world's foremost experts on nuclear energy and nuclear weapons. Any agreement on nuclear weapons must be guided by science—not politics, not speculation, science. Our scientists at New Mexico's two National Labs, Los Alamos and Sandia, and scientists at Lawrence Livermore and Oak Ridge National Laboratories—all have played a key role in these negotiations.

The physics of nuclear weapons is complex. You can't make a bomb out of thin air. I have met with our scientists. I have listened to the experts at the Department of Energy. Iran may be able to break the rules of the deal, but it can't break the rules of physics. Nuclear materials give off telltale signatures. The radioactive decay of uranium and plutonium is detectable even in the event of delayed access. Uranium in nature has a half-life of 4.5 billion years. Enriched uranium 235, which can be used in a weapon, has a half-life of 700 million years. In effect, you can delay, but you still can't hide.

Verification will be strong, and that means continuous monitoring, it means tamper-proof electronic seals, and it means dedicated facilities to inspect the Iranian nuclear program. It will include up to 150 inspectors with long-term visas. We will have the best inspectors in the world in Iran. They will have unprecedented access 24/7 to all declared sites. I would add that they are all trained by nuclear experts at our National Laboratories. I may not trust Iran, but I do trust the science and our National Laboratories.

This is a serious debate and one of the greatest challenges of our time. This agreement will meet that challenge ongoing and for years to come. But let's not kid ourselves. There are other challenges. There are continued dangers posed by the Iranian regime. We all know this. That is why sanctions against Iran's support for terrorist groups will remain and we will stand by our allies in the region. The President has made this very clear.

This agreement will take the nuclear threat off the table. That is what it will do, but here is what it will not do: It will not diminish our resolve to combat other threats or to defend our allies in the region. That resolve will be and must be stronger than ever.

To my colleagues who argue that we should walk away from the agreement which has already been approved by the world's leading powers, I would ask, walk away to where, to what end, to what alternative? Has an alternative been proposed?

I would make two proposals:

First, I urge my colleagues to support this agreement. We have a choice between this deal or no deal. I do not believe we will get another chance.

Second, I ask that we be open to ways that Congress can reinforce the agreement—and that should be part of this process, too—with investment in people and technology to support nonproliferation enforcement with strong oversight of the implementation plan—not to embarrass or score political points but to ensure Iran is abiding by its part of the deal—and with increased support for our allies in the region and with a clear provision for a quick snapback of existing sanctions should that be necessary.

We have a strategic opportunity, just as Presidents Kennedy, Nixon, and Reagan did with adversaries in the past. We need to act now from a position of strength and not wait until another day when the danger may be greater and our options may be more limited.

I began my remarks with a reference to history. I would conclude with one other, closer in time and devastating in consequence, and that is Iraq. Instead of exhausting our diplomatic options, we opted for war. Instead of measured resistance, we opted for regime change. The result was and is tragic.

Diplomacy takes time. It is often imperfect. But there are times when it is our best option and our best course, and this is one of those times.

Mr. President, I yield the floor to my colleague from Michigan.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Michigan.

Ms. STABENOW. Mr. President, at a time when we have so many urgent issues on our national agenda—our economy, jobs, all the issues we need to address, such as making sure every American has a fair shot to get ahead after college, has retirement security, and all of the other issues we know Americans care about—unfortunately, we are revisiting a very old debate that doesn't seem to want to go away, and that is whether we will provide funding for preventive health care for women, specifically for family planning clinics that provide essential primary health care services for women and men for things such as wellness visits, mammograms, and breast cancer screenings.

In 2013, Planned Parenthood performed 500,000 breast exams, including 15,000 for women in Michigan. Planned Parenthood provides screenings for cancer, heart disease, and HIV. In 2013, 400,000 Pap tests and 4.5 million STI tests and treatments were conducted. Women go to Planned Parenthood for cervical cancer screenings, for life-and-death cancer screenings, for vaccines, and for blood pressure checks.

In States where Republican Governors have refused to use the funding that is available to expand Medicaid health care under the Affordable Care Act, Planned Parenthood provides services critical to low-income Americans.

In 2013, more than half the people seeking health services at Planned Parenthood clinics were covered by Medicaid. Nearly 80 percent of these men and women have incomes at or below the poverty level. We are talking about all across the country, many places where there is no other access to health care, no other place to get a mammogram or a breast cancer screening, where these services that are literally life-and-death are being provided.

So when we talk about Planned Parenthood, we are talking about the full spectrum of women's health care, including contraception and family planning services that serve both women and men. One out of five women has been to a Planned Parenthood clinic at some point in her life. In 2013, 2.7 million women, men, young people, relied on Planned Parenthood for preventive care, and about 70,000 of those were in my State of Michigan.

In my State, 40 percent of the Planned Parenthood health clinics are located in areas we call medically underserved. There isn't access to other kinds of clinics or health care. There may not be a hospital nearby or there may not be many doctors nearby. We are talking about basic health care.

Unfortunately, we see politics played with women's preventive health care and family planning over and over again in attacks on Planned Parenthood. As I see it, this is really an attack on every woman who needs preventive health care services.

This is what this is about. Instead of focusing on jobs and closing loopholes that are causing our manufacturing jobs to go overseas; instead of making sure we are focussed on equal pay for equal work or a standard of living that will allow everyone to be successful and economically independent and care for their families; instead of focusing on robustly moving forward as a country in a global economy; instead of focusing on that or continuing to focus on making sure people have access to college without getting out of college with so much debt that they can't buy a house because they can't qualify because they already have so much debt, it is as if they have a mortgage—instead of focusing on all of that, one more time we are seeing an attack on Planned Parenthood and women's preventive health care.

Fortunately, the vast majority of the American people recognize the value of having health clinics like Planned Parenthood that are dedicated to serving women's health care needs in every community across the country. That is why a poll shows that 64 percent of voters oppose the move by congressional Republicans to defund Planned Parenthood and therefore preventive health care services such as mammograms, cancer screenings, blood pressure checks, and access to birth control. Unfortunately, what is the majority view of the public is not what we see debated in the House and in the Senate.

We have come a long way in actually strengthening our health care system, making sure that women and men, older people and younger people, can get preventive health care services, annual wellness visits without having to pay a copay. We have seen a lot of strengthening of access to health care

for women through the Affordable Care Act.

Finally, actually being a woman isn't viewed as a preexisting condition anymore. In too many cases, that had been the situation. Women in childbearing years had to pay higher rates, or someone who survived breast cancer or cervical cancer or some other kind of challenge in their life. Under the Affordable Care Act, we are finally able to say: No, you don't carry that with you as a preexisting condition for the rest of your life. That is a good thing. A lot of women are sleeping better at night as a result of that.

When it comes to basic preventive health care, access to birth control, access to screenings, and so on, it seems that somehow we have to speak out over and over again to defend these basic health care services. One more time we are headed for a big debate, a big fight on the budget. We are hearing people say they won't allow the United States of America to have a budget for next year unless we defund Planned Parenthood and health care access for millions of women in this country. It doesn't speak well for what the priorities are of Congress.

I challenge colleagues across the aisle to join with Democrats, to join with the majority of the American people, who support the ability of women to get a full range of health care services through clinics—where they don't have any other kind of access—through Planned Parenthood and other community clinics that allow them to get the basic health services they need. Women should not be treated as second-class citizens. We have come too far, as we look at the Affordable Care Act and health care access, and it will be incredibly disappointing, disheartening, and maddening, frankly, if we end up in a fight one more time. I have seen it before, and I have had to participate in holding back efforts to say we are not going to fund anything unless we defund women's preventive health care. It is wrong, and this Senator can state as one woman—as well as all of the Democratic women and men who are here—that we don't intend to allow that to happen.

Thank you, Mr. President.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. SULLIVAN). The Senator from Hawaii.

Ms. HIRONO. Mr. President, I rise today to speak against the bill to defund Planned Parenthood. I see this bill and others like it as nothing less than an assault on women's health. What else can you call it when defunding Planned Parenthood will result in 2.7 women in this country—that is more than twice the population of the State of Hawaii—not getting the cervical cancer screenings, mammograms, treatment for sexually transmitted diseases, and other health care they need.

For over 100 years Planned Parenthood has been a leader in improving the health and well-being of women throughout the United States.

For many women, especially low-income women, survivors of domestic and sexual assault, young women, and others, Planned Parenthood health centers are their primary health care provider that they go to for lifesaving cancer screenings, birth control, disease testing, and other essential health care services.

One out of five women in this country will pass through a Planned Parenthood health center for health services at some point in her life. These numbers matter. One out of five women in this country will go to a Planned Parenthood center, and here we are debating whether or not to close these centers. I find it astounding that some—especially on the other side of the aisle—think this is a good idea. Six out of ten women who access family planning services rely on Planned Parenthood as their primary point of care.

In the State of Hawaii, my State, over 7,000 women annually have relied on Planned Parenthood for their basic health services—services that help individuals maintain their health so they can live full, productive lives.

This latest attack—basically fearmongering by the fringes of some on the other side—against Planned Parenthood is unwarranted and unnecessary. This Senator considers it mean-spirited, on top of that. Defunding one of the largest health providers to women shows how far some of my Republican colleagues will go to restrict women's access to basic health care. As previously noted, this latest attack on women's access to care will impact nearly 2.7 million women across the country who benefit from Planned Parenthood's services. Some 2.7 million women—that, again, is nearly double the entire population of the State of Hawaii. Lots of women are going to be impacted by this drive to defund Planned Parenthood.

These 2.7 million Americans do not deserve to have their access to health care terminated just so politicians can score political talking points. If these women can't go to Planned Parenthood, where will they go? Women who rely on Planned Parenthood for essential health care services will be forced to find medical care elsewhere or, tragically, go without.

Defunding Planned Parenthood means there will be 400,000 fewer cervical screenings. There will be 500,000 fewer breast exams. There will be 4.5 million fewer tests and treatments for sexually transmitted disease like HIV.

In Indiana, when the State defunded Planned Parenthood, several clinics closed. The clinic in Scott County was the only testing facility for STDs. Scott County today is in the middle of an HIV outbreak, and the State had to open a popup clinic to offer such services. Defunding led to residents in Scott County being unable to get services due to partisan statesmanship. We do not want these results replicated throughout the United States.

On behalf of the thousands of women in Hawaii and millions across the country who rely on Planned Parenthood for health care services, I oppose this politically motivated attack that will set women's health care back. I will stand vigilant against those attempts to defund Planned Parenthood and will continue to defend the good work this organization does for women across this country every single day.

Planned Parenthood has long been on the ideological hit list of those who want to block abortion. That is the reality. That is being honest. So, today, we are talking about defunding Planned Parenthood as a way to get to that goal of stopping abortions, and tomorrow we will be talking about some other way to limit a woman's right to choose. This bill is dangerous to women's health. I urge my colleagues to join me in voting against this bill and any like it that come our way.

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. MURPHY. 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. MURPHY. Mr. President, later this week we are going to have our first Republican Presidential debate, the official one that is on TV, and a lot of people are going to be watching. There has been a lot of speculation as to who is going to be in the debate, who is not going to be in the debate, who will do well, who will not, who will rise in the polls, and who will fall in the polls.

Frankly, we don't need to wait for that debate because the Republican Presidential primary campaign is playing out right now on the floor of the Senate, I think, to the detriment of the institution. How else would you explain a threat from Members of this body and frankly from Members of the House—many of whom are not running for President—to shut down the government over the issue of funding for Planned Parenthood. We have been through this before. We have been through government shutdowns prompted by ideological politics before, and a lot of people got hurt—a lot of people got hurt.

The life of a woman in Bridgeport, CT, was torn apart because her Head Start Program was shut down because of the Federal Government shutdown. She was just beginning a new job, and she had to make a new choice between continuing in this new place of employment that was going to lift her out of poverty, essentially sending her kids out on the street while they didn't have care, or leaving the job and taking care of her kids while Head Start was shut down. Those are the consequences of a government shutdown.

So if you are going to shut down the government, your reason for doing it better be pretty good. The reason a

couple of years ago was a miserable one—taking health care away from millions of Americans who are getting it because of the Affordable Care Act.

But this one is just as insidious. I don't know where women in my State would be without Planned Parenthood. My wife is one of tens of thousands—probably hundreds of thousands—of Connecticut women who got their preventative care from Planned Parenthood. She did that when she was young, didn't have a lot of income, and needed to find a primary care provider who could get her access to basic health care services. There are 2.7 million patients all across the country who receive their health care, their preventative health care, from Planned Parenthood. More than 90 percent of what Planned Parenthood does all across the country is engage in preventive health care.

In 2013, 400,000 Pap tests, 500,000 breast exams, 4.5 million STI tests and treatments, including HIV tests. In Connecticut, there are 17 Planned Parenthood centers and they serve—here is the number—64,000 patients in the State of Connecticut.

So we are going to shut down the government in order to take health care away from 64,000 women in Connecticut, all in order for a handful of people to make an ideological point that may get some additional votes within a Republican Presidential primary, despite the fact that since the 1980s the law in this country has been clear: You can't use Federal dollars for abortions.

I oppose that law because I believe abortions are part of a panoply of medical services that should be available to people in this country at their choice. Frankly, I think the government should stay out of the business of deciding what medically necessary health care choices women can make. I don't think we should be involved in that. So I don't actually support the underlying law that prevents those dollars from being used, but it is the law of the land, it has been the law of the land, and it will be the law of the land.

We are saying we are going to shut down access to 64,000 women in Connecticut because the place they are getting health care also performs a health care service that is objectionable to people who are running for President, but let us take that logic to its natural extrapolation. Let's take it to its logical end point. If you believe no one should be eligible to get health care services from any institution that has anything to do with abortions or the full array of reproductive health care services, then you can't actually stop at Planned Parenthood. You have to stop funding any hospital that has anything to do with offering a full array of health care services. You have to stop funding for health care centers that do the same.

Why wouldn't you stop sending Medicaid dollars to States such as Connecticut that have codified Roe v. Wade? What is the logical end to this policy if all of a sudden an organization that spends 90-plus percent of its resources simply engaging in the good stuff of preventive health care now all of a sudden can't serve anybody because they engage in a service that is a politically hot topic in Congress, despite the fact that there is a law on the books that says they can't use any of their Federal dollars for that particular service.

Take this to its logical end, and we cut off Federal funding for not 64,000 patients in Connecticut but virtually every patient in Connecticut if any association with the provision of abortions all of a sudden denies you Federal funding. I don't concede the fact that the Hyde amendment is the law of the land, but I acknowledge that it is and it will be.

This is just Presidential Republican primary politics finding its way onto the Senate floor. What this could lead to is not the defunding of Planned Parenthood, because they will not get the votes nor the Presidential signature to defund one of the most important primary and preventive health care providers in our States—I will not do that. I will not deny health care to 64,000 Connecticut women. So all they do by creating this line in the sand, once again, is shut down the Federal Government, sucking thousands of jobs out of our economy, leading to tens of thousands of stories of individual misery, such as the woman from Bridgeport who all of a sudden awoke to find her kid couldn't go to his Head Start Program and so she had to think about quitting her new job in order to take care of her child.

I get it that threats about shutdowns make good headlines. They play to a slice of a Presidential primary electorate, but they are big headaches for real people. We are not playing with politics when we talk about shutting down the government over defunding Planned Parenthood or over repealing the Affordable Care Act. We are playing with people's lives.

So I hope this is just the issue of the week in the Republican Presidential primary. I hope when we come back in September we are not seriously talking about another government shutdown. I hope we seriously are not talking about an attack on women's health care all across this country. I hope we are not entertaining the idea that tens of thousands of women in my State are all of a sudden going to lose access to services or tens of thousands of women and men are going to lose access to programs such as Head Start, job training, and all the other things that get affected when the government shuts down.

I am sick of shutdowns. I have only been in the Congress for less than a decade, and I have been through more of them, real and threatened, than I care to remember. I am certainly not going to stand for a shutdown threatened on the basis of denying health care to women in the State of Connecticut or anywhere else across this country.

I hope we can spend some time after this vote next week—that even my Republican friends in the Republican Presidential primary will admit is a showboat—and get down to the real business of passing a budget that respects the values and priorities of this country, that keeps our government operational, and separates, to the best we can, the business we do on the Senate floor from the business of sorting out who is going to be the next Republican nominee for 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. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

MORNING BUSINESS

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

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

100TH ANNIVERSARY OF DUCHESNE COUNTY

Mr. HATCH. Mr. President, today, I pay tribute to Duchesne County—a remarkable Utah county that is celebrating its 100th birthday.

Located in northeastern Utah, Duchesne County is rich with natural resources and home to some of the State's most majestic scenery. Thousands flock to the region each year to fish its streams, which include the Strawberry, Duchesne, Lake Fork, and Yellowstone Rivers. Even more enjoy its mountains, including Utah's highest, King's Peak, which is 13,528 feet above sea level. Its vistas are breathtaking and its valleys are serene and beautiful.

The county has a meaningful history that traces its roots to Native American culture. In fact, much of present-day Duchesne County was originally part of the Uintah and Ouray Indian Reservations. In the early 1900s, other settlers began arriving in the region after Congress passed the Dawes Act. To farm and make improvements to the land, the government offered these individuals 160 acres under the Homestead Act. Today, approximately 18,000 Utahns live in Duchesne County and contribute to its quality of life.

Livestock and farming along with oil and natural gas resources continue to drive the local economy. Just like its early pioneers, Duchesne County's citizens work hard not only to support their families, but also to make their

communities and our State a wonderful place to live.

Duchesne County captures the best of small town America. Its towns are charming and its people are dedicated and patriotic. I have always enjoyed visiting the many wonderful towns in Duchesne County and getting to know its citizens.

Again, I wish to congratulate Duchesne County on the marking of its centennial. This is a noteworthy time indeed, and I want to wish the many Utahns who call this place home many more years of happiness living and working in this beautiful county.

REMEMBERING ERMA ARVILLA RUPP FRITCHEN

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I rise today to recognize the life of Erma Arvilla Rupp Fritchen. Ms. Fritchen devoted her life to justice, notably as a Freedom Rider in the summer of 1963.

Ms. Fritchen was born and raised in Reno, NV. She strove to be the first in her family to graduate from high school, but nothing was handed to her. Erma worked to pay the rent and still managed to graduate from Reno High School in 1948. Following high school, she pursued adult education classes in psychology before moving to Fort Benning, GA, as a military wife. When she arrived in Fort Benning, she was shocked by the racial disparities in her new city.

After moving back to Nevada, Erma began attending college while also raising her two children on her own. Education and family were important to her, but she was never too busy to take a stand for the principles she believed in. When she had the opportunity to make a difference by joining a civil rights caravan headed for Washington, DC, in 1963, she jumped at the opportunity and added her voice to the Freedom Rider demonstrations that were taking place throughout the country.

Through her years of fighting for justice and equality, Ms. Fritchen proved that everyone can do their part if they work and fight hard enough. I appreciate her dedication to her five sons and contributions to making our country a better place.

RECOGNIZING NEVADA PEP

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I rise today to recognize Nevada PEP for its more than 20 years of service to children with disabilities and their families.

Nevada PEP was founded more than two decades ago by a handful of families who wanted for their children what every parent wants for their child: the opportunity to learn, grow, and succeed in all areas of life, regardless of their ability. Since then, this organization has helped children with disabilities by increasing opportunities for home, community, and school success. Although Nevada PEP started as a small organization with meetings around a kitchen table, the organization has now served more than 17,000 people throughout the State and has had a positive impact on many more Nevadans through its greater advocacy efforts.

The ''PEP'' in the organization's name has a number of meanings, including, ''Parents Encouraging Parents,'' ''Parents Educating Professionals,'' and ''Professionals Empowering Parents.'' Nevada PEP truly embodies all of these meanings through the services it provides. The organization offers support groups, webinars, and other skill-building activities to help the families of children with disabilities become effective advocates for their child. Nevada PEP also works to connect families to essential community resources, including organizations and professionals in the fields of education, health care, housing, and employment. Additionally, the organization raises awareness and engages the community through events, such as the ''Baldy Bash,'' the ''Run, Walk, Roll Against Bullying,'' and an annual art show.

I applaud Nevada PEP for their years of dedicated service to children with disabilities and their families. Their work is truly appreciated and admired. I also commend Karen Taycher, a parent and passionate advocate, as well as founding member and the executive director of Nevada PEP, for her fine leadership throughout the past two decades. As Nevada PEP begins the next chapter, I wish them continued success for years to come.

50TH ANNIVERSARY OF MEDICARE AND MEDICAID

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, today we celebrate a true milestone in our Nation's history, and we mark this reminder that basic health insurance is not a privilege for the wealthy, but a right, for every American. On July 30, 1965, President Lyndon Johnson signed the Social Security Amendments of 1965 into law, establishing the Medicare and Medicaid programs. For 50 years, these two programs have offered health care and economic security to millions of Americans and their families.

The debate over the right to basic health insurance began in the 1940s with President Harry Truman. At a time when just one in eight seniors had health care and were earning less than $1000 on average annually, President Truman sought to create a safety net to meet the needs of a growing population. It may be difficult for all of us in the generations of Americans born since that era to fully understand today, but before Medicaid and Medicare, when private health insurers could still discriminate against individuals based on their health, many seniors were either denied coverage entirely or priced out of health insurance. And for Americans living in poverty, health care was simply out of reach.

The Social Security Amendments of 1965 offered a path forward. Today, Medicare and Medicaid cover a combined 110 million Americans, including seniors, persons with disabilities, and low-income Americans and their families. From cancer screenings to hospital coverage, yearly well-visits, flu vaccinations, pediatric dental care and caregiver support, Medicare and Medicaid provide access to the basic health care services that all Americans deserve. And what a dramatic and tangible difference that has made and continues to make in the lives of millions of people.

Through the Affordable Care Act, Medicare and Medicaid took a step further. States that expanded Medicaid under the law saved nearly $2 billion in health care costs while extending coverage to many, many more Americans. Closing the coverage gap known as the ''donut hole'' saved seniors on Medicare $15 billion in health care costs—a savings to seniors of $28 million in my home State of Vermont alone. The Affordable Care Act strengthened Medicare for future generations, extending the trust fund an additional 13 years as a result of savings to the program.

It is worth remembering as well that in the early years of Medicare and Medicaid, as these programs were established and went through some growing pains, public opinion at first was tentative in supporting these major reforms. Over time, public support for and appreciation of the benefits of these programs has grown significantly. We can see some parallels in the way public opinion about the Affordable Care Act has continued to grow, as its benefits have become more widespread and more apparent in our daily lives.

As we celebrate this important anniversary, I hope we all will remember how far these programs have come and commit to keeping them strong for future generations. Strengthening Medicare and Medicaid is an economic investment in the well-being of our country, and I will fight for these programs for my children and my grandchildren.

I am proud to celebrate an anniversary marking the Federal Government's promise of providing reassurance and stability for our Nation's most vulnerable citizens. I look forward to celebrating the success of Medicare and Medicaid for generations to come.

DRIVE ACT

Mr. MCCAIN. Mr. President, I am pleased by Senate passage today of the DRIVE Act, a long-overdue, multiyear surface transportation bill to authorize and fund our Nation's highway, bridge, and transit programs. This bill would provide the certainty needed for State and local planning organizations to set transportation priorities and begin long-term investments to modernize our Nation's aging infrastructure.

This bill is also a win for the State of Arizona. Included in the DRIVE Act are critical measures, sponsored by

myself and Senator FLAKE, that would pave the way for the establishment of the Sonoran Corridor and the future Interstate 11, I–11, ensuring Arizona has the critical infrastructure it needs to develop significant international trade routes for the Western United States. These provisions would designate the Sonoran Corridor as a future interstate to connect I–19 to I–10 south of the Tucson International Airport and extend the future I–11 through the State of Nevada to I–80 and south toward Arizona's southern border.

As the population in Arizona continues to grow and innovative businesses increasingly settle in our State, we must ensure that we have the infrastructure in place to foster economic development, international trade and job creation. These two top-priority transportation projects will make Arizona a key part of an international trade route that reaches all the way to the southern border. I appreciate Chairman INHOFE's support of these important provisions, as well as Senator FLAKE, Governor Doug Ducey and leaders from across the State of Arizona for their strong partnership in advancing these designations that will connect Arizona businesses and communities to major domestic and international trade partners.

I am proud of the bipartisan effort that went into this bill. It is unfortunate that we ultimately had to pass yet another short-term highway extension today to avoid a transportation shutdown across the country. This stop-gap measure should be the last. When we return following the August break, I urge the House to take up and pass this bill and send it to the President's desk for signature.

REBUILD ACT

Ms. MIKULSKI. Mr. President, I join with my House colleague from Baltimore, Congressman ELIJAH CUMMINGS, to introduce the REBUILD Act. The people who live in our most distressed neighborhoods deserve a government on their side—one that works as hard for them as they work for their own families and communities. This bill is about rehabilitating neighborhoods, making them healthier and safer, and creating jobs today and jobs tomorrow for communities that need it most. By supporting small businesses, rebuilding infrastructure, expanding opportunity for our young people and tackling crime, we will lay the foundation for a brighter future.

The REBUILD Act is an emergency supplemental bill for fiscal year 2015 to help inner-city neighborhoods across the United States. It focuses on four key areas: physical infrastructure, meeting compelling human needs, community safety, and assistance to small business owners.

This bill provides robust funding for U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development programs that will remove blight, rehabilitate aging housing properties, including those with lead paint, and fund youth and senior centers. I especially want to highlight the Community Development Block Grant funding to help those communities most impacted by violence and civil unrest this year. That includes my hometown of Baltimore. This bill also extends the moving-to-work contracts through 2028.

For meeting compelling human needs, this bill funds U.S. Department of Labor's job training and apprenticeship programs to help dislocated workers, veterans and youth make a living wage and learn new job skills. It also funds the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' Healthy Start Initiative. This program helps moms and infants get access to primary and preventative health care to reduce infant mortality rates.

In the area of community safety, there is significant funding for targeted U.S. Department of Justice grant programs. This funding will help reduce youth violence, tackle crime hot spots controlled by gangs and rampant with gun violence, and reduce methamphetamine and heroin trafficking. There is additional funding for drug, mental health and veterans courts to break the cycle of drug use and criminal behavior.

For our small business owners and entrepreneurs, this bill provides loans, grants, training and counseling services. There also is money to help underserved businesses with Federal contracting.

Recent events like the riots in Baltimore remind us of the unmet needs of our Nation's inner city neighborhoods. We must do more. This means immediately getting to work on a sequel to the landmark Murray-Ryan budget deal to replace sequester. The impact of the status quo and deep cuts to our Federal programs on the mission to lift up these communities is unacceptable. The opportunity of the American Dream should be within every American's reach.

VETERAN HOUSING STABILITY ACT OF 2015

Mr. BLUMENTHAL. Mr. President, yesterday, as ranking member of the Senate Committee on Veterans' Affairs, I introduced S. 1885, the Veteran Housing Stability Act of 2015. I would like to thank Senators SANDERS, BROWN, and HIRONO for joining me to introduce this bill, and the National Coalition for Homeless Veterans and the National Alliance to End Homelessness for their support of this legislation. At a time when the Department of Veterans Affairs, VA, has taken on an aggressive initiative to end homelessness among veterans by the end of 2015, much progress has been made yet there is still more progress needed.

The VA initiative has led to a 33 percent decrease in the homeless veteran population since 2010. These declining numbers are a reflection of the combined efforts of VA and its Federal, State, local, tribal, and community partners as they continue aggressive efforts to decrease veteran homelessness and implement a system through which veterans who become homeless can be rapidly placed in appropriate housing situations that meet their needs. The statistics are staggering—49,000 veterans are homeless in America today, 1 in 10 of all homeless men and women—a searing failure in the greatest, strongest Nation in the world's history. It reflects a failure to keep faith that this legislation will help correct. We cannot allow another veteran to slip through the cracks. We must give communities the flexibility and tools they need to create housing systems that can maximize existing resources collaboratively in order to identify and sustain appropriate housing placements for vulnerable veterans.

The legislation would reaffirm this Nation's commitment to safe and affordable housing for veterans by improving and expanding upon VA's programs to prevent and end homelessness among veterans. VA's housing programs for homeless and at-risk veterans must modernize to ensure that they are meeting the needs of the very veterans they are intended to serve. One of the challenges many identify as causing difficulty is one that mainstream housing programs also struggle with—insufficient availability of safe, affordable, permanent housing options.

This measure will address the egregious, abhorrent problem of veteran homelessness with several commonsense, effective steps to increase housing for homeless and at-risk veterans. The Homeless Veterans Prevention Act of 2015 would expand access to housing by requiring VA to collaborate with U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development and other entities to conduct more robust landlord outreach and encourage more landlords to rent to veterans.

Further, this bill would modify a VA program that provides critical savings to transitional housing providers, allowing these groups to spend limited funding to provide high-quality services rather than to retire the debt they would take on to acquire a facility in which to operate. VBA's Acquired Property Sales for Homeless Providers Program sells homes from VA's foreclosure inventory at a discount to nonprofit organizations for use as transitional housing for homeless veterans. As VA continues to shift its homeless programs into an approach that meets veterans at their point of need, rather than choosing a one-size-fits-all solution, more services are being provided under the housing-first model, which pairs housing with appropriate levels of case management. This pairing allows veterans to deal with the underlying issues that caused homelessness, rather than attempting to work through them while simultaneously looking for housing. It is critical that programs that offer more than transitional housing be

allowed to benefit from this discount as well.

As VA focuses on resolving homelessness, instead of just managing it, housing stability is increasingly a focus across the continuum of programs VA offers to eligible veterans. This bill will also modify VA's Grant and Per Diem Program, its largest transitional housing program, to allow VA to incentivize grantees to increase their focus on permanent housing and housing stability in support of the transitional housing program. More specifically, this bill provides VA with much needed authority to allow transitional housing providers to utilize their facility for permanent housing, and to receive a reduced per diem payment to provide case management for participating veterans. This would allow communities that are reaching critical junctures in the fight to end homelessness to repurpose existing transitional housing capacity for more pressing needs, such as permanent housing opportunities for veterans.

As many initiatives across VA have faced performance challenges, it is paramount that we continue to examine all VA initiatives and identify metrics that can be tracked to keep the Department accountable. This legislation includes a provision that would require VA to set national performance targets for entities that receive per diem funding for transitional housing and examine them to determine whether the grantee's performance merits continued funding. Further, this bill also contains a provision that would prompt VA to utilize the data it collects to better target interventions offered by its assertive community teams engaging homeless veterans on the street. Requiring a more targeted effort focused on homeless veterans who are health care ''super-utilizers'' will reduce unnecessary utilization of health care and, subsequently the costs for care.

Research has indicated that housing can be an effective health care intervention when paired with appropriate services and resources. At its very simplest, homelessness among veterans is preventable when there is coordination among the many services and resources available to lift a veteran up. We cannot sit by idly and allow another veteran to slip through the cracks. We must reach out and let them know when, where, and how to get the help that they need and that they have earned.

This is not a full recitation of all the provisions within this legislation. However, I hope that I have provided an appropriate overview of the major benefits this legislation would provide.

SAFER OFFICERS AND SAFER CITIZENS ACT OF 2015

Mr. BOOKER. Mr. President, I join Senators TIM SCOTT and LINDSEY GRAHAM in introducing the Safer Officers and Safer Citizens Act of 2015. This critical legislation moves our Nation a step forward in rebuilding the trust gap between law enforcement and communities by creating a Federal grant program to supply local, State, and tribal law enforcement with body-worn cameras. I thank Senator SCOTT for his work on this bill and his leadership on such a critical issue.

Trust between law enforcement and communities is critical to the foundation of our democracy. It reinforces the legitimacy of the State to the people that the State serves. It assures the public that the people sworn to protect them will do so honorably or be held accountable when they don't. It builds transparency and promotes open government by shining a spotlight on police-citizen interaction so that no misconduct occurs in the dark. It ensures police officers that the community will see their side and not cast unmerited aspersions.

But recent police-citizen encounters in our Nation have created a trust deficit between law enforcement and the communities that they serve. Over the past year, troubling use of force incidents have occurred between police officers and citizens in places like Ferguson, MO, Baltimore, MD, and North Charleston, SC. These events spurred a national dialogue about the state of policing in America, and created an urgency for body-worn cameras.

When I served as mayor of New Jersey's largest city, I saw firsthand the difficulties law enforcement faced in keeping our communities safe. The overwhelming majority of police officers in the United States are decent and hardworking Americans who have dedicated their lives to a greater calling. But let us not mistake ourselves—we have a problem in our country. Over the past few years, trust has eroded between law enforcement and the communities they serve. The unfortunate actions of a few have cast a long shadow over the good work of many.

I am also concerned that systemic issues have contributed to eroding the trust between communities and police. It comes from decades of a failed War on Drugs. Minority communities are routinely subject to stop and frisk policies. People are stopped for ''suspicious'' activities like acting too nervous, acting too calm, dressing casually, or wearing expensive clothes or jewelry. The fact is that five times as many Whites report using drugs as African Americans, yet African Americans are sent to prison for drug crimes ten times that of whites. Of course a lack of trust will exist when our criminal justice system as a whole disproportionately targets minorities.

It is time we start rebuilding that trust. This bill is about transparency. The Safer Officer and Safer Citizens Act of 2015 would require that the Department of Justice give priority to States, localities, and tribal areas that have developed comprehensive body-worn camera policies that address such issues as privacy, data retention, and victim protection. It would also give priority to jurisdictions that consult victim and juvenile advocacy groups, labor organizations, civic leadership, law enforcement professionals, and the defense bar. The bill requires States, localities, and tribal units to collect data on the effectiveness of body cameras.

Body-worn cameras will protect communities from police abuses of power and simultaneously protect police from false complaints. I am proud to join with Senators SCOTT and GRAHAM in introducing the Safer Officer and Safer Citizens Act of 2015, and I urge its speedy passage.

25TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. Mr. President, this week we celebrate the 25th anniversary of the passage of landmark civil rights legislation, the Americans with Disabilities Act. The ADA outlawed discrimination on the basis of physical or developmental ability and sought to grant those with disabilities the same opportunities as other Americans.

In the past quarter century, this law has changed our social fabric as well as of our physical surroundings. Every newly built building or sidewalk with basic accommodations lets more and more of our fellow citizens live fuller lives as self-sufficient members of our communities.

Before there were curb cutouts, some Rhode Islanders couldn't cross the street. Before there were wheelchair lifts on public buses, some Rhode Islanders couldn't commute to work. Before there were assisted listening devices, some Rhode Islanders couldn't follow a professor's lecture or a pastor's sermon. Before there were Braille signs, some Rhode Islanders couldn't find a doctor's office or a child's classroom without assistance. Before there were accessible voting systems, some of us couldn't even exercise our most basic rights as citizens.

My colleague in Rhode Island's congressional delegation, Congressman JIM LANGEVIN, has a special perspective on this groundbreaking law. ''As someone who has lived with the challenges of a disability both before and after the enactment of the ADA,'' he has said, ''I have experienced firsthand the profound changes of this law on our society.''

JIM was only sixteen when an accidental injury left him paralyzed. In an amazing example of optimism and courage, JIM went on to serve the people of our State in the Rhode Island House of Representatives and as our Secretary of State. Today he is the first quadriplegic to serve in the U.S. House of Representatives. On the day he was the first person ever to preside in the House in a wheelchair, I trooped over from the Senate to watch history made.

JIM LANGEVIN is living proof of the promise of the Americans with Disabilities Act and a champion of expanded opportunity for people with disabilities. He fought hard for the ADA Amendments Act of 2008. He is founder and cochairman of the Bipartisan Disabilities Caucus in Congress. And he is a living example to his colleagues that a disability need not be a limitation. Americans of every level of ability are better off for JIM'S passion and determination.

For 25 years, as the Americans with Disabilities Act removed barriers to buildings and transportation, it eliminated obstacles that once kept people from contributing to our society, growing our economy, and realizing their dreams. The equality of opportunity embodied in this law is at the very heart of our American notion of liberty. There is still work to be done, but we should cheer how far we have come, and rededicate ourselves to fulfilling the promise of the ADA. This is truly the work of forming a more perfect union.

RECOGNIZING THE KEEP THE SPIRIT OF '45 ALIVE COALITION AND BRIGADIER GENERAL JAMES B. THAYER

Mr. WYDEN. Mr. President, as our Nation commemorates the 70th anniversary of the end of World War II, I would like to recognize and honor the achievements of the Keep the Spirit of '45 Alive coalition, as well as the remarkable legacy of BG James B. Thayer, Sr. I am proud to speak today in recognition of the devotion exhibited by the Oregon Spirit of '45 organization, and by one of Oregon's finest.

Over the past 5 years, the Keep the Spirit of '45 coalition has been instrumental in convincing Congress, and various State legislatures, to designate an annual Spirit of '45 Day in August. I am incredibly proud that Oregon is our Nation's first State to legislate a permanent State Spirit of '45 Day to honor the valiant men and women who served on the battlefields and on America's home front. However, I am even more proud of Governor Brown's recent decision to designate the week of August 9–16 to be WWII 70th Anniversary Spirit of '45 Commemorative Week, a period of profound appreciation and reflection for the actions of a truly inspirational generation.

It has been wonderful to witness the hard work of Oregon's Spirit of '45 organization this year. From six performances across the State by Oregon's 234th Army Band to wreath laying ceremonies, all of the events took an extraordinary amount of planning and initiative. Oregon has truly developed a unique State plan to commemorate the end of WWII; a plan that not only involves an unprecedented concert tour, but that also includes a worldwide tribute coordinated with WWII allies. I also look forward to what is unfolding on the national level: the flyovers by WWII aircraft, the swing dances and concerts, and the performance of ''Taps'' during a wreath laying ceremony that will bring many great Nations together. Across Oregon and the United States, younger generations will truly appreciate our Nation's successful efforts to defend freedom worldwide, as well as the 70th anniversary of VJ Day—which marked the end of the conflict on August 14, 1945.

As I recognize the efforts of the Keep the Spirit of '45 Alive coalition, I must also express my gratitude for General Thayer, who serves as the coalition's ground forces spokesperson in Oregon. He has served as a guiding force behind the Spirit of '45 organization in Oregon. The recipient of numerous military awards, including the Silver and Bronze Stars, General Thayer helped save the lives of over 15,000 Hungarian Jewish refugees. But his legacy does not end there. Following his heroic liberation of the Nazi Death Camp Gunskirchen-Lager, General Thayer served in the Oregon State Defense Force, eventually ascending to the rank of commander. His willingness to serve his country after WWII, and work his way through the ranks, as well as his distinguished civilian career, speaks highly of his character.

It is our Nation's responsibility to ensure that the men and women who stand by our country are honored for their individual and collective sacrifices. Observing the Spirit of '45 Day begins the process of properly commemorating the sacrifices of our Nation's veterans and home front, at a time when democracy and human rights were threatened around the world.

It is also an opportunity for us to remember the shared sacrifice, commitment to service to community and country, and national unity of our WWII generation so that their example will continue to inspire future generations of Americans, especially the youth of our country.

TRIBUTE TO COLONEL LEON PARROTT

Mrs. CAPITO. Mr. President, today I would like to recognize the outstanding career of COL Leon Parrott, District Commander of the Huntington District, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. Since the beginning of his tenure, Colonel Parrott has dutifully served our great State and was honored earlier this month during a Change of Command ceremony in Huntington.

As District Commander, his jurisdiction encompassed an area of approximately 45,000 square miles in 5 States—West Virginia, Kentucky, Ohio, Virginia, and North Carolina. The District's staff of more than 800 employees supports their mission of operating and maintaining 35 multi-purpose reservoirs and 9 dams in addition to providing flood damage reduction, commercial navigation, recreation, and water supply protection. Colonel Parrott and his staff oversaw significant planning, design and construction efforts that imitated the replacement of outdated navigation structures, dam safety measures and other significant water resource challenges including emergency management.

Throughout his career, Colonel Parrott has held a variety of command and staff assignments including: platoon leader, company executive officer and construction officer with the 94th Engineer Battalion, 18th Engineer Brigade and 249th Engineer Battalion; battalion maintenance officer and company commander with the 37th Engineer Battalion, 20th Engineer Brigade; assistant construction and operations officer with the 416th Engineering Command; environmental project officer and district executive officer, Europe District, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers; battalion operations and executive officer with the 1st Battalion, 395th Engineer Regiment; group engineer with the 5th Special Forces Group, deputy and then chief of the Emergency Operations Center for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers; Commander of the 326th Engineer Battalion; deputy engineer for installations, Environment and Civil/Military Operations, U.S. European Command; chief of engineering at the Defense Intelligence Agency; and, most recently, as corps engineer of the XVIII Airborne Corps.

Colonel Parrott is an outstanding soldier, friend, husband, father and student. A 1988 graduate of the Citadel, he holds a bachelor of science degree in civil engineering as well as master's degree from the University of Phoenix and the U.S. Army War College. In addition, Colonel Parrott has received numerous awards for his heroism and military duty.

I have had the honor to work with him as a Member of the U.S. House of Representatives and now in the U.S. Senate. During that time, I have come to admire his dedication and selfless commitment to the mission of the Huntington Corps and its employees. I would like to wish Colonel Parrott and his wife Judy well in his next command at the North Atlantic Division of USACE in Brooklyn, NY, where he will serve as deputy division commander. I ask my colleagues to join me in thanking Colonel Parrott for his service.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

CONGRATULATING MICHAEL HERNANDEZ

• Mr. HELLER. Mr. President, today, I wish to congratulate Michael Hernandez on his retirement after serving as Reno fire chief for over 5 years. It gives me great pleasure to recognize his years of hard work and dedication to creating a safe environment throughout Reno.

Mr. Hernandez stands as a shining example of someone who has truly devoted his life to serving his local community. He earned a bachelor of science in government and a master of education from Texas A&M University. He later obtained his executive fire officer credential from the National Fire Academy. Mr. Hernandez began his fire service career over 30 years ago as a firefighter medic. Throughout his tenure, he worked in every division of fire services, including emergency operations, training, emergency medical service, emergency operations center management, and the fire prevention bureau. He advanced in his job with diligence, applying knowledge from each division to his work. Mr. Hernandez is truly a role model in the fire services community throughout Reno and across the silver State.

In March of 2010, Mr. Hernandez was named Reno fire chief. Along with the position, he gained responsibility for the department's response to fires, natural and manmade disasters, and emergency medical calls. He worked tirelessly to ensure that the Reno Fire Department maintained excellent fire services for Nevada residents, even in some of the most tumultuous economic times. As chief, Mr. Hernandez provided fellow firefighters with the training and tools necessary to keep our local community safe. Mr. Hernandez is also a member of the International Association of Fire Chiefs, the National Fire Academy Executive Fire Officer Alumni Association, the National Fire Protection Association, and the Nevada Fire Chiefs Association. I am grateful for all Mr. Hernandez has done for the City of Reno.

It is the brave men and women who serve in our local fire departments that help keep our communities safe. These heroes selflessly put their lives on the line every day. I extend my deepest gratitude to Mr. Hernandez for his courageous contributions to the people of Reno and to the silver State. His sacrifice and courage earn him a place among the outstanding men and women who have valiantly put their lives on the line to benefit others.

Mr. Hernandez has demonstrated professionalism, commitment to excellence, and dedication to the highest standards of the Reno Fire Department. I am both humbled and honored by his service and am proud to call him a fellow Nevadan. Today, I ask all of my colleagues to join me in congratulating Mr. Hernandez on his retirement, and I give my deepest appreciation for all that he has done to make Nevada a safer place. I offer him my best wishes for many successful and fulfilling years to come.●

TRIBUTE TO DR. GERALD M. CROSS

● Mr. ISAKSON. Mr. President, today I recognize Dr. Gerald M. Cross, a dedicated public servant who will be retiring from the Department of Veterans Affairs at the end of August.

Before joining the VA, Dr. Cross served in the U.S. Army for nearly 30 years. While in the Army, Dr. Cross was honored with several awards, including five Legion of Merit medals, the Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences, USUHS, Commendable Services Medal and the Order of Military Medical Merit. His final Army assignment was as the U.S. Army Forces Command, FORSCOM, Surgeon at Fort McPherson, assembling medical support for overseas operations.

Inspired by his experience working with servicemembers and their families, Dr. Cross began an 11-year career at the VA after retiring from the Army. His work as Principal Deputy Under Secretary for Health and Acting Under Secretary for Health earned him the Exceptional Service Award in 2010, awarded by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs. Among his many accomplishments, Dr. Cross's work at the VA includes increasing the number of Vet Centers throughout the country, and adding over 1,000 physicians and over 3,000 nurses to the VA staff nationwide, and leading the VA Central Office Task Force that implemented the Suicide Prevention Hotline. His legacy at the VA will live on, helping veterans for years to come.

Dr. Cross is a truly inspirational public servant. I thank him for his many years of serving his country serving those who have served, and I wish him the best in his retirement.●

TRIBUTE TO JOSEPH A. VIOLANTE

● Mr. ISAKSON. Mr. President, I wish to recognize Joseph A. Violante, national legislative director for the Disabled American Veterans, DAV, who will be retiring at the end of this week after over 20 years of service to DAV.

Joe's career of service started long before his tenure at DAV. As a U.S. Marine, he served in combat in Vietnam. Following his honorable discharge from the Marine Corps, Joe began practicing law in California, and in 1990, Joe joined the DAV Washington staff in its appellate work before the VA Board of Veterans Appeals, lending his legal expertise to serve his fellow veterans. Joe became DAV's national legislative director in 1996.

It is an incredible service to defend the United States in combat. Joe went above and beyond that. He came home and started fighting for others who served, helping countless veterans through his work at DAV. Over the past 2 decades, he has played a role in crafting major veterans legislation, and his work has affected policies at the VA, the Department of Labor, the Department of Defense, and other Federal agencies. Joe has helped spur internal VA reforms, establish increases in VA's annual appropriations, expand primary care for veterans, expand the National Cemetery system and establish caregiver benefits for wounded veterans. These accomplishments, just few of many, will continue to help veterans for years to come.

Joe served as national legislative director for three Presidential administrations and testified at my very first hearing as chairman of the Senate Committee on Veterans' Affairs. It was an honor to work with him, and I know I am not alone when I say I am sad to see him go. His retirement is well-deserved, and I wish Joe and his wife Debbie all the best.●

TRIBUTE TO RICHARD DEAN ROGERS

● Mr. MORAN. Mr. President, as a representative of Kansas in the U.S. Senate, it is my honor to celebrate the public service of Richard Dean Rogers, a Kansan who has dedicated his life to serving his community, State, and country. Richard's professional achievements are as plentiful and diverse as they are impressive. Born in Oberlin, KS in 1921, Richard Rogers went on to serve in the U.S. Army Air Corps during World War II and then moved to public life as a county attorney for Riley County, city commissioner and mayor of Manhattan, KS, State representative, State senator in the Kansas Legislature. In 1975, President Gerald Ford appointed Rogers to serve as a U.S. district judge for the District of Kansas, beginning a lasting tenure that will soon reach 40 years.

Judicial colleagues describe Judge Rogers as a role model whose long public life is marked by an amiable spirit, an unpretentious fortitude, and an unmitigated desire for the advancement and protection of all segments of society. Americans thank Judge Rogers for his service and contributions to the State of Kansas and the United States of America and wish Judge Rogers and his wife Cindy well as he moves to inactive senior status on August 7, 2015 and begins a new chapter of his most admirable life.●

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 and withdrawals which were referred to the appropriate committees.

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

MESSAGE FROM THE HOUSE

At 11:43 a.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. 1300. An act to direct the Secretary of Homeland Security to make anthrax vaccines and antimicrobials available to emergency response providers, and for other purposes.

H.R. 1994. An act to amend title 38, United States Code, to provide for the removal or demotion of employees of the Department of Veterans Affairs based on performance or misconduct, and for other purposes.

H.R. 3236. An act to provide an extension of Federal-aid highway, highway safety, motor carrier safety, transit, and other programs funded out of the Highway Trust Fund, to provide resource flexibility to the Department of Veterans Affairs for health care services, and for other purposes.

ENROLLED BILL SIGNED

At 4:29 p.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Mr. Novotny, one of its reading clerks, announced that the Speaker has signed the following enrolled bill:

H.R. 3236. An act to provide an extension of Federal-aid highway, highway safety, motor carrier safety, transit, and other programs funded out of the Highway Trust Fund, to provide resource flexibility to the Department of Veterans Affairs for health care services, and for other purposes.

The enrolled bill was subsequently signed by the President pro tempore (Mr. HATCH).

MEASURES REFERRED

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

H.R. 1300. An act to direct the Secretary of Homeland Security to make anthrax vaccines and antimicrobials available to emergency response providers, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

H.R. 1994. An act to amend title 38, United States Code, to provide for the removal or demotion of employees of the Department of Veterans Affairs based on performance or misconduct, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

EXECUTIVE AND OTHER COMMUNICATIONS

The following communication was laid before the Senate, together with accompanying papers, reports, and documents, and was referred as indicated:

EC–2463. A communication from the Assistant Secretary, Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting, pursuant to law, the text of the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA); the Secretary of State's verification assessment report; and additonal documents, received in the Senate on July 19, 2015; pursuant to Sec. 135(h) of the Atomic Energy Act of 1954 (42 U.S.C. 2011, et seq.) to the Committees on Finance; Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs; Select Committee on Intelligence; and Foreign Relations.

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

The following reports of committees were submitted:

By Mr. BOOZMAN, from the Committee on Appropriations, without amendment:

S. 1910. An original bill making appropriations for financial services and general government for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2016, and for other purposes (Rept. No. 114–97).

By Mr. HATCH, from the Committee on Finance, with an amendment in the nature of a substitute:

S. 313. A bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to add physical therapists to the list of providers allowed to utilize locum tenens arrangements under Medicare (Rept. No. 114–98).

By Mr. HATCH, from the Committee on Finance, without amendment:

S. 349. A bill to amend title XIX of the Social Security Act to empower individuals with disabilities to establish their own supplemental needs trusts (Rept. No. 114–99).

By Mr. HATCH, from the Committee on Finance, with an amendment in the nature of a substitute:

S. 466. A bill to amend title XI of the Social Security Act to improve the quality, health outcomes, and value of maternity care under the Medicaid and CHIP programs by developing maternity care quality measures and supporting maternity care quality collaboratives (Rept. No . 114–100).

S. 599. A bill to extend and expand the Medicaid emergency psychiatric demonstration project (Rept. No. 114–101).

By Mr. HATCH, from the Committee on Finance, with an amendment in the nature of a substitute and an amendment to the title:

S. 607. A bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to provide for a five-year extension of the rural community hospital demonstration program, and for other purposes (Rept. No. 114–102).

By Mr. HATCH, from the Committee on Finance, with an amendment in the nature of a substitute:

S. 704. A bill to establish a Community-Based Institutional Special Needs Plan demonstration program to target home and community-based care to eligible Medicare beneficiaries (Rept. No. 114–103).

S. 861. A bill to amend titles XVIII and XIX of the Social Security Act to curb waste, fraud, and abuse in the Medicare and Medicaid programs (Rept. No. 114–104).

By Mr. HATCH, from the Committee on Finance, with an amendment in the nature of a substitute and an amendment to the title:

S. 1253. A bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to provide coverage of certain disposable medical technologies under the Medicare program, and for other purposes (Rept. No. 114–105).

By Mr. HATCH, from the Committee on Finance, with an amendment in the nature of a substitute:

S. 1347. A bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act with respect to the treatment of patient encounters in ambulatory surgical centers in determining meaningful EHR use, and for other purposes (Rept. No. 114–106).

By Mr. HATCH, from the Committee on Finance, without amendment:

S. 1349. A bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to require hospitals to provide certain notifications to individuals classified by such hospitals under observation status rather than admitted as inpatients of such hospitals (Rept. No. 114–107).

By Mr. HATCH, from the Committee on Finance, with an amendment in the nature of a substitute:

S. 1362. A bill to amend title XI of the Social Security Act to clarify waiver authority regarding programs of all-inclusive care for the elderly (PACE programs) (Rept. No. 114–108).

S. 1461. A bill to provide for the extension of the enforcement instruction on supervision requirements for outpatient therapeutic services in critical access and small rural hospitals through 2015 (Rept. No. 114–109).

By Mr. CORKER, from the Committee on Foreign Relations, with an amendment:

S. 1875. A bill to support enhanced accountability for United States assistance to Afghanistan, and for other purposes.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

The following bills and joint resolutions were introduced, read the first and second times by unanimous consent, and referred as indicated:

By Mr. KING:

S. 1899. A bill to permit aliens seeking asylum to be eligible for employment in the United States and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. KAINE:

S. 1900. A bill to amend the Higher Education Act of 1965 to allow the Secretary of Education to award job training Federal Pell Grants; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Ms. STABENOW (for herself, Mrs. SHAHEEN, and Mr. PETERS):

S. 1901. A bill to help small businesses access capital and create jobs by reauthorizing the successful State Small Business Credit Initiative; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

By Mr. REED:

S. 1902. A bill to provide for the treatment and extension of temporary financing of short-time compensation programs; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. BOOKER (for himself and Mr. BROWN):

S. 1903. A bill to provide for a study by the National Academy of Medicine on health disparities, to direct the Secretary of Health and Human Services to develop guidelines on reducing health disparities, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. BLUMENTHAL:

S. 1904. A bill to protect our Social Security system and improve benefits for current and future generations; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. ROBERTS (for himself and Mr. CARDIN):

S. 1905. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to make permanent the reduced recognition period for built-in gains for S corporations; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. MENENDEZ (for himself and Mr. CRAPO):

S. 1906. A bill to clarify the exclusion of orphan drug sales from the calculation of the annual fee on branded prescription pharmaceutical manufacturers and importers, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. MENENDEZ (for himself, Mr. MARKEY, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Mr. MERKLEY, Ms. MIKULSKI, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Mrs. SHAHEEN, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, Mr. REED, Mrs. BOXER, Ms. STABENOW, Mr. LEAHY, Mr. SCHUMER, Mr. NELSON, Mrs. MURRAY, Mr. FRANKEN, Mr. CARDIN, Mr. PETERS, and Mr. DURBIN):

S. 1907. A bill to reduce the Federal budget deficit by closing big oil tax loopholes, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. BROWN (for himself, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. FRANKEN, Mr. CARPER, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, and Mr. MURPHY):

S. 1908. A bill to amend the Higher Education Opportunity Act to restrict institutions of higher education from using revenues derived from Federal educational assistance funds for advertising, marketing, or recruiting purposes; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. LEE (for himself, Mr. VITTER, Mr. COTTON, Mr. ENZI, Mr. SESSIONS, and Mr. RUBIO):

S. 1909. A bill to protect communities from destructive Federal overreach by the Department of Housing and Urban Development; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

By Mr. BOOZMAN:

S. 1910. An original bill making appropriations for financial services and general government for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2016, and for other purposes; from the Committee on Appropriations; placed on the calendar.

By Ms. COLLINS (for herself and Mr. COONS):

S. 1911. A bill to implement policies to end preventable maternal, newborn, and child deaths globally; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

By Mr. TESTER (for himself, Mr. FRANKEN, Ms. HEITKAMP, and Mr. UDALL):

S. 1912. A bill to protect the rights of Indian and Native Alaskan voters; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. TOOMEY (for himself, Mr. BROWN, Mr. PORTMAN, and Mr. KAINE):

S. 1913. A bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to establish programs to prevent prescription drug abuse under the Medicare program, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. KAINE (for himself and Mr. WARNER):

S. 1914. A bill to amend the Federal Water Pollution Control Act with respect to the guidelines for specification of certain disposal sites for dredged or fill material; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

By Mr. VITTER (for himself, Mr. HATCH, Mr. GRAHAM, Mr. SESSIONS, Mr. GRASSLEY, and Mr. CORNYN):

S.J. Res. 21. A joint resolution proposing an amendment to the Constitution of the United States authorizing the Congress to prohibit the physical desecration of the flag of the United States; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

SUBMISSION OF CONCURRENT AND SENATE RESOLUTIONS

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

By Mr. GRASSLEY (for himself, Mr. WYDEN, Ms. COLLINS, Mr. TILLIS, Mr. KIRK, Mr. JOHNSON, Mr. CARPER, and Mrs. MCCASKILL):

S. Res. 236. A resolution designating July 30, 2015, as ''National Whistleblower Appreciation Day'' ; considered and agreed to.

By Mr. BOOZMAN (for himself, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. INHOFE, Mr. ISAKSON, Mr. ROUNDS, Ms. BALDWIN, Mr. PETERS, Mr. MARKEY, and Mr. HATCH):

S. Res. 237. A resolution condemning Joseph Kony and the Lord's Resistance Army for continuing to perpetrate crimes against humanity, war crimes, and mass atrocities, and supporting ongoing efforts by the United States Government, the African Union, and governments and regional organizations in central Africa to remove Joseph Kony and Lord's Resistance Army commanders from the battlefield and promote protection and recovery of affected communities; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

By Mr. CRUZ:

S. Res. 238. A resolution expressing the determination of the Senate that the 60-calendar day period for congressional review of the nuclear agreement with Iran did not begin with the transmittal of the agreement on July 19, 2015, because that transmittal did not include all materials required to be transmitted pursuant to the Iran Nuclear Agreement Review Act of 2015; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

By Mr. KAINE (for himself and Mr. WARNER):

S. Res. 239. A resolution commemorating the 75th anniversary of the Virginia Institute of Marine Science of the College of William & Mary; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

ADDITIONAL COSPONSORS

S. 183

At the request of Mr. BARRASSO, the name of the Senator from South Dakota (Mr. ROUNDS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 183, a bill to repeal the annual fee on health insurance providers enacted by the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act.

S. 210

At the request of Mr. CASEY, the name of the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. MENENDEZ) was added as a cosponsor of S. 210, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to allow a credit against income tax for amounts paid by a spouse of a member of the Armed Forces for a new State license or certification required by reason of a permanent change in the duty station of such member to another State.

S. 303

At the request of Mr. ROBERTS, the name of the Senator from North Carolina (Mr. BURR) was added as a cosponsor of S. 303, a bill to amend title 5, United States Code, to provide that individuals having seriously delinquent tax debts shall be ineligible for Federal employment.

S. 471

At the request of Mrs. MURRAY, the name of the Senator from Colorado (Mr. BENNET) was added as a cosponsor of S. 471, a bill to improve the provision of health care for women veterans by the Department of Veterans Affairs, and for other purposes.

At the request of Mr. HELLER, the names of the Senator from Hawaii (Mr. SCHATZ) and the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. MENENDEZ) were added as cosponsors of S. 471, supra.

S. 497

At the request of Mrs. MURRAY, the name of the Senator from Oregon (Mr. WYDEN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 497, a bill to allow Americans to earn paid sick time so that they can address their own health needs and the health needs of their families.

S. 578

At the request of Ms. COLLINS, the name of the Senator from New Hampshire (Ms. AYOTTE) was added as a cosponsor of S. 578, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to ensure more timely access to home health services for Medicare beneficiaries under the Medicare program.

S. 681

At the request of Mrs. GILLIBRAND, the name of the Senator from California (Mrs. FEINSTEIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 681, a bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to clarify presumptions relating to the exposure of certain veterans who served in the vicinity of the Republic of Vietnam, and for other purposes.

S. 713

At the request of Mrs. BOXER, the name of the Senator from Michigan (Mr. PETERS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 713, a bill to prevent international violence against women, and for other purposes.

S. 743

At the request of Mr. BOOZMAN, the names of the Senator from South Dakota (Mr. ROUNDS), the Senator from Hawaii (Mr. SCHATZ) and the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. MENENDEZ) 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. 857

At the request of Ms. STABENOW, the name of the Senator from North Dakota (Ms. HEITKAMP) was added as a cosponsor of S. 857, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to provide for coverage under the Medicare program of an initial comprehensive care plan for Medicare beneficiaries newly diagnosed with Alzheimer's disease and related dementias, and for other purposes.

S. 862

At the request of Ms. MIKULSKI, the name of the Senator from Maryland (Mr. CARDIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 862, a bill 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.

S. 901

At the request of Mr. MORAN, the name of the Senator from Missouri (Mr. BLUNT) 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. 979

At the request of Mr. NELSON, the names of the Senator from Hawaii (Mr. SCHATZ) and the Senator from Delaware (Mr. COONS) were added as cosponsors of S. 979, a bill to amend title 10,

United States Code, to repeal the requirement for reduction of survivor annuities under the Survivor Benefit Plan by veterans' dependency and indemnity compensation, and for other purposes.

S. 1020

At the request of Mr. VITTER, the name of the Senator from Tennessee (Mr. ALEXANDER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1020, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to ensure the continued access of Medicare beneficiaries to diagnostic imaging services, and for other purposes.

S. 1082

At the request of Mr. RUBIO, the name of the Senator from North Carolina (Mr. BURR) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1082, a bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to provide for the removal or demotion of employees of the Department of Veterans Affairs based on performance or misconduct, and for other purposes.

S. 1085

At the request of Mrs. MURRAY, the names of the Senator from Hawaii (Mr. SCHATZ) and the Senator from Colorado (Mr. BENNET) were added as cosponsors of S. 1085, a bill to expand eligibility for the program of comprehensive assistance for family caregivers of the Department of Veterans Affairs, to expand benefits available to participants under such program, to enhance special compensation for members of the uniformed services who require assistance in everyday life, and for other purposes.

S. 1099

At the request of Mr. SCOTT, the names of the Senator from Arizona (Mr. FLAKE), the Senator from Arizona (Mr. MCCAIN), the Senator from Oklahoma (Mr. LANKFORD), the Senator from Maine (Ms. COLLINS), the Senator from New Hampshire (Ms. AYOTTE), the Senator from Nebraska (Mrs. FISCHER), the Senator from North Dakota (Mr. HOEVEN), the Senator from Illinois (Mr. KIRK) and the Senator from Idaho (Mr. CRAPO) were added as cosponsors of S. 1099, a bill to amend the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act to provide States with flexibility in determining the size of employers in the small group market.

S. 1383

At the request of Mr. PERDUE, the name of the Senator from Kansas (Mr. ROBERTS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1383, a bill to amend the Consumer Financial Protection Act of 2010 to subject the Bureau of Consumer Financial Protection to the regular appropriations process, and for other purposes.

S. 1466

At the request of Mr. KIRK, the name of the Senator from Kansas (Mr. ROBERTS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1466, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to modify payment under the Medicare program for outpatient department procedures that utilize drugs as supplies, and for other purposes.

S. 1498

At the request of Mr. WYDEN, the name of the Senator from Michigan (Mr. PETERS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1498, a bill to amend title 10, United States Code, to require that military working dogs be retired in the United States, and for other purposes.

S. 1509

At the request of Mr. CARPER, the name of the Senator from West Virginia (Mrs. CAPITO) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1509, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to provide for the coordination of programs to prevent and treat obesity, and for other purposes.

S. 1562

At the request of Mr. WYDEN, the names of the Senator from Illinois (Mr. KIRK), the Senator from West Virginia (Mrs. CAPITO) and the Senator from Louisiana (Mr. VITTER) were added as cosponsors of S. 1562, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to reform taxation of alcoholic beverages.

S. 1578

At the request of Mr. GRASSLEY, the name of the Senator from Kansas (Mr. ROBERTS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1578, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to enhance taxpayer rights, and for other purposes.

S. 1579

At the request of Mr. SCHATZ, the name of the Senator from North Dakota (Ms. HEITKAMP) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1579, a bill to enhance and integrate Native American tourism, empower Native American communities, increase coordination and collaboration between Federal tourism assets, and expand heritage and cultural tourism opportunities in the United States.

S. 1617

At the request of Mr. RUBIO, the name of the Senator from Oklahoma (Mr. LANKFORD) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1617, a bill to prevent Hizballah and associated entities from gaining access to international financial and other institutions, and for other purposes.

S. 1707

At the request of Mr. BOOZMAN, the name of the Senator from Delaware (Mr. COONS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1707, a bill to designate the Federal building located at 617 Walnut Street in Helena, Arkansas, as the ''Jacob Trieber Federal Building, United States Post Office, and United States Court House'' .

S. 1731

At the request of Mrs. MURRAY, the name of the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. BLUMENTHAL) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1731, a bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to waive the minimum period of continuous active duty in the Armed Forces for receipt of certain benefits for homeless veterans, to authorize the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to furnish such benefits to homeless veterans with discharges or releases from service in the Armed Forces with other than dishonorable conditions, and for other purposes.

S. 1760

At the request of Mrs. GILLIBRAND, the name of the Senator from Massachusetts (Mr. MARKEY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1760, a bill to prevent gun trafficking.

S. 1775

At the request of Mr. MURPHY, the name of the Senator from Maryland (Ms. MIKULSKI) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1775, a bill to direct the Secretary of Homeland Security to accept additional documentation when considering the application for veterans status of an individual who performed service as a coastwise merchant seaman during World War II, and for other purposes.

S. 1789

At the request of Mr. RUBIO, the names of the Senator from Colorado (Mr. GARDNER), the Senator from Texas (Mr. CRUZ), the Senator from Maryland (Ms. MIKULSKI) and the Senator from Arizona (Mr. MCCAIN) were added as cosponsors of S. 1789, a bill to improve defense cooperation between the United States and the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan.

S. 1808

At the request of Ms. HEITKAMP, the name of the Senator from Ohio (Mr. PORTMAN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1808, a bill to require the Secretary of Homeland Security to conduct a Northern Border threat analysis, and for other purposes.

S. 1856

At the request of Mr. BLUMENTHAL, the name of the Senator from Massachusetts (Mr. MARKEY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1856, a bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to provide for suspension and removal of employees of the Department of Veterans Affairs for performance or misconduct that is a threat to public health or safety and to improve accountability of employees of the Department, and for other purposes.

S. 1872

At the request of Mr. BOOKER, the name of the Senator from Ohio (Mr. BROWN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1872, a bill to amend the Higher Education Act of 1965 to require the Secretary to provide for the use of data from the second preceding tax year to carry out the simplification of applications for the estimation and determination of financial aid eligibility, to increase the income threshold to qualify for zero expected family contribution, and for other purposes.

S. 1876

At the request of Mr. BLUMENTHAL, the names of the Senator from West Virginia (Mr. MANCHIN) and the Senator from Mississippi (Mr. COCHRAN) were added as cosponsors of S. 1876, a bill to rename the Office to Monitor and Combat Trafficking of the Department of State the Bureau to Monitor

and Combat Trafficking in Persons and to provide for an Assistant Secretary to head such Bureau, and for other purposes.

S. 1881

At the request of Mrs. ERNST, the names of the Senator from Kansas (Mr. MORAN), the Senator from Tennessee (Mr. CORKER), the Senator from South Carolina (Mr. GRAHAM), the Senator from Alabama (Mr. SHELBY), the Senator from Utah (Mr. HATCH), the Senator from Pennsylvania (Mr. TOOMEY), the Senator from North Dakota (Mr. HOEVEN), the Senator from Alabama (Mr. SESSIONS), the Senator from Mississippi (Mr. COCHRAN), the Senator from Alaska (Mr. SULLIVAN), the Senator from Colorado (Mr. GARDNER) and the Senator from Idaho (Mr. RISCH) were added as cosponsors of S. 1881, a bill to prohibit Federal funding of Planned Parenthood Federation of America.

S. 1883

At the request of Mr. REED, the name of the Senator from Indiana (Mr. DONNELLY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1883, a bill to maximize discovery, and accelerate development and availability, of promising childhood cancer treatments, and for other purposes.

S. 1893

At the request of Mr. ALEXANDER, the name of the Senator from Maine (Ms. COLLINS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1893, a bill to reauthorize and improve programs related to mental health and substance use disorders.

S. CON. RES. 4

At the request of Mr. BARRASSO, the name of the Senator from North Dakota (Mr. HOEVEN) was added as a cosponsor of S. Con. Res. 4, a concurrent resolution supporting the Local Radio Freedom Act.

S. RES. 228

At the request of Ms. AYOTTE, the name of the Senator from Hawaii (Ms. HIRONO) was added as a cosponsor of S. Res. 228, a resolution designating September 2015 as ''National Ovarian Cancer Awareness Month'' .

S. RES. 232

At the request of Mr. BOOZMAN, the name of the Senator from Vermont (Mr. LEAHY) was added as a cosponsor of S. Res. 232, a resolution expressing the sense of the Senate that August 30, 2015, be observed as ''1890 Land-Grant Institutions Quasquicentennial Recognition Day'' .

AMENDMENT NO. 2289

At the request of Mr. BOOKER, the name of the Senator from Michigan (Ms. STABENOW) was added as a cosponsor of amendment No. 2289 intended to be proposed to H.R. 22, an act to authorize funds for Federal-aid highways, highway safety programs, and transit programs, and for other purposes.

AMENDMENT NO. 2456

At the request of Mr. MORAN, the name of the Senator from Nebraska (Mrs. FISCHER) was added as a cosponsor of amendment No. 2456 intended to be proposed to H.R. 22, an act to authorize funds for Federal-aid highways, highway safety programs, and transit programs, and for other purposes.

STATEMENTS ON INTRODUCED BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

By Mr. KAINE:

S. 1900. A bill to amend the Higher Education Act of 1965 to allow the Secretary of Education to award job training Federal Pell Grants; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

Mr. KAINE. Mr. President, by 2020, it is estimated that 65 percent of all jobs will require at least some form of postsecondary education and training. The National Skills Coalition estimates that nearly half of all job openings between now and 2022 will be middle skill jobs that require education beyond high school, but not a 4-year degree. While the number of students pursuing postsecondary education is growing, the supply of skilled workers still falls short of industry demand. According to one estimate, the U.S. faces a shortfall of as many as 4.7 million new workers with postsecondary certificates by the year 2018 and according to the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, 3.7 million U.S. jobs are currently vacant because of a shortage of qualified workers.

Our current Federal higher education policy could be improved to help solve this problem. Pell Grants—the primary form of Federal tuition assistance for low-income and working students—can only be awarded towards programs that are over 600 clock hours or at least 15 weeks in length. These grants cannot be used to support many of the short-term occupational training programs at community and technical colleges and other institutions that provide skills and credentials employers need and recognize. When it comes to higher education, Federal policies need to support the demands of the changing labor market and support alternate career pathways that align with industry demand. According the Georgetown University Center on Education and the Workforce, shorter-term educational investments pay off—the average postsecondary certificate holder has 20 percent higher lifetime earnings than individuals with only a high school diploma.

I am pleased to introduce the Jumpstart Our Businesses by Supporting Students or JOBS Act. The JOBS Act would amend the Higher Education Act by expanding Pell Grant eligibility to students enrolled in short-term skills and job training programs that lead to industry-based credentials and ultimately employment in in-demand industry sectors or careers. Since job training programs are shorter and less costly, Pell Grant awards would be half of the current discretionary Pell amount. The legislation defines eligible job training programs as those providing career and technical education instruction at an institution that provides at least 150 clock hours of instruction time over a period of at least 8 weeks and that provides training that meets the needs of the local or regional workforce. These programs must also provide students with licenses, certifications, or credentials that meet the hiring requirements of multiple employers in the field for which the job training is offered.

The JOBS Act also ensures that students who receive Pell Grants are earning high-quality postsecondary credentials by requiring that the credentials meet the standards under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, are recognized by employers, industry, or sector partnerships, and align with the skill needs of industries in the States or local economies.

We need to make sure that Federal student aid supports the demand of a 21st century economy. As Congress works to reauthorize the Higher Education Act, I hope that my colleagues ensure that Pell Grants are accessible for individuals participating in high-quality, short-term occupational training programs that are leading to industry-recognized credentials and certificates.

By Mr. REED:

S. 1902. A bill to provide for the treatment and extension of temporary financing of short-time compensation programs; to the Committee on Finance.

Mr. REED. Mr. President, today I am introducing the Layoff Prevention Extension Act. This bill would extend the financing and grant provisions for the successful work sharing legislation I authored and worked to include in the Middle Class Tax Relief and Job Creation Act of 2012.

The concept of work sharing is simple. It helps people who are currently employed, but in danger of being laid off, to keep their jobs. By giving struggling companies the flexibility to reduce hours instead of their workforce, work sharing programs prevent layoffs and help employers save money on rehiring costs. Employees who participate in work sharing keep their jobs and receive a portion of unemployment insurance benefits to make up for lost wages.

Since becoming law, work sharing has helped save over 110,000 jobs, including 1,200 jobs in my State of Rhode Island, according to estimates from the Department of Labor. And it has saved States $225 million by reimbursing them for work sharing benefits they paid out to workers—benefits that helped keep people on the job.

Before my bill became law in 2012, only a handful of States had work sharing programs. Now, these programs enjoy broad bipartisan support and have been established in 29 States and the District of Columbia. However, the $100 million in implementation grants expired at the end of 2014, and the 100 percent Federal financing of these work sharing benefits will expire next month.

The legislation I am introducing today would extend these deadlines by 2 years so that states with existing work sharing programs, and those that are looking to enact a program, can qualify for Federal support.

I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting passage of this bill to keep American workers on the job, save taxpayers money, and provide employers with a practical, positive, and cost-effective alternative to layoffs.

By Ms. COLLINS (for herself and Mr. COONS):

S. 1911. A bill to implement policies to end preventable maternal, newborn, and child deaths globally; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

Ms. COLLINS. Mr. President, today I am very pleased to be joined by my colleague from Delaware, Senator CHRIS COONS, in introducing the Reach Every Mother and Child Act of 2015. The purpose of our bill is to improve the health and well-being of women and children in developing countries. Every day approximately 800 women will die from preventable causes related to pregnancy and childbirth.

In addition, more than 17,000 children under the age of 5 will die each day of treatable conditions such as prematurity, pneumonia, and diarrhea, with malnutrition being the underlying cause in nearly half those deaths. While progress has been made in improving the health of mothers and their children, it is a tragedy that so many preventable deaths still occur, especially given that there are many effective and established lifesaving maternal and child health protocols and policies.

These lifesaving interventions include clean birthing practices, vaccines, nutritional supplements, hand washing with soap, and other basic needs that remain elusive for far too many women and children in developing countries.

Our legislation would strengthen the American government's commitment to ending preventable deaths of mothers, newborns, and young children in the developing world. There are simple, proven, cost-effective interventions which we know will work if we can reach the mothers and children who need them to survive. Our bill will also allow us to leverage greater investments from other parties, especially the private sector, partner governments, private foundations, and multinational organizations.

According to USAID, a concentrated effort could end preventable maternal and child deaths worldwide by the year 2035. However, U.S. leadership and support of the international community are critical to meeting this goal.

The U.S. Agency for International Development—USAID—has set an ambitious interim goal of preventing the deaths of 15 million children and 600,000 women in the next 5 years to ensure steadfast progress toward the ultimate goal. Due in part to American leadership and generosity, many lives have already been saved. Since 1990 the annual number of deaths of children under the age of 5 has been cut in half. Nevertheless, far too many mothers, newborns, and young children under the age of 5 still succumb to disease and malnutrition that could easily be prevented. The deployment of interventions that have proved to be successful must be accelerated.

Our bill would require the administration to develop a 10-year strategy to achieve the goal of preventing these deaths by the year 2035. Our bill would charge USAID with meeting that goal.

One provision of our bill would establish a maternal and child survival coordinator at USAID who would focus on implementing the 10-year strategy and verifying that the most effective interventions are scaled up in target countries. Our bill would also establish an interagency working group to assist the coordinator in promoting greater collaboration among all the Federal agencies involved in this effort.

To promote transparency and greater accountability, our bill requires that detailed reporting be published on the Foreign Assistance Dashboard, where it can be assessed by the public, Congress, and nongovernmental organizations to track the implementation of the strategy and the progress being made.

Finally, the United States cannot and should not take on the goal of eradicating these preventable deaths alone. Our bill recognizes this reality and requires the administration to develop a financing framework which would allow the use of U.S. Government dollars to leverage additional commitments from the private sector, nonprofit organizations, partner countries, and multinational organizations. As other investments grow, the need for U.S. Government assistance would decline. At a time when we must make very difficult decisions regarding Federal priorities in our budget, this is an important and responsible provision that ultimately will reduce the reliance on U.S. Government contributions.

Improving the health and well-being of mothers and children around the world has far-reaching social and economic benefits as well. An independent group of economists and global health experts from around the world, known as the Lancet Commission, indicated that the return on investment in global health initiatives is very high. In fact, for every $1 invested, there is a return of $9 to $20 in growing the gross domestic product of the country receiving the investment.

Other global health initiatives, such as the successful President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief, or PEPFAR, which was started by President George Bush, demonstrate that results-risen interventions can turn the tide for global health challenges such as maternal and child survival. Taking lessons learned from past initiatives, our bill would provide the focus and the tools necessary to accelerate progress toward ending preventable maternal and child deaths.

I urge my colleagues to take a close look at the bill we are introducing today and to join Senator COONS and me in supporting this bill to save the lives of mothers and children around the world.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Delaware.

Mr. COONS. Mr. President, I join my colleague from Maine on the floor this afternoon to talk about what we can do to save the lives of newborn children and their mothers in some of the poorest communities around our globe.

I wish to start by thanking Senator COLLINS for her impressive leadership and for the energy she has brought to this work. I share her belief that our bipartisan bill, which is called the Reach Every Mother and Child Act or just the REACH Act, will go a long way toward eliminating preventable maternal and child deaths and will do so in an impressively targeted and cost-effective way.

The preventable death of newborns, their mothers, and children under 5 is a genuine tragedy that remains a widespread reality in far too many places around our world today. As Senator COLLINS said, 17,000 children a day lose their lives to preventable diseases such as pneumonia, diarrhea, and malaria—illnesses we know how to not just treat but prevent—and worldwide, 3 million children will lose their lives to malnutrition this year. Nearly 3 million newborns die every year, 1 million of whom don't live to their second day, and 300,000 women don't get to experience the joy of raising their child as either pregnancy or birth takes their lives. I doubt it would come to any surprise to those in this Chamber today that it is the families who are living in the poorest communities in the developing world who are most at risk.

So what brings Senator COLLINS and me to the floor today is the fact that there are things we can do to prevent these deaths from ever happening and to do so in a cost-effective and transparent way. Since I first entered office, I have been confronted with challenges both at home and around the world that demand our action but where real solutions remain out of the reach of this Senate or our government. This is not one of those issues.

Some doubt that we can make a lasting and meaningful impact on the poorest of the poor in the developing world, but the fact is, we have made real progress. It was time spent in east Africa 30 years ago that first really changed my life and engaged me passionately in these issues. What is striking is how much progress we have actually made. Over the past 25 years, we have cut in half the number of children and mothers who have died, the number of children under 5, and mothers who die in illnesses associated with

childbirth. Mortality rates are now declining faster than ever. And while we do face real and seemingly intractable challenges across the international landscape, our progress on this issue remains a telling sign of what is possible when we pull together and apply thoughtful interventions.

Just last year the administration took an important next step, laying out a new strategy with ambitious goals—saving the lives of 15 million children and 600,000 women by the end of this decade. Think about the scope and reach of the change that would mean for families and for communities in some of the poorest places on this planet. These goals are based in the lessons we have learned about what really works. Providing neonatal care to expectant mothers works. Vaccinating young children works. Providing access to clean water so that children don't die from diarrhea works. Providing HIV-positive mothers with antiretroviral drugs works.

I am hopeful about our ability to find cost-effective solutions because many of these remedies are simple things which are already at work here in our own country and which we as Americans take for granted. In the United States, what would be a fairly routine complication of childbirth would, in many communities in the developing world, be a life-or-death situation.

For example, let me talk for a moment about something called a resuscitation bag—a simple piece of plastic that costs just a few dollars. Most American parents have either seen one used or ready to be used in the delivery room. We know that in an American hospital—and it should be in the hospital of any developed country—when a nurse needs a resuscitation bag for a newborn who is struggling to breathe, it is right there and waiting. But in the poorest communities, where newborns are losing their lives at astounding rates, a significant factor is the simple absence of these bags to save the lives of newborns. When a nurse—if there is even a nurse—reaches for one, there is none to be found. Yet these simple devices that cost just a few dollars could save literally hundreds or thousands of lives.

So what our bipartisan REACH Act does is recognize that many of the steps we can take are very much within our grasp, and our bill would take these solutions a step further by reforming them and scaling them up so they have a larger, longer term impact.

Our bill would increase coordination to better implement U.S. strategies with the goal of ending preventable maternal, newborn, and child deaths within 20 years. It would build new partnerships with the private sector, improve coordination across agencies, and insist on real targets and transparent and measurable progress. It would also, as Senator COLLINS referenced, allow U.S. Government dollars to be leveraged. And I love it when we leverage our resources with the private sector, with multilateral donors, and with our partner countries in the developing world. Critically, it would focus on the most effective interventions in the poorest and most vulnerable communities and put in place targets that can be effectively tracked.

These communities in the poorest parts of our planet face many challenges, but when it comes to saving the lives of young mothers and children, we know exactly what it will take to make a meaningful difference. Today, together, we are offering a strong path forward.

I close by urging my colleagues to follow the real leadership of Senator COLLINS and to join both of us in ensuring that American ingenuity and leadership can continue to save lives and to offer communities around our world a brighter future.

Thank you.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Maine.

Ms. COLLINS. Mr. President, I wish to thank the Senator from Delaware for his very eloquent statement. I know how passionate he is about helping people, particularly in Africa. He has extraordinary expertise about that region of the world, about that continent, and has been there many times. I look forward to working with him to make this bill a law. It is bipartisan, and it should bring people together across party lines. I hope we will be able to get it signed into law this year.

By Mr. KAINE (for himself and Mr. WARNER):

S. 1914. A bill to amend the Federal Water Pollution Control Act with respect to the guidelines for specification of certain disposal sites for dredged or fill material; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

Mr. KAINE. Mr. President, today, I am pleased to join my bipartisan Virginia colleagues Senator MARK WARNER and Congressmen ROBERT HURT and MORGAN GRIFFITH in introducing the Commonsense Permitting for Job Creation Act of 2015, a bipartisan, bicameral piece of legislation to address an aspect of water permitting law that has touched several economic development projects in Virginia.

Southern Virginia has seen great economic challenges in recent years due to the overall economic downturn compounded by fundamental changes to the region's traditional industries such as manufacturing, textiles, and tobacco. Throughout this region there are several business park sites that could be developed to accommodate one or multiple manufacturing operations. County economic development authorities have worked to secure all necessary permits and authorities to develop these sites but have encountered an issue pertaining to Clean Water Act Section 404 permits.

Several of these counties have had difficulty securing approval from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers for 404 permits because the Corps is reluctant to issue a permit without a company that has committed to the site and prepared detailed development blueprints. In speaking to potential companies, county officials have heard that it is difficult for a company to commit to a site without assurance that all government permits are secured. This has created a ''chicken and egg'' conundrum—a company will not relocate to the site without an approved permit, but a permit cannot be approved without a company willing to relocate.

This legislation simply addresses that regulatory ambiguity by specifying that the lack of a committed end-user shall not be the sole reason to deny a Corps permit that meets all other legal requirements under Section 404.

I believe Federal, State, and local stakeholders can work in good faith to follow all laws protecting our water resources, while taking reasonable steps to make it easier to pursue economic development opportunities in economically distressed communities. My colleagues and I introduced a version of this bill in the previous Congress, and we were pleased to help speed the process that led to the approval of a permit for the Commonwealth Crossing Business Center in Henry County, VA, last year.

I am optimistic that this bill will help expedite approval of important economic development projects in a manner that is acceptable to all stakeholders. We are proud to be able to work across the aisle and with state and local officials on this commonsense, bipartisan solution.

SUBMITTED RESOLUTIONS

SENATE RESOLUTION 236—DESIGNATING JULY 30, 2015, AS ''NATIONAL WHISTLEBLOWER APPRECIATION DAY''

Mr. GRASSLEY (for himself, Mr. WYDEN, Ms. COLLINS, Mr. TILLIS, Mr. KIRK, Mr. JOHNSON, Mr. CARPER, and Mrs. MCCASKILL) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 236

Whereas, in 1777, before the passage of the Bill of Rights, 10 sailors and marines blew the whistle on fraud and misconduct harmful to the United States;

Whereas the Founding Fathers unanimously supported the whistleblowers in words and deeds, including by releasing government records and providing monetary assistance for reasonable legal expenses necessary to prevent retaliation against the whistleblowers;

Whereas, on July 30, 1778, in demonstration of their full support for whistleblowers, the members of the Continental Congress unanimously enacted the first whistleblower legislation in the United States that read: ''*Resolved*, That it is the duty of all persons in the service of the United States, as well as all other the inhabitants thereof, to give the earliest information to Congress or other proper authority of any misconduct, frauds or misdemeanors committed by any officers

or persons in the service of these states, which may come to their knowledge'' (legislation of July 30, 1778, reprinted in *Journals of the Continental Congress, 1774–1789*, ed. Worthington C. Ford et al. (Washington, D.C., 1904-37), 11:732);

Whereas whistleblowers risk their careers, jobs, and reputations by reporting waste, fraud, and abuse to the proper authorities;

Whereas, when providing proper authorities with lawful disclosures, whistleblowers save taxpayers in the United States billions of dollars each year and serve the public interest by ensuring that the United States remains an ethical and safe place;

Whereas whistleblowing is generally defined as the lawful disclosure of information reasonably believed to evidence a violation of law, rule, or regulation, or gross mismanagement, a gross waste of funds, an abuse of authority, or a danger to public health or safety—and is in contrast to the unlawful disclosure of classified information that threatens the national security of the United States and that violates criminal law; and

Whereas it is the public policy of the United States to encourage, in accordance with Federal law (including the Constitution, rules, and regulations) and consistent with the protection of classified information (including sources and methods of detection of classified information), honest and good faith reporting of misconduct, fraud, misdemeanors, and other crimes to the appropriate authority at the earliest time possible: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) designates July 30, 2015, as ''National Whistleblower Appreciation Day''; and

(2) ensures that the Federal Government implements the intent of the Founding Fathers, as reflected in the legislation enacted on July 30, 1778, by encouraging each executive agency to recognize National Whistleblower Appreciation Day by—

(A) informing employees, contractors working on behalf of United States taxpayers, and members of the public about the legal rights of citizens of the United States to ''blow the whistle'' by honest and good faith reporting of misconduct, fraud, misdemeanors, or other crimes to the appropriate authorities; and

(B) acknowledging the contributions of whistleblowers to combating waste, fraud, abuse, and violations of laws and regulations in the United States.

SENATE RESOLUTION 237—CONDEMNING JOSEPH KONY AND THE LORD'S RESISTANCE ARMY FOR CONTINUING TO PERPETRATE CRIMES AGAINST HUMANITY, WAR CRIMES, AND MASS ATROCITIES, AND SUPPORTING ONGOING EFFORTS BY THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT, THE AFRICAN UNION, AND GOVERNMENTS AND REGIONAL ORGANIZATIONS IN CENTRAL AFRICA TO REMOVE JOSEPH KONY AND LORD'S RESISTANCE ARMY COMMANDERS FROM THE BATTLEFIELD AND PROMOTE PROTECTION AND RECOVERY OF AFFECTED COMMUNITIES

Mr. BOOZMAN (for himself, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. INHOFE, Mr. ISAKSON, Mr. ROUNDS, Ms. BALDWIN, Mr. PETERS, Mr. MARKEY, and Mr. HATCH) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations:

S. RES. 237

Whereas the Lord's Resistance Army, which first formed in northern Uganda, continues its reign of terror in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the Central African Republic, and South Sudan, destabilizing the region and deliberately killing at least 2,400 civilians since 2008, many of whom were targeted in schools and churches;

Whereas atrocities committed by the Lord's Resistance Army have resulted in the rape and brutal mutilation of countless men, women, and children; the abduction of over 70,000 civilians, including at least 30,000 children, many of whom were forced to become child soldiers or sex slaves; the continued displacement of more than 200,000 civilians from their homes, many of whom do not have access to essential humanitarian assistance; and the general deterioration of governance and security in affected areas;

Whereas insecurity caused by the Lord's Resistance Army has undermined efforts by the African Union and governments in the region, which have been supported by the United States and the international community, to consolidate peace and stability in each of the countries affected by the Lord's Resistance Army;

Whereas the Lord's Resistance Army engages in elephant poaching and the violent pillaging of natural resources in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the Central African Republic, using the profits from its sales of ivory, gold, and diamonds to fund its operations and the purchase of munitions;

Whereas the senior core command structure of the Lord's Resistance Army remains functional and the 2005 arrest warrant issued by the International Criminal Court against Joseph Kony for war crimes and crimes against humanity remains pending, as testimony to the continued threat faced by the region;

Whereas the Senate remains dedicated to the commitment established in the Lord's Resistance Army Disarmament and Northern Uganda Recovery Act of 2009 (Public Law 111–172; 22 U.S.C. 2151 note) by working with regional governments toward a comprehensive and permanent resolution to the conflict in northern Uganda and other affected areas through the provision of political, economic, military, and intelligence support to protect civilians, apprehend or remove Joseph Kony and his top commanders from the battlefield, and disarm and demobilize the remaining Lord's Resistance Army fighters;

Whereas, in June 2012, the United Nations Security Council endorsed the Regional Strategy of the United Nations to bring an end to the Lord's Resistance Army by focusing on the implementation of the Regional Cooperation Initiative of the African Union and to support the governments affected by the ongoing conflict;

Whereas, on September 18 and 19, 2012, the Governments of the Central African Republic, South Sudan, and the Republic of Uganda dedicated contingents of their armed forces to a unified African Union Regional Task Force mandated to permanently end the Lord's Resistance Army threat, with the Government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo following suit on February 14, 2013;

Whereas Joseph Kony remains a Specially Designated Global Terrorist and, on January 15, 2013, the Department of State under its Rewards for Justice Program announced a reward for information leading to Kony's arrest or conviction;

Whereas, on December 10, 2014, the United Nations Security Council issued a presidential statement welcoming the continued advisory and logistical support provided by the United States to the African Union Regional Task Force, while noting continued reports of the presence of senior Lord's Resistance Army leaders in the disputed Kafia Kingi enclave and reports of opportunistic collaboration between the Lord's Resistance Army and ex-Seleka forces in the Central African Republic;

Whereas, on March 25, 2014, President Barack Obama notified Congress of the increased commitment of approximately 250 members of the United States Armed Forces to the Regional Task Force to assist regional forces in their efforts to protect civilians, encourage defections from the Lord's Resistance Army, and bring Joseph Kony and his senior leadership to justice;

Whereas reports from nongovernmental organizations operating on the ground indicate that local communities and civil society leaders in the region have welcomed and continue to support the presence and continued assistance of United States military advisors;

Whereas, due to the continued efforts of the Regional Task Force of the African Union and United States military advisors, killings carried out by the Lord's Resistance Army have dropped 90 percent since 2011 and approximately 25 percent of the core fighting force of the Lord's Resistance Army has defected or been otherwise removed from the battlefield since January 2013;

Whereas over 120 women and children held in long-term captivity by the Lord's Resistance Army escaped from the rebel group in 2014;

Whereas reports from nongovernmental organizations and the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs demonstrate an increase in attacks and abductions by the Lord's Resistance Army in 2014 compared to 2013, as well as an increase in internally displaced persons in the northeastern region of the Democratic Republic of the Congo in late 2014;

Whereas the African Union Regional Task Force reported in January 2015 that Okot Odhiambo, a senior Lord's Resistance Army officer indicted by the International Criminal Court on charges of war crimes and crimes against humanity, was killed in battle in 2013;

Whereas, on January 5, 2015, Dominic Ongwen, a senior Lord's Resistance Army officer indicted by the International Criminal Court on charges of war crimes and crimes against humanity, defected to forces from the United States and African Union Regional Task Force;

Whereas the inability of the Central African Republic and the Democratic Republic of the Congo to defuse violence, establish legitimate and effective governance, or achieve basic development objectives throughout their countries has provided safe haven for the Lord's Resistance Army and the failure to immediately de-escalate and resolve the broader national crisis risks eclipsing gains made by United States efforts to prevent atrocities in the southeastern region of the Central African Republic; and

Whereas targeted United States assistance and leadership has made a significant impact on preventing further mass atrocities and curtailing humanitarian suffering in central Africa and must be reinforced to maintain these gains: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) condemns Joseph Kony and the Lord's Resistance Army for continuing to perpetrate crimes against humanity and mass atrocities, and supports ongoing efforts by the United States, the African Union, the international community, and governments in central Africa to remove Joseph Kony and Lord's Resistance Army commanders from the battlefield and promote protection and recovery for affected communities;

(2) commends the continued efforts by the African Union, the United Nations, and regional partners to end the threat posed by the Lord's Resistance Army;

(3) supports efforts to provide the Regional Task Force with the logistics support and authorizations needed to access all areas of suspected Lord's Resistance Army activity in the Central African Republic and the Democratic Republic of the Congo;

(4) urges the President to reauthorize the deployment of United States Armed Forces personnel in support of Operation Observant Compass until senior Lord's Resistance Army commanders are removed from the battlefield and the group no longer poses a significant threat to civilians;

(5) urges the Secretary of State and the Secretary of Defense to support the African Union and the Regional Task Force, as well as regional partners, in their efforts to deny the Lord's Resistance Army safe haven in Sudan and in the disputed Kafia Kingi enclave, by expanding defection messaging initiatives, urging the African Union to engage more proactively in diplomatic outreach to the Government of Sudan, and removing Joseph Kony and his top commanders from the battlefield through the sharing of intelligence and other military assistance;

(6) urges the African Union and the Regional Task Force, with the support of the European Union, as well as the Governments of Uganda, South Sudan, the Central African Republic, and the Democratic Republic of the Congo, to implement the Regional Strategy of the United Nations by—

(A) fully implementing the Regional Cooperation Initiative developed by the African Union to bring an end to the Lord's Resistance Army;

(B) enhancing efforts to promote the protection of civilians in all areas in which the Lord's Resistance Army operates; and

(C) broadening current efforts of disarmament, demobilization, repatriation, resettlement, and reintegration to all areas affected by the Lord's Resistance Army, as well as humanitarian and child protection efforts;

(7) welcomes the continued defections of men, women, and children from the Lord's Resistance Army, and calls on governments in the region and the international community to support their demobilization and safe return;

(8) calls on the Secretary of State, the Secretary of Defense, the Administrator of the United States Agency for International Development, and the heads of other relevant United States Government agencies to utilize authorized and appropriated funds—

(A) to continue efforts to enhance intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance support to the African Union Regional Task Force, and specifically to encourage additional enablers and actionable intelligence to increase the effectiveness of partner operations;

(B) to work with the United Nations, the African Union, and regional government partners to encourage and help non-indicted Lord's Resistance Army members, abductees, and noncombatants to defect safely from the group through the distribution of aerial leaflets, the broadcast of ''come home'' radio programs, and the continuation of flights utilizing helicopter-based speaker systems over known areas of Lord's Resistance Army operation;

(C) to expand efforts to prevent the Lord's Resistance Army from funding its operations through the theft and trade of illicit ivory, gold, and diamonds; and

(D) to support rehabilitation and reintegration programs led by nongovernmental organizations and regional government partners for children, youth, and adults that have been abducted and indoctrinated by the Lord's Resistance Army;

(9) commends those members of the United States Armed Forces previously or currently deployed to serve in support of Operation Observant Compass for their critical contributions to efforts to remove Joseph Kony and Lord's Resistance Army commanders from the battlefield, protect civilians, and encourage members of the Lord's Resistance Army to peacefully defect; and

(10) urges the President, with input from United States Government agencies, regional governments, multilateral partners, and nongovernmental organizations, to develop a strategy aimed at supporting sustainable recovery and security within areas affected by the Lord's Resistance Army, with existing resources, and in partnership with other donors and multilateral bodies, including the World Bank, the European Union, and others.

SENATE RESOLUTION 238—EXPRESSING THE DETERMINATION OF THE SENATE THAT THE 60-CALENDAR DAY PERIOD FOR CONGRESSIONAL REVIEW OF THE NUCLEAR AGREEMENT WITH IRAN DID NOT BEGIN WITH THE TRANSMITTAL OF THE AGREEMENT ON JULY 19, 2015, BECAUSE THAT TRANSMITTAL DID NOT INCLUDE ALL MATERIALS REQUIRED TO BE TRANSMITTED PURSUANT TO THE IRAN NUCLEAR AGREEMENT REVIEW ACT OF 2015

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

S. RES. 238

Whereas section 135(a) of the Atomic Energy Act of 1954, as added by section 2 of the Iran Nuclear Agreement Review Act of 2015 (Public Law 114–17), states that ''Not later than 5 calendar days after reaching an agreement with Iran relating to the nuclear program of Iran, the President shall transmit to the appropriate congressional committees and leadership. . .the agreement, as defined in subsection (h)(1), including all related materials and annexes;'';

Whereas, under section 135(h)(1) of such Act (as so added), the term ''agreement'' is defined as ''an agreement related to the nuclear program of Iran that includes the United States, commits the United States to take action, or pursuant to which the United States commits or otherwise agrees to take action, regardless of the form it takes, whether a political commitment or otherwise, and regardless of whether it is legally binding or not, including any joint comprehensive plan of action entered into or made between Iran and any other parties, and any additional materials related thereto, including annexes, appendices, codicils, side agreements, implementing materials, documents, and guidance, technical or other understandings, and any related agreements, whether entered into or implemented prior to the agreement or to be entered into or implemented in the future.'';

Whereas section 135(b)(1) of such Act (as so added) states that ''During the 30-calendar day period following transmittal by the President of an agreement pursuant to subsection (a), the Committee on Foreign Relations of the Senate and the Committee on Foreign Affairs of the House of Representatives shall, as appropriate, hold hearings and briefings and otherwise obtain information in order to fully review such agreement.'';

Whereas section 135(b)(2) of such Act (as so added) states that ''The period for congressional review under paragraph (1) shall be 60 calendar days if an agreement, including all materials required to be transmitted to Congress pursuant to subsection (a)(1), is transmitted pursuant to subsection (a) between July 10, 2015, and September 7, 2015.'';

Whereas section 135(b)(3) of such Act (as so added) states that ''prior to and during the period for transmission of an agreement in subsection (a)(1) and during the period for congressional review provided in paragraph (1), including any additional period as applicable under the exception provided in paragraph (2), the President may not waive, suspend, reduce, provide relief from, or otherwise limit the application of statutory sanctions with respect to Iran under any provision of law or refrain from applying any such sanctions pursuant to an agreement described in subsection (a).'';

Whereas the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action was agreed to on July 14, 2015, by the nations of China, France, Russia, the United Kingdom, Germany, the United States, and Iran;

Whereas the Department of State asserted that it had transmitted to Congress the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action, its annexes, and related materials on July 19, 2015;

Whereas Senator Tom Cotton of Arkansas and Congressman Mike Pompeo of Kansas were informed by officials from the International Atomic Energy Agency of additional side agreements with Iran that were not included in the Department of State's transmission to Congress;

Whereas guidance materials related to sanctions relief, sanctions interpretations, and licensing policy described in the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action were not included in the Department of State's transmission to Congress; and

Whereas the integrity of the proceedings of the Senate is compromised by the inability of the Senate and its committees to carry out the review provided under section 135(b)(3) of the Atomic Energy Act of 1954 because of the absence of all documents required to be transmitted under that section: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That it is the determination of the Senate that—

(1) for purposes of section 135(b)(2) of the Atomic Energy Act of 1954, as added by section 2 of the Iran Nuclear Agreement Review Act of 2015 (Public Law 114–17), the 60-calendar day period for congressional review of the agreement with Iran relating to the nuclear program of Iran did not begin with the transmittal of the agreement on July 19, 2015, because that transmittal did not include all materials required to be transmitted under the definition of the term ''agreement'' under section 135(h)(1) of such Act (as so added), including specifically side agreements with Iran and United States Government-issued guidance materials in relation to Iran; and

(2) the 60-calendar day period for review of such agreement in the Senate cannot be considered to have begun until the Majority Leader certifies that all of the materials required to be transmitted under the definition of the term ''agreement'' under such Act, including any side agreements with Iran and United States Government-issued guidance materials in relation to Iran, have been transmitted to the Majority Leader.

SENATE RESOLUTION 239—COMMEMORATING THE 75TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE VIRGINIA INSTITUTE OF MARINE SCIENCE OF THE COLLEGE OF WILLIAM & MARY

Mr. KAINE (for himself and Mr. WARNER) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on the Judiciary:

S. RES. 239

Whereas the Virginia General Assembly, with Professor Donald W. Davis of the College of William & Mary, envisioned a center for marine research and education in the Commonwealth of Virginia;

Whereas the Virginia Institute of Marine Science (referred to in this preamble as ''VIMS''), originally known as the Virginia Fisheries Laboratory, began operation in 1940;

Whereas the early work of VIMS assured the future of the fishery industry in Virginia by improving the general knowledge of the resources of fisheries so that they might be properly conserved and managed, and by meeting the need for training in practical marine biology;

Whereas VIMS is now the home of the School of Marine Sciences of the College of William & Mary, a university research and teaching center with a strong element of public service, and is the leading marine center that focuses on estuarine and coastal environments in the nation; and

Whereas VIMS continues to serve the Commonwealth of Virginia and the United States by advancing the frontiers of marine science and sharing the knowledge gained through research with the users and stewards of the environment and future scientists: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) congratulates the College of William & Mary and the Virginia Institute of Marine Science on the 75th anniversary of the Virginia Institute of Marine Science; and

(2) expresses appreciation for the 75 years of service to the environment by the faculty, staff, and students of the Virginia Institute of Marine Science and the School of Marine Sciences of the College of William & Mary.

Mr. KAINE. Mr. President, Virginia has a proud tradition of academic excellence dating back to Thomas Jefferson and a deep appreciation for our beautiful and bountiful coastal waters that predates that. For 75 years, one Virginia academic institution has built a sterling reputation as a national leader in environmental education and a trusted source of information and analysis for generations of policymakers. The Virginia Institute of Marine Science at the College of William & Mary is celebrating its 75th anniversary in 2015. I am proud to join my bipartisan colleagues Senator MARK WARNER and Congressman ROB WITTMAN in submitting a resolution to commemorate this milestone.

VIMS research has yielded critical insights into the water quality of the Chesapeake Bay and its rivers, informing the work of Virginia and other Chesapeake Bay States in striving to reduce pollution while growing outdoor recreation and the economic activity that goes with it. It has produced data and analysis that has contributed to the development of strategies to maintain robust oyster and crab populations, particularly through cooperative partnership with Virginia's commercial watermen. It has also developed technology and expertise that allows more precise projections than ever before of rates of sea level rise and recurrent flooding in the Hampton Roads region.

Elected officials of both parties and at all levels of government in Virginia have benefitted from the expertise and objectivity that this institution brings to environmental policy. I was fortunate to have access to this valuable scientific asset as Governor of Virginia, and I continue to consider its thoughtful views on policy issues that come before Congress.

I congratulate VIMS for 75 years of dedication to academic excellence and scientific achievement.

AMENDMENTS SUBMITTED AND PROPOSED

SA 2542. Mr. MCCONNELL proposed an amendment to the bill H.R. 22, to authorize funds for Federal-aid highways, highway safety programs, and transit programs, and for other purposes.

SA 2543. Mr. MCCONNELL (for Mr. CARPER (for himself and Mr. JOHNSON)) proposed an amendment to the bill S. 1172, to improve the process of presidential transition.

TEXT OF AMENDMENTS

SA 2542. Mr. MCCONNELL proposed an amendment to the bill H.R. 22, to authorize funds for Federal-aid highways, highway safety programs, and transit programs, and for other purposes; as follows:

Amend the title so as to read: ''To authorize funds for Federal-aid highways, highway safety programs, and transit programs, and for other purposes.''.

SA 2543. Mr. MCCONNELL (for Mr. CARPER (for himself and Mr. JOHNSON)) proposed an amendment to the bill S. 1172, to improve the process of presidential transition; as follows:

On page 7, strike lines 11 through 16 and insert the following:

''(A) the Federal Transition Coordinator and the Deputy Director for Management of the Office of Management and Budget, who shall serve as Co-Chairpersons of the agency transition directors council;

''(B) other senior employees serving in the Executive Office of the President, as determined by the President;

On page 8, lines 2 and 3, strike ''Federal Transition Coordinator'' and insert ''Co-Chairpersons''.

NOTICES OF HEARINGS

COMMITTEE ON HEALTH, EDUCATION, LABOR, AND PENSIONS

Mr. ALEXANDER. The Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions will meet during the session of the Senate on August 5, 2015, at 10 a.m., in room SD–430 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building, to conduct a hearing entitled ''Reauthorizing the Higher Education Act: Opportunities to Improve Student Success.''

For further information regarding this meeting, please contact Jake Baker of the committee staff on (202) 224–8484.

COMMITTEE ON HEALTH, EDUCATION, LABOR, AND PENSIONS

Mr. ALEXANDER. Mr. President, I wish to announce that the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions will meet in executive session on Thursday, August 6, 2015, at 10 a.m., in room SD–430 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building to mark up S. 799 Protecting Our Infants Act of 2015, S. 1893 Mental Health Awareness and Improvement Act of 2015, S. 481 Improving Regulatory Transparency for New Medical Therapies Act, the Nomination of Dr. Karen DeSalvo to be Assistant Secretary for Health, Department of Health and Human Services, the Dr. Kathryn Matthew to be Director, Institute of Museum and Library Services, the nomination of W. Thomas Reeder, Jr. to be Director, Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation, and the nomination of Walter Barrows to be Member, Railroad Retirement Board; as well as any additional nominations cleared for action.

For further information regarding this meeting, please contact the Committee at (202) 224–5375.

AUTHORITY FOR COMMITTEES TO MEET

COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES

Mr. INHOFE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Armed Services be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on July 30, 2015, at 9:30 a.m.

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

COMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND NATURAL RESOURCES

Mr. INHOFE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on July 30, 2015, at 10 a.m., in room SD–366 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building.

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

COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS

Mr. INHOFE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Foreign Relations be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on July 30, 2015, at 10 a.m., to conduct a hearing entitled ''Sanctions and the JCPOA.''

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

COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS

Mr. INHOFE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Foreign Relations be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on July 30, 2015, at 2 p.m., to conduct a hearing entitled ''Nominations.''

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

COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY

Mr. INHOFE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on the Judiciary be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on July 30, 2015, at 12:10 p.m., in room SD–226 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building.

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

PERMANENT SUBCOMMITTEE ON INVESTIGATIONS

Mr. INHOFE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations of the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on July 30, 2015, at 9:30 a.m., to conduct a hearing entitled ''Impact of the U.S. Tax Code on the Market for Corporate Control and Jobs.''

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

SELECT COMMITTEE ON INTELLIGENCE

Mr. INHOFE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Select Committee on Intelligence be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on July 30, 2015, at 2:30 p.m.

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

PRIVILEGES OF THE FLOOR

Mr. UDALL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that my State Department fellow, Andreea Paulopol, be granted floor privileges for the remainder of the day.

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

FOREIGN TRAVEL FINANCIAL REPORTS

In accordance with the appropriate provisions of law, the Secretary of the Senate herewith submits the following reports for standing committees of the Senate, certain joint committees of the Congress, delegations and groups, and select and special committees of the Senate, relating to expenses incurred in the performance of authorized foreign travel:

CONSOLIDATED REPORT OF EXPENDITURE OF FUNDS FOR FOREIGN TRAVEL BY MEMBERS AND EMPLOYEES OF THE U.S. SENATE, UNDER AUTHORITY OF SEC. 22, P.L. 95–384—22 U.S.C. 1754(b), COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE, NUTRITION, AND FORESTRY FOR TRAVEL FROM APR. 1 TO JUNE 30, 2015

Name and country	Name of currency	Per diem		Transportation		Miscellaneous		Total	
		Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency
Senator Pat Roberts:									
Cuba	Peso		714.00						714.00
Joel Leftwich:									
Cuba	Peso		521.00						521.00
Totals			1,235.00						1,235.00

SENATOR PAT ROBERTS,
Chairman, Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry,
July 15, 2015.

CONSOLIDATED REPORT OF EXPENDITURE OF FUNDS FOR FOREIGN TRAVEL BY MEMBERS AND EMPLOYEES OF THE U.S. SENATE, UNDER AUTHORITY OF SEC. 22, P.L. 95–384—22 U.S.C. 1754(b), COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS FOR TRAVEL FROM APR. 1 TO JUNE 30, 2015

Name and country	Name of currency	Per diem		Transportation		Miscellaneous		Total	
		Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency
Alexander Carnes:									
Pakistan	Rupee		396.00						396.00
Afghanistan	Afghani		18.00						18.00
United States	Dollar				5,954.70				5,954.70
Paul Grove:									
Sri Lanka	Rupee		660.00						660.00
Pakistan	Rupee		100.00						100.00
Afghanistan	Afghani		18.00						18.00
United Arab Emirates	Dirham		184.11						184.11
United States	Dollar				9,125.90				9,125.90
Adam Yezerski:									
Sri Lanka	Rupee		660.00						660.00
Pakistan	Rupee		100.00						100.00
Afghanistan	Afghani		18.00						18.00
United Arab Emirates	Dirham		184.11						184.11
United States	Dollar				9,125.90				9,125.90
Tim Rieser:									
Sri Lanka	Rupee		330.00				600.00		930.00
Nepal	Rupee		273.00		230.00		445.00		948.00
Laos	Kip		276.00				228.00		504.00
Vietnam	Dong		196.00		190.00		339.00		725.00
Dubai	Dirham		277.00						277.00
United States	Dollar				5,869.00				5,869.00
Paul Grove:									
Egypt	Pound		534.00						534.00
Israel	Shekel		500.00						500.00
Jordan	Dinar		421.54						421.54
Turkey	Lira		853.14						853.14
United States	Dollar				4,467.16				4,467.16
Adam Yezerski:									
Egypt	Pound		534.00						534.00
Israel	Shekel		500.00						500.00
Jordan	Dinar		421.54						421.54
Turkey	Lira		853.14						853.14
United States	Dollar				4,424.70				4,424.70
Heideh Shahmoradi:									
United Arab Emirates	Dirham		1,078.14						1,078.14
United States	Dollar				10,852.20				10,852.20
Rajat Mathur:									
United Arab Emirates	Dirham		1,078.14						1,078.14
United States	Dollar				10,852.20				10,852.20
Dabney Hegg:									
United Arab Emirates	Dirham		1,078.17						1,078.17
United States	Dollar				10,852.20				10,852.20
Senator Bill Cassidy:									
Jordan	Dinar		355.41				1,189.61		1,545.02
Israel	Shekel						167.54		167.54
Senator Richard Durbin:									
Lithuania	Euro		312.11						312.11

CONSOLIDATED REPORT OF EXPENDITURE OF FUNDS FOR FOREIGN TRAVEL BY MEMBERS AND EMPLOYEES OF THE U.S. SENATE, UNDER AUTHORITY OF SEC. 22, P.L. 95–384—22 U.S.C. 1754(b), COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS FOR TRAVEL FROM APR. 1 TO JUNE 30, 2015—Continued

Name and country	Name of currency	Per diem		Transportation		Miscellaneous		Total	
		Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency
Ukraine	Hryvnia		742.00						742.00
Chris Homan:									
Lithuania	Euro		312.11						312.11
Ukraine	Hryvnia		742.00						742.00
Senator Thad Cochran:									
France	Euro		4,062.00						4,062.00
Senator Richard Shelby:									
France	Euro		4,062.00						4,062.00
Jeremy Weirich:									
France	Euro		3,424.00						3,424.00
Brian Potts:									
France	Euro		3,424.00						3,424.00
Jacqui Russell:									
France	Euro		3,424.00						3,424.00
Ann Caldwell:									
France	Euro		3,424.00						3,424.00
Kay Webber:									
France	Euro		872.00						872.00
Senator Patrick Leahy:									
Cuba	Peso		1,098.00						1,098.00
Tim Rieser:									
Cuba	Peso		899.00				76.00		975.00
Kevin McDonald:									
Cuba	Peso		899.00						899.00
Senator Susan Collins:									
Cuba	Peso		732.00				181.33		913.33
Delegation Expenses:*									
Sri Lanka	Rupee						798.00		798.00
Sri Lanka	Rupee				3,200.00				3,200.00
Delegation Expenses:*									
Lithuania	Euro						253.20		253.20
Ukraine	Hryvnia						2,590.00		2,590.00
Delegation Expenses:*									
France	Euro				9,291.52				9,291.52
France	Euro						9,583.63		9,583.63
Delegation Expenses:*									
Cuba	Peso						1,806.42		1,806.42
Delegation Expenses:*									
Cuba	Peso						181.33		181.33
Delegation Expenses:*									
UAE	Dirham						130.03		130.03
Delegation Expense:*									
Egypt	Pound						79.00		79.00
Israel	Shekel						2,705.83		2,705.83
Jordan	Dinar						1,128.98		1,128.98
Total			40,325.66		84,435.48		22,482.90		147,244.04

*Delegation expenses include payments and reimbursements to the Department of State under authority of Sec. 502(b) of the Mutual Security Act of 1954, as amended by Section 22 of P.L. 95–384, and S. Res. 179 agreed to May 25, 1977.

SENATOR THAD COCHRAN,
Chairman, Committee on Appropriations, July 21, 2015.

CONSOLIDATED REPORT OF EXPENDITURE OF FUNDS FOR FOREIGN TRAVEL BY MEMBERS AND EMPLOYEES OF THE U.S. SENATE, UNDER AUTHORITY OF SEC. 22, P.L. 95–384—22 U.S.C. 1754(b), COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES FOR TRAVEL FROM APR. 1 TO JUNE 30, 2015

Name and country	Name of currency	Per diem		Transportation		Miscellaneous		Total	
		Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency
Senator James M. Inhofe:									
Germany	Euro		360.12						360.12
Bahrain	Dinar		363.92						363.92
Ethiopia	Birr		356.17						356.17
Tanzania	Shilling		498.25						498.25
Spain	Euro		214.78						214.78
John Bonsell:									
Germany	Euro		368.10						368.10
Bahrain	Dinar		285.48						285.48
Saudi Arabia	Riyal		348.82						348.82
Ethiopia	Birr		342.92						342.92
Tanzania	Shilling		510.50						510.50
Spain	Euro		276.93						276.93
Anthony Lazarski:									
Germany	Euro		339.73						339.73
Bahrain	Dinar		287.76						287.76
Ethiopia	Birr		335.94						335.94
Tanzania	Shilling		497.25						497.25
Spain	Euro		274.93						274.93
Mark Powers:									
Germany	Euro		339.37						339.37
Bahrain	Dinar		253.41						253.41
Saudi Arabia	Riyal		351.07						351.07
Ethiopia	Birr		321.07						321.07
Tanzania	Shilling		498.25						498.25
Spain	Euro		297.68						297.68
Luke Holland:									
Germany	Euro		342.26						342.26
Bahrain	Dinar		255.48						255.48
Saudi Arabia	Riyal		394.83						394.83
Ethiopia	Birr		321.77						321.77
Tanzania	Shilling		518.25						518.25
Spain	Euro		254.93						254.93
Joel Starr:									
Germany	Euro		333.72						333.72
Bahrain	Dinar		284.23						284.23
Saudi Arabia	Riyal		351.07						351.07
Ethiopia	Birr		321.17						321.17
Tanzania	Shilling		497.25						497.25
Spain	Euro		274.93						274.93
Senator Mike Rounds:									
Germany	Euro		328.72						328.72

CONSOLIDATED REPORT OF EXPENDITURE OF FUNDS FOR FOREIGN TRAVEL BY MEMBERS AND EMPLOYEES OF THE U.S. SENATE, UNDER AUTHORITY OF SEC. 22, P.L. 95–384—22 U.S.C. 1754(b), COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES FOR TRAVEL FROM APR. 1 TO JUNE 30, 2015—Continued

Name and country	Name of currency	Per diem		Transportation		Miscellaneous		Total	
		Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency
Bahrain	Dinar		235.48						235.48
Ethiopia	Birr		321.17						321.17
Tanzania	Shilling		498.97						498.97
Spain	Euro		201.93						201.93
Daniel Adelstein									
Germany	Euro		248.92						248.92
Bahrain	Dinar		287.23						287.23
Ethiopia	Birr		321.17						321.17
Tanzania	Shilling		497.25						497.25
Spain	Euro		254.93						254.93
Delegation Expenses:*									
Germany	Euro						1,305.40		1,305.40
Romania	Leu						584.10		584.10
Saudi Arabia	Riyal						4,081.85		4,081.85
Ethiopia	Birr						2,645.65		2,645.65
Tanzania	Shilling				2,152.40				2,152.40
Burundi	Franc				256.20				256.20
Bahrain	Dinar				308.94		1,392.00		1,700.94
Spain	Euro						503.69		503.69
Senator Dan Sullivan:									
Japan	Yen		172.00						172.00
David Eric Sayers:									
Japan	Yen		107.00						107.00
Paul O. Feather:									
Japan	Yen		200.00						200.00
Jason Suslavich:									
Japan	Yen		248.96						248.96
Delegation Expenses:*									
Japan	Yen				1,087.41		4,497.09		5,584.50
Kathryn Wheelbarger:									
United States	Dollar				18,810.60				18,810.60
France	Dollar		421.78						421.78
Niger	Franc		660.01						660.01
Adam Barker:									
United States	Dollar				18,810.60				18,810.60
France	Dollar		395.96						395.96
Niger	Franc		589.00						589.00
Michael Kuiken:									
United States	Dollar				18,810.60				18,810.60
France	Dollar		457.65						457.65
Niger	Franc		562.31						562.31
Delegation Expenses:*									
France	Dollar						1,616.66		1,616.66
Niger	Franc						350.00		350.00
Jonathan Epstein:									
United States	Dollar				15,492.00				15,492.00
Belgium	Euro		190.83						190.83
Germany	Euro		183.01						183.01
Delegation Expenses:*									
Belgium	Euro						648.11		648.11
Germany	Euro						237.05		237.05
Thomas Goffus:									
United States	Dollar				9,426.40				9,426.40
Belgium	Euro		643.00						643.00
Poland	Zloty		499.00						499.00
Dustin Walker:									
United States	Dollar				9,336.40				9,336.40
Belgium	Euro		699.84						699.84
Poland	Zloty		454.15						454.15
William Monahan:									
United States	Dollar				9,336.40				9,336.40
Belgium	Euro		673.84						673.84
Poland	Zloty		474.15						474.15
Delegation Expenses:*									
Belgium	Euro				2,737.70		194.63		2,932.33
Poland	Zloty						827.52		827.52
Senator Bill Nelson:									
Honduras	Lempira		624.20						624.20
Delegation Expenses:*									
Honduras	Lempira						1,227.80		1,227.80
Senator Kristin Gillibrand:									
Tunisia	Dinar		250.30						250.30
Chad	Franc		337.67						337.67
Kenya	Shilling		668.00						668.00
Senegal	Franc		321.00						321.00
Moran Banai:									
Tunisia	Dinar		179.19						179.19
Chad	Franc		306.64						306.64
Kenya	Shilling		686.37						686.37
Senegal	Franc		240.09						240.09
Jess Fassler:									
Tunisia	Dinar		250.30						250.30
Chad	Franc		337.67						337.67
Kenya	Shilling		668.00						668.00
Senegal	Franc		321.00						321.00
Delegation Expenses:*									
Tunisia	Dinar				414.00				414.00
Chad	Franc						321.23		321.23
Kenya	Shilling						954.30		954.30
Senegal	Franc						645.27		645.27
Senator Roger F. Wicker:									
France	Dollar		1,266.18						1,266.18
Denmark	Krone		444.53						444.53
Delegation Expenses:*									
France	Dollar				852.80		1,180.62		2,033.42
Denmark	Krone				1,111.86		194.71		1,306.57
Senator John McCain:									
United States	Dollar				14,776.00				14,776.00
Vietnam	Dong		434.53						434.53
Singapore	Dollar		813.98						813.98
Christian Brose:									
United States	Dollar				14,776.00				14,776.00
Vietnam	Dong		583.78						583.78
Singapore	Dollar		813.98						813.98
David Eric Sayers:									
United States	Dollar				14,776.00				14,776.00

CONSOLIDATED REPORT OF EXPENDITURE OF FUNDS FOR FOREIGN TRAVEL BY MEMBERS AND EMPLOYEES OF THE U.S. SENATE, UNDER AUTHORITY OF SEC. 22, P.L. 95–384—22 U.S.C. 1754(b), COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES FOR TRAVEL FROM APR. 1 TO JUNE 30, 2015—Continued

Name and country	Name of currency	Per diem		Transportation		Miscellaneous		Total	
		Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency
Vietnam	Dong		456.38						456.38
Singapore	Dollar		1,087.81						1,087.81
Senator Jack Reed:									
United States	Dollar				14,193.50				14,193.50
Vietnam	Dong		372.44						372.44
Singapore	Dollar		796.19						796.19
Ozge Guzelsu:									
United States	Dollar				18,063.40				18,063.40
Vietnam	Dong		513.78						513.78
Singapore	Dollar		763.98						763.98
Senator Mazie Hirono:									
United States	Dollar				7,036,50				7,036.50
Singapore	Dollar		748.13						748.13
Senator Joni Ernst:									
United States	Dollar				14,779.95				14,779.95
Vietnam	Dong		284.00						284.00
Singapore	Dollar		106.95						106.95
Senator Dan Sullivan:									
United States	Dollar				13,279.90				13,279.90
Vietnam	Dong		372.44						372.44
Singapore	Dollar		840.10						840.10
Delegation Expenses:*									
Vietnam	Dong						3,542.97		3,542.97
Singapore	Dollar						2,627.24		2,627.24
Senator Lindsey Graham:									
United States	Dollar				25,445.66				25,445.66
Israel	Shekel		50.59						50.59
Matthew Rimkunas:									
United States	Dollar				12,307.56				12,307.56
Dubai	Dollar		109.05						109.05
Israel	Shekel		103.15						103.15
Craig Abele:									
United States	Dollar				12,333.60				12,333.60
Dubai	Dollar		109.09						109.09
Israel	Shekel		137.75						137.75
Delegation Expenses:*									
Dubai	Dollar						1,230.33		1,230.33
Israel	Shekel						6,596.05		6,596.05
Senator Deb Fischer:									
Germany	Euro		284.22						284.22
Estonia	Euro		218.32						218.32
Czech Republic	Koruna		331.66						331.66
Romania	Leu		227.09						227.09
Spain	Euro		141.10						141.10
Peter Schirtzinger:									
Germany	Euro		260.28						260.28
Estonia	Euro		207.49						207.49
Czech Republic	Koruna		334.64						334.64
Romania	Leu		220.27						220.27
Spain	Euro		147.24						147.24
Joseph Hack:									
Germany	Euro		285.08						285.08
Estonia	Euro		231.23						231.23
Czech Republic	Koruna		330.10						330.10
Romania	Leu		230.42						230.42
Spain	Euro		156.23						156.23
Senator Jeff Sessions:									
Germany	Euro		332.38						332.38
Estonia	Euro		289.86						289.86
Czech Republic	Koruna		432.00						432.00
Romania	Leu		293.75						293.75
Spain	Euro		223.25						223.25
Sandra Luff:									
Germany	Euro		331.97						331.97
Estonia	Euro		273.40						273.40
Czech Republic	Koruna		425.00						425.00
Romania	Leu		272.53						272.53
Spain	Euro		217.29						217.29
Delegation Expenses:*									
Germany	Euro				443.42				443.42
Estonia	Euro						1,084.14		1,084.14
Czech Republic	Koruna				442.35				442.35
Romania	Leu						855.63		855.63
Daniel Lerner:									
United States	Dollar				9,301.14				9,301.14
Estonia	Euro		660.43						660.43
Estonia	Euro						669.08		669.08
Senator James M. Inhofe:									
France	Dollar		3,617.83						3,617.83
Anthony Lazarski:									
France	Dollar		2,964.34						2,964.34
Senator Jeff Sessions:									
France	Dollar		3,678.36						3,678.36
Sandra Luff:									
France	Dollar		3,232.18						3,232.18
Delegation Expenses:*									
France	Dollar				5,309.45		4,986.18		10,295.63
Senator John McCain:									
United States	Dollar				12,841.20				12,841.20
Ukraine	Hryvnia		240.59						240.59
Slovakia	Euro		301.91						301.91
Elizabeth O'Bagy:									
United States	Dollar				12,222.20				12,222.20
Ukraine	Hryvnia		316.43						316.43
Slovakia	Euro		284.82						284.82
Senator Tom Cotton:									
Ukraine	Hryvnia		274.81						274.81
Slovakia	Euro		280.44						280.44
Delegation Expenses:*									
Ukraine	Hryvnia						9,891.03		9,891.03
Slovakia	Euro						1,474.27		1,474.27
Senator Bill Nelson:									
United States	Dollar				4,617.70				4,617.70
Haiti	Gourde		322.00						322.00

CONSOLIDATED REPORT OF EXPENDITURE OF FUNDS FOR FOREIGN TRAVEL BY MEMBERS AND EMPLOYEES OF THE U.S. SENATE, UNDER AUTHORITY OF SEC. 22, P.L. 95–384—22 U.S.C. 1754(b), COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES FOR TRAVEL FROM APR. 1 TO JUNE 30, 2015—Continued

Name and country	Name of currency	Per diem		Transportation		Miscellaneous		Total	
		Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency
Total			62,091.78		315,446.42		56,808.02		434,346.22

*Delegation expenses include payments and reimbursements to the Department of State under authority of Sec. 502(b) of the Mutual Security Act of 1954, as amended by Section 22 of P.L. 95–384, and S. Res. 179 agreed to May 25, 1977.

SENATOR JOHN McCAIN,
Chairman, Committee on Armed Services, July 24, 2015.

CONSOLIDATED REPORT OF EXPENDITURE OF FUNDS FOR FOREIGN TRAVEL BY MEMBERS AND EMPLOYEES OF THE U.S. SENATE, UNDER AUTHORITY OF SEC. 22, P.L. 95–384—22 U.S.C. 1754(b), COMMITTEE ON BANKING, HOUSING, AND URBAN AFFAIRS FOR TRAVEL FROM APR. 1 TO JUNE 30, 2015

Name and country	Name of currency	Per diem		Transportation		Miscellaneous		Total	
		Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency
Senator Sherrod Brown:									
Germany	Euro		150.00						150.00
United Kingdom	Pound		330.00						330.00
Mark Powden:									
Germany	Euro		89.70						89.70
United Kingdom	Pound		219.42						219.42
Senator Richard Shelby:									
Germany	Euro		2,549.65						2,549.65
United Kingdom	Pound		2,687.46						2,687.46
United States	Dollar				12,679.30				12,679.30
Christopher Ford:									
Germany	Euro		2,549.65						2,549.65
United Kingdom	Pound		2,591.94						2,591.94
United States	Dollar				12,679.30				12,679.30
Totals			11,167.82		25,358.60				36,526.42

SENATOR RICHARD SHELBY,
Chairman, Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs,
June 18, 2015.

CONSOLIDATED REPORT OF EXPENDITURE OF FUNDS FOR FOREIGN TRAVEL BY MEMBERS AND EMPLOYEES OF THE U.S. SENATE, UNDER AUTHORITY OF SEC. 22, P.L. 95–384—22 U.S.C. 1754(b), COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE, SCIENCE, AND TRANSPORTATION FOR TRAVEL FROM APR. 1 TO JUNE 30, 2015

Name and country	Name of currency	Per diem		Transportation		Miscellaneous		Total	
		Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency
Jeffrey Farrah:									
United States	Dollar				11,123.53				11,123.53
Argentina	Peso		462.22						462.22
Total			462.22		11,123.53				11,585.75

SENATOR JOHN THUNE,
Chairman, Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation,
July 29, 2015.

CONSOLIDATED REPORT OF EXPENDITURE OF FUNDS FOR FOREIGN TRAVEL BY MEMBERS AND EMPLOYEES OF THE U.S. SENATE, UNDER AUTHORITY OF SEC. 22, P.L. 95–384—22 U.S.C. 1754(b), COMMITTEE ON FINANCE FOR TRAVEL FROM APR. 1 TO JUNE 30, 2015

Name and country	Name of currency	Per diem		Transportation		Miscellaneous		Total	
		Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency
Senator Maria Cantwell:									
Switzerland	Franc		320.00						320.00
United States	Dollar				8,679.60				8,679.60
Rosemary Gutierrez:									
Switzerland	Franc		510.26						510.26
United States	Dollar				11,872.10				11,872.10
Delegation Expenses:*									
United States	Dollar						620.00		620.00
Senator Dean Heller:									
Cuba	Peso		895.69						895.69
Edgar Abrams:									
Cuba	Peso		581.69						581.69
Tyler Brace:									
Ukraine	Hryvnia		1,448.24						1,448.24
United States	Dollar				9,423.80				9,423.80
Delegation Expenses:*									
United States	Dollar						492.56		492.56
Total			3,755.88		29,975.50		1,112.56		34,843.94

*Delegation expenses include transportation and other official expenses in accordance with the responsibilites of the host country.

SENATOR ORRIN G. HATCH,
Chairman, Committee on Finance, July 20, 2015.

CONSOLIDATED REPORT OF EXPENDITURE OF FUNDS FOR FOREIGN TRAVEL BY MEMBERS AND EMPLOYEES OF THE U.S. SENATE, UNDER AUTHORITY OF SEC. 22, P.L. 95–384—22 U.S.C. 1754(b), COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS FOR TRAVEL FROM APR. 6 TO JUNE 30, 2015

Name and country	Name of currency	Per diem		Transportation		Miscellaneous		Total	
		Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency
Senator John Barrasso:									
Germany	Euro		290.37						290.37
Estonia	Euro		211.30						211.30
Czech Republic	Koruna		330.11						330.11
Romania	Leu		228.95						228.95
Spain	Euro		139.56						139.56
Delegation Expenses:*									
Estonia	Euro						173.81		173.81
Czech Republic	Koruna						88.47		88.47
Romania	Leu						80.37		80.37
Spain	Euro						16.76		16.76
Senator John Barrasso:									
Ukraine	Hryvnia		240.59						240.59
Slovakia	Euro		265.66						265.66
United States	Dollar				12,257.20				12,257.20
Delegation Expenses:*									
Ukraine	Hryvnia						2,675.14		2,675.14
Slovakia	Euro						495.46		495.46
Senator Ben Cardin:									
France	Euro		1,607.83						1,607.83
Denmark	Krone		372.63						372.63
Debbie Yamada:									
France	Euro		1,656.49						1,656.49
Denmark	Krone		337.13						337.13
Delegation Expenses:*									
France	Euro						2,463.20		2,463.20
Denmark	Krone						1,643.65		1,643.65
Senator Ben Cardin:									
Cuba	Dollar		905.00						905.00
Brandon Yoder:									
Cuba	Dollar		670.94						670.94
Delegation Expenses:*									
Cuba	Dollar						1,204.28		1,204.28
Senator Christopher Coons:									
Tunisia	Dinar		252.31						252.31
Chad	Central African Franc		335.34						335.34
Kenya	Shilling		764.08						764.08
Senegal	West African Franc		418.97						418.97
Thomas Mancinelli:									
Tunisia	Dinar		244.31						244.31
Chad	Central African Franc		317.43						317.43
Kenya	Shilling		708.66						708.66
Senegal	West African Franc		465.04						465.04
Delegation Expenses:*									
Tunisia	Dinar						140.00		140.00
Chad	Central African Franc						214.15		214.15
Kenya	Shilling						636.20		636.20
Senegal	West African Franc						430.18		430.18
Senator Jeff Flake:									
Cuba	Dollar		684.58						684.58
Chandler Morse:									
Cuba	Dollar		641.00						641.00
Delegation Expenses:*									
Cuba	Dollar						362.66		362.66
Senator Jeanne Shaheen:									
Poland	Zlotych		150.11						150.11
Latvia	Lati		122.89						122.89
United States	Dollar				9,339.30				9,339.30
Joshua Lucas:									
Poland	Zlotych		150.11						150.11
Latvia	Lati		124.46						124.46
United States	Dollar				9,339.30				9,339.30
Delegation Expenses:*									
Poland	Zlotych						349.46		349.46
Latvia	Lati						901.42		901.42
Senator Tom Udall:									
Cuba	Dollar		2,265.00						2,265.00
Matthew Padilla:									
Cuba	Dollar		1,830.00						1,830.00
Delegation Expenses:*									
Cuba	Dollar						1,274.85		1,274.85
Brooke Eisele:									
Morocco	Dirham		592.00						592.00
Algeria	Dinar		668.00						668.00
United States	Dollar				4,045.20				4,045.20
Delegation Expenses:*									
Morocco	Dirham						690.00		690.00
Heather Flynn:									
Kenya	Shilling		1,728.00						1,728.00
South Sudan	Pound		115.00						115.00
Ethiopia	Birr		1,870.00						1,870.00
United States	Dollar				5,328.82				5,328.82
Charlotte Oldham Moore:									
Kenya	Shilling		1,728.00						1,728.00
South Sudan	Pound		115.00						115.00
United States	Dollar				5,328.82				5,328.82
Delegation Expenses:*									
Kenya	Shilling						3,901.06		3,901.06
Ethiopia	Birr						24.18		24.18
Carolyn Leddy:									
Korea	Won		1,008.72						1,008.72
Hong Kong	Dollar		419.90						419.90
Japan	Yen		734.50						734.50
United States	Dollar				5,787.30				5,787.30
Igor Krestin:									
Korea	Won		858.36						858.36
Hong Kong	Dollar		527.41						527.41
Japan	Yen		840.07						840.07
United States	Dollar				5,063.30				5,063.30
Michael Schiffer:									
Korea	Won		834.34						834.34
Hong Kong	Dollar		518.94						518.94
Japan	Yen		555.31						555.31
United States	Dollar				3,878.20				3,878.20
Delegation Expenses:*									
Korea	Won						462.31		462.31

CONSOLIDATED REPORT OF EXPENDITURE OF FUNDS FOR FOREIGN TRAVEL BY MEMBERS AND EMPLOYEES OF THE U.S. SENATE, UNDER AUTHORITY OF SEC. 22, P.L. 95–384—22 U.S.C. 1754(b), COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS FOR TRAVEL FROM APR. 6 TO JUNE 30, 2015—Continued

Name and country	Name of currency	Per diem		Transportation		Miscellaneous		Total	
		Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency
Hong Kong	Dollar						1,239.29		1,239.29
Japan	Yen						803.46		803.46
Carolyn Leddy:									
China	Renminbi		811.76						811.76
Hong Kong	Dollar		548.30						548.30
Taiwan	Dollar		567.18						567.18
United States	Dollar				11,043.60				11,043.60
Jaime Fly:									
Hong Kong	Dollar		1,119.12						1,119.12
Taiwan	Dollar		592.00						592.00
United States	Dollar				14,569.90				14,569.90
Delegation Expenses: *									
China	Renminbi						467.00		467.00
Hong Kong	Dollar						309.00		309.00
Taiwan	Dollar						218.29		218.29
Caleb McCarry:									
Honduras	Lempira		322.32						322.32
El Salvador	Dollar		427.40						427.40
Guatemala	Quetzal		421.53						421.53
United States	Dollar				1,251.40				1,251.40
Sarah Ramig:									
Honduras	Lempira		237.49						237.49
El Salvador	Dollar		396.59						396.59
Guatemala	Quetzal		237.61						237.61
United States	Dollar				1,199.20				1,199.20
Brandon Yoder:									
Honduras	Lempira		487.00						487.00
El Salvador	Dollar		396.40						396.40
Guatemala	Quetzal		411.20						411.20
United States	Dollar				1,094.30				1,094.30
Delegation Expenses: *									
Honduras	Lempira						456.95		456.95
El Salvador	Dollar						482.43		482.43
Guatemala	Quetzal						513.85		513.85
Damian Murphy:									
Latvia	Lati		254.00						254.00
Estonia	Euro		500.44						500.44
Ukraine	Hryvnia		1,188.00						1,188.00
United States	Dollar				4,016.14				4,016.14
John Rader:									
Latvia	Lati		254.00						254.00
Estonia	Euro		500.44						500.44
Ukraine	Hryvnia		1,188.00						1,188.00
United States	Dollar				4,016.14				4,016.14
Delegation Expenses: *									
Latvia	Lati						208.28		208.28
Ukraine	Hryvnia						1,419.72		1,419.72
Stacie Oliver:									
United Arab Emirates	Dirham		437.60						437.60
Bahrain	Dirham		270.99						270.99
Qatar	Riyal		553.13						553.13
United States	Dollar				4,935.80				4,935.80
David Kinzler:									
United Arab Emirates	Dirham		473.61						473.61
Bahrain	Dirham		357.60						357.60
Qatar	Riyal		589.30						589.30
United States	Dollar				4,935.80				4,935.80
Delegation Expenses: *									
United Arab Emirates	Dirham						232.90		232.90
Bahrain	Dirham						259.70		259.70
Qatar	Riyal						225.28		225.28
Andrew Olson:									
Belgium	Euro		653.74						653.74
Switzerland	Franc		1,392.73						1,392.73
United States	Dollar				3,255.50				3,255.50
Delegation Expenses: *									
Belgium	Euro						1,194.11		1,194.11
Michael Schiffer:									
China	Renminbi		1,152.60						1,152.60
Philippines	Peso		445.00						445.00
Thailand	Bhat		358.21						358.21
Singapore	Dollar		3,007.03						3,007.03
United States	Dollar				16,459.90				16,459.90
Delegation Expenses: *									
Thailand	Bhat						270.52		270.52
Lowell Schwartz:									
Belgium	Euro		839.82						839.82
Germany	Euro		328.00						328.00
United States	Dollar				3,224.90				3,224.90
Total			51,564.54		130,370.02		26,528.39		208,462.95

* Delegation expenses include payments and reimbursements to the Department of State under authority of Sec. 502(b) of the Mutual Security Act of 1954, as amended by Section 22 of P.L. 95–384, and S. Res. 179 agreed to May 25, 1977.

SENATOR BOB CORKER,
Chairman, Committee on Foreign Relations, July 21, 2015.

CONSOLIDATED REPORT OF EXPENDITURE OF FUNDS FOR FOREIGN TRAVEL BY MEMBERS AND EMPLOYEES OF THE U.S. SENATE, UNDER AUTHORITY OF SEC. 22, P.L. 95–384—22 U.S.C. 1754(b), COMMITTEE ON HEALTH, EDUCATION, LABOR, AND PENSIONS FOR TRAVEL FROM APR. 1 TO JUNE 30, 2015

Name and country	Name of currency	Per diem		Transportation		Miscellaneous		Total	
		Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency
Mary Sumpter Lapinski:									
United States	Dollar				11,094.00				11,094.00
Belgium	Euro		790.07						790.07
United Kingdom	Pound		1,506.42						1,506.42
Grace Stuntz:									
United States	Dollar				11,094.00				11,094.00
Belgium	Euro		772.07						772.07

CONSOLIDATED REPORT OF EXPENDITURE OF FUNDS FOR FOREIGN TRAVEL BY MEMBERS AND EMPLOYEES OF THE U.S. SENATE, UNDER AUTHORITY OF SEC. 22, P.L. 95–384—22 U.S.C. 1754(b), COMMITTEE ON HEALTH, EDUCATION, LABOR, AND PENSIONS FOR TRAVEL FROM APR. 1 TO JUNE 30, 2015—Continued

Name and country	Name of currency	Per diem		Transportation		Miscellaneous		Total	
		Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency
United Kingdom	Pound		1,525.18						1,525.18
Delegation Expenses:*									
Belgium	Euro						263.78		263.78
United Kingdom	Pound						1,731.43		1,731.43
Total			4,593.74		22,188.00		1,995.21		28,776.95

*Delegation expenses include payments and reimbursements to the Department of State under the authority of Sec. 502(b) of the Mutual Security Act of 1954, as amended by Sec. 22 of P.L. 95–384, and S. Res. 179 agreed to May 25, 1977.

SENATOR LAMAR ALEXANDER,
Chairman, Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions, July 17, 2015.

CONSOLIDATED REPORT OF EXPENDITURE OF FUNDS FOR FOREIGN TRAVEL BY MEMBERS AND EMPLOYEES OF THE U.S. SENATE, UNDER AUTHORITY OF SEC. 22, P.L. 95–384—22 U.S.C. 1754(b), SENATE SELECT COMMITTEE ON INTELLIGENCE FOR TRAVEL FROM APRIL 1 TO JUNE 30, 2015

Name and country	Name of currency	Per diem		Transportation		Miscellaneous		Total	
		Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency
Christopher Joyner	Dollar		301.59						301.59
	Dollar		374.00						374.00
	Dollar		271.00						271.00
	Dollar		300.00						300.00
	Dollar				13,284.60				13,284.60
Ryan Tully	Dollar		301.59						301.59
	Dollar		374.00						374.00
	Dollar		271.00						271.00
	Dollar		300.00						300.00
	Dollar				13,284.60				13,284.60
Ryan Kaldahl	Dollar		301.59						301.59
	Dollar		374.00						374.00
	Dollar		271.00						271.00
	Dollar		300.00						300.00
	Dollar				13,284.60				13,284.60
Michael Pevzner	Dollar		301.59						301.59
	Dollar		374.00						374.00
	Dollar		271.00						271.00
	Dollar				13,274.60				13,274.60
Tressa Guenov	Dollar		496.00						496.00
	Dollar		125.00						125.00
	Dollar		410.00						410.00
	Dollar		164.00						164.00
Brian Miller	Dollar		496.00						496.00
	Dollar		125.00						125.00
	Dollar		410.00						410.00
	Dollar		164.00						164.00
Emily Harding	Dollar		496.00						496.00
	Dollar		125.00						125.00
	Dollar		410.00						410.00
	Dollar		164.00						164.00
James Catella	Dollar		496.00						496.00
	Dollar		125.00						125.00
	Dollar		140.00						140.00
	Dollar		164.00						164.00
John Matchison	Dollar		194.00						194.00
	Dollar		169.00						169.00
	Dollar				14,820.70				14,820.70
Christian Cook	Dollar		446.00						446.00
	Dollar		194.00						194.00
	Dollar		169.00						169.00
	Dollar				19,311.60				19,311.60
Jennifer Barrett	Dollar		446.00						446.00
	Dollar		194.00						194.00
	Dollar		169.00						169.00
	Dollar				19,311.60				19,311.60
Brian Walsh	Dollar		289.00						289.00
	Dollar		336.00						336.00
	Dollar				7,850.62				7,850.62
Nick Basciano	Dollar		289.00						289.00
	Dollar		336.00						336.00
	Dollar				7,850.62				7,850.62
Walter Weiss	Dollar		130.00						130.00
Ryan Kaldahl	Dollar		326.00						326.00
Hayden Milberg	Dollar		278.00						278.00
	Dollar		282.00						282.00
	Dollar				8,394.00				8,394.00
Tom Hawkins	Dollar		278.00						278.00
	Dollar		282.00						282.00
	Dollar				8,394.00				8,394.00
Paul Matulic	Dollar		278.00						278.00
	Dollar		282.00						282.00
	Dollar				8,394.00				8,394.00
Total			14,563.36		147,455.54				162,018.90

SENATOR RICHARD BURR,
Chairman, Senate Select Committee on Intelligence, July 28, 2015.

CONSOLIDATED REPORT OF EXPENDITURE OF FUNDS FOR FOREIGN TRAVEL BY MEMBERS AND EMPLOYEES OF THE U.S. SENATE, UNDER AUTHORITY OF SEC. 22, P.L. 95–384—22 U.S.C. 1754(b), COMMITTEE ON HOMELAND SECURITY AND GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS FOR TRAVEL FROM APR. 1 TO JUNE 30, 2015

Name and country	Name of currency	Per diem		Transportation		Miscellaneous		Total	
		Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency
Senator Rob Portman:									
United States	Dollar				16,623.80				16,623.80

CONSOLIDATED REPORT OF EXPENDITURE OF FUNDS FOR FOREIGN TRAVEL BY MEMBERS AND EMPLOYEES OF THE U.S. SENATE, UNDER AUTHORITY OF SEC. 22, P.L. 95–384—22 U.S.C. 1754(b), COMMITTEE ON HOMELAND SECURITY AND GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS FOR TRAVEL FROM APR. 1 TO JUNE 30, 2015—Continued

Name and country	Name of currency	Per diem		Transportation		Miscellaneous		Total	
		Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency
Ukraine	Hryvnia		251.85						251.85
Latvia	Euro		213.41						213.41
Brent Bombach:									
United States	Dollar				14,668.70				14,668.70
Ukraine	Hryvnia		251.85						251.85
Latvia	Euro		209.41						209.41
Senator Rob Portman:									
United States	Dollar				9,811.36				9,811.36
Israel	Shekel		1,270.00						1,270.00
Brent Bombach:									
United States	Dollar				9,811.36				9,811.36
Israel	Shekel		1,490.00						1,490.00
Mark Isakowitz:									
United States	Dollar				9,811.36				9,811.36
Israel	Shekel		1,409.00						1,409.00
Senator Tammy Baldwin:									
Tunisia	Dinar		169.49						169.49
Chad	Franc		256.86						256.86
Kenya	Shilling		759.19						759.19
Senegal	Franc		240.19						240.19
Senator Gary Peters:									
Tunisia	Dinar		179.19						179.19
Chad	Franc		280.24						280.24
Kenya	Shilling		801.78						801.78
Senegal	Franc		296.95						296.95
Jeremy Steslicki:									
Tunisia	Dinar		175.55						175.55
Chad	Franc		262.92						262.92
Kenya	Shilling		765.25						765.25
Senegal	Franc		246.25						246.25
Edward Jordan Wells:									
Tunisia	Dinar		179.19						179.19
Chad	Franc		306.64						306.64
Kenya	Shilling		813.58						813.58
Senegal	Franc		226.09						226.09
Jose Bautista:									
United States	Dollar				1,059.30				1,059.30
Honduras	Dollar		388.00						388.00
El Salvador	Dollar		396.50						396.50
Guatemala	Dollar		370.00						370.00
Brooke Ericson:									
United States	Dollar				1,482.83				1,482.83
Guatemala	Dollar		376.00						376.00
El Salvador	Dollar		348.00						348.00
Stephen Vina:									
United States	Dollar				1,097.70				1,097.70
Honduras	Dollar		395.63						395.63
El Salvador	Dollar		370.07						370.07
Holly Idelson:									
United States	Dollar				1,199.20				1,199.20
Honduras	Dollar		359.00						359.00
El Salvador	Dollar		345.88						345.88
Guatemala	Dollar		336.00						336.00
Delegation Expenses: *									
Ukraine	Hryvnia						134.02		134.02
Latvia	Euro						1,387.07		1,387.07
Israel	Shekel						17,360.89		17,360.89
Total			14,739.96		65,565.61		18,881.98		99,187.55

*Delegation expenses include payments and reimbursements to the Department of State under authority of Sec. 502(b) of the Mutual Security Act of 1954, as amended by Section 22 of P.L. 95–384, and S. Res. 179 agreed to May 25, 1977.

SENATOR RON JOHNSON,
Chairman, Committee on Homeland Security & Governmental Affairs
July 23, 2015.

CONSOLIDATED REPORT OF EXPENDITURE OF FUNDS FOR FOREIGN TRAVEL BY MEMBERS AND EMPLOYEES OF THE U.S. SENATE, UNDER AUTHORITY OF SEC. 22, P.L. 95–384—22 U.S.C. 1754(b), COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY FOR TRAVEL FROM APR. 1 TO JUNE 30, 2015

Name and country	Name of currency	Per diem		Transportation		Miscellaneous		Total	
		Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency
Senator Al Franken:									
Cuba	Peso		1,278.15						1,278.15
Casey Aden-Wansbury:									
Cuba	Peso		1,202.00						1,202.00
Delegation Expenses: *									
Cuba	Peso						2,231.00		2,231.00
Senator John Cornyn:									
Germany	Euro		270.37						270.37
Estonia	Euro		224.70						224.70
Czech Republic	Koruna		305.49						305.49
Romania	Leu		231.01						231.01
Spain	Euro		33.56						33.56
Russell Thomasson:									
Germany	Euro		281.32						281.32
Estonia	Euro		190.17						190.17
Czech Republic	Koruna		326.47						326.47
Romania	Leu		272.50						272.50
Spain	Euro		83.20						83.20
Delegation Expenses: *									
Estonia	Euro						347.64		347.64
Czech Republic	Koruna						175.94		175.94
Romania	Leu						160.75		160.75
Total			4,698.94				2,915.33		7,614.27

*Delegation expenses include payments and reimbursements to the Department of State under authority of Sec. 502(b) of the Mutual Security Act of 1954, as amended by Section 22 of P.L. 95–384, and S. Res. 179 agreed to May 25, 1977.

SENATOR CHUCK GRASSLEY,
Chairman, Committee on the Judiciary, July 28, 2015.

CONSOLIDATED REPORT OF EXPENDITURE OF FUNDS FOR FOREIGN TRAVEL BY MEMBERS AND EMPLOYEES OF THE U.S. SENATE, UNDER AUTHORITY OF SEC. 22, P.L. 95–384—22 U.S.C. 1754(b), COMMISSION ON SECURITY AND COOPERATION IN EUROPE FOR TRAVEL FROM APR. 1 TO JUNE 30, 2015

Name and country	Name of currency	Per diem		Transportation		Miscellaneous		Total	
		Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency
David Killion:									
France	Euro		359.37						359.37
Denmark	Krone		439.24						439.24
Lithuania	Euro		975.00						975.00
United States	Dollar				11,350.60				11,350.60
South Korea	Won		776.00						776.00
China	Renembi		507.00						507.00
United States	Dollar				12,982.80				12,982.80
Total			3,056.61		24,333.40				27,390.01

SENATOR ROGER F. WICKER,
Chairman, Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe, July 14, 2015.

CONSOLIDATED REPORT OF EXPENDITURE OF FUNDS FOR FOREIGN TRAVEL BY MEMBERS AND EMPLOYEES OF THE U.S. SENATE, UNDER AUTHORITY OF SEC. 22, P.L. 95–384—22 U.S.C. 1754(b), MAJORITY LEADER FOR TRAVEL FROM MAR. 27 TO APR. 4, 2015

Name and country	Name of currency	Per diem		Transportation		Miscellaneous		Total	
		Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency
Senator Mitch McConnell:									
Ireland	Dollar		181.05						181.05
Israel	Dollar		460.00						460.00
Jordan	Dollar		528.82						528.82
Iraq	Dollar		61.00		1,650.00				1,711.00
Kuwait	Dollar		317.79						317.79
Afghanistan	Dollar		56.00						56.00
United Kingdom	Dollar		75.00						75.00
Senator Shelley Moore Capito:									
Ireland	Dollar		190.47						190.47
Israel	Dollar		460.00						460.00
Jordan	Dollar		528.82						528.82
Iraq	Dollar		61.00		1,650.00				1,711.00
Kuwait	Dollar		317.79						317.79
Afghanistan	Dollar		56.00						56.00
United Kingdom	Dollar		69.00						69.00
Senator Cory Gardner:									
Ireland	Dollar		180.61						180.61
Israel	Dollar		460.00						460.00
Jordan	Dollar		528.82						528.82
Iraq	Dollar		61.00		1,650.00				1,711.00
Kuwait	Dollar		417.79						417.79
Afghanistan	Dollar		56.00						56.00
United Kingdom	Dollar		69.00						69.00
Senator Steve Daines:									
Ireland	Dollar		187.31						187.31
Israel	Dollar		460.00						460.00
Jordan	Dollar		528.82						528.82
Iraq	Dollar		61.00		1,650.00				1,711.00
Kuwait	Dollar		317.79						317.79
Afghanistan	Dollar		56.00						56.00
United Kingdom	Dollar		69.00						69.00
Senator David Perdue:									
Ireland	Dollar		237.00						237.00
Israel	Dollar		460.00						460.00
Jordan	Dollar		528.82						528.82
Iraq	Dollar		61.00		1,650.00				1,711.00
Kuwait	Dollar		317.79						317.79
Afghanistan	Dollar		56.00						56.00
United Kingdom	Dollar		69.00						69.00
Senator Thom Tillis:									
Ireland	Dollar		179.96						179.96
Israel	Dollar		460.00						460.00
Jordan	Dollar		528.82						528.82
Iraq	Dollar		61.00		1,650.00				1,711.00
Kuwait	Dollar		417.79						417.79
Afghanistan	Dollar		56.00						56.00
United Kingdom	Dollar		69.00						69.00
Senator Ben Sasse:									
Ireland	Dollar		185.61						185.61
Israel	Dollar		460.00						460.00
Jordan	Dollar		528.82						528.82
Iraq	Dollar		61.00		1,650.00				1,711.00
Kuwait	Dollar		317.79						317.79
Afghanistan	Dollar		56.00						56.00
United Kingdom	Dollar		69.00						69.00
Brian Monahan:									
Ireland	Dollar		197.82						197.82
Israel	Dollar		460.00						460.00
Jordan	Dollar		528.82						528.82
Iraq	Dollar		61.00		1,650.00				1,711.00
Kuwait	Dollar		317.79						317.79
Afghanistan	Dollar		56.00						56.00
United Kingdom	Dollar		169.00						169.00
Thomas Hawkins:									
Ireland	Dollar		203.46						203.46
Israel	Dollar		460.00						460.00
Jordan	Dollar		528.82						528.82
Iraq	Dollar		61.00		1,650.00				1,711.00
Kuwait	Dollar		417.79						417.79
Afghanistan	Dollar		56.00						56.00
United Kingdom	Dollar		169.00						169.00
Stefanie Muchow:									
Ireland	Dollar		193.94						193.94
Israel	Dollar		460.00						460.00
Jordan	Dollar		528.82						528.82
Iraq	Dollar		61.00		500.00				561.00
Kuwait	Dollar		317.79						317.79
Afghanistan	Dollar		56.00						56.00

CONSOLIDATED REPORT OF EXPENDITURE OF FUNDS FOR FOREIGN TRAVEL BY MEMBERS AND EMPLOYEES OF THE U.S. SENATE, UNDER AUTHORITY OF SEC. 22, P.L. 95–384—22 U.S.C. 1754(b), MAJORITY LEADER FOR TRAVEL FROM MAR. 27 TO APR. 4, 2015—Continued

Name and country	Name of currency	Per diem		Transportation		Miscellaneous		Total	
		Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency
United Kingdom	Dollar		69.00						69.00
Philip Maxson:									
Ireland	Dollar		150.11						150.11
Israel	Dollar		460.00						460.00
Jordan	Dollar		528.82						528.82
Iraq	Dollar		61.00		500.00				561.00
Kuwait	Dollar		317.79						317.79
Afghanistan	Dollar		56.00						56.00
United Kingdom	Dollar		69.00						69.00
Delegation Expenses:*									
Ireland	Dollar						276.64		276.64
Israel	Dollar						10,642.10		10,642.10
Jordan	Dollar						3,483.37		3,483.37
Iraq	Dollar						122.80		122.80
Kuwait	Dollar						1,002.78		1,002.78
Afghanistan	Dollar						122.80		122.80
Totals			19,012.05		15,850.00		15,650.49		50,512.54

*Delegation expenses include payments and reimbursements to the Department of State under authority of Sec. 502(b) of the Mutual Security Act of 1954, as amended by Section 22 of P.L. 95–384, and S. Res. 179 agreed to May 25, 1977.

SENATOR MITCH McCONNELL,
Majority Leader, May 22, 2015.

HIRE MORE HEROES ACT OF 2015

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the title amendment, which is at the desk, to H.R. 22 be considered and agreed to.

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

The amendment (No. 2542) was agreed to, as follows:

(Purpose: To amend the title)

Amend the title so as to read: ''To authorize funds for Federal-aid highways, highway safety programs, and transit programs, and for other purposes.''.

EDWARD ''TED'' KAUFMAN AND MICHAEL LEAVITT PRESIDENTIAL TRANSITIONS IMPROVEMENTS ACT OF 2015

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of Calendar No. 166, S. 1172.

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

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 1172) to improve the process of presidential transition.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the bill, which had been reported from the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs, with amendments, as follows:

(The parts intended to be inserted in the bill are shown in italic.)

S. 1172

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 ''*Edward 'Ted' Kaufman and Michael Leavitt* Presidential Transitions Improvements Act of 2015''.

SEC. 2. PRESIDENTIAL TRANSITION IMPROVEMENTS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Presidential Transition Act of 1963 (3 U.S.C. 102 note) is amended—

(1) by redesignating sections 4, 5, and 6 as sections 5, 6, and 7, respectively; and

(2) by inserting after section 3 the following:

''SEC. 4. TRANSITION SERVICES AND ACTIVITIES BEFORE ELECTION.

''(a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section—

''(1) the term 'Administrator' means the Administrator of General Services;

''(2) the term 'agency' means an Executive agency, as defined in section 105 of title 5, United States Code;

''(3) the term 'eligible candidate' has the meaning given that term in section 3(h)(4); and

''(4) the term 'Presidential election' means a general election held to determine the electors of President and Vice President under section 1 or 2 of title 3, United States Code.

''(b) GENERAL DUTIES.—The President shall take such actions as the President determines necessary and appropriate to plan and coordinate activities by the Executive branch of the Federal Government to facilitate an efficient transfer of power to a successor President, including by—

''(1) establishing and operating a White House transition coordinating council in accordance with subsection (d); and

''(2) establishing and operating an agency transition directors council in accordance with subsection (e).

''(c) FEDERAL TRANSITION COORDINATOR.—The Administrator shall designate an employee of the General Services Administration who is a senior career appointee to—

''(1) carry out the duties and authorities of the General Services Administration relating to Presidential transitions under this Act or any other provision of law;

''(2) serve as the Federal Transition Coordinator with responsibility for coordinating transition planning across agencies, including through the agency transition directors council established under subsection (e);

''(3) ensure agencies comply with all statutory requirements relating to transition planning and reporting; and

''(4) act as a liaison to eligible candidates.

''(d) WHITE HOUSE TRANSITION COORDINATING COUNCIL.—

''(1) ESTABLISHMENT.—Not later than 6 months before the date of a Presidential election, the President shall establish a White House transition coordinating council for purposes of facilitating the Presidential transition.

''(2) DUTIES.—The White House transition coordinating council shall—

''(A) provide guidance to agencies and the Federal Transition Coordinator regarding preparations for the Presidential transition, including succession planning and preparation of briefing materials;

''(B) facilitate communication and information sharing between the transition representatives of eligible candidates and senior employees in agencies and the Executive Office of the President; and

''(C) prepare and host interagency emergency preparedness and response exercises.

''(3) MEMBERSHIP.—The members of the White House transition coordinating council shall include—

''(A) senior employees of the Executive branch selected by the President, which may include the Chief of Staff to the President, any Cabinet officer, the Director of the Office of Management and Budget, the Administrator, the Director of the Office of Personnel Management, the Director of the Office of Government Ethics, and the Archivist of the United States;

''(B) the Federal Transition Coordinator;

''(C) the transition representative for each eligible candidate, who shall serve in an advisory capacity; and

''(D) any other individual the President determines appropriate.

''(4) CHAIRPERSON.—The Chairperson of the White House transition coordinating council shall be a senior employee in the Executive Office of the President, designated by the President.

''(e) AGENCY TRANSITION DIRECTORS COUNCIL.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—The President shall establish and operate an agency transition directors council, which shall—

''(A) ensure the Federal Government has an integrated strategy for addressing interagency challenges and responsibilities around Presidential transitions and turnover of noncareer appointees;

''(B) coordinate transition activities between the Executive Office of the President, agencies, and the transition team of eligible candidates and the President-elect and Vice-President-elect; and

''(C) draw on guidance provided by the White House transition coordinating council and lessons learned from previous Presidential transitions in carrying out its duties.

''(2) DUTIES.—As part of carrying out the responsibilities under paragraph (1), the agency transition directors council shall—

''(A) assist the Federal Transition Coordinator in identifying and carrying out the responsibilities of the Federal Transition Coordinator relating to a Presidential transition;

''(B) provide guidance to agencies in gathering briefing materials and information relating to the Presidential transition that may be requested by eligible candidates;

''(C) ensure materials and information described in subparagraph (B) are prepared not later than November 1 of a year during which a Presidential election is held;

''(D) ensure agencies adequately prepare career employees who are designated to fill non-career positions under subsection (f) during a Presidential transition; and

''(E) consult with the President's Management Council, or any successor thereto, in carrying out the duties of the agency transition directors council.

''(3) MEMBERSHIP.—The members of the agency transition directors council shall include—

''(A) the Federal Transition Coordinator, who shall serve as Chairperson of the agency transition directors council;

''(B) a senior employee serving in the Executive Office of the President, who shall be appointed by the President;

''(C) a senior representative from each agency described in section 901(b)(1) of title 31, United States Code, the Office of Personnel Management, the Office of Government Ethics, and the National Archives and Records Administration whose responsibilities include leading Presidential transition efforts within the agency;

''(D) a senior representative from any other agency determined by the Federal Transition Coordinator to be an agency that has significant responsibilities relating to the Presidential transition process; and

''(E) during a year during which a Presidential election will be held, a transition representative for each eligible candidate, who shall serve in an advisory capacity.

''(4) MEETINGS.—The agency transition directors council shall meet—

''(A) subject to subparagraph (B), not less than once per year; and

''(B) during the period beginning on the date that is 6 months before a Presidential election and ending on the date on which the President-elect is inaugurated, on a regular basis as necessary to carry out the duties and authorities of the agency transition directors council.

''(f) INTERIM AGENCY LEADERSHIP FOR TRANSITIONS.—

''(1) OVERSIGHT AND IMPLEMENTATION OF TRANSITION.—Not later than 6 months before the date of a Presidential election, the head of each agency shall designate a senior career employee of the agency and a senior career employee of each major component and subcomponent of the agency to oversee and implement the activities of the agency, component, or subcomponent relating to the Presidential transition.

''(2) ACTING OFFICERS.—Not later than September 15 of a year during which a Presidential election occurs, and in accordance with subchapter III of chapter 33 of title 5, United States Code, for each noncareer position in an agency that the head of the agency determines is critical, the head of the agency shall designate a qualified career employee to serve in the position in an acting capacity if the position becomes vacant.

''(g) MEMORANDUMS OF UNDERSTANDING.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than November 1 of a year during which a Presidential election occurs, the President (acting through the Federal Transition Coordinator) shall, to the maximum extent practicable, negotiate a memorandum of understanding with the transition representative of each eligible candidate, which shall include, at a minimum, the conditions of access to employees, facilities, and documents of agencies by transition staff.

''(2) EXISTING RESOURCES.—To the maximum extent practicable, the memorandums of understanding negotiated under paragraph (1) shall be based on memorandums of understanding from previous Presidential transitions.

''(h) EQUITY IN ASSISTANCE.—Any information or other assistance provided to eligible candidates under this section shall be offered on an equal basis and without regard to political affiliation.

''(i) REPORTS.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—The President, acting through the Federal Transition Coordinator, shall submit to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs of the Senate reports describing the activities undertaken by the President and agencies to prepare for the transfer of power to a new President.

''(2) TIMING.—The reports under paragraph (1) shall be provided 6 months and 3 months before the date of a Presidential election.''.

(b) OTHER IMPROVEMENTS.—Section 3 of the Presidential Transition Act of 1963 (3 U.S.C. 102 note) is amended—

(1) in subsection (a)—

(A) in paragraph (8)—

(i) in subparagraph (A)(i)—

(I) by inserting ''and during the term of a President'' after ''during the transition''; and

(II) by striking ''after inauguration''; and

(ii) in subparagraph (B), by inserting ''or Executive agencies (as defined in section 105 of title 5, United States Code)'' before the period; and

(B) in paragraph (10), by inserting ''including, to the greatest extent practicable, human resource management system software compatible with the software used by the incumbent President and likely to be used by the President-elect and Vice President-elect'' before the period;

(2) in subsection (b)(2), by striking ''30 days'' and inserting ''180 days'';

(3) in subsection (g), by inserting ''except for activities under subsection (a)(8)(A),'' before ''there shall be no''; and

(4) in subsection (h)(2), by adding at the end the following:

''(D) An eligible candidate shall have a right to the services and facilities described in this paragraph until the date on which the Administrator is able to determine the apparent successful candidates for the office of President and Vice President.''.

(c) TECHNICAL AND CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.—

(1) Section 3 of the Pre-Election Presidential Transition Act of 2010 (3 U.S.C. 102 note) is repealed.

(2) The Presidential Transition Act of 1963 (3 U.S.C. 102 note) is amended—

(A) in section 3—

(i) in subsection (a)(4)(B), by striking ''section 6'' and inserting ''section 7'';

(ii) in subsection (b), in the matter preceding paragraph (1), by striking ''section 3 of this Act'' and inserting ''this section''; and

(iii) in subsection (h)(3)(B)(iii), by striking ''section 5'' each place it appears and inserting ''section 6'';

(B) in section 6, as redesignated by subsection (a) of this section, by striking ''section 6(a)(1)'' each place it appears and inserting ''section 7(a)(1)''; and

(C) in section (7)(a)(2), as redesignated by subsection (a) of this section, by striking ''section 4'' and inserting ''section 5''.

(3) Section 8331(1)(K) of title 5, United States Code, is amended by striking ''section 4'' and inserting ''section 5''.

(4) Section 8701(a)(10) of title 5, United States Code, is amended by striking ''section 4'' and inserting ''section 5''.

(5) Section 8901(1)(I) of title 5, United States Code, is amended by striking ''section 4'' and inserting ''section 5''.

SEC. 3. NATIONAL ARCHIVES PRESIDENTIAL TRANSITION.

Section 2203(g) of title 44, United States Code, is amended—

(1) by redesignating paragraph (3) as paragraph (4); and

(2) by inserting after paragraph (2) the following:

''(3) When the President considers it practicable and in the public interest, the President shall include in the President's budget transmitted to Congress, for each fiscal year in which the term of office of the President will expire, such funds as may be necessary for carrying out the authorities of this subsection.''.

SEC. 4. REPORTS ON POLITICAL APPOINTEES APPOINTED TO NONPOLITICAL PERMANENT POSITIONS.

(a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section—

(1) the term ''agency'' has the meaning given the term ''Executive agency'' in section 105 of title 5, United States Code;

(2) the term ''covered civil service position'' means a position in the civil service (as defined in section 2101 of title 5, United States Code) that is not—

(A) a temporary position; or

(B) a political position;

(3) the term ''former political appointee'' means an individual who—

(A) is not serving in an appointment to a political position; and

(B) served as a political appointee during the 5-year period ending on the date of the request for an appointment to a covered civil service position in any agency;

(4) the term ''political appointee'' means an individual serving in an appointment to a political position; and

(5) the term ''political position'' means—

(A) a position described under sections 5312 through 5316 of title 5, United States Code (relating to the Executive Schedule);

(B) a noncareer appointment in the Senior Executive Service, as defined under paragraph (7) of section 3132(a) of title 5, United States Code; or

(C) a position in the executive branch of the Government of a confidential or policy-determining character under schedule C of subpart C of part 213 of title 5, Code of Federal Regulations.

(b) REPORTING ON CURRENT OR RECENT POLITICAL APPOINTEES APPOINTED TO COVERED CIVIL SERVICE POSITIONS.—The Director of the Office of Personnel Management shall submit to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform of the House of Representatives a quarterly report regarding requests by agencies to appoint political appointees or former political appointees to covered civil service positions, which shall—

(1) for each request by an agency that a political appointee be appointed to a covered civil service position during the period covered by the quarterly report, provide—

(A) the date on which the request was received by the Office of Personnel Management;

(B) subject to subsection (c), the name of the individual and the political position held by the individual, including title, office, and agency;

(C) the date on which the individual was first appointed to a political position in the agency in which the individual is serving as a political appointee;

(D) the grade and rate of basic pay for the individual as a political appointee;

(E) the proposed covered civil service position, including title, office, and agency, and the proposed grade and rate of basic pay for the individual;

(F) whether the Office of Personnel Management approved or denied the request; and

(G) the date on which the individual was appointed to a covered civil service position, if applicable; and

(2) for each request by an agency that a former political appointee be appointed to a covered civil service position during the period covered by the quarterly report, provide—

(A) the date on which the request was received by the Office of Personnel Management;

(B) subject to subsection (c), the name of the individual and the political position held by the individual, including title, office, and agency;

(C) the date on which the individual was first appointed to any political position;

(D) the grade and rate of basic pay for the individual as a political appointee;

(E) the date on which the individual ceased to serve in a political position;

(F) the proposed covered civil service position, including title, office, and agency, and the proposed grade and rate of basic pay for the individual;

(G) whether the Office of Personnel Management approved or denied the request; and

(H) the date on which the individual was first appointed to a covered civil service position, if applicable.

(c) NAMES AND TITLES OF CERTAIN APPOINTEES.—If determined appropriate by the Director of the Office of Personnel Management, a report submitted under subsection (b) may exclude the name or title of a political appointee or former political appointee—

(1) who—

(A) was requested to be appointed to a covered civil service position; and

(B) was not appointed to a covered civil service position; or

(2) relating to whom a request to be appointed to a covered civil service position is pending at the end of the period covered by that report.

SEC. 5. REPORT ON REGULATIONS PROMULGATED NEAR THE END OF PRESIDENTIAL TERMS.

(a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section—

(1) the term ''covered presidential transition period'' means—

(A) the 120-day period ending on January 20, 1993.

(B) the 120-day period ending on January 20, 2001;

(C) the 120-day period ending on January 20, 2009; and

(D) the 120-day period ending on January 20, 2017;

(2) the term ''covered regulation'' means a final regulation promulgated by an Executive department; and

(3) the term ''Executive department'' has the meaning given that term under section 101 of title 5, United States Code.

(b) REPORTS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Comptroller General of the United States shall submit to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform of the House of Representatives a report regarding covered regulations promulgated during the covered presidential transition periods described in subparagraph (A), (B), or (C) of subsection (a)(1).

(2) NEXT PRESIDENTIAL TRANSITION.—The Comptroller General of the United States shall submit to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform of the House of Representatives a report regarding covered regulations promulgated during the covered presidential transition period described in subsection (a)(1)(D).

(3) CONTENTS OF REPORTS.—The reports required under paragraphs (1) and (2) shall, for each covered presidential transition period covered by the report—

(A) compare the number, scope, and cost (if possible) of, and type of rulemaking procedure used for, covered regulations promulgated during the covered presidential transition period to the number, scope, and cost of, and type of rulemaking procedure used for, covered regulations promulgated during the 120-day periods ending on January 20 of each year after 1988, other than 1993, 2001, and 2009;

(B) determine the statistical significance of any differences identified under subparagraph (A) and whether and to what extent such differences indicate any patterns;

(C) evaluate the size, scope, and effect of the covered regulations promulgated during the covered presidential transition period; and

(D) assess the extent to which the regularly required processes for the promulgation of covered regulations were followed during the covered presidential transition period, including compliance with the requirements under—

(i) chapter 8 of title 5, United States Code (commonly known as the ''Congressional Review Act'');

(ii) the Small Business Regulatory Enforcement Fairness Act of 1996 (5 U.S.C. 601 note);

(iii) chapter 6 of title 5, United States Code (commonly known as the ''Regulatory Flexibility Act''); and

(iv) chapter 35 of title 44, United States Code (commonly known as the ''Paperwork Reduction Act'').

SEC. 6. ANALYSIS OF THREATS AND VULNERABILITIES.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than February 15, 2016, the Secretary of Homeland Security shall submit to Congress a report analyzing the threats and vulnerabilities facing the United States during a presidential transition, which—

(1) shall identify and discuss vulnerabilities related to border security and threats related to terrorism, including from weapons of mass destruction;

(2) shall identify steps being taken to address the threats and vulnerabilities during a presidential transition; and

(3) may include recommendations for actions by components and agencies within the Department of Homeland Security.

(b) FORM.—The report submitted under subsection (a) shall be prepared in unclassified form, but may contain a classified annex.

Mr. MCCONNELL. I further ask unanimous consent that the committee-reported amendments be agreed to; the Carper amendment, which is at the desk, be agreed to; the bill, as amended, be read a third time and passed; and the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate.

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

The committee-reported amendments were agreed to.

The amendment (No. 2543) was agreed to, as follows:

(Purpose: To improve the bill)

On page 7, strike lines 11 through 16 and insert the following:

''(A) the Federal Transition Coordinator and the Deputy Director for Management of the Office of Management and Budget, who shall serve as Co-Chairpersons of the agency transition directors council;

''(B) other senior employees serving in the Executive Office of the President, as determined by the President;

On page 8, lines 2 and 3, strike ''Federal Transition Coordinator'' and insert ''Co-Chairpersons''.

The bill (S. 1172), as amended, was ordered to be engrossed for a third reading, was read the third time, and passed, as follows:

S. 1172

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 ''Edward 'Ted' Kaufman and Michael Leavitt Presidential Transitions Improvements Act of 2015''.

SEC. 2. PRESIDENTIAL TRANSITION IMPROVEMENTS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Presidential Transition Act of 1963 (3 U.S.C. 102 note) is amended—

(1) by redesignating sections 4, 5, and 6 as sections 5, 6, and 7, respectively; and

(2) by inserting after section 3 the following:

''SEC. 4. TRANSITION SERVICES AND ACTIVITIES BEFORE ELECTION.

''(a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section—

''(1) the term 'Administrator' means the Administrator of General Services;

''(2) the term 'agency' means an Executive agency, as defined in section 105 of title 5, United States Code;

''(3) the term 'eligible candidate' has the meaning given that term in section 3(h)(4); and

''(4) the term 'Presidential election' means a general election held to determine the electors of President and Vice President under section 1 or 2 of title 3, United States Code.

''(b) GENERAL DUTIES.—The President shall take such actions as the President determines necessary and appropriate to plan and coordinate activities by the Executive branch of the Federal Government to facilitate an efficient transfer of power to a successor President, including by—

''(1) establishing and operating a White House transition coordinating council in accordance with subsection (d); and

''(2) establishing and operating an agency transition directors council in accordance with subsection (e).

''(c) FEDERAL TRANSITION COORDINATOR.—The Administrator shall designate an employee of the General Services Administration who is a senior career appointee to—

''(1) carry out the duties and authorities of the General Services Administration relating to Presidential transitions under this Act or any other provision of law;

''(2) serve as the Federal Transition Coordinator with responsibility for coordinating transition planning across agencies, including through the agency transition directors council established under subsection (e);

''(3) ensure agencies comply with all statutory requirements relating to transition planning and reporting; and

''(4) act as a liaison to eligible candidates.

''(d) WHITE HOUSE TRANSITION COORDINATING COUNCIL.—

''(1) ESTABLISHMENT.—Not later than 6 months before the date of a Presidential election, the President shall establish a White House transition coordinating council for purposes of facilitating the Presidential transition.

''(2) DUTIES.—The White House transition coordinating council shall—

''(A) provide guidance to agencies and the Federal Transition Coordinator regarding preparations for the Presidential transition, including succession planning and preparation of briefing materials;

''(B) facilitate communication and information sharing between the transition representatives of eligible candidates and senior employees in agencies and the Executive Office of the President; and

''(C) prepare and host interagency emergency preparedness and response exercises.

''(3) MEMBERSHIP.—The members of the White House transition coordinating council shall include—

''(A) senior employees of the Executive branch selected by the President, which may include the Chief of Staff to the President, any Cabinet officer, the Director of the Office of Management and Budget, the Administrator, the Director of the Office of Personnel Management, the Director of the Office of Government Ethics, and the Archivist of the United States;

''(B) the Federal Transition Coordinator;

''(C) the transition representative for each eligible candidate, who shall serve in an advisory capacity; and

''(D) any other individual the President determines appropriate.

''(4) CHAIRPERSON.—The Chairperson of the White House transition coordinating council shall be a senior employee in the Executive Office of the President, designated by the President.

''(e) AGENCY TRANSITION DIRECTORS COUNCIL.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—The President shall establish and operate an agency transition directors council, which shall—

''(A) ensure the Federal Government has an integrated strategy for addressing interagency challenges and responsibilities around Presidential transitions and turnover of noncareer appointees;

''(B) coordinate transition activities between the Executive Office of the President, agencies, and the transition team of eligible candidates and the President-elect and Vice-President-elect; and

''(C) draw on guidance provided by the White House transition coordinating council and lessons learned from previous Presidential transitions in carrying out its duties.

''(2) DUTIES.—As part of carrying out the responsibilities under paragraph (1), the agency transition directors council shall—

''(A) assist the Federal Transition Coordinator in identifying and carrying out the responsibilities of the Federal Transition Coordinator relating to a Presidential transition;

''(B) provide guidance to agencies in gathering briefing materials and information relating to the Presidential transition that may be requested by eligible candidates;

''(C) ensure materials and information described in subparagraph (B) are prepared not later than November 1 of a year during which a Presidential election is held;

''(D) ensure agencies adequately prepare career employees who are designated to fill non-career positions under subsection (f) during a Presidential transition; and

''(E) consult with the President's Management Council, or any successor thereto, in carrying out the duties of the agency transition directors council.

''(3) MEMBERSHIP.—The members of the agency transition directors council shall include—

''(A) the Federal Transition Coordinator and the Deputy Director for Management of the Office of Management and Budget, who shall serve as Co-Chairpersons of the agency transition directors council;

''(B) other senior employees serving in the Executive Office of the President, as determined by the President;

''(C) a senior representative from each agency described in section 901(b)(1) of title 31, United States Code, the Office of Personnel Management, the Office of Government Ethics, and the National Archives and Records Administration whose responsibilities include leading Presidential transition efforts within the agency;

''(D) a senior representative from any other agency determined by the Co-Chairpersons to be an agency that has significant responsibilities relating to the Presidential transition process; and

''(E) during a year during which a Presidential election will be held, a transition representative for each eligible candidate, who shall serve in an advisory capacity.

''(4) MEETINGS.—The agency transition directors council shall meet—

''(A) subject to subparagraph (B), not less than once per year; and

''(B) during the period beginning on the date that is 6 months before a Presidential election and ending on the date on which the President-elect is inaugurated, on a regular basis as necessary to carry out the duties and authorities of the agency transition directors council.

''(f) INTERIM AGENCY LEADERSHIP FOR TRANSITIONS.—

''(1) OVERSIGHT AND IMPLEMENTATION OF TRANSITION.—Not later than 6 months before the date of a Presidential election, the head of each agency shall designate a senior career employee of the agency and a senior career employee of each major component and subcomponent of the agency to oversee and implement the activities of the agency, component, or subcomponent relating to the Presidential transition.

''(2) ACTING OFFICERS.—Not later than September 15 of a year during which a Presidential election occurs, and in accordance with subchapter III of chapter 33 of title 5, United States Code, for each noncareer position in an agency that the head of the agency determines is critical, the head of the agency shall designate a qualified career employee to serve in the position in an acting capacity if the position becomes vacant.

''(g) MEMORANDUMS OF UNDERSTANDING.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than November 1 of a year during which a Presidential election occurs, the President (acting through the Federal Transition Coordinator) shall, to the maximum extent practicable, negotiate a memorandum of understanding with the transition representative of each eligible candidate, which shall include, at a minimum, the conditions of access to employees, facilities, and documents of agencies by transition staff.

''(2) EXISTING RESOURCES.—To the maximum extent practicable, the memorandums of understanding negotiated under paragraph (1) shall be based on memorandums of understanding from previous Presidential transitions.

''(h) EQUITY IN ASSISTANCE.—Any information or other assistance provided to eligible candidates under this section shall be offered on an equal basis and without regard to political affiliation.

''(i) REPORTS.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—The President, acting through the Federal Transition Coordinator, shall submit to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs of the Senate reports describing the activities undertaken by the President and agencies to prepare for the transfer of power to a new President.

''(2) TIMING.—The reports under paragraph (1) shall be provided 6 months and 3 months before the date of a Presidential election.''.

(b) OTHER IMPROVEMENTS.—Section 3 of the Presidential Transition Act of 1963 (3 U.S.C. 102 note) is amended—

(1) in subsection (a)—

(A) in paragraph (8)—

(i) in subparagraph (A)(i)—

(I) by inserting ''and during the term of a President'' after ''during the transition''; and

(II) by striking ''after inauguration''; and

(ii) in subparagraph (B), by inserting ''or Executive agencies (as defined in section 105 of title 5, United States Code)'' before the period; and

(B) in paragraph (10), by inserting ''including, to the greatest extent practicable, human resource management system software compatible with the software used by the incumbent President and likely to be used by the President-elect and Vice President-elect'' before the period;

(2) in subsection (b)(2), by striking ''30 days'' and inserting ''180 days'';

(3) in subsection (g), by inserting ''except for activities under subsection (a)(8)(A),'' before ''there shall be no''; and

(4) in subsection (h)(2), by adding at the end the following:

''(D) An eligible candidate shall have a right to the services and facilities described in this paragraph until the date on which the Administrator is able to determine the apparent successful candidates for the office of President and Vice President.''.

(c) TECHNICAL AND CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.—

(1) Section 3 of the Pre-Election Presidential Transition Act of 2010 (3 U.S.C. 102 note) is repealed.

(2) The Presidential Transition Act of 1963 (3 U.S.C. 102 note) is amended—

(A) in section 3—

(i) in subsection (a)(4)(B), by striking ''section 6'' and inserting ''section 7'';

(ii) in subsection (b), in the matter preceding paragraph (1), by striking ''section 3 of this Act'' and inserting ''this section''; and

(iii) in subsection (h)(3)(B)(iii), by striking ''section 5'' each place it appears and inserting ''section 6'';

(B) in section 6, as redesignated by subsection (a) of this section, by striking ''section 6(a)(1)'' each place it appears and inserting ''section 7(a)(1)''; and

(C) in section (7)(a)(2), as redesignated by subsection (a) of this section, by striking ''section 4'' and inserting ''section 5''.

(3) Section 8331(1)(K) of title 5, United States Code, is amended by striking ''section 4'' and inserting ''section 5''.

(4) Section 8701(a)(10) of title 5, United States Code, is amended by striking ''section 4'' and inserting ''section 5''.

(5) Section 8901(1)(I) of title 5, United States Code, is amended by striking ''section 4'' and inserting ''section 5''.

SEC. 3. NATIONAL ARCHIVES PRESIDENTIAL TRANSITION.

Section 2203(g) of title 44, United States Code, is amended—

(1) by redesignating paragraph (3) as paragraph (4); and

(2) by inserting after paragraph (2) the following:

''(3) When the President considers it practicable and in the public interest, the President shall include in the President's budget transmitted to Congress, for each fiscal year in which the term of office of the President will expire, such funds as may be necessary for carrying out the authorities of this subsection.''.

SEC. 4. REPORTS ON POLITICAL APPOINTEES APPOINTED TO NONPOLITICAL PERMANENT POSITIONS.

(a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section—

(1) the term ''agency'' has the meaning given the term ''Executive agency'' in section 105 of title 5, United States Code;

(2) the term ''covered civil service position'' means a position in the civil service (as defined in section 2101 of title 5, United States Code) that is not—

(A) a temporary position; or

(B) a political position;

(3) the term ''former political appointee'' means an individual who—

(A) is not serving in an appointment to a political position; and

(B) served as a political appointee during the 5-year period ending on the date of the request for an appointment to a covered civil service position in any agency;

(4) the term ''political appointee'' means an individual serving in an appointment to a political position; and

(5) the term ''political position'' means—

(A) a position described under sections 5312 through 5316 of title 5, United States Code (relating to the Executive Schedule);

(B) a noncareer appointment in the Senior Executive Service, as defined under paragraph (7) of section 3132(a) of title 5, United States Code; or

(C) a position in the executive branch of the Government of a confidential or policy-determining character under schedule C of subpart C of part 213 of title 5, Code of Federal Regulations.

(b) REPORTING ON CURRENT OR RECENT POLITICAL APPOINTEES APPOINTED TO COVERED CIVIL SERVICE POSITIONS.—The Director of the Office of Personnel Management shall submit to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform of the House of Representatives a quarterly report regarding requests by agencies to appoint political appointees or former political appointees to covered civil service positions, which shall—

(1) for each request by an agency that a political appointee be appointed to a covered civil service position during the period covered by the quarterly report, provide—

(A) the date on which the request was received by the Office of Personnel Management;

(B) subject to subsection (c), the name of the individual and the political position held by the individual, including title, office, and agency;

(C) the date on which the individual was first appointed to a political position in the agency in which the individual is serving as a political appointee;

(D) the grade and rate of basic pay for the individual as a political appointee;

(E) the proposed covered civil service position, including title, office, and agency, and the proposed grade and rate of basic pay for the individual;

(F) whether the Office of Personnel Management approved or denied the request; and

(G) the date on which the individual was appointed to a covered civil service position, if applicable; and

(2) for each request by an agency that a former political appointee be appointed to a covered civil service position during the period covered by the quarterly report, provide—

(A) the date on which the request was received by the Office of Personnel Management;

(B) subject to subsection (c), the name of the individual and the political position held by the individual, including title, office, and agency;

(C) the date on which the individual was first appointed to any political position;

(D) the grade and rate of basic pay for the individual as a political appointee;

(E) the date on which the individual ceased to serve in a political position;

(F) the proposed covered civil service position, including title, office, and agency, and the proposed grade and rate of basic pay for the individual;

(G) whether the Office of Personnel Management approved or denied the request; and

(H) the date on which the individual was first appointed to a covered civil service position, if applicable.

(c) NAMES AND TITLES OF CERTAIN APPOINTEES.—If determined appropriate by the Director of the Office of Personnel Management, a report submitted under subsection (b) may exclude the name or title of a political appointee or former political appointee—

(1) who—

(A) was requested to be appointed to a covered civil service position; and

(B) was not appointed to a covered civil service position; or

(2) relating to whom a request to be appointed to a covered civil service position is pending at the end of the period covered by that report.

SEC. 5. REPORT ON REGULATIONS PROMULGATED NEAR THE END OF PRESIDENTIAL TERMS.

(a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section—

(1) the term ''covered presidential transition period'' means—

(A) the 120-day period ending on January 20, 1993.

(B) the 120-day period ending on January 20, 2001;

(C) the 120-day period ending on January 20, 2009; and

(D) the 120-day period ending on January 20, 2017;

(2) the term ''covered regulation'' means a final regulation promulgated by an Executive department; and

(3) the term ''Executive department'' has the meaning given that term under section 101 of title 5, United States Code.

(b) REPORTS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Comptroller General of the United States shall submit to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform of the House of Representatives a report regarding covered regulations promulgated during the covered presidential transition periods described in subparagraph (A), (B), or (C) of subsection (a)(1).

(2) NEXT PRESIDENTIAL TRANSITION.—The Comptroller General of the United States shall submit to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform of the House of Representatives a report regarding covered regulations promulgated during the covered presidential transition period described in subsection (a)(1)(D).

(3) CONTENTS OF REPORTS.—The reports required under paragraphs (1) and (2) shall, for each covered presidential transition period covered by the report—

(A) compare the number, scope, and cost (if possible) of, and type of rulemaking procedure used for, covered regulations promulgated during the covered presidential transition period to the number, scope, and cost of, and type of rulemaking procedure used for, covered regulations promulgated during the 120-day periods ending on January 20 of each year after 1988, other than 1993, 2001, and 2009;

(B) determine the statistical significance of any differences identified under subparagraph (A) and whether and to what extent such differences indicate any patterns;

(C) evaluate the size, scope, and effect of the covered regulations promulgated during the covered presidential transition period; and

(D) assess the extent to which the regularly required processes for the promulgation of covered regulations were followed during the covered presidential transition period, including compliance with the requirements under—

(i) chapter 8 of title 5, United States Code (commonly known as the ''Congressional Review Act'');

(ii) the Small Business Regulatory Enforcement Fairness Act of 1996 (5 U.S.C. 601 note);

(iii) chapter 6 of title 5, United States Code (commonly known as the ''Regulatory Flexibility Act''); and

(iv) chapter 35 of title 44, United States Code (commonly known as the ''Paperwork Reduction Act'').

SEC. 6. ANALYSIS OF THREATS AND VULNERABILITIES.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than February 15, 2016, the Secretary of Homeland Security shall submit to Congress a report analyzing the threats and vulnerabilities facing the United States during a presidential transition, which—

(1) shall identify and discuss vulnerabilities related to border security and threats related to terrorism, including from weapons of mass destruction;

(2) shall identify steps being taken to address the threats and vulnerabilities during a presidential transition; and

(3) may include recommendations for actions by components and agencies within the Department of Homeland Security.

(b) FORM.—The report submitted under subsection (a) shall be prepared in unclassified form, but may contain a classified annex.

ORDERS FOR FRIDAY, JULY 31, 2015, AND MONDAY, AUGUST 3, 2015

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that when the Senate completes its business today, it adjourn until 10 a.m., Friday, July 31, for a pro forma session only with no business being conducted; further, that following the pro forma session, the Senate adjourn until 2 p.m., Monday, August 3; 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 resume consideration of the motion to proceed to S. 1881; finally, notwithstanding rule XXII, the cloture vote with respect to the motion to proceed to S. 1881 occur at 5:30 p.m.

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

ADJOURNMENT UNTIL 10 A.M. TOMORROW

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, if there is no further business to come before the Senate, I ask unanimous consent that it stand adjourned under the previous order.

There being no objection, the Senate, at 5:51 p.m., adjourned until Friday, July 31, 2015, at 10 a.m.

NOMINATIONS

Executive nominations received by the Senate:

MORRIS K. UDALL AND STEWART L. UDALL FOUNDATION

ERIC DRAKE EBERHARD, OF WASHINGTON, TO BE A MEMBER OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES OF THE MORRIS K. UDALL AND STEWART L. UDALL FOUNDATION FOR A TERM EXPIRING OCTOBER 6, 2018, VICE BRADLEY UDALL, TERM EXPIRED.

NATIONAL FOUNDATION ON THE ARTS AND THE HUMANITIES

MICHAEL F. SUAREZ, OF VIRGINIA, TO BE A MEMBER OF THE NATIONAL COUNCIL ON THE HUMANITIES FOR A

TERM EXPIRING JANUARY 26, 2020, VICE DAWN HO DELBANCO, TERM EXPIRED.

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE

ELISSA SLOTKIN, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, TO BE AN ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF DEFENSE, VICE DEREK H. CHOLLET, RESIGNED.

THE JUDICIARY

JOHN E. SPARKS, OF VIRGINIA, TO BE A JUDGE OF THE UNITED STATES COURT OF APPEALS FOR THE ARMED FORCES FOR THE TERM OF FIFTEEN YEARS TO EXPIRE ON THE DATE PRESCRIBED BY LAW, VICE JAMES EDGAR BAKER, TERM EXPIRING.

AMTRAK BOARD OF DIRECTORS

DEREK TAI–CHING KAN, OF CALIFORNIA, TO BE A DIRECTOR OF THE AMTRAK BOARD OF DIRECTORS FOR A TERM OF FIVE YEARS, VICE NANCY A. NAPLES, TERM EXPIRED.

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

BEVERLY ANGELA SCOTT, OF OHIO, TO BE A MEMBER OF THE NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD FOR A TERM EXPIRING DECEMBER 31, 2019, VICE MARK R. ROSEKIND, RESIGNED.

DEPARTMENT OF STATE

JOHN D. FEELEY, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, A CAREER MEMBER OF THE SENIOR FOREIGN SERVICE, CLASS OF MINISTER–COUNSELOR, TO BE AMBASSADOR EXTRAORDINARY AND PLENIPOTENTIARY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO THE REPUBLIC OF PANAMA.

ROBERT PORTER JACKSON, OF VIRGINIA, A CAREER MEMBER OF THE SENIOR FOREIGN SERVICE, CLASS OF MINISTER–COUNSELOR, TO BE AMBASSADOR EXTRAORDINARY AND PLENIPOTENTIARY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO THE REPUBLIC OF GHANA.

EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY COMMISSION

VICTORIA A. LIPNIC, OF VIRGINIA, TO BE A MEMBER OF THE EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY COMMISSION FOR A TERM EXPIRING JULY 1, 2020. (REAPPOINTMENT)

DEPARTMENT OF LABOR

MICHAEL HERMAN MICHAUD, OF MAINE, TO BE ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF LABOR FOR VETERANS' EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING, VICE KEITH KELLY.

THE JUDICIARY

SUSAN PARADISE BAXTER, OF PENNSYLVANIA, TO BE UNITED STATES DISTRICT JUDGE FOR THE WESTERN DISTRICT OF PENNSYLVANIA, VICE SEAN J. MCLAUGHLIN, RESIGNED.

INGA S. BERNSTEIN, OF MASSACHUSETTS, TO BE UNITED STATES DISTRICT JUDGE FOR THE DISTRICT OF MASSACHUSETTS, VICE DOUGLAS P. WOODLOCK, RETIRED.

GARY RICHARD BROWN, OF NEW YORK, TO BE UNITED STATES DISTRICT JUDGE FOR THE EASTERN DISTRICT OF NEW YORK, VICE SANDRA J. FEUERSTEIN, RETIRED.

ROBERT JOHN COLVILLE, OF PENNSYLVANIA, TO BE UNITED STATES DISTRICT JUDGE FOR THE WESTERN DISTRICT OF PENNSYLVANIA, VICE GARY L. LANCASTER, DECEASED.

ELIZABETH J. DRAKE, OF MARYLAND, TO BE A JUDGE OF THE UNITED STATES COURT OF INTERNATIONAL TRADE, VICE RICHARD K. EATON, RETIRED.

JENNIFER CHOE GROVES, OF VIRGINIA, TO BE A JUDGE OF THE UNITED STATES COURT OF INTERNATIONAL TRADE, VICE GREGORY WRIGHT CARMAN, RETIRED.

MARILYN JEAN HORAN, OF PENNSYLVANIA, TO BE UNITED STATES DISTRICT JUDGE FOR THE WESTERN DISTRICT OF PENNSYLVANIA, VICE TERRENCE F. MCVERRY, RETIRED.

GARY STEPHEN KATZMANN, OF MASSACHUSETTS, TO BE A JUDGE OF THE UNITED STATES COURT OF INTERNATIONAL TRADE, VICE JANE A. RESTANI, RETIRED.

DAX ERIC LOPEZ, OF GEORGIA, TO BE UNITED STATES DISTRICT JUDGE FOR THE NORTHERN DISTRICT OF GEORGIA, VICE JULIE E. CARNES, ELEVATED.

JOHN MILTON YOUNGE, OF PENNSYLVANIA, TO BE UNITED STATES DISTRICT JUDGE FOR THE EASTERN DISTRICT OF PENNSYLVANIA, VICE MARY A. MCLAUGHLIN, RETIRED.

SMALL BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION

DARRYL L. DEPRIEST, OF ILLINOIS, TO BE CHIEF COUNSEL FOR ADVOCACY, SMALL BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION, VICE WINSLOW LORENZO SARGEANT, RESIGNED.

WITHDRAWALS

Executive Message transmitted by the President to the Senate on July 30, 2015 withdrawing from further Senate consideration the following nominations:

EARL L. GAY, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, TO BE DEPUTY DIRECTOR OF THE OFFICE OF PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT, VICE CHRISTINE M. GRIFFIN, WHICH WAS SENT TO THE SENATE ON JANUARY 8, 2015.

DEREK TAI–CHING KAN, OF CALIFORNIA, TO BE A DIRECTOR OF THE AMTRAK BOARD OF DIRECTORS FOR A TERM OF FIVE YEARS, VICE JEFFREY R. MORELAND, TERM EXPIRED, WHICH WAS SENT TO THE SENATE ON JULY 13, 2015.

Daily Digest

HIGHLIGHTS

Senate passed H.R. 22, Developing a Reliable and Innovative Vision for the Economy Act, as amended.

Senate passed H.R. 3236, Surface Transportation and Veterans Health Care Choice Improvement Act.

Senate

Chamber Action

Routine Proceedings, pages S6147–S6210.

Measures Introduced: Sixteen bills and five resolutions were introduced, as follows: S. 1899–1914, S.J. Res. 21, and S. Res. 236–239. **Pages S6186–87**

Measures Reported:

S. 1910, making appropriations for financial services and general government for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2016. (S. Rept. No. 114–97)

S. 313, to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to add physical therapists to the list of providers allowed to utilize locum tenens arrangements under Medicare, with an amendment in the nature of a substitute. (S. Rept. No. 114–98)

S. 349, to amend title XIX of the Social Security Act to empower individuals with disabilities to establish their own supplemental needs trusts. (S. Rept. No. 114–99)

S. 466, to amend title XI of the Social Security Act to improve the quality, health outcomes, and value of maternity care under the Medicaid and CHIP programs by developing maternity care quality measures and supporting maternity care quality collaboratives, with an amendment in the nature of a substitute. (S. Rept. No. 114–100)

S. 599, to extend and expand the Medicaid emergency psychiatric demonstration project, with an amendment in the nature of a substitute. (S. Rept. No. 114–101)

S. 607, to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to provide for a five-year extension of the rural community hospital demonstration program, with an amendment in the nature of a substitute. (S. Rept. No. 114–102)

S. 704, to establish a Community-Based Institutional Special Needs Plan demonstration program to target home and community-based care to eligible Medicare beneficiaries, with an amendment in the nature of a substitute. (S. Rept. No. 114–103)

S. 861, to amend titles XVIII and XIX of the Social Security Act to curb waste, fraud, and abuse in the Medicare and Medicaid programs, with an amendment in the nature of a substitute. (S. Rept. No. 114–104)

S. 1253, to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to provide coverage of certain disposable medical technologies under the Medicare program, with an amendment in the nature of a substitute. (S. Rept. No. 114–105)

S. 1347, to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act with respect to the treatment of patient encounters in ambulatory surgical centers in determining meaningful EHR use, with an amendment in the nature of a substitute. (S. Rept. No. 114–106)

S. 1349, to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to require hospitals to provide certain notifications to individuals classified by such hospitals under observation status rather than admitted as inpatients of such hospitals. (S. Rept. No. 114–107)

S. 1362, to amend title XI of the Social Security Act to clarify waiver authority regarding programs of all-inclusive care for the elderly (PACE programs), with an amendment in the nature of a substitute. (S. Rept. No. 114–108)

S. 1461, to provide for the extension of the enforcement instruction on supervision requirements for outpatient therapeutic services in critical access and small rural hospitals through 2015, with an amendment in the nature of a substitute. (S. Rept. No. 114–109)

S. 1875, to support enhanced accountability for United States assistance to Afghanistan, with an amendment. **Page S6186**

Measures Passed:

National Whistleblower Appreciation Day: Senate agreed to S. Res. 236, designating July 30, 2015, as "National Whistleblower Appreciation Day". **Page S6147**

Developing a Reliable and Innovative Vision for the Economy Act: By 65 yeas to 34 nays (Vote No. 260), Senate passed H.R. 22, to authorize funds for Federal-aid highways, highway safety programs, and transit programs, and after taking action on the following amendment proposed thereto:

Pages S6149–6161

Adopted:

McConnell Amendment No. 2542, to amend the title. **Page S6205**

Surface Transportation and Veterans Health Care Choice Improvement Act: By 91 yeas to 4 nays (Vote No. 261), Senate passed H.R. 3236, to provide an extension of Federal-aid highway, highway safety, motor carrier safety, transit, and other programs funded out of the Highway Trust Fund, to provide resource flexibility to the Department of Veterans Affairs for health care services, by the order of the Senate of Wednesday, July 29, 2015, 60 Senators having voted in the affirmative. **Pages S6165–66**

Presidential Transitions Improvements Act of 2015: Senate passed S. 1172, to improve the process of presidential transition, after agreeing to the committee amendments, and the following amendment proposed thereto: **Pages S6205–09**

McConnell (for Carper/Johnson) Amendment No. 2543, relative to presidential transitions.

Pages S6207–09

Measures Considered:

Prohibit Federal Funding of Planned Parenthood—Cloture: Senate began consideration of the motion to proceed to consideration of S. 1881, to prohibit Federal funding of Planned Parenthood Federation of America. **Pages S6161–64, S6166–80**

A motion was entered to close further debate on the motion to proceed to consideration of the bill, and, in accordance with the provisions of Rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate and pursuant to the unanimous-consent agreement of Thursday, July 30, 2015, a vote on cloture will occur at 5:30 p.m., on Monday, August 3, 2015. **Page S6209**

A unanimous-consent agreement was reached providing that at approximately 2 p.m., on Monday, August 3, 2015, Senate resume consideration of the motion to proceed to consideration of the bill.

Page S6209

Pro Forma Session—Agreement: A unanimous-consent agreement was reached providing that the Senate adjourn until 10:00 a.m., on Friday, July 31, 2015, for a pro forma session only, with no business conducted; and that following the pro forma session, Senate adjourn until 2 p.m., on Monday, August 3, 2015. **Page S6209**

Nominations Received: Senate received the following nominations:

Eric Drake Eberhard, of Washington, to be a Member of the Board of Trustees of the Morris K. Udall and Stewart L. Udall Foundation for a term expiring October 6, 2018.

Michael F. Suarez, of Virginia, to be a Member of the National Council on the Humanities for a term expiring January 26, 2020.

Elissa Slotkin, of the District of Columbia, to be an Assistant Secretary of Defense.

John E. Sparks, of Virginia, to be a Judge of the United States Court of Appeals for the Armed Forces for the term of fifteen years to expire on the date prescribed by law.

Derek Tai-Ching Kan, of California, to be a Director of the Amtrak Board of Directors for a term of five years.

Beverly Angela Scott, of Ohio, to be a Member of the National Transportation Safety Board for a term expiring December 31, 2019.

John D. Feeley, of the District of Columbia, to be Ambassador to the Republic of Panama.

Robert Porter Jackson, of Virginia, to be Ambassador to the Republic of Ghana.

Victoria A. Lipnic, of Virginia, to be a Member of the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission for a term expiring July 1, 2020.

Michael Herman Michaud, of Maine, to be Assistant Secretary of Labor for Veterans' Employment and Training.

Susan Paradise Baxter, of Pennsylvania, to be United States District Judge for the Western District of Pennsylvania.

Inga S. Bernstein, of Massachusetts, to be United States District Judge for the District of Massachusetts.

Gary Richard Brown, of New York, to be United States District Judge for the Eastern District of New York.

Robert John Colville, of Pennsylvania, to be United States District Judge for the Western District of Pennsylvania.

Elizabeth J. Drake, of Maryland, to be a Judge of the United States Court of International Trade.

Jennifer Choe Groves, of Virginia, to be a Judge of the United States Court of International Trade.

Marilyn Jean Horan, of Pennsylvania, to be United States District Judge for the Western District of Pennsylvania.

Gary Stephen Katzmann, of Massachusetts, to be a Judge of the United States Court of International Trade.

Dax Eric Lopez, of Georgia, to be United States District Judge for the Northern District of Georgia.

John Milton Younge, of Pennsylvania, to be United States District Judge for the Eastern District of Pennsylvania.

Darryl L. DePriest, of Illinois, to be Chief Counsel for Advocacy, Small Business Administration.

Pages S6209–10

Nominations Withdrawn: Senate received notification of withdrawal of the following nominations:

Derek Tai-Ching Kan, of California, to be a Director of the Amtrak Board of Directors for a term of five years, which was sent to the Senate on July 13, 2015.

Earl L. Gay, of the District of Columbia, to be Deputy Director of the Office of Personnel Management, which was sent to the Senate on January 8, 2015. **Page 6210**

Messages from the House: **Pages S6185–86**

Measures Referred: **Page S6186**

Executive Communications: **Page S6186**

Additional Cosponsors: **Pages S6187–89**

Statements on Introduced Bills/Resolutions: **Pages S6189–94**

Additional Statements: **Pages S6184–85**

Amendments Submitted: **Page S6194**

Notices of Hearings/Meetings: **Page S6194**

Authorities for Committees to Meet: **Page S6194**

Privileges of the Floor: **Page S6195**

Record Votes: Two record votes were taken today. (Total—261) **Pages S6160–61, S6165–66**

Adjournment: Senate convened at 10 a.m. and adjourned at 5:51 p.m., until 10 a.m. on Friday, July 31, 2015. (For Senate's program, see the remarks of the Majority Leader in today's Record on page S6209.)

Committee Meetings

(Committees not listed did not meet)

DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS WHISTLEBLOWER CLAIMS

Committee on Appropriations: Subcommittee on Military Construction and Veterans Affairs, and Related Agencies concluded a hearing to examine whistleblower claims at the Department of Veterans Affairs, after receiving testimony from Linda A. Halliday, Deputy Inspector General, Office of the Inspector General, and Katherine L. Mitchell, Veterans Integrated Service Network 18, Veterans Healthcare Administration, both of the Department of Veterans Affairs; Carolyn Lerner, Special Counsel, Office of Special Counsel; and Danielle Brian, Project on Government Oversight, and Lisa M. Nee, both of Washington, D.C.

NOMINATION

Committee on Armed Services: Committee concluded a hearing to examine the nomination of Admiral John M. Richardson, USN, to be Chief of Naval Operations, after the nominee testified and answered questions in his own behalf.

BUSINESS MEETING

Committee on Energy and Natural Resources: Committee ordered favorably reported the following business items:

An original bill to provide for the modernization of the energy policy of the United States;

An original bill to provide for reforms of the administration of the Outer Continental Shelf of the United States;

S. 720, to promote energy savings in residential buildings and industry, with an amendment;

S. 583, to establish certain wilderness areas in central Idaho and to authorize various land conveyances involving National Forest System land and Bureau of Land Management land in central Idaho;

S. 1240, to designate the Cerro del Yuta and Rio San Antonio Wilderness Areas in the State of New Mexico, with an amendment;

S. 145, to require the Director of the National Park Service to refund to States all State funds that were used to reopen and temporarily operate a unit of the National Park System during the October 2013 shutdown;

S. 403, to revise the authorized route of the North Country National Scenic Trail in northeastern Minnesota and to extend the trail into Vermont to connect with the Appalachian National Scenic Trail, with an amendment;

S. 521, to authorize the Secretary of the Interior to conduct a special resource study of President Station in Baltimore, Maryland, with an amendment;

S. 593, to require the Secretary of the Interior to submit to Congress a report on the efforts of the Bureau of Reclamation to manage its infrastructure assets, with an amendment;

S. 610, to authorize the Secretary of the Interior to conduct a special resource study of P.S. 103 in West Baltimore, Maryland and for other purposes;

S. 873, to designate the wilderness within the Lake Clark National Park and Preserve in the State of Alaska as the Jay S. Hammond Wilderness Area;

S. 1103, to reinstate and extend the deadline for commencement of construction of a hydroelectric project involving Clark Canyon Dam;

S. 1104, to extend the deadline for commencement of construction of a hydroelectric project involving the Gibson Dam;

S. 1305, to amend the Colorado River Storage Project Act to authorize the use of the active capacity of the Fontenelle Reservoir, with an amendment; and

S. 1483, to direct the Secretary of the Interior to study the suitability and feasibility of designating the James K. Polk Home in Columbia, Tennessee, as a unit of the National Park System, with an amendment.

SANCTIONS AND THE JCPOA

Committee on Foreign Relations: Committee concluded a hearing to examine sanctions and the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action, after receiving testimony from Juan C. Zarate, Foundation for Defense of Democracies Center on Sanctions and Illicit Finance, Washington, D.C.; and Richard Nephew, Columbia Center on Global Energy Policy, New York, New York.

NOMINATIONS

Committee on Foreign Relations: Committee concluded a hearing to examine the nominations of Lucy Tamlyn, of New York, to be Ambassador to the Republic of Benin, Jeffrey J. Hawkins, Jr., of California, to be Ambassador to the Central African Republic, David R. Gilmour, of Texas, to be Ambassador to the Togolese Republic, Daniel H. Rubinstein, of Virginia, to be Ambassador to the Republic of Tunisia, and Carolyn Patricia Alsup, of Florida, to be Ambassador to the Republic of The Gambia, all of the Department of State, after the nominees testified and answered questions in their own behalf.

U.S. TAX CODE

Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs: Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations concluded a hearing to examine the impact of the United States tax code on the market for corporate control and jobs, after receiving testimony from Jim Koch, Boston Beer Company, Boston, Massachusetts; David E.I. Pyott, Allergan, Washington, D.C.; Walter J. Galvin, Emerson, St. Louis, Missouri; Howard B. Schiller, Valeant Pharmaceuticals International, Inc., Bridgewater, New Jersey; and Joshua Kobza, Restaurant Brands International, Miami, Florida.

CAMPUS SEXUAL ASSAULT

Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions: On July 29, 2015, Committee concluded a hearing to examine reauthorizing the Higher Education Act, focusing on combating campus sexual assault, including S. 590, to amend the Higher Education Act of 1965, after receiving testimony from Senators McCaskill, Heller, Gillibrand, and Ayotte; Janet Napolitano, University of California, Oakland; Dana Bolger, Know Your IX, and Mollie Benz Flounlacker, Association of American Universities, both of Washington, D.C.; and Dolores A. Stafford, D. Stafford and Associates, Rehoboth Beach, Delaware, on behalf of the National Association of Clery Compliance Officers and Professionals.

INTELLIGENCE

Select Committee on Intelligence: Committee met in closed session to receive a briefing on certain intelligence matters from officials of the intelligence community.

House of Representatives

Chamber Action

The House was not in session today. The House is scheduled to meet in a Pro Forma session at 1 p.m. on Friday, July 31, 2015.

Committee Meetings

EXAMINATION OF FEDERAL AND STATE RESPONSE TO AVIAN INFLUENZA

Committee on Agriculture: Subcommittee on Livestock and Foreign Agriculture held a hearing entitled ''Examination of Federal and State Response to Avian Influenza''. Testimony was heard from David Swayne, Laboratory Director, Southeast Poultry Research Laboratory, Department of Agriculture Agricultural Research Services; John Clifford, Deputy Administrator, Veterinary Services, Department of Agriculture Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service; R. Douglas Meckes, State Veterinarian, North Carolina Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services; and Bill Hartmann, Executive Director, Minnesota Board of Animal Health.

Joint Meetings

No joint committee meetings were held.

COMMITTEE MEETINGS FOR FRIDAY, JULY 31, 2015

(Committee meetings are open unless otherwise indicated)

Senate

No meetings/hearings scheduled.

House

No hearings are scheduled.

Next Meeting of the SENATE

10 a.m., Friday, July 31

Senate Chamber

Program for Friday: Senate will meet in a pro forma session.

Next Meeting of the HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

1 p.m., Friday, July 31

House Chamber

Program for Friday: The House is scheduled to meet in a Pro Forma session at 1 p.m. on Friday, July 31, 2015.

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