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House of Representatives

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

DESIGNATION OF SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

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

WASHINGTON, DC,
September 9, 2015.

I hereby appoint the Honorable CARLOS CURBELO to act as Speaker pro tempore on this day.

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

MORNING-HOUR DEBATE

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

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

IRAN

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

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, our vote on the nuclear agreement with Iran will be the most important decision I have made in Congress since voting against the disastrous Iraq war.

I am under no illusions that the clerics and military that run Iran are friends of the United States. To the contrary, they are engaged in activities that are opposed to the United States interests and those of many of our friends and allies.

This agreement does not resolve all our differences, change Iranian behaviors, or provide greater freedom for its people. What it does do is give the world 15 years of security to prevent Iran from developing nuclear weapons.

It also demonstrates our ability to work with our international partners—France, Great Britain, Germany, especially Russia and China—to bring Iran to the negotiating table, to force them to make important concessions, and to retain the ability to re-impose crippling sanctions if they violate the agreement.

It has a strong mechanism for surveillance and snapping back sanctions to give us confidence that it is strongly in the Iranians' interest to comply.

Fifteen years is not forever. But taking the current nuclear breakout time of less than 15 weeks for Iran to a minimum of a year and having assurance for 15 years is a remarkable achievement.

The alternative is not ''a better deal.'' There is no evidence that there is something beyond this agreement that the Iranians would agree with or, most critically, that has the support of the other five countries that made this agreement possible in the first place.

The alternative is for the United States to lose the support of our allies so that Iran gets access to its money anyway, the partnership dissolves, and this important moment is lost.

The United States still retains the ability to walk away from the deal if it is rejected or violated by Iran. This puts us in a much stronger position to re-impose sanctions with more leverage going forward.

In the final analysis, the United States or Israel, for that matter, can always resort to military force. But it is far better, however, to make this agreement work, to monitor and enforce it, and build on this unique international partnership.

Our work will not be done in the Middle East with Iran, even if this agreement is adopted and Iran abides by it. We still must be prepared to confront Iran where they are involved with aggressive action against other countries, especially our allies.

We must be prepared to support our friends in the Middle East, like Israel and Saudi Arabia. We must be prepared to make the diplomatic efforts and demonstrate commitment and resolve wherever it is necessary.

Those who would resort to force in the first instance will always retain that option.

We risk little trying to make diplomacy with rigorous inspections work and to strengthen the partnership with countries that made this agreement possible, to redouble our ongoing efforts to stabilize this deeply troubled Middle East region.

The agreement doesn't solve our problems, but it simplifies one of the greatest threats to the Middle East, not just Iranian nuclear weapons, but a potential nuclear arms race with potentially catastrophic results.

I am comfortable being in agreement with some of the most distinguished leaders of past American administrations, both Republican and Democratic, who have agreed, notwithstanding their reservations and cautions, that the acceptance of this agreement is the best path forward for the United States and world peace.

It is sad that, for the very first time, a critical American foreign policy decision has become so partisan in Congress. But the weight of evidence is for the agreement to be adopted, and we should do so.

APOLOGY TO THE VICTIMS OF THE ''IRANIAN NUCLEAR ATTACK''

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

Mr. JOHNSON of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, because speeches made here on the

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House floor are preserved for history, I want to speak to the future, to present a plausible scenario and an apology, an apology to be heard by the survivors, an apology to every victim of what will forever be known as the Iranian nuclear attack.

I expect it will be after the year 2030 before anyone takes any real notice of this apology. Someone will find it while surfing what remains of the Internet, maybe in Israel, Western Europe, or here in the United States, someone surrounded by the smoking ruins of leveled buildings, the incinerated corpses of those lucky enough to have been killed in the first seconds of the blast, and the wails of anguish of those left to die and mourn.

It is especially ironic and heartbreaking to be speaking about this as today, in 2015, we prepare to remember those killed in the 9/11 terrorist attacks.

So to the people of 2030, on behalf of America, I am truly sorry. I am sorry we failed to stop President Obama from releasing $150 billion to fuel the destructive fantasies of terrorist leaders in Iran that lit the fuse.

During my 26-year career in the United States Air Force, America's leaders believed in mutually assured destruction, the MAD theory.

We thought, if one nation such as the Soviet Union launched nuclear missiles, the other nation would do so as well and both would be destroyed. This potential of mutual destruction kept those missiles in their silos.

But that theory does not apply to dealing with the leaders of Iran, who are dangerous fanatics, motivated by evil, not self-preservation.

So the madness in Iran means the MAD theory doesn't apply in 2015. And that is why I am sorry that we who lead America in 2015 failed to stop President Obama from helping Iranian terrorists and Iranian tyrants build an intercontinental ballistic missile system.

I am also sad to say that the people hearing my message in 2030 will bear witness to the fact that Iranian missiles can, indeed, deliver nuclear holocaust to America's soil.

In the Air Force, I worked alongside other military strategists to ensure that missiles would never strike here. But, in 2015, America's President and his supporters discarded those concerns.

So to our countrymen of 2030 and to our friends in Israel whose land now lies fallow and wrecked, let me now say we were wrong. We struggle to imagine what you must be going through. The death and destruction that once haunted your nightmares now plays out before you.

Families and friends are either dead or lined up at makeshift morgues to claim the bodies of loved ones. Food and water are scarce or contaminated with radiation. Refugees from the blast area stagger down gridlocked highways where traffic stopped when the detonation occurred.

We thought we had seen the worst of humanity's hate on September 11, 2001, but that atrocity now pales in comparison. The similarities between the tragic missteps of Barack Obama and Neville Chamberlain, who foolishly trusted Nazi Germany, are obvious.

Mr. Obama says his deal with Iran will somehow lead to peace. Mr. Chamberlain made the same assertion, claiming that his pact with the Nazis would lead to ''peace for our time.''

In 2015, I spoke in opposition to the deal that led to the 2030 Iranian nuclear attack because I well remember the words of the theologian Bonhoeffer who eventually died in a Nazi torture chamber.

In confronting the murderous madmen of his time, he declared that ''Silence in the face of evil is itself evil: God will not hold us guiltless. Not to speak is to speak. Not to act is to act.''

In 2015, many of us spoke, many of us acted, but the powers of evil still won the day. And now the innocent dead of 2030 call out with just one question: How could the leaders of 2015 let this happen?

The answer is simple and sad: Because, despite our best efforts, we couldn't stop the deal that funded, armed, and unleashed nuclear hell from the madmen of Iran. We allowed the power and persistence of the foolish to deliver a corrupt contract with a nation of terror. And, in 2030, the day of reckoning arrived. And for that I am truly very, very sorry.

May God have mercy on us all.

IMMIGRATION

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

Mr. GUTIÉRREZ. Mr. Speaker, you know in the movies when someone has to make a choice and a little devil and a little angel appear on their shoulder to give good and bad advice? Well, that is what I feel America is going to feel like in a couple of weeks when His Holiness Pope Francisco comes to visit us, including an address in this very room.

On one shoulder, we have a billionaire out there saying Mexicans are murderers; immigrants come to this country to get on welfare; our best days are behind us; and just getting tough and insulting people will solve all of our problems and make us great again.

And almost everyone else in his party is scrambling to catch up so they don't miss out on the wave of populist anger he is tapping and feeding with a mix of untruths, half-truths, and good old-fashioned racism.

On the other shoulder is a man who is not afraid to touch the feet of the poor and recognizes their humanity even in their poverty. He is a man who sees actual human problems, like our environment, and tries to bring us together to do something about it. He is a man who, through deeds, declarations, and his own demeanor says in a clear voice: Welcome the stranger, and come onto me.

He does not blame a nation's problems on the strangers at the gate or says ''get the hell out.'' In many ways, Pope Francis represents the Anti-Trump, the antidote to his venom.

I, like a lot of my Democratic colleagues and a lot of my Catholic colleagues and, frankly, the majority of American of all faiths and political stripes across the Nation, am very much looking forward to the Pope's visit and the Pope's words because our Nation needs a counterbalance, a counterweight, to what has become the ugliest, most xenophobic, and most anti-immigration campaign in anyone's memory.

You can also throw in large helpings of anti-woman, anti-environmental, and anti-poor attacks in there as well.

Shortly after The Donald announced with great fanfare and extreme insult and unvarnished racism that he would inflict his campaign for the White House on the Nation, I came to this well to address my colleagues on July 9.

I discussed a reasoned approach to dealing with the immigrant criminals who must be locked up and deported and distinguishing them from the vast majority of America's immigrants who live peacefully and helpfully among us.

They come here to work and to make a better life for themselves and their families, as my parents did when they left Puerto Rico in the fifties to seek a better life, eventually landing in Chicago.

It is the strength and the advantage of our Nation that we come from everywhere, but we have put together the best Nation on Earth by working together. It is what defines us as a people.

Most of our ancestors came to this land of their own free will, and some did not. Most came here seeking a dream or running away from a nightmare or sometimes both.

Most of us came here legally, sometimes waiting in lines that lasted years. And some of us, when legality was not an option and there was no line to stand in, came anyway because work and freedom are so plentiful.

But in the United States, we came together from many nations and traditions and languages and religions and made the one Nation that stands above all others as the defender of liberty, the engine of the world economy, and the beacon of freedom recognized in every corner of the globe.

We are proud of our accomplishments, as we should be, despite our humble beginnings, when no one and no other nation thought we could survive to take our place among the nations of the world.

As the Pope joins us this month to deliver his message of peace and inclusion, I urge all of us to remember the many challenges we have faced as a Nation and the many obstacles we have overcome.

Just a few decades ago the thought of a Catholic President was outrageous and the thought of a Pope addressing a Joint Session of Congress was far-fetched, just about as far-fetched as a Black President of the United States, a woman President, or a Latino Pope from Latin America.

Over the decades, in fits and starts, marching forward, being pushed back, marching forward again arm in arm, we have spent more time listening to our better angels and their advice, taking us toward a brighter future as a Nation and less time listening to our darker influences who lament progress and seek to divide us from one another.

□ 1015

I think, in this Capitol Building, in this Chamber, when the Pope speaks to us, we will see two paths in very sharp relief. Build a wall or build a bridge? Help our brother or turn our backs? Belittle our sister or share her heavy load? Incite distrust and division or foster unity to face our challenges because we are stronger together?

For this Catholic American, for this man who has sometimes struggled with the church and is not always welcome because of my support for women's health, a woman's right to a legal abortion, LGBT, I am so looking forward to the Pope's visit because I feel my Nation needs him more than ever before.

CHINA'S AGGRESSIVE SOUL

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

Mr. POE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, there are five entities that have mischief and aggression on their minds—of course, ISIS, Iran, Russia, North Korea, and China.

Recently, while the President preached climate change in Alaska, three Chinese combat ships got closer to the Alaskan coast than ever before. Military experts say this was the first time Chinese ships were in that area, just the latest example of China expanding its military operation globally.

One expert said:

> The Chinese Navy is taking on more and more of an expeditionary character . . . the Chinese Navy is going global.

He is correct. China has massively built up its military and uses it to project its power in Asia and other places. Like Russia's invasion of Ukraine, China is taking over territory while the United States just watches.

There has been a fivefold increase in China's military expenditures since 1997. It is stockpiling nuclear weapons. A recent Pentagon report revealed that China is upgrading its ballistic missile delivery systems with multiple independently targeted reentry vehicles, or MIRV, technology. What that means in layman's terms is they can send one missile with several nuclear warheads; one could hit New York, and one could hit Texas.

The Beijing Navy is taking control of disputed areas and intimidating other countries in the region who have rightful claims to the South China Sea. This is a poster, Mr. Speaker, of 1999—I know you can't see the background, but this is Beijing in the South China Sea area from Australia to almost Alaska and east and west Guam to Indonesia—1999 military might of the Chinese depicted here by planes, ships, and submarines and U.S. military might about the same in 1999.

What is it today? Let's look at the same map, superimposed with Chinese buildup since 1999. In 2015, you don't have to be real smart to understand the Chinese are building more airplanes, now aircraft carriers, more ships, and lots of nuclear submarines and conventional submarines. The United States, we are about the same with our military might in the area. That is today.

This ratio here is a missile that can be fired in this region.

Now, let's project just 5 years and see what the Chinese will have in 2020 in the same area, same region. United States, we are about the same—but, look, planes, nuclear carriers, now intercontinental ballistic missiles, more ships, more submarines, Chinese military might, 2020 and today or in 1999.

We should be concerned about Chinese aggressive tendencies. In December 2013, China also began a bold land-reclaiming project in the South China Sea in an effort to increase its influence. What does that mean? That means that the Chinese are going in the South China Sea and they are dredging areas and making islands in the South China Sea. On some of these islands, it intends to build runways. I wonder what for.

Not only does China claim these newly created lands, but it also claims exclusive maritime rights in vast surrounding areas in the South China Sea. This has rightfully rattled our allies in the region. Not only has China become an economic giant, but it is a military bully in the area.

China, of course, is a state-run communist country. There is no telling what China could do and what would happen to the global economy if China insists on controlling the sea lanes. Is China becoming like the Barbary pirates of old that used to control the Mediterranean? Is that what China is going to do in the South China Sea? Who knows.

Other countries in the area are looking for the United States to lead. They haven't forgotten what China did the last time China was an imperial power. For over 1,000 years, until the 20th century, China required other countries that wanted to trade in Asia to pay tribute to China. That meant kneeling down before the emperor and paying heavy taxes. It was an extortion plan.

Our friends in Asia don't want that to happen again. This is not a time to sit back and let the chips fall where they may in Asia. The United States should care about what China is doing because China's brazen move toward colonization of the South China Sea shows that Beijing is determined to expand its military and economic influence in the entire area.

What is the United States going to do? Are we going to do the same as we did with Russia and just watch? The region and the world both are looking for the United States to lead. We should lead because that is the responsibility of the world's most important democracy.

This should concern the entire world, not just the South China Sea area. Also, these lack of resources should concern Americans.

And that is just the way it is.

END HUNGER NOW

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

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, supporting healthy families and strong communities starts with access to healthy food, but for many families, it is a struggle just to put food on the table. A growing body of research shows why we should all be concerned with hunger as a health issue.

For the 49 million Americans who struggle with food insecurity—or hunger—access to nutritious food and enough healthy food is a real challenge that can have serious negative health consequences far beyond just a growling stomach.

Hunger can exacerbate underlying medical conditions like diabetes, heart disease, and cancer and can result in life-threatening complications; not only that, hunger can result in more trips to the emergency room and more hospitalizations which only increases healthcare costs across the board.

A recent article in the Canadian Medical Association Journal found that households with low food security had 49 percent higher healthcare costs than those who didn't have to worry about where their next meal was coming from. Healthcare costs were an astonishing 121 percent higher for those with very low food security.

Similarly, a 2014 article in the journal Health Affairs reported that hospitals saw a 27 percent increase in hypoglycemia cases among low-income individuals at the end of the month as compared to the beginning of the month.

You might wonder why that is. The sad truth is that these cases of hypoglycemia—or low blood sugar—are likely more prevalent at the end of the month because this is when SNAP benefits run out for many individuals and their families.

When families don't have enough to eat, their health suffers. We hear time and time again that the current monthly SNAP benefit is inadequate. That families must scramble to cobble

together enough to eat from food pantries and charities.

Seniors are especially vulnerable to hunger as a health issue. Many seniors live on fixed incomes and are often faced with the tough choice of paying for their medications or paying for their food. For seniors, taking medication on an empty stomach can be especially dangerous and may land them in the hospital.

It is astounding that some of America's most vulnerable families must face these challenges month after month, year after year; but the good news is that hunger can also be one of the most treatable health conditions. Hunger is solvable. We have the resources, but we need to muster the political will to end hunger now.

One organization that has for years been doing incredible work to reframe the paradigm of hunger as a health issue is Community Servings, a Massachusetts-based nonprofit that delivers free meals to homebound individuals and their families. Their meals are medically tailored to meet the specific dietary needs of the recipients.

The Community Servings model addresses two of the biggest barriers that low-income individuals who are dealing with extended illness face: shopping for food and preparing meals. Community Servings takes care of that so that patients can focus on getting better without worrying about where their next meal is coming from.

The Community Servings model shows great promise in not only fighting hunger but also in saving money in our healthcare system. A survey last year of doctors and nurses who care for Community Servings clients found that 96 percent said that the meals improved their clients' health and 65 percent said they believed the meals had resulted in fewer hospitalizations.

We also need to do a better job of connecting our hospitals and our community health centers and VA hospitals with farmers markets. Organizations like Wholesome Wave are effectively expanding their fruit and vegetable prescription program, where doctors can write a prescription for fruits and vegetables that individuals could then immediately fill at a farmers market that might be set up on the hospital grounds 1 or 2 days a week.

Boston Medical Center has addressed hunger as a health issue head on with its Preventive Food Pantry permanently located in the hospital itself. Here, low-income families can work with a dietitian to choose foods that meet their dietary needs with an emphasis on fresh fruits and vegetables.

Food banks and food pantries are finding innovative ways to partner with local farms to provide more fresh produce to low-income families. I am proud to represent one such forward-thinking partnership in my congressional district. Every year, the Community Harvest Project, run through a local farm in Grafton, Massachusetts, donates hundreds of thousands of pounds of fresh fruits and vegetables to the Worcester County Food Bank.

Finally, we ought to do a better job of educating doctors and nurses about what hunger looks like. I am always surprised when I talk to medical students, that they only take one or two, if any, classes in nutrition. That is why I am a cosponsor of my friend Congressman TIM RYAN's bill, the ENRICH Act, which would provide grants to improve nutrition education among healthcare professionals.

Mr. Speaker, as Members of Congress, we talk a lot about finding ways to save money in our healthcare system. In that same conversation, we need to do a better job of understanding that food is medicine.

We can't just address hunger and health as two separate issues; they are two sides of the same coin. Hunger is a health issue, and it should be treated as such. We can and we should do more to end hunger now.

PLANNED PARENTHOOD

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

Mr. LAMALFA. Mr. Speaker, as you know, the House adjourned for the month of August for time to be in the districts with our constituents.

Before that, we saw the breaking story in mid-July of Planned Parenthood and the videos that came out of the barbaric practices that were happening in there on aborted babies. Indeed, America was horrified as each of the videos unfolded to see that these are the practices that our tax dollars are somehow helping to fund in that organization.

The House did not completely take time away from Washington. Indeed, several of our committees started immediately taking action in July and then during August with letters transmitted to Planned Parenthood and others to make this more well known to the public, letters to invite them to explain themselves to committees—Energy and Commerce Committee, Judiciary Committee, Oversight and Government Reform Committee—which upon each video, as they became available to the public, Americans were more and more horrified with what was going on.

The actions in the House were to ask the first person in the first video, Dr. Nucatola, to come and present her case of what that video was about and why it happened to the committee.

Planned Parenthood responded that they probably wouldn't make Dr. Nucatola available; but indeed, finally, a month later, on August 27, the committee was able—a month later—to interview Dr. Nucatola.

Today, the Judiciary Committee will resume these hearings this morning, almost as we speak now. Indeed, later on, Oversight and Government Reform later this week and Energy and Commerce Committee this week, will be doing more investigations, more hearings, on this, as is our prerogative in the House with Oversight and Government Reform because the American people, no matter how they feel about the question on abortion, post-abortion, when Planned Parenthood appears to most people to now be the equivalent of a chop shop for baby parts, they are outraged. They are going: Why are my tax dollars going to this organization?

This isn't about women's health. There are lots of options for the health issues that women do need that don't have to be funded by an organization that is doing these practices.

□ 1030

The House will continue its work on the investigations that are needed here, and we will continue on our work, seeing to it that tax dollars can be pulled back from supporting such an organization with such barbaric practices and with such a callous attitude as they discuss them over a glass of wine, on camera, at lunch. Indeed, this is our time in Congress, through this investigative process, to stand up for life, for what is right, for what is moral, and we dare not shirk from that responsibility.

PILLOW FIGHT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from California (Ms. SPEIER) for 5 minutes.

Ms. SPEIER. Mr. Speaker, like slumber parties and sleepovers, a pillow fight doesn't sound like the type of activity that would leave 30 of our Nation's most promising future military leaders injured or call into question the management practices of the Army's top academy. Yet, that is exactly what happened.

We just learned that, on August 20, West Point freshman cadets got together for an annual pillow fight, and according to press accounts, they swung pillowcases packed with large, hard objects, thought to be helmets. This fight badly injured 30 cadets, 24 of them diagnosed with concussions. There were shoulders dislocated, one cadet diagnosed with a hairline fracture of the cheekbone, some with broken noses and split lips. Before the fight, upperclassmen commanders reportedly encouraged the freshmen by telling them, ''If you don't come back with a bloody nose, you didn't try hard enough.''

The American people deserve to know what happened here. West Point and the Army have provided conflicting explanations, saying in one instance, ''Many members of the plebe class spontaneously participated in a pillow fight,'' while, in another, they suggested that a pillow fight is a hallowed annual tradition, dating back to 1897. Well, which is it?

West Point, apparently, doesn't know how to run this pillow fight either.

This rite of passage has a track record of similar injuries, followed by ineffective attempts to make this event safer. Two years ago, for example, the 2013 pillow fight was canceled after at least one cadet placed a lockbox as a weapon in a pillowcase. Now it is back, and according to reports, the helmets the cadets were using to give their teammates concussions had been mandated as protection after injuries in previous pillow fights.

May I remind everyone that this education is being paid for directly by the taxpayers of this country. The U.S. Government funds everything the Academy does to the tune of millions of dollars a year. It is utterly irresponsible to think that a violent pillow fight is a way to build camaraderie and create a professional military.

West Point has stated that all cadets are back on duty and that it is pursuing an investigation, but Congress needs to know what kind of investigation it is pursuing and when we will receive answers. As the ranking member of the House Armed Services Committee's Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations, I am calling on the Army and the U.S. Military Academy to provide a clear explanation of the incident and its causes, as well as a full accounting of who was responsible and what measures are being taken to prevent something like this from happening again.

We will not create the world's most feared fighting force by hosting a concussion-filled slumber party. We must ensure that the august institution lives up to the exceptionally high standards that it represents and that our future military leaders live up to the great responsibility that rests on their shoulders. We can and we must do better.

HONORING THE LIFE OF TUSKEGEE AIRMAN JOHN WATSON, JR.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from West Virginia (Mr. JENKINS) for 5 minutes.

Mr. JENKINS of West Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life of John Watson, Jr., of Beckley, a Tuskegee Airman who served our country honorably during World War II.

Mr. Watson passed away on August 31, and he will be buried with honors at Arlington National Cemetery.

I had the honor of meeting Mr. Watson in May when he was formally recognized as a Tuskegee Airman. Mr. Watson joined the military during World War II and served as an aircraft crew chief. These men were integral to the success of the Tuskegee Airmen but were never given their due until recently. I was pleased and honored to help present Mr. Watson with his Tuskegee red jacket and his Congressional Gold Medal when he visited the Capitol just this past May as part of an Honor Flight that was organized by Always Free Honor Flight of West Virginia. One of his granddaughters, Daphne Watson, was able to join him for the presentation, and there was not a dry eye in the room as Mr. Watson received his long past due, much-deserved recognition.

After serving in World War II, Mr. Watson continued his work as an employee of the VA Medical Center in Beckley, West Virginia. He truly believed in giving back to his Nation, and we are better off for his service to our country.

SACRAMENTO HEROES

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from California (Ms. MATSUI) for 5 minutes.

Ms. MATSUI. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the extraordinary heroism of Airman 1st Class Spencer Stone, Army National Guardsman Alek Skarlatos, and college student Anthony Sadler.

These three courageous young Americans drew the attention of the world on August 21 when they bravely took action to prevent a terrorist attack that could have taken the lives of dozens, if not hundreds, of innocent people on a passenger train in France. By now, most of the country and the world have heard about the heroic actions of these young men.

Spencer, Alek, and Anthony were on a train from Amsterdam to Paris as part of a European vacation. A terrorist, intending to murder passengers, boarded their train. When the attacker, armed with at least two firearms, including an assault rifle with hundreds of rounds of ammunition, entered the train car, the three young Americans, without hesitation, responded.

Witnesses say that Alek prompted action by yelling, ''Go get 'em.'' Spencer charged and tackled the gunman, with Alek and Anthony close behind. The three men, with the help of another passenger, tackled, subdued, and disarmed the attacker before anyone else was seriously injured. The attacker managed to wound Spencer with a box cutter during the struggle. Despite his injuries, Spencer used his Air Force medic training to treat the wound of another passenger, likely saving his life.

Mr. Speaker, I am very proud that all three of these heroes are from the Sacramento region. They met at a local middle school and have maintained a close friendship ever since. Their friendship and loyalty to each other is part of what makes Sacramento and this Nation great.

Spencer grew up in Carmichael, which is just outside of Sacramento—a suburb, in fact—and attended Del Campo High School. He currently serves as a U.S. Air Force medic.

Alek is also from Carmichael and had moved to Oregon. He serves in the Oregon National Guard and had just finished a 9-month deployment in Afghanistan.

Anthony is studying kinesiology at California State University, Sacramento. He grew up in Sacramento. His father is a pastor at Shiloh Baptist Church, a historical church in our community, and he has been a friend of the Matsui family for many, many years. As he related to me, he always told Anthony to always watch each other's back. That is what friends do.

Mr. Speaker, Spencer's, Alek's, and Anthony's actions were nothing short of extraordinary. These young men, who call themselves just regular guys, have given all Americans a reason to celebrate. They have been awarded the French Legion of Honour. My city of Sacramento, which is also the State capital, will be throwing them a parade on Friday—significantly, on 9/11—and I am sure more accolades will follow.

However, more important than any accolade is that they have reminded us about the importance of service, sacrifice, and selflessness. All three men deserve commendation for the manner in which they have represented our Nation and have put themselves in harm's way to save the lives of others.

Mr. Speaker, I ask all of my colleagues to join me in recognizing Spencer Stone, Alek Skarlatos, and Anthony Sadler as we honor their bravery.

A NUCLEAR-ARMED IRAN IS A THREAT TO EVERY COUNTRY

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

Mr. COSTELLO of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, there is no higher priority for this government than of guaranteeing the safety and security of the American people. Allowing Iran—the chief sponsor of global terror—to obtain nuclear capabilities, which Iran is guaranteed to have through this deal, means freedom everywhere is threatened. A nuclear-armed Iran is a threat to every country everywhere.

Mr. Speaker, any deal must be verifiable, enforceable, and accountable, and there is nothing verifiable about this deal.

The secret deals between Iran and the U.N. mean Iranians get to certify whether they are complying, and Iran actually provides the testing samples to the U.N. for testing. If the U.S. demands the right to inspect facilities, Iran can delay for more than 3 weeks. Our ''anytime, anywhere'' threshold demand has been watered down during negotiations to what Iran calls ''managed access.''

It is not an enforceable deal. Sanctions will have been lifted, and it is the sanctions that have forced them to the bargaining table in the first instance. Once lifted, Iran will have billions to complete their nuclear program and expand their funding of terror. Even if we can prove a violation, a slow bureaucratic process gives them time to delay, deceive, and deter effective enforcement. There are no snapback provisions here, Mr. Speaker, and it is not an accountable deal.

Iran is permitted to keep thousands of nuclear centrifuges to enrich uranium. As for the $150 billion in unfrozen assets, does anyone think that Iran is going to use that to build schools or hospitals or to teach tolerance of other faiths? Instead, how about using it to wipe Israel off the map? How about the chants of ''death to America''? Why are we paving the path to weapons that can accomplish these atrocities?

Why should we trust Iran? What is it about their history of deceit, destruction, and killings that warrants our bestowing trust that they will be peaceful?

Here is a question for those who say this is a good deal: How many people can Iran kill with this money for this to remain a good deal? What is the under-over death toll threshold for this deal to no longer be a good deal?

I ask these questions because, very simply, this money is going to be used to kill people, and this deal provides the funding for it.

Millions of Americans, throughout the history of this country, have fought and died. Families have sacrificed in the name of freedom. Generations of Americans have brought about American strength and exceptionalism, and this has engendered a belief in our allies that we will have their backs, and it has kept many of our enemies in check given our military capability. This strength has always been at the very core of our leverage when dealing with other countries.

As for negotiating, the administration simply says we have negotiated the best deal we can, and we are supposed to, as Congress, accept that at face value with zero input.

Here is a little bit of recent history. We were assured by this administration that al Qaeda had been broken, but it hasn't. Our strategy in Yemen was called a model for combating terrorism, but, at this point, it looks very much like an Iran proxy state. ISIS was mocked as a JV team, and now they are murdering thousands. Our relationship with Russia was supposed to be reset, but I don't think anyone let Vladimir Putin know that as he invades sovereign countries and faces no consequences.

□ 1045

How about the bright red line in Syria that said we won't allow Assad to kill his own people with chemical weapons? This administration decided to ignore that, and we now have a Syrian refugee crisis.

This is the recent backdrop from which our leverage, our American strength and exceptionalism, earned through the blood, sweat, and tears of generations of Americans, has been brokered by this administration in this deal.

The U.N. voting on this deal before the United States Congress and the United States Senate, the minority of which is actually considering filibustering a vote on this deal, is an outrage, Mr. Speaker.

What does a good deal consist of? Real simple: A complete dismantling of their entire nuclear program. Once we have a demonstrated proof of that, then sanctions get lifted. No nonnuclear concessions.

Any other outcome is not acceptable. Let's use our leverage to the maximum. We fought for it. Let's be strong and let's be proud of our strength and let's use it to our advantage.

Diplomacy isn't compromising to the preferred position of a terrorist country. Diplomacy must always begin and end with protecting American security.

This is not about politics, and it is not just about America. A nuclear Iran is a global threat to everyone everywhere. All Iranian terror must be stopped. We need to reject this deal and go back to the negotiating table.

MAKE IT IN AMERICA FIELD HEARING

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Connecticut (Ms. ESTY) for 5 minutes.

Ms. ESTY. Mr. Speaker, yesterday Congresswoman DELAURO and I held a Make It In America field hearing in Connecticut.

We heard from manufacturers from across the State, including leaders from Click Bond in Watertown, Connecticut, who are committed to growing their businesses right here in the United States. But they need our support.

Congress needs to be a more effective partner for American manufacturing. We must continue to foster an innovation economy that creates manufacturing careers, not jobs, but careers that are at the heart of the middle class.

We must reauthorize the Export-Import Bank, a critical financial tool for our companies to remain competitive in the global marketplace.

We must work together to create a predictable Tax Code that encourages companies to return to the United States and levels the playing field for our small businesses, particularly our family-owned companies.

We must inspire our students in science, technology, engineering, and math so that the United States remains the leader in global innovation for generations to come. By engaging our students in the STEM fields, we can prepare them to be the scientists, entrepreneurs, and innovators of the future.

These students could become NASA astronauts like Waterbury's own Rick Mastracchio, who circled the planet on the International Space Station, or machinists or Teamsters, who assemble the aircraft that our military flies proudly all around the world, or computer programmers, who make our world more accessible and connected. Many of my colleagues share my passion for STEM education and bolstering our skilled workforce.

With Minority Whip STENY HOYER's leadership, Congress has advanced the Make It In America agenda and passed important legislation to cut taxes, provide small business loans, train skilled workers, and support American manufacturing.

I look forward to working with my colleagues on both sides of the aisle who are dedicated to creating and growing American jobs.

By rising above partisan politics and focusing on commonsense practical policies, our bipartisan efforts can stimulate real economic growth. We should seize the opportunity to work together to support high-paying careers in American manufacturing.

WASHINGTON STATE WILDFIRES

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. BYRNE). The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Washington (Mr. NEWHOUSE) for 5 minutes.

Mr. NEWHOUSE. Mr. Speaker, for the second year in a row, my home State of Washington and my Fourth Congressional District are facing the worst wildfires in the State's recorded history.

One year ago the Carlton Complex fire broke out in Okanogan County. At the time, it was the most destructive in our State's history, burning over 250,000 acres, destroying hundreds of homes and businesses, and devastating the environment.

Now the people of Washington are once again enduring another catastrophic wildfire season, far surpassing the scale of the devastation experienced last year.

To put it in perspective, the amount of land burning in my home State is equivalent to the State of Rhode Island. Many of these fires continue to burn, even as Federal, State, and local agencies and officials work tirelessly to contain them.

Communities across my State are mourning the tragic loss of three firefighters who fell in the line of duty on August 19 while battling the Twisp fire in Okanogan County. We remember and mourn the loss of these brave young men: Andrew Zajac, Richard Wheeler, and Tom Beshevsky.

Our prayers are with their families and their loved ones. The current situation in Washington is dire, and the heartbreaking loss of life is a sober reminder of the dangerous conditions facing many residents.

Already roughly 1 million acres have burned, along with countless homes and businesses and agricultural operations, forcing thousands of residents to evacuate their homes as the threat continues.

While the Governor has declared a state of emergency and the President approved a Federal emergency declaration, the threat remains for residents of central and eastern Washington, and more resources are necessary.

For the first time in history, the Forest Service has spent more than half

its budget on wildfire suppression and across the country over 8 million acres have already burned just this year.

The Forest Service reported last week that it has begun the practice known as fire borrowing, which is transferring funds to supplement its diminishing firefighting budget.

This practice of fire borrowing leads into a vicious cycle where funding is not available for critical fire mitigation efforts, such as thinning dense forests, rehabilitating areas after wildfires, and ensuring communities are more resilient and prepared for future fires.

This leads the next fire season to be worse than the last, a trend that we are now experiencing in Washington, which is why it is more important than ever to pass legislation to fix this problem such as the Wildfire Disaster Funding Act.

To protect our communities and battle the wildfires, firefighters from across the U.S., as well as Australia and New Zealand, have joined the fight. We owe them our deepest gratitude and thanks.

Additionally, the thousands of first responders and volunteers and National Guard servicemembers who have worked around the clock at great personal risk to fight the blaze deserve recognition for their heroic and selfless efforts.

I have seen firsthand how our communities have pulled together to help one another during these trying times. Our communities in central and eastern Washington are resolute, resilient, and have come together to confront the many challenges facing them.

The outpouring of support and effort of volunteers from all over the State and country, who provide shelter to survivors, cook meals, and unload trucks of relief supplies, is a testament to the spirit and determination of Washingtonians and our neighbors.

However, help is needed still as the current fires have only worsened what was already a perilous situation, with more and more homes being destroyed, families being displaced, and severe economic hardship expected in the aftermath.

Mr. Speaker, we must remember the losses caused by catastrophic wildfires of the last 2 years, and Congress must continue to push to improve forest health and to ensure that this does not happen again.

AMERICAN HEROES OF FRENCH TRAIN ATTACK

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

Mr. DESAULNIER. Mr. Speaker, I rise to join my neighbor and good friend from Sacramento in honoring three brave Americans who foiled an attempted attack on passengers in a train traveling from Amsterdam to Paris on August 22, 2015. Anthony Sadler, Spencer Stone, and Alek Skarlatos were the three brave Americans who stopped this attack.

Anthony Sadler is a native of Pittsburg, California, which, happily, is in my congressional district. These courageous men charged the attacker, who was armed with an AK–47 and dozens of rounds of ammunition, enough to kill everyone on that train.

Thanks to Anthony and his friends, no one was killed and injuries were minimized. Each were awarded France's highest civilian honor, the Legion d'Honneur.

As we reflect on 9/11, 14 years ago this week, the heroic efforts of these young men underscore our Nation's resolve to confront violent extremism. I am thankful they returned home to their families and to America.

A MUNICH-SIZED MISTAKE

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

Mr. MCCLINTOCK. Mr. Speaker, in 48 hours, the House will vote on a resolution to stop the Iran nuclear treaty.

Now, I know the President chooses not to call it a treaty, but it is a treaty in everything but name, with international ramifications as great as any treaty Congress has ever considered.

Because treaties have a profound implication to the life of this Nation, the Constitution requires they be ratified by a two-thirds vote of the Senate. Yet, in this post-constitutional era of Obama's America, it now require two-thirds of both Houses to reject them.

Every Republican in both Houses has taken a stand against this treaty. So rejection or ratification now rests solely on whether enough Democrats are willing to place country ahead of party on a matter of the gravest consequence to world peace.

I don't think anyone can dispute the immediate effects of this treaty: $150 billion in frozen assets will be released to a regime whose leaders daily reiterate their intention to wage war on Israel and the United States. These funds will be available to finance Iran's military and terrorist activities and to fund its nuclear ambitions.

Although the agreement purports to halt production of fissile material, it gives Iran the legal right to continue its research and development of advanced centrifuges, the only purpose of which is to produce nuclear weapons.

It gives them legal access to traffic in conventional arms in just 5 years and ICBM technology in 8 years, something that Obama's own chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff said should be done ''under no circumstances'' just a week before the treaty was announced.

Does anyone deny that the nation most immediately imperiled by a nuclear Iran—our ally, Israel—is united in its opposition to this treaty? Israeli political parties are among the most fractured and disputatious in the world. Yet, they stand united on this issue.

Does anyone deny that the Iranian regime is notorious for not honoring its treaty obligations? Indeed, Iran signed a nuclear nonproliferation treaty and has violated it ever since, which is why we are now debating this treaty.

Verification therefore must be the central focus of any treaty with this regime. Yet, under its very terms, spot inspections can be delayed for weeks or even months if the regime objects.

More recently, we have learned that, under secret side agreements the administration had no intention of sharing, inspections of the most important nuclear sites are to be conducted by the Iranians themselves. This provision alone guarantees that history will ridicule this treaty as the pinnacle of naivety.

So I ask my Democratic colleagues, why? Why would anyone who values peace support this treaty? The answer I hear is that it reduces the chance of war in the next few years or, in Neville Chamberlain's words, it guarantees ''peace in our time.''

Does anyone really believe this? This treaty gives Israel the Hobson's choice of launching a preemptive strike or ramping up its own nuclear program.

The Saudis and Egyptians have already made clear this agreement gives them no alternative other than to initiate their own nuclear programs. It catastrophically undermines the Iranian democratic opposition at just the time the regime was faltering from within.

Ironically, Mr. Obama tacitly concedes the destabilizing effect of this treaty by following it up with pledges to vastly increase military aid to Israel, Egypt, and Saudi Arabia. If he really believed this treaty stabilizes the region, why would it need a new infusion of arms?

□ 1100

I appeal to my Democratic colleagues to consider the ramifications of this vote. The constitutional concerns are huge. This sets a dangerous precedent that essentially rescinds the treaty clause of the Constitution, a precedent they might live to regret under Republican administrations.

A far more immediate danger is the chain of events this treaty would set off in the Middle East and quickly spread throughout the world. This treaty bolsters the Iranian regime from within. It infuses it with $150 billion with which to finance its nuclear ambitions. It gives it the legal right and guaranteed timetable to pursue nuclear war and cannot be verified through inspections.

Iran has made crystal clear its intent to destroy Israel and the United States, a threat reiterated yesterday in no uncertain terms by its Supreme Leader.

Mr. Speaker, we are running out of time to avert a catastrophe.

SOCIAL SECURITY DISABILITY TRUST FUND

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New York (Mr. REED) for 5 minutes.

Mr. REED. Mr. Speaker, there are a lot of important issues before the House this week, but I wanted to take an opportunity to raise an issue that we have been working on in our office for quite some time.

We, as a body, Mr. Speaker, will be faced with an opportunity, hopefully, to resolve this issue here shortly in the next few months, and that is the issue of the Social Security disability insurance trust fund.

Not a lot of people are aware—and I just read the Social Security trustees report over the summer—that the disability trust fund goes insolvent in 2016. That means millions of Americans who rely on Social Security disability benefits are looking at a situation where their benefits are going to be cut 20 percent because of the insolvency of the Social Security trust fund—2016, Mr. Speaker, that is right around the corner.

When I raised this issue 2 years ago with the White House, with Jack Lew—our Treasury Secretary—in our Committee on Ways and Means hearing, I asked him 2 years ago: What is the plan? What is the solution to this problem?

What I was ultimately told was this is what we are going to do: we are just going to take money from the Social Security retirement fund and move it over to the disability trust fund and bail it out.

Well, in my private life in business, I knew a lot of businessowners, and what that essentially was, it is robbing Peter to pay Paul because the Social Security retirement fund is on a path to insolvency just a few short years down the road.

I said we could do better. That is why I was glad to join with my colleague, SAM JOHNSON, who chairs the Subcommittee on Social Security here in Washington, to change the rules to make sure that that solution would not be the one that we follow here in 2015 and 2016. We can do better.

You know why we can do better? It is because we care. We care about the people that are in the disability trust fund, and we need to listen to those people. This is what their experience is with the disability trust fund today. They are frustrated. It is a bureaucracy. It is a mess.

We have overpayments. We have fraudulent payments. We have a system that penalizes people returning to work, rather than trying to incentivize them and stand with them when they return to work.

We had an individual by the name of Mike Zelly come before the committee and testify to us, and he is in the disability trust fund. He was in a horrific automobile accident 36 years ago and has been in a wheelchair ever since.

These are the people we should listen to. These are the people that know the disability trust fund the best. What his testimony to us was, he says we should seize this opportunity to fix this problem, take care of the bureaucracy, make sure the overpayments don't occur because, when an overpayment occurs to a disability recipient, guess who has to pay it back? It is the disability recipient because of the Social Security Administration's incompetence. That is not right. That is not fair.

Most importantly, what he talked about in his 36 years in the disability trust fund is that, when he tried to return to work, he was faced with obstacle after obstacle of a bureaucracy that said, if you do that, you will lose your benefit. That is not right.

Mike Zelly offered ideas on how we can improve the system to streamline this bureaucracy. This is the process someone in the Social Security disability trust fund has to go through in order to try to go back to work. We need to simplify it, and we need to stand with the American work ethic for the people in the disability trust fund that want to return to work.

There was a recent Brookings Institution report that came across my desk that I read. There was 40 percent return on the beneficiaries in the disability trust fund that indicated they would like to return to work, but because of the bureaucracy, there was fear. There was a sense that, if they did that, they would lose their benefit, and they just couldn't risk it.

That is why we are offering commonsense reforms here out of our office, out of the Committee on Ways and Means, out of this House, hopefully, shortly, so that what we can do is make sure that those disability trust fund recipients don't look at a 20 percent cut in 2016.

We will hold them harmless, and we will make sure we do what is necessary in order to make sure that our obligations and promises under the disability trust fund are met to those individuals because that is the right thing to do.

We cannot lose this opportunity to modernize the Social Security disability trust fund to make sure that we stand with those that want to return to work and believe in the American work ethic like we do.

I ask my colleagues to join with us on a bipartisan basis, and there has been an indication of bipartisan work that we have been able to show here in the initial conversations.

Let's modernize the disability trust fund; let's cure the waste, fraud, and abuse, but most importantly, let's stand with the individuals like Mike Zelly who want to return to work because it gives him dignity and it gives him a sense that he is contributing rather than being in any way a burden on the system.

RECESS

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

Accordingly (at 11 o'clock and 6 minutes a.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1200

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker at noon.

PRAYER

Reverend Robert Michaels, Serve & Protect, Brentwood, Tennessee, offered the following prayer:

Lord God, we humbly come before You asking for wisdom, unity, and peace.

We are reminded that September 9, 1776, the Continental Congress declared the name of our new Nation to be the United States of America, no longer United Colonies. Our national unity was strong.

Lord, we also remember unity September 11, 2001, when terrorists attacked our Nation. Again, our Nation stood united, strong, and resolute.

Today, Lord, we pray for that same commitment to unity, that sense of all for one and one for all. We pray for our military and first responders, noble heroes all.

Please, Lord, help our leaders. Grant wisdom and vision; help them serve this great Nation, under God, ''with liberty and justice for all.'' One Nation. One heart. One mind.

We sincerely pray this as one Nation under God, as Jesus taught us to pray, to our Father, who is in heaven.

Amen.

THE JOURNAL

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

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

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER. Will the gentlewoman from Minnesota (Ms. MCCOLLUM) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Ms. MCCOLLUM led the Pledge of Allegiance as follows:

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

WELCOMING REVEREND ROBERT MICHAELS

The SPEAKER. Without objection, the gentlewoman from Tennessee (Mrs. BLACKBURN) is recognized for 1 minute.

There was no objection.

Mrs. BLACKBURN. Mr. Speaker, it is a distinct honor to introduce and honor guest chaplain Reverend Robert Michaels, from Brentwood, Tennessee.

As is the tradition of this governing body, we begin each day with a prayer. I am so pleased that Chaplain Michaels is offering that prayer today.

He is the CEO, founder, and national trauma care specialist for Serve & Protect, an international nonprofit organization dedicated to comprehensive and confidential trauma care and therapy for police officers, firefighters, rescue workers, dispatchers, and other emergency workers.

Chaplain Michaels served in law enforcement with the 229th Military Police Battalion of the Virginia Army National Guard, as well as with the Norfolk, Virginia, police department.

He serves as chaplain for the FBI Memphis division, Nashville R.A., State chaplain for Tennessee FOP, and is a chaplain and second vice president for Morris Heithcock FOP Lodge 41 in Williamson County, Tennessee, where he is an active member and leads a Bible study group for first responders.

He is a member of the American Academy of Experts in Trauma Stress, National Center for Crisis Management, the International Conference of Police Chaplains, and Federation of Fire Chaplains. He holds a BA from Columbia International University and an MA from Wheaton College.

Mr. Speaker, please join me in welcoming Chaplain Michaels today and expressing gratitude for the good work that he does for our law enforcement and emergency workers each and every day.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

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

CONGRATULATING THE ROWAN LITTLE LEAGUE SOFTBALL TEAM

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

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Speaker, today, I rise to recognize the members of Rowan Little League's 12-under softball team.

Kaylin Dowling, Allison Ennis, Kary Hales, Caylie Keller, Caitlin Mann, Kali Morton, Taylor Sanborn, Megyn Spicer, Liza Simmerson, Jaden Vaughn, Taylor Walton, Ellie Wilhelm, and Ellen Yang played their hearts out during the Little League Softball World Series in Portland, Oregon, and emerged as world champions.

Coach Steve Yang, with assistance from Coaches Eric Dowling and Rob Hales, led the team, who went 5–1 in the tournament and outscored their opponents 43–6 during the winning campaign.

After scoring four runs in the first inning of the championship game versus East regional champs, Rhode Island, the team relied on exceptional pitching and outstanding defensive play to win the game.

I commend these young athletes and congratulate them on a job well done. North Carolina is incredibly proud of the teamwork, dedication, and perseverance they exhibited on the way to this extraordinary achievement.

HONORING THE LIFE AND SERVICE OF SHANE CLIFTON

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

Ms. MCCOLLUM. Mr. Speaker, yesterday, I attended a visitation for St. Paul firefighter and paramedic Shane Clifton. Mr. Clifton passed away while on duty at Fire Station 14 in St. Paul, Minnesota.

In addition to his duties as firefighter and paramedic, Shane served in Afghanistan and Iraq as a member of the United States Navy and participated in humanitarian missions in Haiti.

Shane and firefighters around Minnesota and our Nation sacrifice time away from their families, work long hours, and put their lives at risk to keep our communities safe. We owe all of our first responders an incredible debt of gratitude for ensuring our public safety.

Shane served the city of St. Paul bravely and his death is a tragedy. The city of St. Paul, Fire Station 14, and his family will all miss his presence dearly.

My thoughts and prayers are with his children, his family, and his brothers and sisters in the St. Paul Fire Department.

Rest in peace, Shane.

IRAN AND FAILED PRESIDENTIAL LEADERSHIP

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

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, the President's failure to lead our Nation for a strategy of peace through strength has resulted in mass murders in the Middle East.

We have seen his failure to take action after Syria violated his declared ''red line'' and used chemical weapons against its citizens. We have seen his failure in recognizing ISIL-Daesh as a deadly threat to American families as the ''JV'' team. The President has been inaccurate in describing his dangerous nuclear deal.

Sadly, we read tragic stories of men, women, and children fleeing their homes in Syria. They are escaping a murderous government, the same government propped up by the Iranian regime. The President is establishing a failed dangerous legacy that has left the Middle East in wars and mayhem with refugees and migrants drowning at sea.

Ambassador John Bolton said it best when he remarked:

> Obama's mistakes make it impossible to travel in time back to a theoretical world where sanctions might have derailed Iran's nuclear weapons program.

I believe the President has abandoned the young people of Iran seeking regime change.

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

HONORING THE MEMORIES OF MORRIS AND BETH FAITELEWICZ AND YEHUDA BAYME

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

Ms. VELÁZQUEZ. Mr. Speaker, on Monday, three New Yorkers—Morris and Beth Faitelewicz, who celebrated their 33rd wedding anniversary in June, and Yehuda Bayme, fiance to their only daughter—lost their lives in a Sullivan County car accident.

This tragedy is being felt deeply in the Lower East Side. Not only were they respected community members, but Morris and Beth had been involved in response and recovery efforts on 9/11.

Morris served as vice chair of Manhattan's Community Board 3, was citywide coordinator and deputy inspector of NYPD's Auxiliary Volunteer Emergency Services Rescue Unit in the World Trade Center area, and was a dedicated Hatzolah member.

He was among the first to rush to the World Trade Center. For his efforts, he earned a Port Authority exceptional service award and a city council proclamation. Beth, an ER nurse, also served with distinction after the towers collapsed.

I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring their memories.

Rest in peace.

MAYERS MEMORIAL HOSPITAL SUCCESS

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

Mr. LAMALFA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the Mayers Memorial Hospital in my district, the First District of California, in Fall River Mills, eastern Shasta County, not only for their commitment to deliver exemplary healthcare services to the northeast area of rural California, but also in congratulations for, after years of planning and diligence on their part, Mayers was recently awarded a $21 million USDA rural development grant to address the hospital and region's most urgent needs, including replacement facilities for emergency departments, acute care, and diagnostic services, while making the facility compliant with California's rigid earthquake mandates that will make the building in seismic code by 2020.

Access to healthcare services is already critical and a big challenge in

rural areas of California, so ensuring our hospitals and doctors have the tools they need to continue offering primary care and emergency health services is very critical for our area.

I have no doubt this project—one that I was happy to help support—will have a positive impact on the community and the whole northeast region, generating jobs, and making sure the people of eastern Shasta County, as well as northeastern California, have the healthcare services and emergency services they need.

LET'S FOCUS MORE ON PRIORITIES OF HARD-WORKING AMERICAN FAMILIES

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

Mr. KILDEE. Mr. Speaker, the House Republican leadership's continued dysfunction and inability to govern is starting to have real effects on people back home.

Like most Members, I spent the last month back home listening to the people that I work for, and I heard one message loud and clear. They want us to get to work and get things done and set aside the hyperpartisanship and focus on the priorities of the American people; yet we are 10 days away from another government shutdown.

We are no further ahead today than we were 6 months ago in getting a budget that represents the interests and the priorities of the American people, 10 days away from another government shutdown—instead of focusing on the priorities of the American people, like rebuilding our crumbling roads and bridges that would help us be more efficient and make our businesses more productive, nothing.

Instead of focusing on the priorities of the American people to grow our economy, we have seen nothing come to this floor of the House. We can't even get a budget bill.

On this side, Democrats, we stand willing to work, and we stand willing to compromise. We will work with you to put together a spending plan. We cannot continue to allow the priorities of the American people to be set aside.

IRAN NUCLEAR DEAL

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

Mr. GIBBS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to oppose the nuclear deal that the President and Secretary of State Kerry negotiated with Iran. Since the announcement of the deal on July 14, the world has learned piece by piece just how bad it is.

Earlier this year, I spoke on the House floor on the elements that would be needed in order to consider an agreement with Iran.

One such element was the requirement of anytime, anywhere inspections, which would give inspectors 24-hour access to any site inside Iran; yet, according to Hillel Fradkin, an expert at the Hudson Institute, Iran could get as many as 63 days—possibly more—before inspections. This gives Iran time to hide and destroy any potential evidence of nuclear weapons research.

Additionally, this deal lifts economic sanctions too quickly and gives Iran access to $150 billion in sanctions relief. Iran is a top exporter and supporter of terrorism. We should not be making it easier for them to fund groups like Hezbollah and dictators like those in Syria, nor should we make it easier for Iran to procure conventional arms and missiles that have the capability of reaching American soil.

Despite our negotiators' assurances that the conventional arms embargo would not be lifted, this is precisely what will happen with the UN arms embargo ending in just 5 years. The President is rewarding Iran with money, access to weaponry, and a 10-year pause on their nuclear weapons research—and that is if the Iranians don't cheat.

Empowering Iran to fund terrorists and bully its neighbors is not what I call a good agreement for the United States or allies Israel and Saudi Arabia. Congress must end this deal and impose stronger sanctions.

□ 1215

LAS VEGAS NIGHT

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

Ms. TITUS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to invite all of my colleagues to join me tonight in the Cannon Caucus Room to celebrate Las Vegas Night.

We will have food and drinks and music and casino games, and it just promises to be a good time. This is what is happening only in District One. It is my pleasure to welcome and thank the Las Vegas Chamber of Commerce for hosting this event. It is going to be just a great evening, and I hope you will all join us.

Las Vegas is back. Our economy was hard hit by the recession, but now we are doing so much better. We had 315,000 tourists just over Labor Day weekend. We will welcome over 42 million tourists and business travelers this year, and that includes 8 million foreign visitors. That supports 366,000 jobs. I tip my hat to those workers in the tourism industry who have helped us make it through.

Please join me tonight, and remember that what happens on Vegas Night stays on Vegas Night.

PATIENTS DESERVE BETTER THAN NEW PROSTHETIC RULE

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

Mr. PAULSEN. Mr. Speaker, every day, cutting-edge medical innovation is making it possible for patients to live healthy, active lives. One of the best examples of this is lower limb prosthetics.

Losing a limb is a traumatic and life-altering experience, but the continued advancement and development of prosthetics has made it possible for many of these patients to continue to have significant amounts of functionality, along with ensuring they won't be confined to wheelchairs.

However, proposed changes to Medicare rules threaten access to important medical innovation and medical technology. Recently, a number of patients and advocacy groups came to Washington to share what the proposed rule changes would mean to them. One patient from Minnesota noted that the proposed rule would turn back the clock and force her to use a prosthetic that she claimed would be the car equivalent of a 1970s Vega.

Mr. Speaker, I share the apprehension that these patients have, and I encourage CMS, the agency in charge of administering Medicare, to chart a different course when it comes to administering lower limb prosthetics.

GOP ATTACKS AGAINST A NUCLEAR DEAL

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

Mr. DOGGETT. Mr. Speaker, Republican self-styled experts like Sarah Palin, Glenn Beck, and Donald Trump condemning an agreement to decrease the nuclear threat is hardly new.

One Republican Presidential candidate blasted a ''nuclear Munich.''

The National Review denounced a ''suicide pact.''

The Conservative Caucus founder derided our President as a ''useful idiot'' and a ''weak man.''

Old George Will lamented the ''cult of arms control.''

Sharp words for a President who is negotiating a nuclear agreement with an untrustworthy, terrorist-promoting regime that is bent on destroying America.

Yet these shrill Republican attacks were not against President Obama, rather they were against President Ronald Reagan for agreeing with the Soviets to limit nuclear missiles. What the bomb-first, rejectionist crowd lacks in understanding and creativity they make up for here today in fatal consistency. Those who think the only good deal with Iran is a dead deal over nuclear weapons are only endangering our families.

This week, I believe that reason will prevail and the President will be sustained, and our families will be all the safer for it.

HAPPY ANNIVERSARY

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

Mr. CARTER of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, 37 years ago today, I received one of the highest honors of my life when I was married to the former Amy Coppage of Waycross, Georgia.

We met as chemistry lab partners at Young Harris College in the north Georgia mountains. I didn't really like her much then—she was a lot smarter than me—but that quickly changed, and I grew very fond of her.

We were married in Trinity United Methodist Church in Waycross, Georgia. We have been blessed with three wonderful sons, two daughters-in-law, two wonderful granddaughters, and we have a grandson on the way. Those fine young men are really the result of her efforts.

I want to wish her a happy anniversary. We have been very blessed, and I am blessed today to have her with me.

Happy anniversary.

WEAR RED WEDNESDAY

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

Ms. WILSON of Florida. Mr. Speaker, today is Wear Red Wednesday to Bring Back Our Girls.

We have heard so many heartbreaking details of the death and destruction that Boko Haram has brought upon the people of Nigeria.

I traveled to Nigeria last month, and I am strongly encouraged by President Buhari's pledge to defeat Boko Haram by the end of December with the help of a multinational joint task force that is made up of troops from Benin, Cameroon, Chad, Niger, and Nigeria—and also to free the girls.

I am also encouraged after meeting in my office yesterday with members of the Nigerian House of Representatives—people who I know share my concern about Boko Haram and the Chibok girls. These honorable men confirmed the news that Boko Haram is quickly deteriorating—fractured after losing its central command—and may be defeated even before President Buhari's December deadline.

Until Boko Haram is defeated and those precious girls are returned, we will continue to tweet, tweet, tweet #bringbackourgirls and tweet, tweet, tweet #joinrepwilson.

CONGRESS MUST REJECT DISASTROUS IRAN DEAL

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

Mr. MARCHANT. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong opposition to the Iran nuclear deal.

Earlier this year, over 350 Members of Congress, myself included, wrote the President with objectives any deal must reach before we would consider lifting sanctions. The deal is before us, and now it has none of them.

There are no anytime, anywhere inspections. Iran gets to maintain key nuclear infrastructure. The most important restrictions begin to expire in as few as 10 years. On top of that, Iran will receive $100 billion in sanctions relief almost immediately.

This agreement is a dangerous gamble for the United States and our allies, especially for Israel. Our security is on the line, and the deck is stacked in favor of a sworn adversary. I will be voting to reject this disastrous deal, and I call on my colleagues to do the same.

DEFEAT THE IRAN NUCLEAR DEAL

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

Mr. WENSTRUP. Mr. Speaker, the details found within the nuclear Iran deal are stunning.

The original pledge of anywhere, anytime inspections gave way to a 24-day lead time for Iranians to hide their activities from inspectors.

We now know that Iran has entered into two secret deals with the IAEA and that the details are not available to the duly elected Members of this body.

We were told that no deal is better than a bad deal. Yet here we are with a very bad deal.

The alternative to this deal is not war, as this administration is fear-mongering, but through strengthened sanctions to continue international pressure on the largest state sponsor of terrorism. Without war, we can pursue a nuclear-free Iran through diplomacy by engaging with our allies and with peace-loving nations and with the deterrent of military might and effective economic sanctions.

''Do I trust Iran?'' I am asked. Based on the last four decades and on its recent behavior, I only trust them to cheat.

Congress and the American people must defeat this deal in the interest of regional stability and our own national security and for the prospect of peace for future generations of Americans and our allies.

IN REMEMBRANCE OF TWO INDIANA LEADERS

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

Mr. STUTZMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in sadness over the loss of two northeast Indiana community leaders.

Jac Price, a lifetime LaGrange County native, passed away on Sunday, September 6, at the age of 76. Jac, a member of the United States Army, a LaGrange County commissioner and business leader, loved his country, State, and community very much. In a testament to this, last month, Jac was awarded the prestigious Sagamore of the Wabash award—our State's highest honor—by Governor Mike Pence. He will be missed by many, and I rise today to honor Jac's service to our State.

Indiana also lost Garrett Mayor Tonya Hoeffel on Sunday as well. Tonya passed away at the age of 52, living a life dedicated to DeKalb County and the city of Garrett, Indiana. Her heart for serving her community represented true Hoosier values and is an example for all of us to follow. Her contagious smile will be forever missed. I continue to keep her husband, children, and family in my prayers.

RIDGWAY RIFLE CLUB

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

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor of the Ridgway Rifle Club, which has been called the ''Silhouette Capital of the United States.''

This type of target practice involves shooting at steel targets at varying distances. While silhouette shooting has been around for 100 years, the Ridgway Rifle Club has the distinction of being the first club east of the Mississippi River to open this type of a shooting range, in the 1970s.

The range has grown over the past 40 years to include silhouettes of all shapes and sizes. One of its most recent creations, the Varmint Bench Rest Silhouette, includes small targets that are placed 1,000 yards from the shooter.

Mr. Speaker, the Ridgway Rifle Club's silhouette range is very popular, with more than 100 people attending matches each month. The range has even attracted national attention, and it was recently featured on the television program ''Shooting USA.''

I wish the club continued success in nurturing a love of target shooting, shooting sports, and its support of the Second Amendment in our communities and for future generations.

UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH FLORIDA ST. PETERSBURG'S 50TH ANNIVERSARY

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

Mr. JOLLY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize an institution that for a half century has provided excellence in higher education to the people of Florida's 13th Congressional District, to the State of Florida, and, increasingly, to all corners of the world.

I rise to recognize and honor the University of South Florida St. Petersburg as it celebrates its 50th anniversary.

USF St. Petersburg was established in 1965 by the University of South Florida to meet a rising demand by students who sought to make their mark in the world. It grew through the eighties and nineties, and, by 2006, USF became its own accredited institution by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools. Today, it boasts over 5,000 students and faculty who are

Fulbright Scholars and Pulitzer Prize jurors; and it boasts partnerships with leading health institutions, like All Children's Hospital and Raymond James. In short, USF St. Petersburg has become part of the fabric of Pinellas County, enriching the lives of students, faculty, and all of our neighbors.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to join me in recognizing USF St. Petersburg as it celebrates 50 magnificent years of higher education.

□ 1230

RECOGNIZING CHESTER COUNTY LAW ENFORCEMENT

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

Mr. COSTELLO of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, on August 26th, an armed man, who we later learned posed a security threat when he jumped the fence at the White House earlier this year, charged past the metal detectors at the Chester County Courthouse in my district and threatened those going about their daily schedules. The intruder used a knife to attack and wound a deputy sheriff before being shot dead.

Just a few years earlier I had served as a Chester County Commissioner and regularly went into that building.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and thank those security officers, especially those serving in the Chester County Sheriff's Department who put their lives on the line each day to protect our communities, for their hard work.

Unspoken and often unknown to many is the countless amount of time spent training and preparing for such an incident if it ever does come about.

We owe a special thanks to Sheriff Bunny Welsh and those in her department for the service they provide every single day.

Mr. Speaker, it is because of their heroic efforts that for those who enter the Chester County Courthouse day in and day out can feel safe.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. WESTMORELAND). Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess subject to the call of the Chair.

Accordingly (at 12 o'clock and 32 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 2227

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. COLLINS of Georgia) at 10 o'clock and 27 minutes p.m.

REPORT ON RESOLUTION PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H. RES. 411, FINDING THAT THE PRESIDENT HAS NOT COMPLIED WITH SECTION 2 OF THE IRAN NUCLEAR AGREEMENT REVIEW ACT OF 2015; PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 3461, APPROVAL OF JOINT COMPREHENSIVE PLAN OF ACTION; AND PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 3460, SUSPENSION OF AUTHORITY TO WAIVE, SUSPEND, REDUCE, PROVIDE RELIEF FROM, OR OTHERWISE LIMIT THE APPLICATION OF SANCTIONS PURSUANT TO AN AGREEMENT RELATED TO THE NUCLEAR PROGRAM OF IRAN

Mr. SESSIONS, from the Committee on Rules, submitted a privileged report (Rept. No. 114–259) on the resolution (H. Res. 412) providing for consideration of the resolution (H. Res. 411) finding that the President has not complied with section 2 of the Iran Nuclear Agreement Review Act of 2015; providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 3461) to approve the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action, signed at Vienna on July 14, 2015, relating to the nuclear program of Iran; and providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 3460) to suspend until January 21, 2017, the authority of the President to waive, suspend, reduce, provide relief from, or otherwise limit the application of sanctions pursuant to an agreement related to the nuclear program of Iran, which was referred to the House Calendar and ordered to be printed.

IRAN NUCLEAR DEAL

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

Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.J. Res. 64, Disapproving of the agreement transmitted to Congress by the President on July 19, 2015, relating to the nuclear program of Iran.

First, I would like to commend all of the individuals from the Obama administration and their counterparts across the globe for their tireless work in this agreement.

Since the Iranian Revolution in 1979, this is as close as our country and the international community have come to signing a peace agreement. That progress did not come without significant sacrifice of personal and professional time. Unfortunately, Mr. Speaker, I cannot support the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action. While I commend all those involved and recognize the importance of a comprehensive nuclear agreement, I do not believe in what we are getting.

Over the past 30 years, the international community has been subjected to Iranian threats and bully behaviors. The international community has also had to tolerate Iran's constant threats to destroy our Nation and the State of Israel, our staunch ally. For too long, the community of nations has dealt with Iran's funding of terrorism throughout the Middle East and the world.

I am unable to support a deal that would allow the Iranian regime to continue to perpetrate these actions without repercussions. It is important to mention that these are not just my beliefs.

Since the announcement in July, my office has received hundreds of contacts from constituents opposing the Iran agreement.

In the month of August, I held town halls, hosted meetings and conducted constituent visits.

The majority of those interactions affirmed the people in our district do not trust Iran.

The State of Israel should not have to worry about more threats and potentially expanded attacks funded by Iranian petro-dollars.

The United States shouldn't have to provide relief to a regime that continues to call for our destruction and those of our allies.

I believe the delay and dismantlement of Iran's nuclear program is a laudable goal, perhaps one of the most important in the world.

I also believe that we should work to alleviate the pressures and foster the goals of the Iranian people.

The young people in Iran are being held accountable for the actions of an autocratic, religiously-motivated panel of leaders.

However, we cannot ignore 30 years of unrelenting threats and condemnable behavior for a decade or less of nuclear concessions.

In Texas, perception is often reality and if you are perceived as a bully, then you'll be treated as one.

We spent too many years bringing Iran to the table through sanctions and diplomatic pressures.

We cannot easily forget the history between the two countries but we can hopefully work toward a better situation.

As long as our friends and allies in the Middle East and around the world feel the threat of Iranian influence, our job as the United States is to hold the regime accountable in every way possible.

It is my hope we work together to block this deal and use its framework to get a better deal.

I urge my colleagues to oppose H.J. Res. 64 and I yield back.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. Speaker, I move that the House do now adjourn.

The motion was agreed to; accordingly (at 10 o'clock and 28 minutes p.m.), under its previous order, the House adjourned until tomorrow, Thursday, September 10, 2015, at 10 a.m. for morning-hour debate.

EXECUTIVE COMMUNICATIONS, ETC.

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

2651. A communication from the President of the United States, transmitting an alternative plan for monthly basic pay increases

for members of the uniformed services for 2016, pursuant to 37 U.S.C. 1009(e); (H. Doc. No. 114—56); to the Committee on Armed Services and ordered to be printed.

2652. A letter from the Chairman, Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting D.C. Act 21-148, ''Fiscal Year 2016 Budget Support Act of 2015'', pursuant to Public Law 93-198, Sec. 602(c)(1); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

2653. A communication from the President of the United States, transmitting an alternative plan for pay increases for civilian Federal employees covered by the General Schedule and certain other pay systems in January 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 5303(b) and 5304a; (H. Doc. No. 114—57); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform and ordered to be printed.

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES ON PUBLIC BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

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

Mr. BISHOP of Utah: Committee on Natural Resources. H.R. 1554. A bill to require a land conveyance involving the Elkhorn Ranch and the White River National Forest in the State of Colorado, and for other purposes (Rept. 114–257). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

Mr. BISHOP of Utah: Committee on Natural Resources. H.R. 2223. A bill to authorize, direct, expedite, and facilitate a land exchange in El Paso and Teller Counties, Colorado, and for other purposes (Rept. 114–258). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

Mr. SESSIONS: Committee on Rules. House Resolution 412. A Resolution providing for consideration of the resolution (H. Res. 411) finding that the President has not complied with section 2 of the Iran Nuclear Agreement Review Act of 2015; providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 3461) to approve the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action, signed at Vienna on July 14, 2015, relating to the nuclear program of Iran; and providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 3460) to suspend until January 21, 2017, the authority of the President to waive, suspend, reduce, provide relief from, or otherwise limit the application of sanctions pursuant to an agreement related to the nuclear program of Iran (Rept. 114–259). Referred to the House Calendar.

PUBLIC BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

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

By Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York (for herself, Mr. CUMMINGS, Mr. MEEHAN, Mr. KING of New York, Ms. KELLY of Illinois, Mr. FITZPATRICK, Mr. DONOVAN, and Ms. DUCKWORTH):

H.R. 3455. A bill to prevent gun trafficking; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. DONOVAN:

H.R. 3456. A bill to improve the process for claims for losses under the National Flood Insurance Program, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Financial Services.

By Mr. MEEHAN (for himself, Mrs. WALORSKI, and Mr. DUFFY):

H.R. 3457. A bill to prohibit the lifting of sanctions on Iran until the Government of Iran pays the judgments against it for acts of terrorism, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

By Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas (for herself, Ms. EDWARDS, Ms. BONAMICI, Mr. SWALWELL of California, Mr. GRAYSON, Ms. ESTY, Mr. VEASEY, Ms. CLARK of Massachusetts, Mr. BEYER, Mr. PERLMUTTER, and Mr. TONKO):

H.R. 3458. A bill to authorize appropriations to the Department of Transportation for surface transportation research, development, and deployment, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Science, Space, and Technology, and in addition to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. KLINE (for himself, Mr. ROE of Tennessee, Mr. WALBERG, Ms. FOXX, Mr. ROKITA, Mr. WILSON of South Carolina, Mr. HUNTER, Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania, Mr. SALMON, Mr. GUTHRIE, Mr. BARLETTA, Mr. HECK of Nevada, Mr. MESSER, Mr. BYRNE, Mr. CARTER of Georgia, Mr. BISHOP of Michigan, Mr. GROTHMAN, Mr. RUSSELL, Mr. CURBELO of Florida, Mr. ALLEN, Mr. CHABOT, Mr. LUETKEMEYER, Mrs. HARTZLER, Mr. SMITH of Missouri, Mr. HARDY, and Mr. KNIGHT):

H.R. 3459. A bill to clarify the treatment of two or more employers as joint employers under the National Labor Relations Act; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

By Mr. ROSKAM:

H.R. 3460. A bill to suspend until January 21, 2017, the authority of the President to waive, suspend, reduce, provide relief from, or otherwise limit the application of sanctions pursuant to an agreement related to the nuclear program of Iran; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs, and in addition to the Committees on Financial Services, the Judiciary, Oversight and Government Reform, and Ways and Means, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. BOEHNER:

H.R. 3461. A bill to approve the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action, signed at Vienna on July 14, 2015, relating to the nuclear program of Iran; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs, and in addition to the Committees on Financial Services, the Judiciary, Oversight and Government Reform, and Ways and Means, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. GRAVES of Louisiana (for himself and Ms. GRAHAM):

H.R. 3462. A bill to amend title 46, United States Code, and the Dingell-Johnson Sport Fish Restoration Act with respect to sport fish restoration and recreational boating safety, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Natural Resources, and in addition to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. GRIFFITH (for himself and Ms. DEGETTE):

H.R. 3463. A bill to amend title XXVII of the Public Health Service Act to clarify the treatment of pediatric dental coverage in the individual and group markets outside of Exchanges established under the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. GRIJALVA (for himself and Mr. GALLEGO):

H.R. 3464. A bill to amend title 39, United States Code, to provide that the United States Postal Service may not close or consolidate any postal facility located in a ZIP code with a high rate of population growth, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

By Mr. SEAN PATRICK MALONEY of New York:

H.R. 3465. A bill to enhance the services of the Office of Contracts and Procurement at the Department of Transportation to assist modal agencies, States, and grant recipients with certain design and procurement practices and contracts; to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

By Mr. POCAN (for himself, Ms. SCHAKOWSKY, Mr. WELCH, Mr. CARTWRIGHT, Mr. HASTINGS, Mr. HIGGINS, Mr. DEFAZIO, Mr. GRIJALVA, and Mr. HONDA):

H.R. 3466. A bill to demonstrate a commitment to our Nation's scientists by increasing opportunities for the development of our next generation of researchers; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Ms. VELÁZQUEZ (for herself and Ms. MAXINE WATERS of California):

H.R. 3467. A bill to establish a pilot program to train public housing residents as home health aides and in home-based health services to enable such residents to provide covered home-based health services to residents of public housing and residents of federally-assisted rental housing, who are elderly and disabled, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Financial Services.

By Ms. VELÁZQUEZ (for herself, Mrs. DINGELL, Mrs. LAWRENCE, Ms. HAHN, Mr. TAKAI, Ms. JUDY CHU of California, Ms. MENG, Mr. MOULTON, Ms. ADAMS, Ms. CLARKE of New York, Ms. JACKSON LEE, and Mr. TED LIEU of California):

H.R. 3468. A bill to amend the Small Business Investment Act of 1958 to establish a scale-up manufacturing investment company program; to the Committee on Small Business, and in addition to the Committees on Financial Services, and the Judiciary, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. HUNTER (for himself, Mr. KINZINGER of Illinois, Mr. ZINKE, Mr. WITTMAN, and Mr. COOK):

H.J. Res. 66. A joint resolution to authorize the use of the Armed Forces of the United States against Iran if the President determines and certifies to Congress that Iran is not able to demonstrate that it has not sought, developed, or acquired nuclear weapons in violation of its commitments or obligations under the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

By Mr. FORTENBERRY (for himself, Ms. ESHOO, Mr. FRANKS of Arizona, Mr. LIPINSKI, Mr. DENHAM, and Mr. VARGAS):

H. Con. Res. 75. Concurrent resolution expressing the sense of Congress that those who commit or support atrocities against Christians and other ethnic and religious minorities, including Yezidis, Turkmen, Sabea-Mandeans, Kaka'e, and Kurds, and who target them specifically for ethnic or religious reasons, are committing, and are hereby declared to be committing, ''war crimes'', ''crimes against humanity'', and ''genocide''; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

By Mr. GARRETT:

H. Con. Res. 76. Concurrent resolution expressing the sense of Congress that Taiwan

and its people deserve membership in the United Nations; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

By Mr. POMPEO (for himself and Mr. ZELDIN):

H. Res. 411. A resolution finding that the President has not complied with section 2 of the Iran Nuclear Agreement Review Act of 2015; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs, and in addition to the Committees on Financial Services, the Judiciary, Oversight and Government Reform, and Ways and Means, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas (for herself, Mr. CARSON of Indiana, Mr. TONKO, and Mr. HONDA):

H. Res. 413. A resolution honoring the victims of hate crimes of Islamophobia and anti-immigrant sentiment, in the aftermath of September 11, 2001, where individuals were targeted by violence and hatred, because they were Muslim or perceived to be Muslim; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

PRIVATE BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

Under clause 3 of rule XII,

Mrs. DAVIS of California introduced a bill (H.R. 3469) for the relief of Beloved Jefeti; which was referred to the Committee on the Judiciary.

CONSTITUTIONAL AUTHORITY STATEMENT

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

By Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York:

H.R. 3455.

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

Article II, Section 8, Clause 18

By Mr. DONOVAN:

H.R. 3456.

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

Article 1, Section 8 of the Constitution of the United States.

By Mr. MEEHAN:

H.R. 3457.

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

This bill is enacted pursuant to Article I, Section 8

By Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas:

H.R. 3458.

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

Article I, section 8 of the Constitution of the United States.

By Mr. KLINE:

H.R. 3459.

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

Article I, section 8 of the Constitution of the United States

By Mr. ROSKAM:

H.R. 3460.

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

Article I, section 8, clause 3 of the Constitution of the United States (relating to the regulation of commerce with foreign nations).

By Mr. BOEHNER:

H.R. 3461.

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

Article I, section 8, clause 3 of the Constitution of the United States (relating to the regulation of commerce with foreign nations).

By Mr. GRAVES of Louisiana:

H.R. 3462.

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

Article I, section 8, clause 3 of the United States Constitution.

By Mr. GRIFFITH:

H.R. 3463.

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

This bill is enacted pursuant to the power granted to Congress under Article I, Section 8 of the United States Constitution.

By Mr. GRIJALVA:

H.R. 3464.

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

U.S. Const. art. I, §§1 and 8.

By Mr. SEAN PATRICK MALONEY of New York:

H.R. 3465.

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

Article 1, Section 8

By Mr. POCAN:

H.R. 3466.

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

Article I, Section 8, Clause 3

The Congress shall have Power . . . To regulate Commerce with foreign Nations, and among the several States, and with the Indian Tribes.

By Ms. VELÁZQUEZ:

H.R. 3467.

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

Article I, Section 8, Clause 1

''The Congress shall have Power to . . . provide for the . . . general Welfare of the United States; . . .''

By Ms. VELÁZQUEZ:

H.R. 3468.

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

Article I, Section 8, Clause 1

The Congress shall have Power to . . . provide for the . . . general Welfare of the United States; . . .

Article I, Section 8, Clause 3

The Congress shall have Power . . . To regulate Commerce with foreign Nations, and among the several States, and with the Indian Tribes.

By Mrs. DAVIS of California:

H.R. 3469.

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

Article 1, Section 8, Clause 1

By Mr. HUNTER:

H.J. Res. 66.

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

Article 1 Section 8 Clause 11.

ADDITIONAL SPONSORS

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

H.R. 25: Mrs. BLACKBURN.

H.R. 69: Ms. FUDGE and Mr. HONDA.

H.R. 114: Mr. NUGENT.

H.R. 140: Mr. WEBER of Texas, Mrs. BLACKBURN, Mrs. MILLER of Michigan, Mr. GROTHMAN, Mr. FLEMING, Mr. MILLER of Florida, and Mr. AUSTIN SCOTT of Georgia.

H.R. 167: Mr. CÁRDENAS, Mr. COFFMAN, Mr. MEADOWS, Mr. SCOTT of Virginia, Mr. TED LIEU of California, and Ms. MATSUI.

H.R. 184: Mr. BRADY of Pennsylvania and Ms. JACKSON LEE.

H.R. 207: Mrs. NAPOLITANO.

H.R. 288: Mr. POCAN.

H.R. 303: Mr. HIMES, Ms. EDWARDS, Mrs. KIRKPATRICK, Mr. PITTENGER, Mr. CUELLAR, Mr. CUMMINGS, and Mr. JOYCE.

H.R. 333: Mr. PERLMUTTER, Mr. CUMMINGS, and Mr. HIMES.

H.R. 347: Mrs. MIMI WALTERS of California.

H.R. 353: Mr. PAULSEN.

H.R. 379: Mr. BUTTERFIELD.

H.R. 403: Mr. SMITH of Washington.

H.R. 425: Mr. JONES.

H.R. 456: Ms. STEFANIK.

H.R. 525: Mrs. ELLMERS of North Carolina.

H.R. 592: Mrs. MIMI WALTERS of California.

H.R. 612: Mr. RIGELL.

H.R. 662: Mr. WALKER.

H.R. 702: Mr. RIBBLE, Mr. LUETKEMEYER, and Mr. ROE of Tennessee.

H.R. 704: Mr. CARTER of Texas and Mr. ZELDIN.

H.R. 707: Mr. HARPER.

H.R. 757: Mr. SMITH of Washington.

H.R. 767: Mr. LOEBSACK.

H.R. 836: Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania.

H.R. 842: Mr. NUGENT and Mr. GIBBS.

H.R. 855: Mr. ASHFORD, Mr. MEEHAN, and Mr. COSTA.

H.R. 865: Mr. DESJARLAIS and Mrs. ELLMERS of North Carolina.

H.R. 883: Mr. HURD of Texas.

H.R. 915: Mr. CÁRDENAS.

H.R. 920: Mr. PRICE of North Carolina.

H.R. 939: Ms. LOFGREN.

H.R. 953: Mrs. COMSTOCK.

H.R. 963: Mrs. NAPOLITANO.

H.R. 985: Mr. STEWART and Mrs. KIRKPATRICK.

H.R. 986: Mr. ROTHFUS.

H.R. 997: Mr. SHUSTER and Mr. STIVERS.

H.R. 1019: Mr. THOMPSON of California, Mr. KINZINGER of Illinois, and Mr. BISHOP of Utah.

H.R. 1062: Mr. BUCHANAN, Mr. WEBER of Texas, Mr. BOUSTANY, Mrs. MCMORRIS RODGERS, Mrs. MIMI WALTERS of California, Mr. STIVERS, Mr. DUFFY, Mr. TIPTON, and Mr. RENACCI.

H.R. 1086: Mr. TURNER.

H.R. 1130: Mrs. BEATTY, Mr. CONYERS, Mr. AUSTIN SCOTT of Georgia, and Mr. CHAFFETZ.

H.R. 1141: Ms. GABBARD and Mrs. NAPOLITANO.

H.R. 1142: Ms. GABBARD and Mr. MEEHAN.

H.R. 1151: Mr. BROOKS of Alabama.

H.R. 1174: Mr. TIBERI.

H.R. 1175: Mr. TAKAI.

H.R. 1188: Mr. GARAMENDI.

H.R. 1220: Mr. BENISHEK, Mr. HECK of Nevada, Mr. DOLD, Mr. KING of New York, and Mr. MURPHY of Pennsylvania.

H.R. 1258: Ms. MICHELLE LUJAN GRISHAM of New Mexico, Mr. HASTINGS, Mr. CICILLINE, Ms. BORDALLO, Mr. DONOVAN, Mr. NADLER, Mr. CUMMINGS, and Mr. NORCROSS.

H.R. 1411: Mrs. KIRKPATRICK.

H.R. 1422: Ms. BROWNLEY of California, Mr. GARAMENDI, and Mr. LOWENTHAL.

H.R. 1459: Mr. BLUMENAUER.

H.R. 1464: Mr. LOWENTHAL.

H.R. 1475: Mrs. KIRKPATRICK, Mr. SMITH of New Jersey, and Mr. POCAN.

H.R. 1478: Mr. PITTENGER.

H.R. 1516: Mr. MICHAEL F. DOYLE of Pennsylvania.

H.R. 1567: Mr. RIBBLE.

H.R. 1624: Mr. WESTERMAN, Mr. SMITH of New Jersey, and Mr. KELLY of Pennsylvania.

H.R. 1644: Mr. GRIFFITH.

H.R. 1671: Mr. KNIGHT.

H.R. 1684: Mr. CRENSHAW.

H.R. 1728: Mr. LOWENTHAL and Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas.

H.R. 1733: Mr. CICILLINE.

H.R. 1737: Mrs. KIRKPATRICK, Mr. SMITH of Texas, Mr. BARLETTA, and Mr. BRAT.

H.R. 1752: Mr. HOLDING.
H.R. 1761: Mr. HECK of Nevada.
H.R. 1769: Mr. COLE and Mr. DELANEY.
H.R. 1786: Mrs. KIRKPATRICK, Mrs. BUSTOS, Mr. TED LIEU of California, Ms. LORETTA SANCHEZ of California, Ms. DUCKWORTH, Mrs. LAWRENCE, and Ms. HAHN.
H.R. 1814: Ms. SINEMA, Ms. MATSUI, Mr. ZELDIN, Mr. COSTA, Ms. KELLY of Illinois, Ms. EDWARDS, Ms. ADAMS, Mr. SMITH of New Jersey, Mr. CONYERS, and Mr. LOEBSACK.
H.R. 1901: Mr. MULVANEY.
H.R. 1948: Mr. DEFAZIO and Mrs. NAPOLITANO.
H.R. 1966: Mr. PERLMUTTER and Mr. GRIJALVA.
H.R. 2013: Mrs. KIRKPATRICK, Ms. LEE, Mr. YARMUTH, and Mr. BLUMENAUER.
H.R. 2071: Ms. MOORE.
H.R. 2072: Mr. THOMPSON of California and Mr. TED LIEU of California.
H.R. 2083: Mr. TAKAI.
H.R. 2145: Mr. RIBBLE and Ms. BORDALLO.
H.R. 2156: Ms. GRAHAM, Ms. ESHOO, Mr. ZELDIN, and Mr. HULTGREN.
H.R. 2217: Mr. GRIJALVA.
H.R. 2248: Mr. LOWENTHAL.
H.R. 2293: Ms. DELBENE, Ms. NORTON, Mr. KEATING, Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York, Ms. MICHELLE LUJAN GRISHAM of New Mexico, Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas, Mr. LANGEVIN, and Ms. BORDALLO.
H.R. 2306: Mr. BRAT.
H.R. 2327: Ms. MATSUI.
H.R. 2342: Mr. KIND, Miss RICE of New York, Ms. ESHOO, Mr. WELCH, Mr. LIPINSKI, Mr. LOWENTHAL, Mr. POCAN, Mr. CARTWRIGHT, Mr. GRIJALVA, and Ms. BONAMICI.
H.R. 2430: Mr. BRADY of Pennsylvania and Mrs. LOWEY.
H.R. 2449: Ms. PELOSI.
H.R. 2463: Mr. DOLD.
H.R. 2493: Mr. ENGEL and Mr. CICILLINE.
H.R. 2494: Mr. SHERMAN and Mr. QUIGLEY.
H.R. 2513: Mr. MULLIN.
H.R. 2539: Mr. COLE.
H.R. 2609: Mr. BRAT and Mr. HENSARLING.
H.R. 2622: Mr. CRAMER.
H.R. 2646: Mr. BISHOP of Michigan, Mr. BYRNE, Mr. O'ROURKE, Mr. RODNEY DAVIS of Illinois, Mr. QUIGLEY, and Ms. ESHOO.
H.R. 2654: Mr. FOSTER.
H.R. 2697: Ms. JUDY CHU of California, Mr. CONNOLLY, Mr. ISRAEL, and Mr. PRICE of North Carolina.
H.R. 2698: Mr. DEFAZIO and Mr. JODY B. HICE of Georgia.
H.R. 2712: Mr. HECK of Nevada.
H.R. 2715: Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas.
H.R. 2738: Mr. CARTWRIGHT.
H.R. 2739: Mr. BURGESS and Mr. VAN HOLLEN.
H.R. 2747: Mr. DEFAZIO.
H.R. 2764: Mr. TAKANO, Mr. RANGEL, Mr. HONDA, Ms. NORTON, and Ms. LEE.
H.R. 2775: Ms. PINGREE.
H.R. 2799: Mr. PAULSEN.
H.R. 2811: Ms. DELBENE.
H.R. 2844: Mr. VISCLOSKY, Mrs. BEATTY, Ms. LOFGREN, Mr. NOLAN, Ms. NORTON, Ms. VELÁZQUEZ, and Mr. TED LIEU of California.
H.R. 2847: Mr. DENT, Mr. MEEKS, and Mr. SMITH of Washington.
H.R. 2858: Mr. DONOVAN, Ms. LEE, Mr. NADLER, Mr. NORCROSS, Mr. GRAYSON, and Ms. DUCKWORTH.
H.R. 2901: Mr. PITTENGER, Mr. MULVANEY, and Mr. HILL.
H.R. 2911: Mr. RODNEY DAVIS of Illinois.
H.R. 2915: Ms. LOFGREN and Ms. MATSUI.
H.R. 2922: Mr. BRAT.
H.R. 2932: Mrs. BEATTY.
H.R. 2948: Mr. RIBBLE and Ms. NORTON.
H.R. 2957: Ms. MOORE, Ms. LEE, and Mr. LEVIN.
H.R. 2989: Mr. DESJARLAIS and Mr. CRENSHAW.
H.R. 2992: Mr. GRIJALVA and Mr. LOWENTHAL.
H.R. 3025: Mr. NUGENT.
H.R. 3029: Mr. LOEBSACK, Mr. TAKANO, Ms. ROYBAL-ALLARD, Mrs. NAPOLITANO, and Mrs. BEATTY.
H.R. 3036: Mr. COOK, Mr. DONOVAN, Mr. ISRAEL, Ms. NORTON, Mr. PIERLUISI, Miss RICE of New York, Mrs. MILLER of Michigan, and Mr. SIRES.
H.R. 3041: Ms. JUDY CHU of California, Mr. LOWENTHAL, Mr. HIGGINS, and Mr. NOLAN.
H.R. 3121: Ms. DELBENE.
H.R. 3136: Mrs. ELLMERS of North Carolina.
H.R. 3142: Ms. JUDY CHU of California and Mr. MCGOVERN.
H.R. 3151: Mr. FLORES, Mr. AUSTIN SCOTT of Georgia, and Mr. SESSIONS.
H.R. 3166: Ms. MICHELLE LUJAN GRISHAM of New Mexico, Ms. MCCOLLUM, and Ms. MOORE.
H.R. 3183: Mr. LANCE.
H.R. 3187: Mr. CRAMER and Mr. DESJARLAIS.
H.R. 3188: Mr. JONES.
H.R. 3221: Mrs. BUSTOS, Ms. JUDY CHU of California, Mr. TED LIEU of California, Mr. MOULTON, and Ms. MATSUI.
H.R. 3225: Mr. GROTHMAN.
H.R. 3258: Mr. RUSH and Mr. FARR.
H.R. 3268: Mrs. NOEM, Mrs. COMSTOCK, Ms. JENKINS of Kansas, Mr. MACARTHUR, Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania, Ms. BONAMICI, Mr. CICILLINE, Ms. LOFGREN, Mr. BRENDAN F. BOYLE of Pennsylvania, Mr. O'ROURKE, Ms. MOORE, Ms. MAXINE WATERS of California, Mr. DEFAZIO, Mr. SHERMAN, Mr. SIRES, Mr. BEYER, Ms. LEE, Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York, Ms. TSONGAS, Mr. ROTHFUS, and Ms. MATSUI.
H.R. 3286: Ms. GRAHAM and Ms. BROWNLEY of California.
H.R. 3289: Ms. SLAUGHTER.
H.R. 3296: Mr. BRAT and Ms. MCSALLY.
H.R. 3338: Mr. ROTHFUS, Mr. LEWIS, and Mr. NUGENT.
H.R. 3339: Ms. MCSALLY.
H.R. 3364: Ms. CASTOR of Florida and Mr. CARNEY.
H.R. 3377: Mr. ELLISON, Mr. COHEN, Mr. SMITH of Washington, and Mrs. BEATTY.
H.R. 3379: Ms. NORTON.
H.R. 3381: Miss RICE of New York, Mr. COURTNEY, Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ, and Mr. DELANEY.
H.R. 3396: Ms. MAXINE WATERS of California.
H.R. 3407: Mr. CRAMER and Mr. MACARTHUR.
H.R. 3429: Mr. DUNCAN of Tennessee, Mr. ROTHFUS, Mr. MOONEY of West Virginia, Mr. CRAMER, Mr. ROE of Tennessee, Mr. WESTERMAN, Mr. WITTMAN, Mr. FLORES, Mr. WEBER of Texas, Mr. ADERHOLT, Mr. GIBBS, Mr. WENSTRUP, Mr. HULTGREN, Mr. LAMALFA, Mr. ALLEN, Mr. FLEMING, Mr. GRAVES of Georgia, Mr. GROTHMAN, Mr. STUTZMAN, Mr. HUIZENGA of Michigan, and Mrs. HARTZLER.
H.R. 3442: Mr. TIBERI, Mr. REED, Mr. FLORES, Mr. SAM JOHNSON of Texas, Mrs. BLACK, Mr. KELLY of Pennsylvania, Mr. NUNES, Mr. BUCHANAN, Mrs. NOEM, and Mr. RENACCI.
H.R. 3443: Mr. FARENTHOLD, Mr. WESTERMAN, and Ms. MCSALLY.
H.J. Res. 9: Mr. FLORES.
H.J. Res. 64: Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN.
H. Con. Res. 17: Mr. BARR.
H. Con. Res. 50: Mr. DONOVAN.
H. Res. 12: Mr. DESAULNIER, Mr. CUELLAR, and Mr. GALLEGO.
H. Res. 145: Mr. ENGEL.
H. Res. 214: Mr. CLEAVER.
H. Res. 261: Ms. DELBENE.
H. Res. 289: Mr. SWALWELL of California.
H. Res. 318: Mr. GRAYSON and Mr. DONOVAN.
H. Res. 354: Mr. TED LIEU of California, Ms. MENG, and Mr. CICILLINE.
H. Res. 410: Mr. CARTER of Georgia, Mr. HARRIS, Mr. WEBER of Texas, and Mr. POSEY.

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PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES OF THE 114th CONGRESS, FIRST SESSION

Vol. 161 WASHINGTON, WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 9, 2015 No. 129

Senate

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.

Almighty God, our Lord, how excellent is Your Name in all the Earth. Today, open the hearts of our lawmakers to what You have done, are doing, and will do for those who love You. As they remember how You led our Nation in the past, increase their optimism regarding what the future can bring. Help them to remember that even when wrong seems very strong, You continue to rule and that Your sovereignty will prevail.

Give us this day our daily bread, not only of physical renewal but of spiritual sustenance, lest our souls starve in the far country of neglect or indulgence.

We pray in Your great 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. TOOMEY). The majority leader is recognized.

SERIOUS DEBATE IN THE SENATE

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, this afternoon the Senate will engage in a debate of immense importance to our country. I again ask every Senator to reflect upon its gravity.

At its heart, this is about more than just the short term prospects of one agreement or the long-term legacy of one President or the narrow interests of one political party. Wrapped within are larger questions about the prospects for stability in a region, the potential for safety in a nation, and the continued role for our country in a dangerous and uncertain world.

We can't escape these questions. Their answers carry the potential to touch every American and future generations.

The American people deserve our deliberate and considered responses. They deserve a Senate that can rise to the moment. Tired talking points won't get us there. A filibuster won't do it, either. But here is what will: Respecting each other will get us there. Serious discussion will get us there. A debate worthy of the moment will get us there. So that is what I am calling for again today.

I ask every Senator to join me at their desks this afternoon so that we might listen to colleagues as well as debate colleagues. A serious debate and an open vote on this issue is the very least our country should expect. That is the least we should be able to give them.

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Democratic leader is recognized.

DEADLINES IN THE SENATE

Mr. REID. Mr. President, yesterday my friend, the chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee, Senator CORKER of Tennessee, said: ''I recognize, and have all along, that it takes 60 Senators to advance legislation and get to a final vote on a bill or resolution.'' No equivocation, no dancing around the issue—the chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee established what we have known all along: It takes 60 votes.

His counterpart, Senator CARDIN of Maryland, also agrees that 60 votes was always the intention. One Senator at the hearings voted no on the resolution because he didn't want it to be 60 votes. Everybody else voted for that. Forty-seven Republican Senators sent a letter to the Ayatollah, explaining to them how the Senate works. In that letter, all 47 Republican Senators acknowledged that it takes three-fifths votes to get things done here in the Senate.

So that is over and done with. The resolution before us will take 60 votes to pass. The direct quote from Senator CORKER that I read is in black and white. There aren't any words of mine; those are his words. That is a direct quote from the chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee.

So that is what we have. Republicans have clearly conceded that it takes 60 votes to advance a resolution of disapproval.

Filibusters stop debate. We are willing to have all the debate the Republicans want—2 hours, 2 days, whatever they want. It has to be completed by next Thursday. That is the only deadline that I can see.

The good news is that Senate Democrats, of course, on this side of the aisle, continue to propose that following ample debate, the Senate then proceed directly to a vote on final passage. Of course, it would have a 60-vote threshold, as the chairman of the committee said yesterday. There would be no need for any other procedural votes. We would just do that. There is no need for the Republican leader to continue wasting the Senate's time—and it is precious.

Look at what we have this week. There is basically one more legislative day this week. Next week, we have two days, Monday and Tuesday, which are long-time celebrations by the entire Congress of a Jewish holiday. We have the deadline of September 17 for this matter dealing with Iran to be completed, as far as Senate floor action. Staring us in the face at the end of the

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

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month is that government funding will be gone. We have to do something about that. And we know, as we have heard all the threats by Republican Senators, that we are not going to fund the government unless something is done with Planned Parenthood. Those things take time. We have to get to that. Every day we waste here on the floor, trying to figure out what the Republicans want to do, is time that we should be spending on how we are going to fund the government.

There is no question that the Republican leader now has a very real and important decision to make. We have a lot of work to do this month. We can't afford to waste time with unnecessary procedural votes.

We also have some things we have to be involved in here that are going to slow up what we do. We have the President of China coming toward the end of the month. We have the Pope coming. We expect as many as 500,000 people here on both sides of the Capitol during the short time the Pope is here on Capitol Hill.

We have so many things to do. We need to have a path forward, as I mentioned already, to keep the Federal Government from shutting down because of a lack of funding. We need to figure out a way to keep our highway trust fund solvent, which it is not now. We need to do something about cyber security, and we need to consider important tax extenders legislation, as well as how to avoid default on the debt limit. They are all going to converge at about the same time.

Senate Democrats and Senate Republicans have very real deadlines that we must meet. We can't meet them because of the procedure in the Senate unless the Republican leader allows us to have some time on the floor. What we don't have is time to waste on Republican-contrived procedural fights that have no basis in fact or reality. It is time for Republicans to abandon their plans to slow down a vote on final passage of the Iran nuclear agreement resolution of disapproval and move on to other matters.

Mr. President, would the Chair announce the business of the day.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

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

HIRE MORE HEROES ACT OF 2015

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will resume consideration of H.J. Res. 61, which the clerk will report.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A joint resolution (H.J. Res. 61) amending 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.

Pending:

McConnell amendment No. 2640, of a perfecting nature.

McConnell amendment No. 2641 (to amendment No. 2640), to change the enactment date.

McConnell amendment No. 2642 (to amendment No. 2641), of a perfecting nature.

McConnell amendment No. 2643 (to the language proposed to be stricken by amendment No. 2640), to change the enactment date.

McConnell amendment No. 2644 (to amendment No. 2643), of a perfecting nature.

McConnell motion to commit the joint resolution to the Committee on Foreign Relations, with instructions, McConnell amendment No. 2645, to change the enactment date.

McConnell amendment No. 2646 (to (the instructions) amendment No. 2645), of a perfecting nature.

McConnell amendment No. 2647 (to amendment No. 2646), of a perfecting nature.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the time until 12:30 p.m. will be equally divided between the two leaders or their designees.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that until 12:30 p.m. today, the time during quorum calls be equally divided.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

The Senator from California.

Mrs. BOXER. Mr. President, if I might, through the Chair, if Senator CORKER would like to take his 5 minutes first, I am happy to allow that.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Tennessee.

Mr. CORKER. Mr. President, I thank the Senator for her tremendous courtesy, and I will actually take 1 minute.

This afternoon we are going to have a very sober and dignified debate about a foreign policy issue of huge consequence to our Nation and certainly to the world. I wish to thank Senator MCCONNELL and Senator REID for setting up a format that reflects that. I know many of my friends on the other side of the aisle have been concerned about amendments that may call for this to be a different type of debate. I would like to point out that the leader yesterday filled the tree. I just want people to know that.

I wish to thank Senator CARDIN and Senator MENENDEZ before him for the way we have all been able to work through a lot of issues that have come up. What I hope doesn't happen today is that, somehow or another, we begin referring back to incidents and trying to turn this into some type of partisan debate. We worked through August. Things happened all along the way. We worked through those. We ended up with the ability as a Congress, on an executive agreement, which we all know was meant to be implemented without any congressional involvement whatsoever, going straight to the U.N. Security Council—we all worked together to figure out a way to have this debate and then vote on the substance of this legislation.

So I want to thank my friends on both sides of the aisle. It passed overwhelmingly—98 to 1. I think, actually, the Senator from California was absent on that day. I look forward to a very substantive debate taking place on this most important issue.

Later today, I will have longer and more formal comments to make about the substance of what was agreed to by the administration and other countries involved in the process.

I am looking forward to this. I want to say again to my friends on the other side of the aisle that I think we set this up in a manner to be a dignified, sober debate about one of the most important foreign policy issues that will come before us. Thankfully it is coming before us because we all forced it to come before us, to have this debate, and to be able to weigh in.

I yield the floor. I thank very much the Senator from California for her courtesy.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from California.

Mrs. BOXER. Mr. President, I wish to thank my chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee, Senator CORKER, for his courtesies. We do not agree on this particular matter, but there are a lot of matters when it comes to foreign policy on which we do agree. I do agree this should be a very straightforward debate—either you are for this agreement or you are not.

I think the fact that Congress is voting on it is good. I did support that in the committee. That calls for regular order as far as the way we treat this very important vote.

I am very proud to stand here today as the longest serving member sitting on the Foreign Relations Committee today. Out of all of the members, I have been there the longest. When I got there, I did not have these gray hairs. I am not blaming any of the topics that came before us for these gray hairs; however, we have had some tough debates, and this certainly is one of them. I know my friend has a lot to do. I just want to say I was pleased to yield to him because I think he has set the right tone.

Colleagues, this is a vote we are going to long remember, a vote on an arms control agreement that came about for only one reason. That reason is, our President and his team—former Senator John Kerry, now Secretary of State; Wendy Sherman, the chief negotiator—they were part of the team, and many others worked tirelessly against the most vitriolic opposition.

The President stood firm. I want to say to him today: Thank you, Mr. President. In that race for President that you ran, you were very clear that you were going to reach out your hand and see if we could avoid another war in the Middle East. I hope and pray this Senate will give us and the world this opportunity.

As the President has said, a military option is always on the table. It is in our Constitution that the President can respond to a threat. So nothing in this agreement takes a military response off the table. But it does say

that diplomacy should have a chance to work. This diplomacy includes much of the world. That is why it is so remarkable.

I also want to give special thanks to two former Secretaries of State—Colin Powell, a Republican, and Hillary Clinton, a Democrat—for weighing in on the side of diplomacy. As Senators, we deal with thousands of issues in the course of our careers, but we will long remember those that actually change the course of history. Those kinds of votes are votes of conscience, and they are votes about which we must look deeply into our hearts and into our minds. We have to look at the facts. Facts are stubborn things. No matter what 30-second ad there is, no matter what newspaper ad there is, there are facts that are obvious. I want to go through those facts. I have them here on this chart.

One, this agreement cuts off the uranium pathway to a bomb. It does it by reducing Iran's stockpile of enriched uranium by 98 percent and severely restricting its ability to enrich uranium. That is No. 1.

Two, it cuts off the plutonium pathway to a bomb. They do that by dismantling Iran's Arak reactor's core and replacing it with a core that cannot produce weapons-grade plutonium. That is the second part of the agreement.

Three, it includes the most intrusive inspections regime ever negotiated. Let me repeat that. The deal includes the most intrusive inspections regime ever negotiated. This means 24/7 monitoring of Iran's declared sites as well as inspections to the entire nuclear supply chain, from its uranium mines and mills, to its conversion facility, to its centrifuge manufacturing and storage facility. This is critical. It provides the International Atomic Energy Agency—you will hear it referred to as the IAEA—with the mechanism to require that Iran grant access to its suspicious sites. No other international agreement has ever done this before. So when you hear colleagues say, ''Well, Iran has 24 days, you know, to hide things,'' all the experts will tell you that you can hide a computer, but you cannot hide nuclear material. It has a half-life of thousands of years. But no other international agreement, not even the agreements we have with the IAEA, say that the IAEA has a deadline where access has to be granted to suspicious sites.

Next, it requires the Iranians to disclose their past nuclear activities before they can receive any sanctions relief. Let me say that again. The Iranians have to disclose their past nuclear activities before they can receive any sanctions relief.

Lastly, if Iran cheats, the United States and our allies will be able to snap back multilateral sanctions. There is a process there that gives us a lot of power to do that.

Because of all of this, more than 100 nations support this deal, including many of our closest allies, such as the United Kingdom, Germany, Australia, France, Japan, and Canada—100 nations. That is why 29 of the Nation's top scientists, including 6 Nobel laureates, call the deal ''innovative and stringent'' and even say it can serve as a ''guidepost for future agreements.'' One hundred nations, 29 of our Nation's top scientists. That is also why 60 bipartisan national security leaders support it, including leaders such as Madeleine Albright, Thomas Pickering, and Ryan Crocker. You know those names. You know those people. They have integrity. They have intelligence. They have experience. They were appointed by Republicans and Democrats alike. They point out that there are no viable alternatives to this agreement. They are right.

Anyone—you are going to hear this from my Republican friends—anyone who says we should go back to the bargaining table—and you are going to hear this over and over again: Oh, just go back to the bargaining table. Anyone who says that after 20 months of negotiations and huge support in the world is either engaging in fantasy or they truly want to sink this deal. So if you hear somebody say, ''Oh, just go back to the table. Just forget the support of the 100 nations. Just go back and renegotiate this deal,'' let me tell you, they are either engaging in fantasy or they want to sink this deal. There is a hard, cold truth here: If we walk away, there will be no agreement. Let's be clear. If that is your position, why don't you say it? But don't say ''Go back to the negotiating table. No problem.'' If we walk away, there will be no agreement. America will be isolating itself and undermining its role as a global leader on arms control. That is why more than 100 former U.S. Ambassadors say that without this deal, ''the risks to the security of the United States and our friends and allies would be far greater.'' Let me say that again. One hundred former U.S. Ambassadors from both parties say that ''the risks to the security of the United States and our friends and allies would be far greater'' than if we do the deal.

We know right now that Iran has enough nuclear material to build 10 nuclear weapons. So whom are you kidding when you say the world will be safer if this agreement falls and Iran is left to continue the dangerous course it began way back in 1984? We passed sanctions. We did it right here. I spoke on that. I said: We have to keep our eye on Iran. We don't trust them. So they came to the table.

Opposing this agreement means walking away—walking away from the very strategy we embraced when we placed sanctions on Iran. It means walking away from our best friends, our allies, and our trading partners.

When you probe the opponents of this deal and you say, ''Well, if you go back to the table, you are going to lose 100 nations, many of them our best friends,'' do you know what they say? ''Oh, we can just sanction those friends. We can just sanction those allies. We can just sanction those trading partners.'' Can you imagine going after our best friends? Is that a winning strategy? That is another example of the opponents dreaming or scheming—dreaming of a successful go-it-alone strategy or scheming for another war in the Middle East. Those options—go it alone or a war—are self-inflicted wounds we can ill afford.

Let's put up the statement by Philip Hammond, the United Kingdom Foreign Secretary. This is what he said. In a meeting with the various Ambassadors of the countries that cut this deal, the same thing was said, but let's say it the way he did. This is the United Kingdom Foreign Secretary:

> If the United States were to walk away from this deal, international unity would disintegrate. The hardliners in Iran would be strengthened, and we would lose the most effective path to stop Iran from developing a nuclear weapon.

Philip Hammond, the UK Foreign Secretary.

So, again, look at what he is saying. He is saying that if we walk away, the hardliners in Iran would be strengthened. They would win. So I ask opponents of this deal: Why do you want to stand with the hardliners in Iran? Because you are standing with the hardliners in Iran who shout ''Death to America,'' ''Death to Israel.'' You are standing with them. They want to kill the deal.

I am under no illusion that this agreement solves all of our problems with Iran. I am under no illusions that this agreement will make Iran suddenly some positive player on the world stage that we can cozy up to. No. No. That is why this agreement is not based on trust. As Hillary Clinton said today, it is based on distrust and verification. She is right. This agreement is also based on the most stringent inspection regime ever negotiated. Iran is a bad and a dangerous actor. I do not think there is any disagreement on that. That is why its nonnuclear activities will remain subject to tough sanctions. But here is the ultimate question each of us must ask ourselves: Would we rather have a bad and dangerous actor with a nuclear bomb or a bad and dangerous actor without a nuclear bomb? My kids would say that is a no-brainer. The answer is obvious. We don't want Iran with a nuclear bomb. That is why we need this deal. If Iran cheats, it will be in front of the whole world. I will be among the first to consider any and all options.

I began by saying this is one of the most important votes we will ever cast in our lifetime. I am reminded of another one, my vote against the Iraq war. It was lonely then—only 23 of us—but you have to look at the situation. Some of the leading voices against this deal were the very same people who brought us the Iraq war.

Remember Paul Wolfowitz saying the Iraqis would ''greet us as liberators''?

Remember Dick Cheney, who is out there now saying: Vote no on this deal. Oh, it is terrible.

Remember what he said as he drew us into Iraq? He said there was ''no doubt that Saddam Hussein now has weapons of mass destruction.'' And remember when he said the whole war would be ''weeks rather than months''? I remember that after 10 years of war.

Remember Bill Kristol saying we would ''be vindicated when we discover the weapons of mass destruction''?

And, remember, some of our colleagues who are here today pushed hard for the Iraq war and said it would be great for America and great for Israel. Well, they were wrong then, and they are wrong now.

Look, it is no secret that the Prime Minister of our great ally, Israel, is on the other side of this argument, but we must also remember that Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu was a cheerleader for the Iraq war and said in 2002: ''If you take out . . . Saddam's regime, I guarantee you that it will have enormous positive reverberations on the region.'' Prime Minister Netanyahu argued for the Iraq war saying: ''I guarantee you that it will have enormous positive reverberations on the region.''

Positive reverberations? Instead, devastating consequences. More than 4,000 of our brave American men and women were killed and nearly 32,000 wounded. We know that a lot of the Baathists joined ISIS, and the Baathists were loyal to Saddam. Now they are guiding ISIS. No positive reverberations there, devastating consequences.

If we were completely honest and we really asked the question: Who won the war in Iraq? The answer comes back, Iran. Iran. They have never had more influence in modern times on Iraq than they have today. That is why, as a stalwart supporter of Israel and the Israeli-American relationship, I strongly support this deal.

I am the proud author of the last two United States-Israel security bills passed by Congress. They were called the United States-Israel Enhanced Security Cooperation Act of 2012 and the United States-Israel Strategic Partnership Act of 2014. I believe, as the author of those two bills that President Obama signed, this deal makes the United States safer, it makes Israel safer, and it makes the entire world safer.

I said that Prime Minister Netanyahu is very clearly opposed, but let's look at some of the top military experts in Israel—experts who understand what is paramount to Israel's security.

Let's look at Ami Ayalon. He is a former head of Shin Bet, Israel's internal security service. He said: ''When it comes to Iran's nuclear capability, this [deal] is the best option. . . .'' Now this isn't just some citizen in the street; this is the former head of Shin Bet, Israel's internal security service, saying this.

Then there is Amram Mitzna, a retired major general in the Israel Defense Forces, the IDF, former member of the Knesset and former mayor of Haifa, who said: ''For Israel's sake and all the people of the Middle East, we must not miss this opportunity.''

Then there is Efraim Halevy, former director of the Mossad, who said: ''Without an agreement, Iran will be free to act as it wishes. . . .''

Let me repeat that. This is the former director of the Mossad, who said: ''Without an agreement, Iran will be free to act as it wishes. . . .''

These leaders from Israel whom I have quoted are some of the most knowledgeable in the world when it comes to Israel's security, and they believe this deal will make Israel safer. It doesn't change the fact that the Israeli Government opposes this. I agree with that; I understand that. But there is a split in Israel, and it is worth commenting on it.

With their expertise and their knowledge, these endorsements by these Israelis should be taken seriously. Also, the endorsements from our current and former colleagues in Congress should be taken seriously.

Eleven Jewish former Members have weighed in, saying: ''We championed the U.S.-Israel alliance . . . and we all strongly support this agreement because it will enhance the security of the U.S., the State of Israel, and the entire world.''

I thank them for weighing in. This is one of those debates that is very hard—regardless of your position—because it is emotional, it is difficult, and yet they weighed in, as did the Israeli security experts. Believe me, the pressure on them not to talk was enormous.

This deal also has the support of some of the most knowledgeable and respected foreign policy lawmakers who ever served in Congress.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to have printed in the RECORD two opinion pieces, one written by Senators Carl Levin and John Warner and another by Senators Sam Nunn and Richard Lugar.

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

[Aug. 13, 2015]

WHY HAWKS SHOULD ALSO BACK THE IRAN DEAL

(By Carl Levin and John Warner)

We both were elected to the Senate in 1978 and privileged to have served together on the Senate Armed Services Committee for 30 years, during which we each held committee leadership positions of chairman or ranking minority member. We support the Iran Agreement negotiated by the United States and other leading world powers for many reasons, including its limitations on Iran's nuclear activities, its strong inspections regime, and the ability to quickly re-impose sanctions should Iran violate its provisions.

But we also see a compelling reason to support the agreement that has gotten little attention: Rejecting it would weaken the deterrent value of America's military option.

As former chairmen of the Senate Armed Services Committee, we have always believed that the U.S. should keep a strong military option on the table. If Iran pursues a nuclear weapon, some believe that military action is inevitable if we're to prevent it from reaching its goal. We don't subscribe to that notion, but we are skeptical that, should Iran attempt to consider moving to a nuclear weapon, we could deter them from pursuing it through economic sanctions alone.

How does rejecting the agreement give America a weaker military hand to play? Let's imagine a world in which the United States rejects the nuclear accord that all other parties have embraced. The sanctions now in place would likely not be maintained and enforced by all the parties to the agreement, so those would lose their strong deterrent value. Iran would effectively argue to the world that it had been willing to negotiate an agreement, only to have that agreement rejected by a recalcitrant America.

In that world, should we find credible evidence that Iran is starting to move toward a nuclear weapon, the United States would almost certainly consider use of the military option to stop that program. But it's highly unlikely that our traditional European allies, let alone China and Russia, would support the use of the military option since we had undermined the diplomatic path. Iran surely would know this, and so from the start, would have less fear of a military option than if it faced a unified coalition.

While the United States would certainly provide the greatest combat power in any military action, allies and other partners make valuable contributions—not just in direct participation, but also in access rights, logistics, intelligence, and other critical support. If we reject the agreement, we risk isolating ourselves and damaging our ability to assemble the strongest possible coalition to stop Iran.

In short, then, rejecting the Iran deal would erode the current deterrent value of the military option, making it more likely Iran might choose to pursue a nuclear weapon, and would then make it more costly for the U.S. to mount any subsequent military operation. It would tie the hands of any future president trying to build international participation and support for military force against Iran should that be necessary.

Those who think the use of force against Iran is almost inevitable should want the military option to be as credible and effective as possible, both as a deterrent to Iran's nuclear ambitions and in destroying Iran's nuclear weapons program should that become necessary. For that to be the case, the United States needs to be a party to the agreement rather than being the cause of its collapse.

In our many years on the Armed Services Committee, we saw time and again how America is stronger when we fight alongside allies. Iran must constantly be kept aware that a collective framework of deterrence stands resolute, and that if credible evidence evolves that Iran is taking steps towards a nuclear arsenal, it would face the real possibility of military action by a unified coalition of nations to stop their efforts.

The deal on the table is a strong agreement on many counts, and it leaves in place the robust deterrence and credibility of a military option. We urge our former colleagues not to take any action which would undermine the deterrent value of a coalition that participates in and could support the use of a military option. The failure of the United States to join the agreement would have that effect.

[Aug. 30, 2015]

THERE ARE NO PERFECT NUCLEAR DEALS

(By Sam Nunn and Richard Lugar)

During the Cold War both Republican and Democratic presidents accepted less-than-

perfect arms pacts with the Soviets. We need to do the same with Iran.

At the height of the Cold War, the Soviet Union had thousands of nuclear warheads aimed at American cities, and the Soviets were subject to numerous arms controls agreements. But progress was hard-fought and incremental at best. In an ideal world, the Soviet Union would have agreed to more severe constraints than those agreed by Presidents Kennedy, Nixon, Ford, Carter, Reagan and Bush, for example. It would have dismantled all of its nuclear weapons, stopped its human rights abuses and halted its meddling around the world.

But, as all of these presidents—Democratic and Republican—understood, holding out for the impossible is a recipe for no progress at all. Congress should take the same approach today to the Iran nuclear deal.

We know something about the long history of such agreements. During our combined 60 years in the U.S. Senate, we participated in countless meetings, hearings and trips around the globe focused on reducing the threats posed by weapons of mass destruction. The centerpiece of our efforts was the Nunn-Lugar Act, passed in 1991, which was the basis for two decades of hard work that resulted in the safeguarding and deactivation of more than 7,000 nuclear warheads, hundreds of missiles and bombers, and numerous other elements of the former Soviet Union's WMD programs.

These experiences underscored for us that arms control agreements are rarely finished absolutes. Inevitably, their success depends on many factors that play out after the agreement is signed, including alliance cohesion, congressional funding for implementation and the political will of the parties to ensure verification and enforcement.

Over the next several weeks, every member of Congress will have the opportunity to weigh the terms of the nuclear agreement against all viable alternatives. In our view, the key questions regarding this agreement are: Will it stop Iran from obtaining a nuclear weapon? What are the risks of going forward with this agreement? And what are the risks if Congress rejects the agreement?

The plus-sides of this deal are clear. It includes severe restrictions on uranium enrichment and plutonium production, required transparency into Iranian activities and inspection provisions to assure the international community that Iran's nuclear program is, and remains, peaceful. Reports that Iran will simply inspect itself to address unresolved allegations about its nuclear behavior have been refuted by the head of the International Atomic Energy Agency, who has stated that the arrangements are technically sound, consistent with the IAEA's long-established practices and do not compromise IAEA safeguards standards in any way. Importantly, the agreement taken as a whole will help deter Iranian cheating and provide the means to detect violations in time to take strong action if required.

Could we conceive a stronger deal? Of course—that has been true of every arms control negotiation. We have heard critics suggest that Iran would have agreed to entirely dismantle its nuclear enrichment facilities and stop all activities related to its civil nuclear program if only the U.S. had been tougher in negotiations. But had the U.S. taken such an approach in the early 1990s, we would not have encouraged and helped Russia, Ukraine, Kazakhstan and Belarus safely accelerate the destruction of their weapons and materials of mass destruction, and the risk of accidents or catastrophic terrorism would have been far higher over the past 20 years.

Although there are no absolute guarantees, nor can there be in diplomatic accords, our bottom line is that this agreement makes it far less likely that the Iranians will acquire a nuclear weapon over the next 15 years.

As to risks in going forward with the agreement, Congress must listen carefully to both our intelligence community and the IAEA's views on any possible weaknesses in the verification regime, and then work with these entities to mitigate any vulnerabilities, both now and in the years ahead.

As with other agreements, Congress must recognize that there is no such thing as ''perfect'' verification. What is crucial, however, is whether ''effective'' verification can be achieved. Can cheating be detected in time to take action before Iran could achieve a militarily significant advance? We believe the answer to that question is yes. The monitoring and verification provisions of this agreement are unprecedented in the history of arms control in their comprehensiveness and intrusiveness, and together with our intelligence capabilities should give us powerful tools to achieve effective verification.

Opponents of this agreement have offered criticism that sanctions relief would provide Iran with additional resources that would enable it to intensify its destabilizing behavior in the region. This is a risk, but the argument that this risk can be avoided or reduced by the defeat of this agreement rests on a patently false assumption. Anyone believing that the present effective economic sanctions will be continued by Russia, China, India and other nations if Congress rejects this agreement is in a dream world. This agreement and the alliance that brought Iran to the negotiating table through sanctions has focused on Iran's nuclear activities, not its regional behavior, though both are serious dangers. This alliance could never have been brought or held together to pursue a broad, nuclear and regional agenda on which alliance partners themselves strongly disagree.

With or without this agreement, the U.S. must continue and intensify our efforts with other partners to challenge and counter Iran's destabilizing regional activities and strengthen our cooperation with Israel and the Gulf States. If this agreement is rejected, both of these objectives become more difficult.

Finally, and perhaps most importantly, members of Congress must think long and hard about the consequences if this agreement is turned down. There is no escaping the conclusion that there will inevitably be grave implications for U.S. security and for U.S. international leadership in the decades ahead. Sanctions allies will go their own way, reducing the effectiveness of our financial tools and leaving Iran in a stronger position across the board. Any future effort by this president or the next to assemble a ''sanctions coalition'' relating to Iran or other security challenges will be weakened. U.S. leadership, diplomacy and credibility, including efforts to achieve support for possible military action against Iran, will all be severely damaged.

If, however, the Iran agreement is upheld by Congress, the hard work of monitoring and enforcement is just beginning. This Congress and future Congresses, as well as future presidents, have a large and continuing role to play in the decades ahead if ''stopping the Iranian bomb'' is to become a reality. Congress must insist that Iran be held to its commitments while not obstructing the agreement. The U.S. must make clear our commitment to the security of our allies and friends in the Middle East, through security assistance and a clear policy that Iranian meddling in the region will be firmly resisted. It must be clear which congressional committees are responsible for oversight and monitoring of implementation and compliance. There should also be clear requirements for the president to report to Congress on intelligence associated with Iran. In addition, Congress must provide funding to the IAEA for its activities in monitoring Iranian compliance with this agreement as well as other nuclear proliferation activities in the Gulf region.

These crucial September votes will require members to search their own consciences. Whether they vote ''yea'' or ''nay,'' they must first look in the mirror and ask whether they are putting our nation's interest first.

Our own conviction is that this agreement represents our best chance to stop an Iranian bomb without another war in the Middle East.

Mrs. BOXER. These are two Democrats, two Republicans, leaders all—respected, effective. These former colleagues understand the risks of military action, and they are right. They know this deal doesn't rule out the use of military force. The United States can strike if we need to, but we must first try diplomacy. Since when are we afraid of that?

We can try diplomacy because we are the most powerful Nation on Earth. We should try diplomacy, and if it fails, we always have all options on the table—as our President has said, as I have said, as everyone has said.

It is striking to me that we don't have one Republican for this. I am kind of amazed. All of the focus was on the Democrats, really. A few are opposing and a vast majority are for it.

I am surprised that a Richard Lugar couldn't sway anybody, that a Colin Powell couldn't sway anybody, that a John Warner couldn't sway anybody, and, also, the religious communities across the United States apparently aren't swaying anybody. It is telling that 340 U.S. rabbis fear that if the United States rejects the deal: ''. . . the outcome will be the collapse of the international sanctions regime, an Iranian race for nuclear weapons . . . [and] isolation of Israel and the United States from international partners.''

There is also support from more than 53 Christian leaders and the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, who referred to Pope Francis's hope for a deal that he says is a ''definitive step toward a more secure and fraternal world.''

I don't know why we haven't been able to really see bipartisan support in the Senate. I am puzzled by it. I am saddened by it. It appears to me this is political. President Obama wants it. He worked hard for it. They don't like it. This is what I think.

I may be wrong, but it is hard for me to imagine, with all of these solid Republicans in favor of this deal outside of the Senate and the House, we cannot seem to have bipartisanship. These faith leaders are speaking on behalf of their synagogues, on behalf their congregations, and their faithful. They are speaking for so many Americans, so many Americans who have prayed on this issue and have come to the conclusion that it is best for our Nation.

Believe me, it is easier to say no. You can always say: Well, I don't like page 4, line 2.

A deal by its very nature is not perfect. It is not. That is why it is a deal. Otherwise it would be a fiat. Oh, I want this. OK. We make deals. We do it here all the time, but somehow this deal—because it isn't perfect and everyone agrees it isn't perfect—somehow we cannot seem to get bipartisanship. It breaks my heart, frankly.

Colleagues, this is really a major moment for us, as individuals and for our Nation. We will be judged on this vote, and we should be judged on this vote. We should be judged on votes that could lead to another war in the Middle East. At least one of our colleagues on the other side of the aisle admitted his truthful position. I respect that. He said we can ''set Iran's nuclear facilities back to day zero'' using military force.

He is voting no on this agreement, and anyone else who joins him should know this: to walk away means Iran could continue its nuclear program at will. This is not acceptable, and it means a path to war.

Let us not tiptoe around this. This option, the option of no agreement, isn't going back to the bargaining table because everyone has said—very clearly, all our allies—they are not going back to the bargaining table.

So we have no agreement, and to walk away means the international sanctions collapse. If we think that we, ourselves, can now turn to our best friends and allies, such as the United Kingdom, and say: Well, if you don't go along with us, we are not trading with you anymore—that is not going to happen.

To walk away means Iran continues its nuclear program because there won't be a deal. To walk away means we will find ourselves isolated from some of our best allies in the world. Remember, 100 nations support this deal, including the United Kingdom, France, Germany, Australia, Japan, and Canada. To walk away—I believe—means war, and the other side would say: Oh, that is just a scare tactic.

It is not a scare tactic. If you cannot go back to the negotiating table because nobody is going back there with you—you can go back. You will be there by yourself. Iran walks away. They continue with their program, and we are not going to stand for that. We have all said that.

So to walk away, in my view, means war. Because when we walk away, there is no deal. Iran keeps its nuclear program, and that cannot be allowed to happen.

Another one of our colleagues whom we serve with—and I have a lot of respect for and a good friendship with—one said: Bomb, bomb, bomb, bomb Iran.

You remember that. He is going to vote no on this deal, and that is going to move us more toward his reality.

Wars are easy to start, and they are hard to end. Wars are a stain on the human race, and we should do everything in our power to avoid war. Now, avoiding war does not mean giving up strength because, again, a military response to Iran is always on the table. And if Iran violates the deal, the whole world will know it. It will be right out there, and the whole world will stand with us in taking action.

Diplomacy is the first resort; war is the last resort. I have voted for war, OK. I said: Let's go after bin Laden. I voted for that war. It is easy to start, hard to end.

So, my colleagues, I will say it again. This is our chance, and this is our choice. History will judge us.

With this one vote, we have the chance to seize a historic opportunity to once again make America a shining example of leadership. With this vote, we have a chance, a real chance, to make this world safer right now for our children and our grandchildren.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Tennessee.

Mr. CORKER. Mr. President, I thank the Senator from California for her service on the Foreign Relations Committee and her passionate comments. Obviously, I am in a very different place policywise than she is.

I do want to point out there is bipartisanship here. There is bipartisan disapproval. While I know the Senator from California knows a great deal about foreign policy, as she is the longest serving member on the committee, the two who have spent more time than anyone understanding the nature of this deal, the impact it is going to have on the region—more time because there has been more meetings with them—are the two Democrats, the ranking member today and the former ranking member, who both oppose this. So there is bipartisanship.

I don't view this as political at all. I think we have been able to establish a strong bipartisan bill to vote on this. We have strong bipartisanship in both bodies, I might say, in the House and the Senate, in opposing this.

I hope what we will be able to do is not cast aspersions about people's motives but really debate this on the substance.

If I could, and then I will be glad to take my colleague's question.

Without objection, I would like to yield the remainder of Republican time as in morning business in this manner: 20 minutes to Senator CRUZ, who I think will be here momentarily; 20 minutes to Senator MCCAIN; 15 minutes to Senator VITTER; and 5 minutes to Senator KIRK.

I don't want to burn up a lot of our time, but if there is no objection.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Hearing none, it is so ordered.

Mr. CORKER. I will be glad to take my colleague's question briefly, but I don't want to burn up a lot of our time.

Mrs. BOXER. Briefly, this is not a lot.

What I wanted to point out is exactly that; that you do have a few Democrats, I think four Democrats, who have come down ''no,'' but we don't have one Republican on the other side. That was the only point I was making.

So my colleague is right. You have bipartisanship, but I am asking where are the Republicans supporting this? It just seems odd to me. And to me it does feel political from your side because when you have Colin Powell, who is for the agreement, and you have John Warner and other Republicans—former ambassadors and military people—it just seems odd. I was making that point.

But my colleague is right. You do have bipartisan support on your side, and I am lamenting the fact that we don't have it on ours because it doesn't feel right to me, having gone through these debates in the past.

Mr. CORKER. I think in closing—I will leave the floor, so I am not burning up any more of our time—but I think there are very legitimate concerns about the fact we began this to dismantle Iran's nuclear program, to end their program, per the President, and by approval of this deal we actually are approving the industrialization of Iran's nuclear program—the greatest state sponsor of terror in the world. Obviously, that creates a lot of issues and concerns. That is why, I believe, we see so many people disapproving of this agreement.

With that, Mr. President, I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. CRUZ. 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. CRUZ. Mr. President, let's start out with a little simple math: 58 to 42 is not a victory for the side with 42. Even in the case of ObamaCare—a truly disastrous piece of legislation which was forced through the Congress on purely partisan lines—that legislation received a majority. This isn't even close. Because not only has the Republican caucus held firm and unanimously rejected this catastrophic deal, we have also been joined by colleagues from across the aisle who are not blinded by partisan politics and understand the threat that is posed by President Obama's proposed nuclear deal with Iran.

I want to take a moment to acknowledge them, as they are among those who know best how bad this deal is. First, Senator CHUCK SCHUMER of New York, who has been a long-time advocate for the State of Israel. It is no secret Senator SCHUMER and I have had our disagreements on a great many issues, but I have been proud to stand with him for Israel and against this Iranian nuclear deal, and I was proud

to stand with Senator SCHUMER when Congress voted unanimously on the legislation I introduced to ban a known terrorist—Hamid Aboutalebi, who participated in the 1979 Iranian hostage-taking—from becoming Iran's Ambassador to the United Nations.

Senator BOB MENENDEZ of New Jersey, the former chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee, has likewise come out against this catastrophic deal. Senator MENENDEZ and I have worked together on a wide range of issues, including legislation to provide a Rewards for Justice reward last summer of $5 million for the capture or kill of the Hamas terrorist who murdered Israeli American teenager Naftali Fraenkel and his two teenage friends.

Senator BEN CARDIN of Maryland, the ranking member of the Foreign Relations Committee, whose name is on the legislation on which we are scheduled to vote this week. Certainly Senator CARDIN knows as much about this deal as anyone, and his opposition should make all Senators, particularly Democratic Senators, take note.

Senator JOE MANCHIN of West Virginia, my colleague on the Senate Committee on Armed Services, who understands the threats to national security posed by this Iranian nuclear deal, I was honored to work with him and have his support for the resolution I introduced condemning Hamas's use of human shields during Israel's action in Gaza last summer—a disgusting terrorist tactic that was aided and abetted by Hamas's Iranian sponsors.

Democrats should take note that the ranking member on the Foreign Relations Committee, the former ranking member on the Foreign Relations Committee, and the Democrat scheduled to be the next Democratic leader have all come out and valued national security above partisan loyalty. That ought to be reason to cause every other Democratic Member of this body to take a second assessment of their own decisions.

I also want to mention Senator CHRIS COONS of Delaware, who even though he plans, unfortunately, to vote in favor of this deal, maintains it should go to a vote and not go into effect by default because the minority can block cloture through a filibuster. In these dark times, it is at least encouraging to know there are still a handful of Democrats who, in the tradition of Scoop Jackson, JFK, and Joe Lieberman, are willing to put country in front of party, are willing to defend national security. That used to be a robust tradition on the Democratic side of the aisle. I would that there were more Scoop Jackson Democrats in the United States Senate. I would that there were more JFK Democrats in the United States Senate. I would that there were more Joe Lieberman Democrats in the United States Senate.

It is also telling that not a single Republican was persuaded by the President and Secretary of State when they told us this is the only option; that it is this deal, this catastrophic deal, or war and that this is the very best deal we could have gotten. If that is so, we shouldn't have been negotiating in the first place.

Indeed, as Israel's Prime Minister Netanyahu noted, the one person telling the truth about this deal is Iran's President Ruhani, who observed that Iran has gotten everything they wanted from this deal because this deal is, as Prime Minister Netanyahu predicted, a very bad deal and a historic mistake.

First and foremost, this terrible deal will not stop a virulently anti-American and anti-Israeli regime from getting a nuclear bomb. The so-called Supreme Leader, the Ayatollah Khamenei, declared that Israel—which he calls the Little Satan—would be nothing in 25 years and that those 25 years would be made miserable because of the heroic attacks of radical Islamic jihadists. America, he said, was the Great Satan. He didn't say this in 1979. He tweeted it yesterday.

This is the Ayatollah Khamenei, the person with whom the administration is making a deal that facilitates his having nuclear weapons. He is being candid. He is telling us he intends to do everything possible to murder as many Israelis as possible and to murder as many Americans as possible.

President Obama's deal, if it goes through, will allow Khamenei and his fellow mullahs to retain their centrifuges. They have established their ''right to enrich'' uranium. They have rejected attempts to inspect their sites with possible military dimensions related to their nuclear program. Indeed, this deal is without any credible inspection mechanism.

Not long ago, the administration was promising the American people so-called ''anytime, anywhere inspections.'' Those inspections quickly morphed into inspections with 24 days' advance notice—plenty of time to ensure that the inspections will never uncover the cheating.

But even more laughable, even more farcical, this deal doesn't rely on American inspectors; it doesn't rely on international inspectors. This deal trusts the Iranians to inspect themselves. It is not much of an exaggeration to say the inspection regime envisioned in this deal is simply picking up the phone, calling the Ayatollah Khamenei, and asking: Are you developing nuclear weapons? No. Very good; thank you.

That is a regime designed to facilitate cheating, to facilitate surreptitious development of nuclear weapons with $150 billion to fuel and fund that development.

Beyond that, the deal actually obligates signatories to assist Iran in developing their program, which, remarkably, the Secretary of State suggests will be used to try to cure cancer, and, even more remarkably, obligates signatories to assist Iran in defending against efforts by the nation of Israel to stop a nuclear weapons regime. That is a remarkable commitment Senate Democrats have signed on to.

In addition, this terrible deal makes concessions to Iran completely unrelated to the nuclear program. For example, it provides sanctions relief for designated terrorists such as General Suleimani, the head of the Iranian Revolutionary Guard's elite Quds Force, who should have no association with the Iranian nuclear program whatsoever. Iran and the Iranian regime maintain that the nuclear program is not a military program. Then why is a military general covered in this agreement—this man, General Suleimani, who has blood on his hands from the IEDs that he funneled into Iraq that murdered and maimed hundreds of American service men and women?

And even while Iranians such as Suleimani get relief, four Americans were cruelly excluded from this deal: Pastor Saeed Abedini, an American citizen imprisoned for 8 years in an Iranian prison for the crime of preaching the Gospel; former marine Amir Hekmati; Washington Post reporter Jason Rezaian; and Bob Levinson. It is a disgrace on our Nation that we agreed to any deal with Tehran before they were liberated.

Finally, this terrible deal provides Iran with some $150 billion in economic relief, which will inevitably be used to finance the violent terrorist mayhem that has been a signature of the Islamic Republic since the 1979 revolution. It will, in effect, make the U.S. Government the leading international financier of terrorism. We haven't even voted yet on this deal, and we are already seeing the consequences play out in real time. Senior Iranian officials, including Suleimani, who is technically still under a U.N. travel ban, have traveled to Moscow to make arms deals with Vladimir Putin—arms that will flow to Iran's terrorist proxies, from Yemen to Gaza to Lebanon to Syria. Syrian dictator Bashar al-Assad has gotten an economic lifeline in the form of a $1 billion line of credit. Senior Iranian officials have announced to the media they will redouble their support for Hamas because they ''reject the existence of any Israeli on this earth.''

If we want to understand who we are dealing with, that clarifies exactly what their intent is. In other words, the world's leading state sponsor of terrorism, Iran, just got a $150 billion windfall courtesy of the U.S. Government.

The grim consequences of this activity can be seen on our TV screens as we witness hundreds of thousands of panicked refugees fleeing out of places where Iran's proxies are active. Of course, ISIS and its affiliates bear significant responsibility for this crisis. But make no mistake about it; Tehran's bloody fingerprints are all over it as well. From the Houthis to Hamas to Hezbollah, they are enabling

and financing the radical Islamic terrorists who are making life, from North Africa to the Middle East, utterly untenable. They are murdering Christians and Jews and other Muslims who do not embrace their radical jihadist dream.

This isn't complicated. The American people know this is a terrible deal. That is why President Obama has only been able to persuade a minority of their duly elected representatives to support it. It is why, as Secretary Kerry frankly admitted, they didn't even try to submit their deal to the Senate as a treaty, as they should have done. They prefer to jam it through by default or by Presidential veto—anything to get what they believe will be a domestic political legacy. How typical it is of the Washington cartel that one-third of one House of Congress is trying to force this catastrophic deal on our country.

Yet even in the face of 42 Democrats making a decision to value partisan loyalty over the national security of our country, over standing with our friend and ally the nation of Israel, and over protecting the lives of millions of Americans—even in the face of that—there are still serious steps we can take right now. There are two individuals in Washington, DC, who have the capacity still to stop this deal. Their names are Majority Leader MITCH MCCONNELL and Speaker of the House JOHN BOEHNER. Corker-Cardin was, unfortunately, a very weak piece of review legislation, but it did have one small bit of teeth in it that ought to be used. Under Corker-Cardin, the review period does not start until the administration submits the entirety of the deal to Congress. That entirety is defined under Corker-Cardin to include any and all side deals.

This deal has at least two side deals with the IAEA concerning inspections. It is the laughable inspection regime that trusts the Iranians to inspect themselves. Those side deals have not been submitted to Congress. Under the terms of Corker-Cardin, the review period has not started and does not start until the entire deal is submitted to Congress, and the President cannot lift these sanctions until the review period expires.

So therefore, I call upon the leadership of my party—Leader MCCONNELL, Speaker BOEHNER—simply to enforce the terms of Corker-Cardin. The administration has not submitted the deal. Accordingly, we should not be voting on a resolution of disapproval because the Corker-Cardin clock never began to start, and under Corker-Cardin, until the clock starts, the sanctions can't be lifted.

Republicans in this body should not be facilitating this President's yet again disregarding the law and doing so in contravention of the national security interests of this country.

Two final observations: If and when we vote on this deal, for every Member of this body, I agree with my former colleague, former Senator Joe Lieberman, who said this may well be the most important vote any Senator casts in his or her career. I implore every Democrat who has come out in support of this deal, search your conscience. You can make a choice other than standing with your own party. You can stand up to your own party. Trust me; I have done it myself. It is not the end of the world.

I implore every Democrat: Go home and pray. Go home and ask yourself how you will look in the eyes of the mother or father whose son was blown to bits by an Iranian IED that came directly from General Suleimani, on whom we are now lifting sanctions; how you will explain your vote that ''your son or daughter's life didn't matter enough to me, that I was willing to reward their murderer.'' I can tell you that is not a conversation I would ever like to have. I ask every Democrat who has said they support this deal to ask yourself that question.

I ask you to ask the question how you will look in the eyes of the mothers and fathers and sons and daughters of those who will be murdered by Hamas, by Hezbollah, by the Houthis, by radical Islamic terrorists across the globe with the over $100 billion that this deal gives them.

Osama bin Laden murdered nearly 3,000 people on September 11, 2001. Bin Laden never had $100 billion at his disposal. This deal gives people every bit as evil, every bit as consumed with bilious hatred resources, billions of dollars. And, if this deal goes through, we know to an absolute certainty that Americans will be murdered, Israelis will be murdered, and Europeans will be murdered. I ask every Democratic Member of this body to think before you cast a vote: How will you look in the eyes of the children of those who are murdered by terrorists who use the billions that this deal gives them to kill them? That is blood you can't wash your hands of. When you knowingly and willingly send billions of dollars to jihadists who have declared their intention to murder us, there is no excuse you can hide behind when they carry through on the intention using the billions of dollars you have given.

And, if—God forbid—Iran ever acquires a nuclear weapon, the odds are unacceptably high they would, No. 1, use that nuclear weapon above our friend and ally the nation of Israel. For every Democrat who maintains he or she is a friend of Israel, you need to be prepared to explain how you facilitated a day that could see a nuclear warhead detonating over Tel-Aviv, murdering millions.

When Prime Minister Netanyahu spoke to a joint session of Congress, I participated in a panel discussion that my office organized with Elie Wiesel, a Nobel laureate who survived the Holocaust, and when Elie Wiesel says ''never again,'' it means never again. The one threat that could kill 6 million Jews again is a nuclear Iran. Listen to Elie Wiesel.

The single-most dangerous thing Iran could do with a nuclear weapon is launch it from a ship in the Atlantic into the atmosphere and set off an electromagnetic pulse, or an EMP, that would take down the electrical grid and could kill tens of millions of Americans. To every Democrat, listen to those voices.

Finally, if the Democrats refuse to put our national security interests first, then it will be incumbent on the next President to undo the damage. Any competent Commander in Chief should be prepared on the first day—on January 20, 2017—to rip to shreds this catastrophic Iranian deal and to make clear to the Ayatollah Khamenei and to every other jihadist that under no circumstances will the nation of Iran, led by a theocratic Ayatollah who chants ''Death to America,'' be allowed to acquire nuclear weapons.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. SULLIVAN). The minority whip.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, what time is remaining on the Democratic side?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Thirty-six minutes.

Mr. DURBIN. How much on the other side?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Forty-one minutes.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I would like to respond very briefly—very briefly—before yielding to Senator NELSON of Florida.

I would say to the junior Senator from Texas that I hope he listened carefully last Sunday when General Colin Powell, former Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff—a man who risked his life in battle for America, a man who served as Secretary of State under Republican President George W. Bush—came forward and endorsed this agreement that has been proposed before the Senate. So to suggest that General Powell and so many others are not aware of the security aspects of this agreement I don't believe is a fair characterization. General Powell and others understand better than I can, better than the Senator from Texas can what it means to face these security issues. I would like to quote what he said. He said that ''with respect to the Iranians, don't trust, never trust, and always verify.'' So he comes to his conclusion supporting this agreement with the same degree of skepticism that many of us do.

I would not discount for a minute some of the activities that have been cataloged by the junior Senator from Texas when it comes to Iran, but if you think those were terrible—and they were—imagine Iran with a nuclear weapon. That is what is at stake in this debate. Currently Iran has the capacity to build 10 nuclear weapons—10. We want to stop them from doing that, put inspectors in place. So when you list the litany of horrors coming out of Iran's terrorist activities, imagine

those activities with a nuclear weapon. Our goal is to stop the development of a nuclear weapon in Iran.

I yield the floor to the Senator from Florida.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Florida.

Mr. NELSON. Mr. President, I will vote for the joint agreement. I want the Senate and my colleagues from Florida to understand. I gave a lengthy speech as to why I would support this some 5 weeks ago, in the early part of August before we adjourned. Indeed, I, like most every other Senator here, feel this is one of the most important votes we will cast. I bring to the table the attempted insight given the fact of 6 years being a member of the Intelligence Committee and now having the privilege of being a senior member of the Senate Armed Services Committee.

The question is, Does this agreement prevent Iran from having a nuclear bomb? That is the essential question. Does this agreement do that? This is not an agreement to stop the bad behavior of Iran, which, of course, I wish we could. This is not a question of whether we are going to get Iran to suddenly change its attitude about Israel, which I wish we could. This is a question of preventing Iran from building and producing a nuclear bomb. I believe this agreement does it, and I believe it does it at both the declared sites and a future cheating at a covert site. Now, there are three declared sites. Those are going to be completely dismantled. The whole program is going to be dismantled.

This is misunderstood when you talk about their centrifuges, of which they have the generation of centrifuge that is very modernized. All of those are going to be cut in a third, from approximately 19,000, and they are all going to be first-generation, which is not the modernized centrifuges. That is one thing. But also they have 12,000 kilograms of enriched uranium. Do you know how much that is? That is over 13 tons, to put it in the lingo Americans understand. That is going to be reduced under this agreement by 98 percent to 300 kilograms—in other words, less than one-fifth to make a bomb. And by the way, that enriched uranium is going to be cut down not to 90 percent to build a bomb but 3.67 percent enriched uranium.

Also, going forward, we are going to have the inspection from cradle to grave, from the very uranium mines where they dig up the uranium rocks, to the processing, which is crushing it into the yellowcake—we are going to have constant surveillance of all of this—taking the yellowcake, making it into a gas, putting that gas into centrifuges, and spinning it so that the uranium comes out of the gas in more concentrated forms, and in the cascade of these centrifuges, then bringing it down to the enriched uranium in order to make a bomb.

The same thing with plutonium. What about plutonium? In the one declared site, Arak, they are going to fill it up with concrete, and all of the existing plutonium is going to be shipped out of the country. I hope we are going to have lots of pictures of that as they do this.

Oh, by the way, as they shut down this program—talking about this money which is held in the banks of five foreign countries, which is the Iranian oil money they will eventually get—you hear all these figures: 150, 100. When you subtract the Iranian obligations, the net amount is still a lot of money—$56 billion—but they don't get that until they do all of this. And when is that going to be? It will probably be a year from now before they ever get the money that is held in the banks of Japan, South Korea, China, India, and Taiwan, banks that are in countries that need oil, that want Iranian oil, especially if in the future Iran sells them oil at discounted prices. Do you think those banks, those countries are going to keep that money if we walk away from this deal? No. The sanctions are going to dissipate. The money is going to flow.

Thank goodness, because of the joint agreement, that money is not going to flow—probably a year from now—until they have done all of these things that are required in the agreement of dismantling their program.

What this agreement does is it vastly reduces their ability to produce a bomb unless they cheat. Let's talk about that. Now, I said from the very beginning—and this was part of my speech 5, 6 weeks ago. President Reagan said ''trust, but verify'' in dealing with the Soviet Union. I say don't trust, but verify. So the whole point is that if we think they are going to cheat—and I can tell you that this Senator thinks they are going to try to cheat, although I think they clearly are going to comply with this. And I think the outset—the preamble of the agreement says that it is understood that Iran will never have a nuclear weapon. Never ever. But are some elements of their society, their government, going to try to cheat? This Senator thinks they will. Can we catch them? Well, I think we clearly will.

First of all, we are going to have a lot more insight into their attempted nuclear program than we do now. And by the way, we have a vast intelligence network out there, along with our allies, that will penetrate. But on top of that, other than the three declared sites of Iraq, Natanz, and Fordow, which will all be dismantled in the reductions that I just mentioned—we will have immediate access to those sites. Any other site that we suspect, that we say we want to inspect, the max that they can rope-a-dope us is 24 days.

So if they are trying to cheat, could they do a nuclear detonator? Probably. But can they build a bomb? The answer is no. Why is it no without us knowing? Because when that site is suspected and we go in and have the inspection, you cannot hide energized, enriched uranium or plutonium. The half-life of this stuff is thousands of years. You can't paint over it. You can't asphalt over it. We will find it because the radioactivity will be there.

If they cheat, what happens? The fact that we have caused them to reduce all of these things that I have mentioned means we have a year in advance to deal with it, whether it is a military strike, whether it is the sanctions going back into place.

By the way, this is structured so that the United Nations sanctions go right back into place. You say: How in the world can you do that? The U.N. Security Council—any one of those other countries, such as China or Russia, can object.

No, that is not how this deal is structured. With the United States saying the sanctions go back—by ourselves—if they have cheated, the economic sanctions of the P5+1—the UK, France, Germany, China, Russia, and the United States—go back into place.

So we are going to have a year advance if they are cheating. Compare that, please, to if we walk away from the deal today. They can have a nuclear bomb within a few months, and the sanctions of our allies will dissipate because they have all told us they will dissipate if we walk away from the deal.

I will conclude with this: If this Senator knows that we are in a situation where if we reject the deal, Iran is going to have a nuclear bomb in a few months as opposed to any prospect in the future of them having a nuclear bomb with us having a year's advance notice but the likelihood that it is 10, 15, 20, 25 years—this Senator feels that the world is going to be a very different place in 15 to 20 years and that for the protection of the interests of the United States and our allies right now, including our strong ally Israel, it is important that Iran not have a nuclear weapon, that we are dealing with an Iran that does not have a nuclear weapon in the immediate future and instead that we penetrate their society with a much better understanding with them not having the capability of a nuclear weapon until years and years in the future.

For all of those reasons—and you can tell this is coming right out of my heart and is not some written, read speech—it is in the interest of the United States that this Senator will vote to support the deal.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Arizona.

Mr. MCCAIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to address the Senate as in morning business for such time as I may consume.

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

Mr. MCCAIN. Mr. President, in response to the Senator from Florida's—I am sure heartfelt—remarks, only 21 percent of the American people agree with his stated position there, and I am

sure he will hear from his constituents, as he should.

I did not come to the floor this morning to talk about the agreement. I will save my remarks, which I have been asked to make, for this afternoon.

REFUGEE CRISIS AND AMERICAN LEADERSHIP

Mr. MCCAIN. Mr. President, I call attention to the urgent refugee crisis that is happening in our midst. Men, women, and children are fleeing by the thousands from the violence and destruction that has engulfed the Middle East and North Africa. This crisis didn't come out of nowhere like an earthquake or a tornado. Instead, it is the predictable result of this administration's policies of leading from behind as conflicts metastasized in the vacuum created through years of inaction by President Obama and a total lack of American leadership. This did not happen by accident. It happened because of leading from behind. It happened because this President has refused to lead. When a vacuum is created, this is the predictable result which many of us predicted.

As we know, the vast majority of these refugees are from Syria, a country which has known little but death and destruction for 4 years as a murderous dictatorship and a homicidal cult have fought a war against a common enemy, the Syrian people. As Assad and ISIL fight to rule, cruelty and atrocity reign.

According to the United Nations Refugee Agency, about 63 percent of European asylum seekers in the past 2 years are Syrians, but the truth is, the refugee crisis is much bigger than what we are seeing today in Europe. Since 2011, well over 200,000 Syrians have been killed, 1 million injured, 8 million displaced, 4 million forced to seek refuge abroad in countries such as Turkey, Jordan, Lebanon, and Egypt where the situation is not much better. The United Nations has described this crisis as ''the greatest humanitarian crisis tragedy of our times.''

As conditions at refugee camps in the region continue to deteriorate with overcrowding, disease, violence, and exploitation, those who can are attempting to escape further west to safer places in Europe. The United Nations estimates that at least 850,000 people will seek refuge in Europe between 2015 and 2016. About a quarter of them will be children. These children are increasingly leaving their families and homes to make dangerous journeys by sea and land. While they are risking their lives to escape the threat of abduction, sexual abuse, torture and murder, they face an entirely new set of threats on this desperate journey for asylum. Many are on traversing unsafe routes, suffering from starvation, facing the threat of human trafficking, enduring debilitating psychological trauma, and, of course, many are dying.

The U.N. Refugee Agency has stated that about 2,600 people have died while attempting to cross the Mediterranean this year alone, including 3-year-old Aylan Kurdi. Aylan grew up in the Syrian city of Kobani, a city situated on the border of Turkey, which in recent years has been under siege by ISIL militants and the Assad regime. Facing increasing turmoil and unrest, Aylan's father, Abdullah, and mother, Rehen, did what any parent would do for their children. They attempted to move Aylan and his 4-year-old brother Galip to a safer home. Abdullah arranged for his family to board a boat bound for Sweden by way of Greece, a trip that many of his fellow Syrians have attempted over the years. But when the Kurdi family met their smugglers in Turkey, they were surprised how crowded the small, flimsy fiberglass boat was. Despite repeated questions about the safety of the voyage, the smugglers assured Abdullah they would be OK.

Shortly into the trip, the waters became increasingly rough, crashing into the boat and rocking it back and forth until it capsized, launching the passengers—including Aylan, his mother, and 4-year-old brother—into the rough waters. Despite Abdullah's strongest attempts, he was unable to save his family.

This photo, which was taken shortly after Aylan's dead body was washed ashore, has opened the world's eyes to this devastating crisis. Within hours of this photo being posted, people across the world began to share it on social media using a hashtag in Arabic that translates to ''humanity washed ashore.'' This image has haunted the world, but what should haunt us even more than the horror unfolding before our eyes is the thought that the United States will continue to do nothing meaningful about it.

The conflicts in Syria, Iraq, Lebanon, Yemen, and elsewhere in the Middle East and North Africa that have taken the lives of Aylan and countless other desperate refugees are not only a threat to our security, but a crisis of conscience. They challenge the moral fabric of our Nation and the foundation of global leadership. Let's be clear. The current crisis before us is not a migrant issue. They are not migrants. Migrants leave for economic reasons. It is a mass exodus of refugees who are fleeing conflicts that this administration has refused to address for years. As the U.N. High Commissioner stated last week: ''This is a primarily refugee crisis, not only a migration phenomenon. The vast majority of those arriving in Greece come from conflict zones like Syria, Iraq or Afghanistan and are simply running for their lives.''

I say to the media: Stop calling them migrants. They are not migrants. They are refugees who are attempting to escape from torture, murder, killing, and genocide. Statements and images like these should not just be a source of heartbreak and sympathy; they should be a call to action. The following quote is from the Wall Street Journal editorial this morning.

Another Syria Failure

It's hard to believe, but the debacle that is the Obama Administration's Syria policy could get worse. U.S. sources have been leaking that Russia may be preparing for a major military deployment to keep Bashar Assad in power in Damascus. By some reports quoting Western diplomats, a Russian expeditionary force is already in Syria preparing for the arrival of jets and attack helicopters to carry out strikes against Islamic State . . . Mr. Assad is a Russian ally, and Vladimir Putin isn't about to let the Syrian government fall without a bigger fight. Like so much else in the Middle East, President Obama has created an opening for this Russian intervention by minimizing U.S. interests in the outcome of Syria's civil war. He has refused to offer more than token help to pro-Western Syrians, thus ceding the battleground to radical Islamists or the Assad-Russia-Iran-Hezbollah axis. Don't expect a decline in the flow of refugees anytime soon.

Just a few months after the revolution in Syria began in 2011, President Obama issued his Presidential Study Directive stating: ''Preventing mass atrocities and genocide is a core national security interest and a core moral responsibility of the United States.''

He went on to say: ''Our security is affected when masses of civilians are slaughtered, refugees flow across borders, and murderers wreak havoc on regional stability and livelihoods.''

In 2013, President Obama, speaking at the U.S. Holocaust Museum, said: ''Too often, the world has failed to prevent the killing of innocents on a massive scale. And we are haunted by the atrocities that we did not stop and the lives we did not save.''

In a 2013 address to the U.N. General Assembly, President Obama said:

[T]he principle of sovereignty is at the center of our international order. But sovereignty cannot be a shield for tyrants to commit wanton murder, or an excuse for the international community to turn a blind eye. While we need to be modest in our belief that we can remedy every evil, while we need to be mindful that the world is full of unintended consequences, should we really accept the notion that the world is powerless in the face of a Rwanda, or Srebrenica? If that's the world that people want to live in, they should say so, and reckon with the cold logic of mass graves.

I strongly suggest, given the fact that there is no policy, no strategy, and no effective way of stemming this horror, that the President of the United States should say so and reckon with the cold logic of mass graves. That was our President. By the way, I agree with every word he said, but how can the American people reconcile these words with pictures of dead children and desperate refugees literally running for their lives? How can President Obama say it is our moral obligation to do what we can to prevent the worst atrocities in our world but refuse to do anything to stop the atrocities that are occurring every single day in Syria and across the Middle East?

Where is that President Obama today? Where is the President Obama who has spoken so movingly of the moral responsibilities that great power confers?

Unfortunately, the administration is still ''considering a range of options''—I am not making this up—to respond to this issue, a National Security Council spokesman stated this week. In the meantime, the President and his cabinet officials continue to push through an agreement that legitimatizes Iran, which is not only the leading state sponsor of terror in the world, but the patron of the Assad regime responsible for the deaths of hundreds of thousands of innocent Syrians. After this deal, Iran's power in the region will only be enhanced, and it is safe to assume that it will use the billions of dollars in sanctions relief to boost arms supplies to Iran's terrorist proxies, to sow chaos and instability across the region, and to prop up Assad right when he needs it most.

As the administration stands by, Russia is capitalizing on America's inaction to provide additional support for the Assad regime. According to numerous press reports, Russia is establishing a base at an airfield near an Assad stronghold in western Syria. Russia could soon deploy 1,000 or more military personnel into Syria to conduct air operations in support of Assad's forces.

Our government is doing what it has sadly done too often in the past, receding our strength and averting our eyes. We try to comfort our guilty consciences by telling ourselves that we are not doing nothing, but it is a claim made in bad faith, for everyone concedes that nothing we are doing is equal to the horrors we face. We are telling ourselves: We're too tired or weary to get more involved, that this is not our problem, that helping to resolve this crisis is not our responsibility, and that there are no options to end the conflicts around the world today. The truth is there was plenty that could have been done to avoid the devastation unfolding before our eyes in 2011, in 2012, in 2013, in 2014. And there is still more we can do today to respond to this growing crisis.

My friends, my colleagues, my fellow Americans, I fear the longer this violence goes on, the more difficult it will be to bring it to an end. Failing to do so will leave a dangerous vacuum that enables extremism and instability to grow and provides terrorists the space, resources, and recruits they need to wreak havoc on the region and threaten the United States of America.

It is not too late. We must not avert our eyes from Aylan and the millions of other refugees running for their lives. We must commit to a strategy to defeat the malign forces in the region that are sowing chaos and mass destruction. Failing to act now leaves us with even fewer options to rectify this terrible chapter in our history.

Speaking of history, I am a student of history. I don't believe there are exact parallels in American history, but there are certain areas where a failure to lead leads to catastrophic consequences. In 1938, on October 5, a man named Winston Churchill—who was shunned by his colleagues and ridiculed in the House of Commons for his constant speaking and warning—in one of my favorites of the appearances he made in the House of Commons before his fellow citizens, he said:

> And do not suppose this is the end. This is only the beginning of the reckoning. This is only the first sip, the first foretaste of a bitter cup which will be proffered to us year by year unless by a supreme recovery of moral health and martial vigour, we arise again and take our stand for freedom as in olden time.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Connecticut.

Mr. MURPHY. Mr. President, I come to the floor to speak to the nuclear agreement with Iran. First, having just come back from the region after having spent Sunday morning in one of the biggest refugee camps inside Syria—where 80,000, more than half of them children under the age of 18, with more than 250 every day leaving the camp because they have lost hope and they are, frankly, more willing to live inside a dangerous Syria with their lives in danger than to continue to live inside of this camp—let me associate myself with the imperative that Senator MCCAIN laid before us, that we can do more. I don't agree with his diagnosis of how we got here, nor will I likely agree with his solution in terms of prescriptions to solve the problem, but I certainly agree that this body and the administration should be standing up and bearing our share of the burden when it comes to this humanitarian crisis, having seen it now firsthand for myself.

Peace is a messy business. As Yitzhak Rabin said upon the recognition of the PLO—a really hard thing for the Israelis to do—he said, ''You don't make peace with your friends, you make it with very unsavory enemies.'' It makes sense, right? The definition of peace is the settlement of old disputes or even just one big dispute with someone with whom one has a long history of disagreement or conflict. And unless peace comes from unconditional surrender—and that frankly doesn't happen very much in the postnuclear age—then peace by nature is going to be a compromise. It doesn't come from one side getting everything it wants. Thus, by definition, it is going to feel fairly unsatisfactory.

I say this because viewing the Iran deal through that prism allows me to understand why so many people are voting no, and it allows me to understand why many of those who are voting yes took a long time to get there, but what I have trouble understanding is all of the revisionist history that is crowding this Chamber right now. I don't think there is a single Member of the Senate who didn't in principle support the idea of negotiating an end to Iran's nuclear weapons program. And I don't remember anyone who didn't understand that the sanctions we layered upon Iran were directed at their nuclear program, not their support for Hezbollah or their detainment of hostages or any other malevolent behavior in the region. Why? Because we had a whole different set of sanctions on that activity.

But now there is all sorts of Sturm und Drang in Congress over the idea that this deal represents a give-and-take between the United States and Iran. Why didn't we get everything, a lot of people are asking; and the failure of this agreement to settle all our disputes with Iran at once—but they still do bad stuff, people say. I view these protests largely as cover for a ''no'' vote that is likely about something else because we always knew this was going to be a negotiation. We can complain about the end balance, but we can't engage in a straight-faced argument about the outrageousness of Iran getting to keep a few centrifuges. And we can all rage about Iran's support for terrorism or their dangerous talk about our sacred ally, Israel, but we all passed sanctions bills knowing they were about their nuclear program, not all of these other activities. Thus, it must stand to reason that these sanctions would be removed if Iran came to the table and satisfied our concerns about their nuclear program, not our concerns about everything else they do that is terrible.

Peace is never perfect. Diplomacy is, frankly, mostly ugly, but it matters. Because why on Earth do we spend $500 billion every year on the world's biggest, baddest, most capable military force if we aren't willing to use it? I don't mean use it in the way that Senator GRAHAM or Senator COTTON may mean ''use it,'' I mean use it by entering into peaceful agreements that are held in place by the threat of overwhelming U.S. military force. Our planes and our bombs and our brigades, these are the muscle that ensures that agreements are lived up to, not the muscle that substitutes for a diplomatic agreement. America, more than any other country in the world, can afford to take a diplomatic risk because we can clean it up fast if it goes wrong. Now, I don't think this agreement is going to go wrong, but I sure like knowing that a bunker-busting bomb is waiting in the wings if it does. And I will sleep better at night knowing that by agreeing to this deal, we are keeping together an unprecedented international coalition that will stand with us if we need to drop that bomb—something they would not do if we dropped it without this agreement.

This body often seems to forget that American power is not simply exercised through the blunt force of military power. And President Obama, frankly, is not the first President to be pressed by hawks in Congress, and outside of Congress, to forsake diplomacy in favor of war.

In the first meeting with legislative leaders after the announcement of Russian missiles inside Cuba, the bipartisan congressional leadership, meeting

with President Kennedy, was unanimous in its support for an attack and ultimately the possible invasion of Cuba. All of them thought that talking to Russia about a negotiated solution equaled weakness. President Kennedy didn't listen, and over 13 days he worked out a peaceful solution to the Cuban Missile Crisis that history looks very kindly upon.

President Reagan, upon signing the IMF treaty with Russia, leaned over to Gorbachev as they announced the deal and said: ''The hardliners in both our countries are bleeding when we shake hands today.'' Hawks in Congress didn't want an agreement with our sworn enemy, Russia. They didn't understand why we signed a nuclear agreement with a country that was still out for American blood on so many other fronts. But history tells us that the IMF treaty was an important piece of our strategy to weaken hardliners inside Russia and open that country to reform.

I hear this analogy to 1938 and Munich almost every day, and it doesn't just come with respect to this agreement. Almost every time we sit across the table from someone we have a disagreement with, the claim is that it is Munich all over again, but Munich is the exception, not the rule. There are plenty more diplomatic agreements to avert war that went right rather than those that went wrong. It doesn't mean we don't use 1938 as a caution, but it doesn't mean it is an automatic parallel to every single time we are trying to settle our disputes with an adversary at the negotiating table rather than through the means of arms.

Our partners in the Middle East largely get this. I just returned from this trip, as I mentioned, to the region—Qatar, UAE, Iraq, Kuwait, and Jordan—with Senator PETERS. In every country we visited, we heard about Iran's dangerous activity in the region, including support for the Houthis in Yemen, funding Shiite militias in Iraq, propping up the murderous Bashar al Assad in Syria, pumping money into Hezbollah and Hamas to threaten Israel, but despite these provocations, every Arab political leader whom we met with—every single one—supports this agreement. They give two basic reasons, and I want to share them because they mirror the reasons for my support as well.

First, they know that no matter how dangerous Iran is today, they shudder to think how much more dangerous Iran would be if they possessed a nuclear weapon. They believe, as I do, that this agreement is the best way to keep Iran from obtaining a nuclear weapon, and they support it, to a country, first and foremost for that reason.

Before this deal, Iran had 19,000 centrifuges spinning. After it, they are going to have just a few thousand. Before this deal, Iran was enriching up to 20 percent and was only a few months from being able to enrich to a level in which they could get on a pathway to a bomb. After this deal, enrichment will be down to 3.7 percent. Before this deal, Iran had an enormous stockpile of enriched uranium, and after this deal that stockpile is, for all intents and purposes, eliminated—reduced by 97 percent. Before this deal, the only way we knew what was going on in the nuclear program was through covert surveillance. After the deal, we are going to have a network of inspectors crawling over every inch of their nuclear program to make sure they aren't cheating.

Second, our Arab partners whom we visited within the region know that all of the problems in the region can't be solved without Iran at the table, and while they aren't sure this agreement by itself will draw Iran into peaceful negotiations over Syria or Yemen or Iraq—and I think none of us can be sure that is how this will play out—they are certain that a rejection of the agreement by the United States Congress will virtually guarantee that Iran will not come to the table. They talk openly about fearing a newly isolated Iran, the rejection of this agreement empowering the hardliners, punishing the moderates, and pushing Iran away from any constructive dialogue in the region. Our Arab partners don't love the terms of this agreement any more than the U.S. Senate does, but they know the alternative—a retrenched Iran with a green light to start back up their nuclear program—is the most dangerous outcome of all.

Our partners understand what supporters of the deal understand; that this idea that if Congress were to reject the agreement, we could come back to the table and get a better one is pure fiction. It is pure political fiction made up by people who don't want to sound like they don't have an alternative plan, when they really don't. No one with any credible diplomatic experience in the Middle East believes that Iran will come back to the table if Congress rejects this deal, and our international partners have told us to our face that they will not come back to the table if we reject this deal. A better deal is fantasy, plain and simple.

Here is what happens. Here is what really happens if Congress rejects this deal that is supported by all of our negotiating partners—Britain, France, Germany, China, Russia—the entirety of the Security Council and all of our Arab partners in the region. What happens is that Iran starts back up their nuclear program, centrifuges climb to 25,000, 30,000, enrichment gets closer to the level necessary for a bomb, the inspectors get kicked out—our eyes on a nuclear program disappear—and sanctions fray at first and likely fall apart over time and Iran gets everything it wants. It gets its nuclear program and it gets sanctions relief. What a catastrophic outcome that would be.

But as bad as that reality would be, it actually gets worse. We know the hardliners have been marginalized as a result of this deal, and the moderates, which I admit is, frankly, a relative term inside Iran, are gaining power. Rejection of this deal would just be a gift to hardliners and would likely lead to Ruhani being replaced by a Revolutionary Guard proxy who would lead Iran down a path that is even more dangerous—hard to believe—than the path they are on today.

Lastly, the United States would just become an international pariah. With all of our partners at the negotiating table, almost every nation around the world supporting this agreement, what would it say if the U.S. Congress walked away? Our power as a nation would be irreparably damaged.

Now, I heard Senator CRUZ on the floor earlier today chastising Democrats, yelling at us, about how could we live with ourselves doing a deal with our mortal enemy Iran. So let me ask him and others who oppose this agreement, with the rhetoric that he uses, a question in return: How could opponents of this deal live with themselves if a rejection of this deal would result in, No. 1, Iran restarting its nuclear program; No. 2, sanctions dramatically weakening; No. 3, inspections ending; and, No. 4, hard-liners being in power inside Iran?

The fact is that many Republicans opposed this agreement before they read it. Senator CRUZ opposed it within an hour of its announcement. So I don't know how some opponents of this deal can live with themselves having made a political decision to oppose the most important diplomatic agreement that most of us will vote on during our time here.

This is not a perfect deal, but no diplomatic agreement ever is. Peace, as the great Israeli leader Yitzhak Rabin told us, is never easy. History almost always judges that it is worthwhile.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mrs. ERNST). The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

Mr. VITTER. Madam President, I rise to urge all of our colleagues, Republicans and Democrats, to strongly oppose the proposed nuclear deal with Iran and to effectively block it for the sake of the country and our national security by supporting the motion of disapproval on the Senate floor.

I have served in the Senate and the House for about 15 years. It has been an enormous honor and a serious responsibility. I have taken it very seriously. When I think through all of that service, all of the votes we have cast, all of the debates we have had, I cannot think of any more serious than the issue we are debating and voting on here, the Iran nuclear deal. Maybe there are a few that rank in a similar way—after 9/11, starting that effort to

root out terrorists and to oppose those who inflicted massive death in our country—but there is none that is more important and more significant because this deal, this issue goes to the fundamental security of America, our future. Are we going to be free from the threat of attack with nuclear weapons by a wildly radical and unstable regime? It does not get more basic, more serious than that.

The first point I want to make is that this is a dead-serious issue because the consequences do involve life or death, massive numbers of lives or deaths. So if there is any debate, any vote that should be completely devoid of partisan political considerations, it is this one. I urge all of our colleagues on both sides of the aisle to leave the partisanship at the door. This is way more important than that. I would hope that would be obvious.

With that in mind, it is troubling that President Obama has tried to make this a partisan debate. He has actively, obviously sought to inflict partisanship into it, I think simply because that is the way he thinks he can hold enough Democratic votes on his side. I think that is really a shame. I hope everyone proves him wrong in terms of the nature of the debate and vote we have in this important body.

When you look at the agreement, at the specifics of the agreement—I will not go into all of the weeds and all of the issues. I could spend days alone on that. But I do want to focus on two key considerations that are absolutely top in my mind.

The first is the very premise and outcome of the agreement because we have gone from a negotiation that was supposed to be about preventing Iran from ever developing nuclear weapons to a discussion of when they are going to do it. We have gone from if to when. This agreement ensures that they will have the ability to get there even if they live under the full terms of the agreement, and obviously there is a concern, which I will get to in my second point, that they won't. This puts our nuclear nonproliferation policy, including the nonproliferation treaty, which has been the cornerstone of our policy regarding the proliferation of nuclear weapons and particularly in the Middle East for 45 years—this throws it out the window. This puts it on its head.

With this agreement, the United States has agreed that at the end of a timeline, Iran has full authority to enrich uranium, will be completely within its rights to do so with no fear of economic or political repercussions by the major powers, full authority for them to go against 45 years of standing nonproliferation policy. So what started as strong action, including meaningful sanctions that were having an impact to make sure Iran never got nuclear weapons, now concedes that they will get there; it is simply a debate about when. That is at the core of this agreement. That is at the core of the reason we all must say no and pass the motion of disapproval.

If there is any region of the world where we need to maintain this tough nonproliferation policy, it is the Middle East. This agreement obliterates that. Iran won't be the only new nuclear power over time. There will be a race among Middle Eastern countries to develop nuclear weapons because Iran is going to get one. That is inevitable, in my mind.

The second major point I want to make—the second major issue is verification, our ability under the agreement to see that Iran lives by it. First, as I said, even under the agreement, we are conceding their ability to develop nuclear weapons. That is absolutely wrong. But then within the agreement, we also have nothing near the tools and the assurances we need with regard to verification every step of the way.

Iran has proved over and over that they will violate these sorts of agreements, that they will lie. International agencies have caught them in those lies, including the IAEA. That agency and others have noted the difficulty of verification in dealing with Iran. Then we get to this agreement, which makes that difficulty move from significant to monumental.

There are lots of details we could look at, but the single most telling is the detail that is in a side agreement between Iran and the IAEA that we are not allowed to read. We are having this debate. We have to vote on this motion of disapproval. Yet we are not allowed to read this critical side agreement which goes to the heart of the ability of the world to verify compliance.

I brought up this fairly basic issue a few weeks ago when Wendy Sherman, Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs, testified before our committee on banking and urban affairs. I asked her point-blank: This side agreement between the IAEA and Iran, have you read it?

She answered: Yes.

I will be honest with you, I am not certain if that is true, but she answered yes.

Then I asked her: Am I, as a representative of the people of Louisiana, allowed to read that agreement?

She answered through nonresponses: No.

I asked her: Do you have to vote on this agreement in your responsibility?

No.

But I do; correct, Ms. Sherman?

Yes.

But I don't get to read this critical side agreement with regard to verification that goes to the heart of our ability to make sure Iran is even following these rules, as lax as they are?

Again, through her nonanswer, the answer was clear: No, I don't get to read it. The Presiding Officer does not get to read it. Nobody in the Senate who is voting on this gets to read it. Nobody in the House of Representatives who is voting on this gets to read it. Forget about any slight on the Presiding Officer and me and others personally. It is not about that. We are here to represent the people. I am here to represent the people of Louisiana. I cannot read what we are voting on? That is absolutely ridiculous.

Then, to add insult to injury, come press reports about what we are not allowed to read. Of course, the most significant were the press reports from several weeks ago from the AP saying that this side agreement had an extremely unusual provision with regard to inspections at at least one of Iran's most sensitive military facilities—the biggest concern we have probably in all of Iran. In at least that most sensitive military facility and perhaps others, Iran gets to collect the samples. Iran gets to choose and control those who do. The IAEA, the international community, and America do not and are not allowed on site. That just does not pass, I would say, the laugh test. But it is a very serious matter. That is like someone like Alex Rodriguez collecting his own urine and mailing it in. That does not work at a basic level. Yet that, according to very credible reports, is in this side agreement that, oh, by the way, we are not allowed to read.

For all of these reasons, for our security, for our kids' future, for freedom around the world, for Israel's security, for nonproliferation in the Middle East so that we do not have an explosive Middle Eastern nuclear arms race, we must pass this motion of disapproval.

Again, this goes way beyond politics. This is about our physical security, our kids' and grandkids' future. We must all come together, look at the substance of this, and do the right thing. That certainly involves invoking cloture on this motion so we go to a final vote. I believe that clearly involves passing this motion of disapproval. I urge all of our colleagues to do exactly that.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

Mrs. SHAHEEN. Madam President, as do virtually all of the Members of this body, I believe we must prevent Iran from developing a nuclear weapon. Because of that, I support the international agreement that the Senate is debating this week because I am convinced it is the best way to achieve that objective.

We can stop Iran's nuclear weapons program in one of two ways, either diplomatically or militarily. Powerful international sanctions, which I have strongly supported, have brought Iran to the negotiating table. And on July 14, the United States, the United Kingdom, France, Russia, China, and the European Union—the so-called P5+1

powers—concluded an agreement with Iran that, if it is implemented as it was agreed to, promises a peaceful, diplomatic solution. Thanks to the Iran Nuclear Agreement Review Act, Congress has had ample time to review the agreement.

I have spent hours and hours studying the text of the agreement and scrutinizing our intelligence agencies' classified assessment of their ability to verify Iran's compliance.

As a member of both the Senate Foreign Relations Committee and the Senate Armed Services Committee, I attended more than a dozen hearings and briefings with administration officials and outside experts—both for and against the agreement. In the end, I have concluded that this agreement effectively blocks Iran's pathways to develop a nuclear weapon for well over a decade.

Right now, what we heard from testimony from both those people who support and oppose the agreement is that Iran can acquire enough fissile nuclear material to make a bomb in less than 3 months. The agreement extends this breakout time to at least 1 year by slashing Iran's stockpile of enriched uranium by 98 percent and banning enrichment above 3.67 percent, which is far below weapons grade, for 15 years.

The agreement also reduces Iran's number of centrifuges by more than two-thirds for a decade, and it maintains inspectors' access to Iran's uranium mines and mills—so the whole life cycle of uranium—for a quarter of a century. These are just some of the many restrictions the agreement imposes on Iran.

In addition, Iran is bound by the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty and other agreements to a permanent commitment not to pursue nuclear weapons and, as part of that agreement, to permit access by inspectors to any suspected sites. Of critical importance, the Iran agreement is not based on trust—none of us trust Iran—but it is based on an inspections regime that is more rigorous and more intrusive than any previous negotiated agreement. Nuclear experts are confident that we will be able to detect violations by Iran. Thanks to language in the agreement that allows the United States to respond unilaterally to a violation by reimposing U.S. and U.N. sanctions, Iran knows that it faces crippling consequences if it violates the agreement.

If Congress rejects the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action, the Iran agreement, all of these advantages go away. The risk of an Iranian nuclear breakout and a regional nuclear arms race will increase dramatically. We will be left with no credible, nonmilitary option for stopping Iran's nuclear program.

Now, I certainly respect the views of my colleagues who oppose this agreement, and I have listened carefully to their arguments. Some of them assert that Iran will find a way to cheat and, therefore, no diplomatic resolution is possible. However, most opponents are careful to avoid talk of military conflict and argue that we can reject this deal, that we can rally the world to impose harsher sanctions, and that Iran will eventually capitulate.

But sadly, that premise is at odds with the facts as they currently exist. Our negotiating partners in this deal—Britain, France, Russia, China, and the European Union—have concluded that this is a fair agreement. In a briefing for Senators last month, the Ambassadors from these nations told us in no uncertain terms that there will be no going back to the bargaining table if Congress rejects this agreement. If the deal is rejected, the most likely outcome is that the international sanctions regime against Iran would unravel. The United States would be isolated, and we would lose credibility as a reliable negotiating partner. So, yes, we would retain the ability to act unilaterally, but unilateral sanctions have their limits, as we have heard in this body. Our military commanders counsel us that even a robust military option would delay, but it would not prevent, Iran from obtaining a nuclear weapon because they already have the nuclear know-how.

This agreement is not about becoming friends with Iran or turning a blind eye to its efforts to destabilize the Middle East. In fact, we must redouble our efforts to help our allies counter Iran's malign influence in the region.

In particular, our commitment to the defense of Israel should remain unshakeable. In addition, we must maintain vigorous sanctions against Iran for its support for terrorism and for its violations of human rights.

Now, while there are risks to whatever course we take with respect to Iran, I believe that the choice is clear. Either we recognize that this agreement is the best available option or we chase some fantasy agreement on our own as international sanctions collapse and Iran's nuclear program continues unchecked and our options for stopping it are narrowed.

I am convinced that the agreement negotiated by the United States and our allies is the least risky approach, and it is the approach that is most likely to succeed. As I said last month in New Hampshire, I intend to vote to support this deal.

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. KIRK. Madam President, I ask unanimous that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

The Senator from Illinois.

Mr. KIRK. Madam President, as I rise, many who fear the pending Iran vote feel that it could deliver a mortal blow to the Senate's historic support for the safety of the families of Israel. Have no fear. No matter what, we will always have a capable majority of Americans who support the free and democratic tolerant society of Israel. No matter what the Iranians do, America's commitment will remain to that shining city on Jerusalem's hills, to a nation that has proved that democracy and tolerance can thrive in a place even as hostile as the Middle East and will remain strong.

I represent many people who have survived the Holocaust. Their spirit is within the State of Illinois. They prevailed over the worst evil that has ever disgraced our time. That spirit unites the free and tolerant people of the United States and Israel that we will prevail no matter what.

I yield the floor.

RECESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate stands in recess until 2:15 p.m.

Thereupon, the Senate, at 12:28 p.m., recessed until 2:15 p.m. and reassembled when called to order by the President pro tempore (Mr. HATCH).

HIRE MORE HEROES ACT OF 2015—Continued

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Georgia.

Mr. ISAKSON. Mr. President, in anticipation of the majority leader and minority leader coming to the floor in a moment, I will begin the debate, a debate on the most consequential vote I will ever take as an elected official. Certainly, in my 41 years of public service, I have never had a decision to make as serious, as complex, and as meaningful as the decision we will make on the Iran nuclear deal negotiated by the administration and the President.

I rise in opposition to that agreement and to explain why I will vote against it, but before I do, I want to compliment three or four members in particular on the Foreign Relations Committee: former Chairman MENENDEZ from New Jersey, Ranking Member CARDIN from Maryland, and Chairman CORKER from Tennessee. Throughout the entire debate on the Iran nuclear deal, they have been forthright in being sure everybody got every question they wanted answered, that every issue was exposed, and that everybody had the time to participate to the fullest degree possible. Great leadership on the part of Senator CORKER, great leadership on the part of Senator CARDIN, and great assistance on the part of Senator MENENDEZ.

In the end, in committee, I voted for the resolution of disapproval to vote against the nuclear arrangement with the Iranians, and I want to talk about why. First of all, the President said a vote against the deal is a vote for war. I argue with that conclusion. In fact, I think a vote against the deal is a vote of strength. A vote for the deal is an

appeasement to the Iranian people, to the Iranian ayatollahs, and to a group of people who have not been trustworthy in negotiations with our country for the past 60 years.

Second, I think it is a vote against strength and for appeasement, when in fact there has never been a time more important to the United States of America to be stronger than today.

Think about this. The bodies of young Syrian children are washing up on the shore of the Mediterranean. The Russians have established a beachhead in the Crimea, the Ukraine, and now in the Arctic. Last week, our President went to Alaska and the Chinese sent five ships off the coast just to wave the Chinese flag in the face of our President.

Our diplomacy around the world is faltering and failing because we are not resolved. We are not as strong as we used to be. Diplomatically we are not respected and militarily we are not feared. It is time we made sure the vote we cast on this Iranian nuclear deal is not a vote that sends another signal of weakness but instead a signal of strength.

Why am I voting against the Iranian nuclear deal? There are five principal reasons. No. 1 is the basis upon which I voted for the New START treaty 5 years ago. When I voted for that treaty, I was on the Foreign Relations Committee as well, and the questions I asked at that time are the same questions I am asking now about what is not a treaty—what I think is a treaty but what the President calls an agreement: No. 1, is it enforceable; No. 2, do we have inspections; No. 3, do we have credibility; No. 4, have I seen all the documents; and, No. 5, is it best for my children and grandchildren and the future of my country?

First, I haven't seen all the documents, and we now find out we will never see all of them because the addendums to the IAEA will not be available to us as Members of the Senate. That is No. 1. No. 2, can we have inspections? Well, yes, you can have inspections, kind of or sort of. Yes, you get 24 hours' notice and then 24 days to approve and then the Iranians have a say over who gets to inspect and we don't have a part. That is not a fair deal.

When I voted for the New START treaty, the principal reason I finally did was this: Russians were allowed in the United States to inspect our nuclear warheads; we were allowed in Russia to inspect theirs. We had absolute credibility in the inspection regime. We knew what we were getting, and it was an enforceable treaty. This is not that. This is one that can be cheated on too easily and far too easily for the American people and the security of my children and grandchildren.

And what about my children and grandchildren—why are they of interest to me in this vote? They are because they are our future. The future of all mankind is the young people today who will run these countries in the years ahead, unless there is a rogue nation with nuclear weapons that could disrupt the world's balance of power, and that is just what the Iranians are capable of doing. So I want to make sure I don't do anything that would facilitate the Iranian use of nuclear weapons in the future. I don't think this deal protects us from that, and that is why I am going to vote against it.

Lastly, I want to comment about the issue of a cloture vote. I understand there will be a vote to filibuster the final vote on the resolution of disapproval rather than having a resolution of disapproval. I think that is wrong. I think the American people deserve to know where each of us stand, and the people of Georgia deserve to know where JOHNNY ISAKSON stands—what I am going to do and why I am going to do it.

A vote against cloture is to protract having a final vote on the resolution of disapproval and leaves open the whole issue. It is not fair to the American people, it is not right for the American people, and it is avoiding our responsibility. So I will vote for cloture so we can go to a final vote on the resolution of disapproval, and I hope every Member of the Senate will do the same. To do anything less is wrong for America, wrong for our heritage, and wrong for our future.

So I end where I began. I thank Senator CORKER, Senator MENENDEZ, and Senator CARDIN for their forthright leadership. I have studied hard, I have worked hard to try to find the best parts of this deal and the worst parts of this deal. I find it fails in those five tests I have given it and I will vote no. I will vote for the resolution of disapproval and vote against the treaty with Iran on the Iran nuclear deal.

With that said, Mr. President, I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. 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 PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Colleagues, before the Senate is a resolution that would disapprove of the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action agreed to by the United States, China, France, Germany, the Russian Federation, the United Kingdom, the European Union, and the Islamic Republic of Iran.

I have long said the Senate should assess this deal by employing a simple standard: Will it further or will it harm the national security interests of the United States and her allies? By that measure, I believe Senators must vote to disapprove of the deal.

I truly wish that wasn't the case, but it is a predictable outcome when one considers the mindset with which the administration appeared to approach these negotiations. The President's overall foreign policy has long been guided by policies and desires to withdraw forward-deployed conventional military power from operational theaters, to reduce America's commitments and capabilities, and to rely upon international organizations to uphold international order.

That is the type of mindset that guided the administration's negotiators on this deal, and it has resulted in a flawed deal that a majority of Congress and a broad swath of the American people now seem poised to reject—and that is a bipartisan majority.

The American people were led to believe that negotiations with Iran would be about ending its nuclear program, but that is not what the deal before us would do. Instead, the President's deal would bestow international recognition upon Iran's nuclear program by the most powerful nations on Earth. There is no question that Iran's nuclear program is designed to develop a nuclear weapon—no question. This is not about peaceful nuclear energy.

Yet the President's deal would leave Iran as a nuclear threshold state forever on the edge of developing a nuclear weapon. It would allow Iran to maintain thousands of centrifuges—1,044 IR–1 centrifuges in Fordow and 5,060 centrifuges at Natanz—as well as advanced research and development programs.

The President's deal with Iran will also give the regime access to literally billions of dollars. The President himself has acknowledged that at least some of that cash windfall is likely to be used to support terrorism.

It is already clear that Iran is meddling in Bahrain, in Yemen, in Lebanon, and in Afghanistan, and the President's deal will only strengthen terrorist proxies such as Hezbollah, the Houthi insurgents in Yemen, and the Assad regime in Syria.

Iran is working to prop up and protect Assad's regime in Damascus, and it is working with Shia militias in Iraq to expand its influence even further—just as Iran once supplied Iraq's Shia militias with the weapons to maim and kill our soldiers and marines.

Iran has a long history of employing terrorism as a tool for defending the regime—not just against its neighbors, not just against Israel, but also against America.

On September 20, 1984, with support and direction from Iran, the Shia militants of Hezbollah carried out a suicide car bombing against the American embassy in Beirut, 31 years ago. Two dozen people died that day; among them, Chief Warrant Officer Kenneth Welch of the U.S. Army. His son, Brian, has lived with that loss ever since. I want all of our colleagues to know he is sitting with us in this Gallery this afternoon. He is right here with us listening to this debate.

So I ask my colleagues: How could we support a deal that would not only

strengthen terrorist groups like Hezbollah, but also would effectively subsidize the activities of the Revolutionary Guard Corps, a group that has been accused of helping Shiite militias attack and kill Americans in Iraq?

The $100 billion Iran is expected to reap from this deal is also certain to be invested in Iran's war economy for defense of the regime and will undoubtedly strengthen the hand of the Revolutionary Guards.

The Council on Foreign Relations has referred to the group as the regime's ''money machine'' because of its varied business interests with Iran. As the Council noted in a 2013 backgrounder, the Guards were estimated to have ties to more than 100 companies controlling about $12 billion in construction and engineering capital, and one of its fellows, Ray Takeyh, has linked the group to ''university laboratories, weapons manufacturers, and companies connected to nuclear technology.''

Now, the administration has attempted to make light of the benefits to Iran's economy, military, and terrorist arms from the lifting of sanctions. Secretary Kerry observed that $100 billion is ''nothing''—nothing—''compared to what gets spent'' in the region.

''Iran's military budget is $15 billion,'' he said, while ''the Gulf states' military budget is $130 billion.''

But what is lost on Secretary Kerry is the fact that Iran and its proxies have pursued asymmetric capabilities against the United States, not to mention Israel and our moderate Sunni allies.

Iran has carefully studied the tactics and capabilities brought to bear by our forces in Desert Storm, Operation Enduring Freedom, Operation Iraqi Freedom, and other campaigns. And because it has, the regime has decided to invest in anti-access and area-denial capabilities, cyber warfare capabilities, espionage, and other means to avoid fighting directly against our strengths.

The Jewish Institute for National Security Affairs, in an assessment of the nuclear deal with Iran, expanded on that point. Here is what they had to say:

> Iran has acquired and developed various capabilities to execute this asymmetric strategy, including anti access/area denial . . . it possesses the region's largest arsenal of short and medium ballistic missiles, as well as a growing arsenal of cruise missiles and unmanned aerial vehicles, to target military and energy installations throughout the Gulf, including U.S. ships. It also has a sizeable fleet of fast attack craft, submarines and large numbers of torpedoes and naval mines for choking off Hormuz and attacking aforementioned targets. The S–300 air defense systems could stymie U.S. air operations around the Gulf, in addition to complicating any strike on Iran's nuclear facilities.

That is from the Jewish Institute of National Security Affairs.

Now, there is another worrying aspect of the cash windfall from this deal as well. It will also serve to advance Tehran's efforts to divide the United States from the very allies who helped us bring Iran to the table in the first place. As Iranian trade expands with the other P5+1 countries, they will grow even more reluctant to hold Iran accountable for the inevitable violations of the deal.

We need not have ended up here. We didn't have to be in this place. The President had the opportunity to declare a firm policy to end Iran's nuclear program and to enact additional sanctions while Iran's war economy was ailing. But, no, that is not what he did.

Instead, the administration attempted to rely on the ambiguity of its military policy by claiming at every stage that it sought to keep ''all options on the table.'' But that was never a policy. It was a talking point—a talking point was not going to deter Iran.

As I alluded in a speech delivered at AIPAC a few years ago, the only way the administration is going to be able to persuade Iran to cease its pursuit of a nuclear weapon and to dismantle its enrichment capability is if it was prepared to make the Supreme Leader of Iran believe—believe—that the survival of his regime was actually at stake.

In other words, the only way the Iranian regime could have been expected to negotiate to preserve its own survival—rather than simply delay as a means to pursue nuclear weapons—is if the administration had imposed the strictest sanctions while concurrently enforcing a firm declaratory policy that reflected a commitment to a potential use of force, if that became necessary. But, no. The administration chose to pursue negotiations and sanctions consecutively rather than simultaneously, as it also failed to articulate a clear consequence for the crossing of red lines.

Thus, while the President had an opportunity to exercise political leadership and work with the Congress to craft a stronger policy toward Iran that would have better served our national security, he chose the path of concessions instead. Indeed, the administration allowed for a series of concessions throughout these lengthy negotiations.

Rather than anytime, anywhere inspections, the deal creates a process within which Iran can delay inspections for at least up to 24 days.

Rather than dismantle Iran's enrichment capability, some centrifuges will be put in storage, enrichment will continue, and research and development will go on—all legitimatized by the President's deal. Now, at the end of the 10- and 15-year milestones, Iran's breakout time will be reduced to nearly zero.

Concessions were made on the conventional weapons ban and ballistic missile technology embargo too. Despite the fact that the International Atomic Energy Agency reported in 2011 that ''Iran has carried out activities relevant to the development of a nuclear device,'' the administration made further concessions regarding the possible military dimensions of Iran's program.

Assessing this deal strategically, it can only be understood as part of a broader strategy to concede a larger sphere of influence to the Iranian regime while weakening our commitment to our moderate Sunni allies and Israel. Now, that is just fitting within the overall administration's view of reducing America's overseas commitments, its reliance upon international organizations, and its seeming determination to withdraw our forward deployed presence. But in terms of our traditional strategy, it makes no sense at all, as Iran's capability and power will be stronger in every single regard.

Writing in the Wall Street Journal in April, two former Secretaries of State noted that Iran's representatives remain committed to a revolutionary, anti-western concept of the international order. They observed that:

> Absent any linkage between nuclear and political restraint, America's traditional allies will conclude that the U.S. has traded temporary nuclear cooperation for acquiescence to Iranian hegemony. They will increasingly look to create their own nuclear balances and, if necessary, call in other powers to sustain their integrity.
>
> Does America still hope to arrest the region's trend towards sectarian upheaval, state collapse, and the disequilibrium of power tilting toward Tehran, or do we now accept this as an irremediable aspect of the regional balance?

Regrettably, it appears that the administration has traded the appearance of nuclear cooperation for acquiescence to Iranian hegemony.

The President famously suggested that if countries like Iran were willing to unclench their fist, they would find an extended hand. From that hand the Iranians took concession after concession after concession on enrichment, on U.N. Security Council resolutions, on centrifuges, on missiles, on the conventional arms embargo, and on sanctions—concessions on every one of those issues.

Under the President's deal with Iran, nearly every aspect of Iran's national power will be strengthened: economic power, diplomatic power, espionage power, conventional warfare power, and the power Iran derives from supporting proxies like Hamas, Hezbollah, the Houthis in Yemen, and the Assad regime.

So when supporters of this flawed deal ask ''what is the alternative,'' there is a simple answer: political leadership. It is the next President and the next Congress that will have to deal with the consequences of this deal; and if we are united in ending Iran's nuclear program, we can make clear to the Iranians that their weapons program is simply unacceptable.

Remember: It was the sanctions enacted by Congress, over the objections of President Obama—many people have forgotten that he didn't want the sanctions they ended up getting—that

caused sufficient concern within the regime to compel the Supreme Leader to allow the negotiations in the first place.

That is why, throughout the previous Congress and the beginning of this Congress, I attempted to pass additional sanctions and made a commitment to a strong declaratory policy against Iran—an idea some of our colleagues may now deem necessary to pursue through legislation given the terms of the nuclear deal with Iran.

But Congress alone cannot provide Presidential leadership. It can provide for the defense capabilities required to contain and combat threats like Iran. It can reassure regional allies, like Israel, that this Executive deal is not a treaty and can be revisited. And when Iran cheats on this deal, we can resolve to use the tools available to us to stop its nuclear weapons program. In short, Congress can lay the groundwork for the next President. But Congress needs real Presidential leadership, too.

Just this morning, we saw reports that Iran's Supreme Leader had ruled out any real rapprochement with the U.S. after this nuclear deal. We saw the Supreme Leader state his desire to see Israel cease to exist in the coming years. Against that backdrop, we now have the President's deal with Iran before us.

Any objective net assessment of this deal must conclude that it will strengthen the Supreme Leader's regime. No question about it. Any objective assessment must also conclude that America and her allies will be made less safe by the President's deal with Iran. Well, certainly that is the conclusion I have reached as well. This is the conclusion many Democrats have reached. This seems to be the conclusion the American people have reached as well.

I wish this was a deal I could support, but it isn't. I urge my colleagues to join me and many others in voting for the resolution of disapproval.

In fact, we know there is a bipartisan majority of the United States Senate in opposition to this deal. We know that already. We know there is a huge majority of Americans who oppose this deal. We know that every single Democrat who has come out for the deal has immediately started making excuses about how we need to get tougher with Iran—every single one of them.

So that is what is before us, and it will be before us until next week.

With that, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Tennessee.

Mr. CORKER. Mr. President, first of all, I wish to thank our leader and I wish to thank Senator REID for allowing us to come to this vote without a motion to proceed so we can begin this debate in a sober and responsible manner.

I thank the leader. I know many Members on the other side of the aisle were concerned about maybe nefarious amendments being a part of this debate on the front end. I thank you for the way you set up this procedure so that we are focused only on the resolution of disapproval. That is something I know the other side had wanted, and I appreciate your setting it up in that manner.

I also thank Senator CARDIN. I thank him for being such a tremendous partner on the committee. I thank him for his diligence in making what I know was a tough decision on the substance. I truly appreciate his ability and the way he worked with us to ensure that we have this debate and this opportunity to vote.

Let me step back and refresh people's memory. I know there has been a lot of discussion, and there are some who purposefully try to confuse what is happening here. But the fact is that the President decided long ago that he was not going to pursue a treaty. He instead was going to pursue what is called a nonbinding political commitment, and he was going to go directly to the U.N. Security Council for approval. As a matter of fact, he has already done that.

In the course of discussions, we realized, just as the leader mentioned, it was actually we who brought Iran to the table. We had four tranches of severe sanctions that, as was mentioned, in most cases were objected to by the administration, but it was those sanctions and then the international community agreeing with those sanctions that brought Iran to the table in the first place. We had discussions. We realized that we understand the President planned to do this with an Executive agreement.

By the way, I think everyone understands that when the President does that, it is only binding on his administration, it is not binding on future administrations, whereas a treaty, which goes through a whole different process, is binding on future Presidents.

Because we had played such a role, we ended up with the Iran Nuclear Agreement Review Act, and this agreement has now put us in place to debate this issue and to decide as a body whether we want to approve it or disapprove it. I thank Senator CARDIN for his efforts in making that happen.

I thank all the Senators in this body—98 of them; 1 was missing that day—who voted to put us in this place. As a matter of fact, I think all of us know that if it weren't for that, we would be having no discussion. This would have already been implemented. The President already went to the U.N. Security Council, and it is this pause that has allowed us to weigh in this way on behalf of the American people and to express whether we approve or disapprove of this agreement.

Let me say this: When the President began back in 2012 and he said that he was going to negotiate with the P5+1 on this Iranian nuclear deal to end their nuclear program, I thought, that is outstanding. As a matter of fact, if the President can do that and if he had done that, I am sure we would have had 100 votes in favor of that. As a matter of fact, in other instances, he mentioned that he wanted to dismantle their nuclear program. Again, as the leader has mentioned, had he achieved that, none of us would be debating this issue. We would be thrilled with that outcome. But it was very evident that was not the course of action which was being pursued when we had the first agreement, the JOPA.

We had another round. We had additional concessions. Finally, we got to the point where we all realized that what was happening—instead of a dismantling or instead of ending Iran's nuclear program, what this agreement does, if we were to approve it, it agrees to the industrialization of their nuclear program. We have a state sponsor of terror, and this agreement is approving the industrialization of their program.

I think everyone knows that one of the great fallacies in this deal is that not only, with our approval, are they industrializing their program, but in 9 months all of the leverage shifts. Their country has a $409 billion economy. In the next 9 months, this country is going to get about $100 billion. That has not been disputed. Think about it—25 percent of their economy is going to be given to them in 1 year. Think about an $18 trillion country such as ours. If we were to get $4 to $5 trillion, think what we would be able to do with those resources. Over that 9-month period, regardless of what they do with PMD, regardless of what they do with other issues, the rest of the big economic sanctions are going to be relieved. Their economy is going to be growing. They are going to be cash-rich. They are going to be a much stronger country.

I think it is probably important to talk about whom we are dealing with. I know Senator COTTON has alluded to this before, as have many others, but when we went to Baghdad through the years, most of us sat down with General Odierno. On his coffee table, he would have in front of him all of the devices Iran was using to kill and maim our soldiers. I think you will remember that there was actually a rush at one time to rush out humvees to try to protect our soldiers from having their limbs and body parts dismembered. Once we did that, the Iranians developed another device. It was made of copper. When it exploded, it would go through any type of metal. It was used to kill Americans. It was used to dismember them. As a matter of fact, when you see people in Tennessee, Wyoming, Kansas, or in other places walking up and down the street with prosthetics, that was Iran. Iran was responsible for the dismembering of so many Americans.

They are the same people, by the way, who are supporting Assad right now. An amazing thing—the IRGC, which is the arm that directly reports to the Supreme Leader, is the shock

force in Syria right now that is keeping Assad afloat.

The ranking member and I recently went to see a display by the Holocaust Museum. A gentleman named Caesar had documented what Assad, with Iran's support, is doing to everyday Syrians in the country. As we sit here, what they are doing is torturing people. As a matter of fact, I wish you could see the pictures. They are actually amputating people's genitals. As we are sitting here in this comfortable setting, Iran is supporting Assad's ability to do that to his own people. We see on the TV screens what is happening. People are flooding out from Syria and flooding out from Iraq to get away from what is happening right now in the Middle East.

We know that Hezbollah—another arm of Iran—through one of its proxies right now, is destabilizing Lebanon.

We know that Hamas is being supplied rockets—sophisticated rockets, I might add—from Iran to shoot into Israel.

We know that in Bahrain, where we have thousands of troops to keep the Strait of Hormuz open, they are supplying terrorist organizations there to disrupt that government and cause harm to the people who are serving us.

So this is whom we are dealing with—the greatest state sponsor of terror that we know. We only named three, by the way. We named Syria, we named Sudan, and we named Iran.

Obviously, when we worked through the first agreements and in the interim agreement where we agreed to enrich, that was quite a shock to most of us. Then they went through the first big round to reach this comprehensive agreement, and that agreement addressed a number of the issues the leader just laid out. But prior to going to Geneva, there were still, in this final round, some issues that needed to be addressed.

I had one of those few calls with Secretary Kerry where I felt as though he was listening. I talked to him at length. I told him: Secretary Kerry, a lot of people are going to have difficulty ever approving a deal that allows Iran to industrialize their program like this.

But how you finish these last pieces is going to say a lot qualitatively about how we really plan to implement this deal. At that time, of course, we still had the issues of previous military dimensions. Some people call it possible military dimensions. But we know they were developing a nuclear weapon. You certainly heard the presentation regarding how we are dealing with Parchin. It is really pretty amazing, after the AP report came out, how this has actually survived late-night comedy. We know that if the IAEA gives a report on Iran's previous military dimensions—I think you know Iran is supposed to be supplying the IAEA information and access to scientists regarding what they were doing. But regardless of what the quality of this is—if it is a D-minus report or an A-plus report—the fact is that they still get the sanctions relief they are seeking over the next 9 months.

In addition to that, the inspections process—we have all had concerns about the fact that we have to wait 24 days. By the way, there is a lot of misunderstanding about the 24 days. That is after the IAEA raises a concern. That is after Iran responds to that. Some people have written that it could take as many as 40 to 45 days for this to occur. But then there is a 24-day period.

Our leader referred to the IR–1. Iran has done a masterful job because they have gotten the P5+1 to focus on their IR–1 centrifuges. They have 19,000 of them. They are antiques. Truly, they are antiques. What they have going on right now is the development of IR–2s, IR–4s, IR–6s, IR–8s.

I would ask you to go down to the SCIF and let some of our intelligence people tell you the speed—the difference between the IR–8 and IR–1.

Let me say to you without giving any classified information that in a room the size of where I am standing to this back wall and actually much closer this way, in a small room like that, Iran can actually do the equivalent of 720 IR–1s. With a 24-day inspection process, our ability to detect in very small areas of Iran—a very large country—this type of thing is going to be very difficult.

So I talked to Secretary Kerry about those two things, and I am sorry, I feel as if we totally punted on those issues, and then for good measure, as has been mentioned many times, we threw in the lifting of the conventional arms embargo. I mean, where did that come from? What did that have to do with the nuclear power? We threw in the lifting of ballistic testing in 8 years. Again, what was that about? Then, with some really special and peculiar language meant, I think, to confuse, we lifted immediately their ability to test ballistic weapons.

So let me say again that all of this we know is being done with a country that has no practical need for enrichment. They have one nuclear reactor—one. They can buy enriched uranium so much cheaper on the market. They have absolutely no need for 19,000 centrifuges. They have no need for an underground facility to protect from bombing. They have no need for the facility at Arak that produces plutonium.

Many people have said that Iran wants to have the ability to deal with medical isotopes. They want to show to the rest of the Middle East that they are sophisticated. Do you know how many centrifuges they would need to do that? Five hundred.

So what has all this been about? They have put their people through such grief, such economic depravity. They have been isolated from the world. They are a rogue community. And they have done all that to create a program that has, as we know, only one need, and that is so they can develop a nuclear weapon.

I am very disappointed with where we have come up, and I am disappointed to add this as another problem. We are doing all this without a strategy in the Middle East. I wrote an op-ed in the Washington Post—not that anybody reads them—to talk about my disapproval of this deal. When you think about it, one of the great tragedies—again, we are seeing it play out on television. JOHN MCCAIN has been so good at talking about this issue. But what we are seeing play out right now is no strategy in the Middle East. It is the greatest humanitarian disaster of my lifetime.

So what is going to happen without any strategy to push back against Iran, to push back against what they are doing in Syria, what they have been doing in Lebanon, what they are doing in Yemen, what they are doing in Bahrain, what they are doing certainly against Israel—Hamas—without a strategy, this is going to be the de facto strategy.

I will remind everyone again that in 9 months all the leverage goes away. Right now we have leverage over them. In 9 months, they have all their money and the sanctions have been relieved. Many of you have read statements that have been issued by the Supreme Leader and others that if we try to put sanctions on them for their terrorist activities, violations of human rights or other activities, you know what they are going to say. They are going to say: Hey, I am sorry. You are violating the agreement.

Remember, this President has tried to obligate not just us from putting additional sanctions in place, but he has tried to keep State and local governments from putting sanctions in place. He is actually acting as a buffer against those people who in good conscience would want to push back against the terrible human rights activities that are taking place and the terrorism that is being exported.

Again, this is going to be our strategy. Think about it. In a year, before the next President takes office, let's say we want to put sanctions in place to push back because Iran is supplying additional arms to Assad, as it appears Russia is doing right now, what is Iran going to say? Well, we are just going to begin development of our nuclear program.

What if we say that we know they are in violation of the nuclear program, and therefore we are going to put sanctions in place, what are they going to say? Well, we are just going to resume the nuclear program.

So in 9 months, literally, the leverage shifts from us to them. We are going to be very reticent to challenge them on any violations of this agreement. Candidly, we are going to be reticent to push back against the things they are doing to destabilize the region.

I will close with this. I appreciate the leader setting up this debate. I appreciate Senator REID allowing us to do this. I appreciate that 98 Senators have said: Look, this is probably the biggest foreign policy issue we are going to deal with during our time here in the U.S. Senate. I hope what is going to happen over the course of the next several days is that we will continue to express our approval by some, our disapproval by others—a bipartisan majority—and the reasons as to why some approve this.

At the end of the day what I hope will happen is that—since all 98 Senators in this body said they wanted to debate this and wanted the opportunity to vote up or down on the substance of this deal—we will have enough colleagues in this Chamber who will agree that because it is the biggest foreign policy issue of our day and because 98 Senators stood up and said: No, Mr. President, you cannot implement this deal until we express whether we approve or disapprove this deal, we will have far more than 60 Senators who will agree to allow us to get to a final vote so everybody in this Senate can be accountable.

This is an important issue. I thank my colleagues for the time to be able to discuss it in this way.

With that, I will yield the floor. I thought Senator CARDIN was next, but it looks as if it will be Senator DURBIN.

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. The majority whip.

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senator from Arizona, the chairman of the Armed Services Committee, be recognized and that I be recognized following his remarks.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, reserving the right to object.

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Illinois.

Mr. DURBIN. Will the Senator from Utah, the President pro tempore, advise the Senate if we are operating under a unanimous consent agreement as to time allocations?

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. At this time, the time is equally divided.

Mr. DURBIN. Between which hours?

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. The time until 5 p.m. today is equally divided.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, will the President pro tempore be kind enough to tell me how much time has been used by the Republican side since 2:15 p.m.

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. Approximately 45 minutes.

Mr. DURBIN. I do not object.

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. CORKER. Mr. President, I am really glad that the distinguished leader of the Armed Services Committee is going to speak next. The Senator from Arizona probably has more knowledge of the Middle East than almost anybody in this body, but it was my understanding that we were going to rotate back and forth.

We actually have people who have asked to speak. Senator REID had asked to speak, but he decided not to do so. Senator CARDIN was going to speak. We were going to rotate between Republicans and Democrats.

Senators had signed up for time to speak, and that was the procedure we were going to follow. It wasn't going to be just Republicans on the floor and then Democrats, but it appears the majority whip wishes to alter that status.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, we have Senators on the Democratic side prepared to speak when the Republicans are ready to yield.

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Arizona.

Mr. MCCAIN. Mr. President, I say to the Senator from Illinois that I will be more than happy to yield to any speaker on the other side. I was under the impression that we were going to be going back and forth, and I think that would contribute to the debate. If the Senator from Illinois or the Senator from Hawaii or anyone else wishes to speak, I will be glad to yield.

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Texas.

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the time be equally divided between both sides of the aisle and that following the recognition of a speaker on our side, an opportunity be given to a speaker on the Democratic side and that we alternate back and forth using the time that is allotted for the debate.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, reserving the right to object. The Republican side has already used 45 minutes, so I hope the Senator from Texas is saying that between 2:15 p.m. and 5 p.m. the time will be equally divided, and we will rotate from one side to the other.

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I ask consent to amend the request.

Mr. MCCAIN addressed the Chair.

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Texas has the floor.

Mr. CORNYN. I yield the floor.

Mr. MCCAIN. Mr. President, am I recognized?

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Arizona.

Mr. MCCAIN. Mr. President, again, I say to the Senator from Illinois that the usual way I have seen around here for many years is one side will speak, and then the other side will make their argument. If the Senator from Illinois wants to stack up all of his time on that side so there is no back and forth, I don't think that is the intent of what we are trying to achieve here.

Mr. DURBIN. I say to my friend from Arizona, I have told you, we have Democratic Senators prepared to speak. So when my friends are ready to give up the floor, we will be glad to recognize our Democratic Senators.

Mr. MCCAIN. We have been in since 2:15 p.m.

Mr. DURBIN. We have been waiting patiently.

Mr. MCCAIN. I know their schedules are very crowded, but I would hope that maybe one of them could wander over and speak. This is a fairly important issue.

Mr. DURBIN. I say to my friend from Arizona, we have a Democratic Senator prepared to speak at this moment.

Is the Senator prepared to yield?

Mr. MCCAIN. Prepared to speak at this moment?

I yield to whichever Senator on the other side wishes to speak.

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Hawaii.

Mr. SCHATZ. Thank you, Mr. President.

A President of the United States once said of his Nation's enemy that we cannot ''wish away the differences between our two societies and our philosophies, but we should always remember that we do have common interests and the foremost among them is to avoid war.'' In pursuing that cause, he said:

> We will be prepared to protect our interests and those of our friends and allies, but we want more than deterrents. We seek genuine cooperation. We seek progress for peace.

It was President Reagan who seized the opportunity during the Cold War and President George H. W. Bush who carried it forward. Together they achieved commitments from the United States and the Soviet Union, enemies through and through, to reduce their stockpiles of nuclear weapons, bringing us ever closer to a world free of the threat of nuclear annihilation. It ingrained in us a tradition of pragmatism—the idea that even with countries we deeply distrust and whose behavior we abhor, we cannot ignore the opportunity to prevent the proliferation of nuclear weapons.

The Joint Comprehension Plan of Action that the United States negotiated with Iran and the other members of the P5+1 preserves that tradition, to ''seek progress for peace.''

This deal is not perfect, as the chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee so ably explained. We had to make concessions, and that is because it was negotiated between sovereign countries pursuing diplomacy and not unconditional surrender.

I hear complaints about one provision or another, and some of those criticisms are valid, but we don't have the luxury of sending our negotiators back to Vienna. If we do that, things will fall apart. Every ambassador from the P5+1 has made clear that the multilateral sanctions that brought Iran to the table will be upended. We would be isolated diplomatically, Iran's nuclear program would be unconstrained, and Iran would get most of its money too.

Of course, we could levy harsh unilateral sanctions ourselves, and that would be emotionally satisfying to many, but they won't bite. They did not when Iran went from 300 centrifuges to more than 18,000, and they won't now.

The question in this debate is whether to approve the deal or dump it. There is no door No. 3, but we don't

need to feel resigned because, as a deal, it is quite a good one. Experts in the nonproliferation space almost unanimously affirm that it is a strong deal. It blocks each one of Iran's pathways to the bomb and places its nuclear program under strict international supervision. There is no alternative to this agreement, and certainly no military option, that eliminates 98 percent of Iran's fissile material or two-thirds of its operating centrifuges.

Now, I will grant that critics make a few very persuasive arguments that have more to with how we view Iran than how we view this deal. First they say that it places too much trust in Iran, but the opposite is true. This agreement is not based on trust or shared values, and we have no reason to assume that Iran will comply with its terms in good faith. That is why the agreement adopts a robust inspections and verification regime that will be in place for up to 25 years. We will be monitoring Iran's entire nuclear supply chain—from uranium mining, milling, and enrichment to the manufacturing and replacement of centrifuges—so we will know if Iran is diverting uranium or centrifuges to secret facilities.

If Iran does try to break out to acquire the bomb, all options remain on the table to stop it, including the use of military force. And because the agreement provides us more information about Iran's nuclear program, our military options will be more effective and have the backing of the international community because we will have exhausted diplomacy first.

The other concern, and I think this is a valid one, is that this deal should not be overstated in terms of its impact on our priorities and alliances in the region. It is important on the nuclear issue, but in October we will have many of the same challenges in the Middle East that we have in September. Iran is still the world's leading state sponsor of terror and nothing in this deal will deter us from working to contain Iran's regional aspirations, including its support of Hamas and Hezbollah. But our efforts can now occur with a nuclear-armed Iran off the table.

I wish to personally offer some words to those Americans who love Israel with a personal passion and commitment that I share. Your skepticism is well earned and based in faith and history—based in familial relationships and culture. It is core of who we are.

My colleagues rightly want to know what happens next. What is the United States prepared to do to protect loved ones in a dangerous neighborhood? Whether one supports this deal or not, we can all agree that America's commitment to Israel remains unshakeable, and we will continue, Democrats and Republicans united, to stand with Israel. Even as we work to restrict Iran's nuclear ambitions, we will continue to thwart Hamas and Hezbollah. We are committed to cooperating with Israel on intelligence and security at the highest levels ever and continuing to ensure that Israel's qualitative military edge is protected. When this debate is over, we must find new ways to enhance our joint efforts to counter threats that endanger Israel every day.

We are debating what may be the most important foreign policy choice of the decade. Our decision will have consequences for the security and the stability of the new Middle East. If Congress chooses to oppose this agreement, we will witness an unraveling of the international sanctions that brought Iran to the negotiating table, with Iran moving ever faster toward the bomb and our country left with few choices besides another war in the Middle East.

We have shown as a country that we have the will to protect ourselves, our allies, and our interests—using military force when truly necessary. We will continue to stand with Israel despite whatever temporary disagreements our governments may have. We do not underestimate or understate the challenges we have and the role of our military in shaping events for the better, but in this instance, with eyes wide open, we ought to pursue peace first.

Thank you, Mr. President.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Arizona.

Mr. MCCAIN. Mr. President, I wish to thank the majority leader, the Senator from Kentucky, for conducting the debate on this agreement with the seriousness and gravity it deserves. In doing so, he has acted in the best traditions of the Senate, and I thank him for it.

I wish to also thank my colleague, the Senator from Tennessee, the chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee, who I believe just gave a very eloquent presentation of the situation as we are debating today.

Today begins the culmination of a monumental debate that our Nation has conducted for the past 3 months. This debate is not about whether we support diplomatic solutions to international challenges or whether we are willing to negotiate with the Iranian regime or whether we should go to war with Iran. That is not what this debate is about, despite the President's sad, partisan attempts to make it so.

It is always preferable to solve international problems without resorting to military force, but the ultimate test of any diplomacy is not merely whether it avoids the use of force but whether it secures our national security interests. Put simply, I believe the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action fails this test and it fails by the very criteria the administration itself once laid out as a good deal.

Three years ago, President Obama said the goal of negotiations with Iran was to ''get Iran to recognize it needs to give up its nuclear program and abide by U.N. resolutions that have been in place.'' This is what the President said:

> The deal we'll accept is they end their nuclear program. It's very straightforward.

In reality, the deal doesn't require Iran to end its program; it simply suspends it for a period of years. As the President said in April, ''Iran is not going to simply dismantle its program because we demand it to do so.'' Let's contemplate that. ''Iran is not going to simply dismantle its program because we demand it to do so.''

Unfortunately, the administration's concessions didn't stop there. On November 24, 2013, Secretary Kerry said:

> There is no right to enrich. We do not recognize a right to enrich.

However, in the final deal, the administration not only conceded the right to enrich, it also allowed Iran to maintain an industrial-scale enrichment capability that will only grow in size and sophistication.

On the issue of Fordow, the once covert nuclear facility that was built deep into a mountain, President Obama said in December 2013 that Iran had no need—no need—for such a facility if all it sought was peaceful nuclear energy. Yet the final deal allows Iran to maintain nearly 1,000 centrifuges at Fordow and conduct nuclear-related testing there during the entire life of the agreement.

On the issue of Iran's breakout capacity, President Obama said in December of 2013 that in the deal he envisions, the Iranians ''as a practical matter, do not have a breakout capacity.'' Here, too, the administration reversed itself, conceding to a breakout capacity in establishing the arbitrary standard of 1 year.

Similarly, on the so-called possible military dimensions, or PMD, of Iran's past nuclear activities, Secretary Kerry said this April:

> They have to do it. It will be done. . . . It will be part of a final agreement. It has to be.

Just 2 months later—2 months later—Secretary Kerry reversed himself, saying:

> We're not fixated on Iran specifically accounting for what they did at one point in time or another. We know what they did. We have no doubt. We have absolute knowledge.

My friends, this kind of hubris is astonishing. I know of no intelligence professional who would share that level of certainty. But perhaps Secretary Kerry's reversal is because the final deal does not require Iran to resolve the PMD issue prior to receiving sanctions relief.

Furthermore, the chief of Iran's atomic energy agency has said sanctions relief will proceed regardless of the resolution of the PMD issue. That was the chief of Iran's atomic energy agency.

The mechanism to resolve longstanding international concerns about the possible military dimensions of Iran's nuclear program is contained in a side agreement between Iran and the

IAEA which neither the administration nor the Congress has seen. Get this: There is an agreement on inspection and verification that this Congress, before we vote, will never have seen and the American people will never have seen. How in the world, on the most important aspect of any agreement—verification—the provisions for which are not known to the Members of this body. That alone is a reason to demand—to demand—what are those side agreements? Maybe they are nothing. Maybe they are something we would approve of. We don't even know what in the world they are.

The administration provided a classified briefing on what they know to be in the side agreement, and suffice it to say that I think most of us—even on both sides of the aisle—would agree that briefing is one of the more bizarre and disturbing aspects of this deal. They called it unconventional. That is generous.

What is more, inspections of Iran's facilities will be conducted by the IAEA, the International Atomic Energy Agency. There will be no Americans allowed on the ground, and the details of how these monitoring activities will occur are contained in another side agreement between the IAEA and Iran.

Here is the problem: Verifying that Iran is not cheating on this deal requires a full accounting of the possible military dimensions of Iran's nuclear program. To verify that Iran has ceased its nuclear weapons-related activities necessarily requires that we know the full extent of these past activities—the personnel, facilities, equipment, and materials used and over what time period. We do not have that information.

President Obama has said this deal is based on verification, not trust, but the means of verification are in many cases suspect. This presents a major problem. We will vote in the coming days on the Iran deal, but we cannot even read certain foundational documents pertaining to how that verification will occur, and our own government is not even a party to those agreements. I find that deeply troubling. It may account for, as more Americans know more about it, the overwhelming majority of Americans who do not approve of this deal.

Even more troubling, however, is that the administration also conceded its longstanding and repeated promises that its diplomacy was limited exclusively to the nuclear fight. For nearly a decade, the international arms embargo has significantly hurt Iran's ability to build up and modernize its aging military.

Not long before the deal was announced, the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, before our committee—General Dempsey—told the Committee on Armed Services that ''under no circumstances should we relieve pressure on Iran relative to ballistic missile capabilities and arms trafficking.'' Is there anything in this agreement that does that? In fact, it is the opposite.

In 5 years, the international arms embargo against Iran will be lifted, freeing up the regime to acquire advanced conventional military means capabilities such as fighter aircraft, air defense systems, and anti-ship missiles. With billions of dollars in sanctions relief, Iran is sure to find plenty of states that are eager to sell those weapons, especially Russia and China.

In 8 years, the agreement would legitimate and accelerate Iran's development of ballistic missiles, including ICBMs, whose only conceivable military purpose would be to deliver nuclear weapons. This concession was made even as the Director of National Intelligence concluded earlier this year that ''Iran's ballistic missiles are inherently capable of delivering WMD''—that is weapons of mass destruction—''and Tehran already has the largest inventory of ballistic missiles in the Middle East.''

In this way, the administration's Iran deal not only paves the Islamic Republic's path to a nuclear capability, it also furthers that regime's emergence as a dominant military power in the Middle East. This has direct and dangerous implications for the United States—especially our Armed Forces. After all, the ultimate guarantee that Iran will not get a nuclear weapon is not a 109-page document; it is the capability of the U.S. military to do what is necessary to prevent it if all else fails.

The administration says that the military option will remain on the table if Iran violates the agreement, and that is true. Yet the agreement itself would enable Iran to construct the very kind of advanced military arsenal that could raise the cost of employing our military option should it become necessary. In short, if this agreement fails and U.S. servicemembers are called upon to take military action in Iran, their lives clearly would be at greater risk because of the terms of this deal.

As we debate the technical details of this agreement, this is the bigger picture we must stay focused on: the strategic implications of this agreement on nuclear proliferation, regional security, and the balance of power in an increasingly chaotic Middle East. This has been the focus of our oversight on the Committee on Armed Services, and from this perspective, this bad Iran deal only looks that much worse.

Iran is not just an arms control challenge; it is a geopolitical challenge. For years, many of us have urged the administration to adopt a regional strategy to counter Iran's malign activities in the Middle East. The chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee pointed out what has been done by these IEDs that Qasem Soleimani sent into Iraq to kill and maim our men and women who are serving in the military. Unfortunately, if such a strategy exists, there is no evidence of it. Instead, we have watched with alarm as Iran's military and intelligence operatives have stepped up their destabilizing activities in Iraq, Syria, Yemen, Bahrain, Gaza, and elsewhere.

Iran did all of this under the full pressure of sanctions. Now Iran will receive tens of billions of dollars in sanctions relief. To be sure, a good amount of that money will go to Iran's priorities, but much of it will also surely flow to Iran's Revolutionary Guards Corps and Quds Force—groups that, as the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff also mentioned, were responsible for the deaths of several hundred U.S. servicemembers. This will have enormous consequences for stability in the Middle East and for America's credibility.

For decades, Republican and Democratic administrations have sought to contain the malign influence of the Islamic Republic of Iran and prevent it from acquiring nuclear weapons capability. Our allies and partners have entrusted much of their own security to the United States because they believed our commitments were credible. In this way, America's role in the region has been to suppress security competition between states with long histories of mistrust and to prevent that competition from breaking down into conflict.

I fear this agreement will further undermine our ability and willingness to play that vital stabilizing role. Our allies and partners in the Middle East have increasingly come to believe that America is withdrawing from the region and doing so at a time when Iran is aggressively seeking to advance its geopolitical ambitions. Now we have made a deal with Iran that will not only legitimize the Islamic Republic as a threshold nuclear state with an industrial enrichment capability but will also unshackle this regime in its long-held pursuit of conventional military power and may actually consolidate the Islamic Republic's control in Iran for years to come. The dangerous result is that our allies and partners will be increasingly likely to take matters into their own hands—and, indeed, we already see evidence of that.

These fateful decisions may well manifest themselves in a growing regional security competition, new arms races, nuclear proliferation, and possible conflict, all of which would demand more, not less, U.S. leadership and presence in the region.

Ultimately, this is what I find most troubling about the Iran deal. It embodies and will likely exacerbate the collapse of America's global influence that is occurring under this administration and indeed has so often been catalyzed by its policies.

Just consider—just consider, my colleagues, how much more dangerous our world has become. A malign form of Russian influence is expanding in Europe and Eurasia. Vladimir Putin is using 21st century weapons to further his 19th century ambitions of the Russian Empire—most dramatically in

Ukraine where Putin seeks to annex the territory of a sovereign country.

Our President goes to Estonia and days later Russia abducts an Estonian agent on Estonian territory. What message does that send? China's leaders also appear to feel emboldened. Our President visits Asia, and the next week China escalates tensions with a U.S. partner in the South China Sea. Our President visits Alaska and five—for the first time five Chinese warships show up in the Aleutians, violating the 12-mile limit.

Meanwhile, China continues its military modernization while building and militarizing land features in international waters. Again, there is no deterrence. Cyber attacks against our Nation are increasing in regularity and severity. In just the past year, we have been attacked by North Korea, Iran, China, and Russia. The administration does what? Nothing. There is no deterrence, so the attacks continue.

We have watched the hard-won gains of our men and women in uniform melt away in Iraq following the President's decision to withdraw all of our troops in 2011 over the objections of his military leaders and commanders on the ground. Of course, there is the conflict in Syria, which has claimed 220,000 lives and counting, spawned the largest and most threatening terrorist army in the world, involved the repeated use of weapons of mass destruction, destabilized the entire Middle East, and led to the largest refugee crisis in Europe since World War II.

There is no one who was not deeply moved by the picture of the 3-year-old baby on the beach. My friends, that is a direct result of Obama's foreign policy and have no doubt about it. Amidst all of these growing threats, for 4 years now the Budget Control Act and sequestration have cut our military by hundreds of billions of dollars for no strategic rationale whatsoever. Congress has, unfortunately, been complicit in this disaster, but if the President showed as much personal engagement and willingness to compromise with the Republicans as he did with the Iranians, we could repeal the Budget Control Act and sequestration and fund the government tomorrow.

Through it all, my colleagues, what have we heard from our President? We have been told that America's influence is limited, as if that is not always the case. We have been told there are no good options to the challenges we face, as if there ever are in the real world. We have been told we cannot solve every problem in the world, as if that absolves us from ever attempting to solve any problem. We have been told the administration's worst failures are always someone else's fault and that no policy of theirs, after 6 years in power, is ever to blame.

We have been told the only alternative to our current mess of a foreign policy is war and that anyone who disagrees with this President—Republicans and Democrats; they make no distinction—is a warmonger—is a warmonger. Again and again, where there should be leadership and statesmanship, there is only a parade of truisms and defeatist rhetoric and straw man arguments and partisan attacks.

This has tainted and cheapened our national discourse, as evidenced by the fact that unlike past landmark diplomatic agreements, this one will likely come into force on a party-line minority vote. Let me emphasize that. This Iranian deal will likely be rejected by a bipartisan majority of both Houses of Congress. If there is a precedent in American history for such a thing, I cannot think of it.

Indeed, a recent Pew poll found that only 21 percent of Americans approve of the Iranian deal. This has also diminished our standing in the world. Our words ring hollow. Our reassurances fail to reassure. Our warnings are not heeded. Our redlines are crossed. Our moral influence is being discredited and tarnished. Americans sense this and so do our adversaries. They perceive it as weakness, and it is provocative.

We need leadership, a strategy, and policies to address this crisis in our foreign policy, especially the broader threat posed by Iran. This larger response should include, among other steps, increasing sanctions against Iran for its malign activities in the Middle East and its human rights abuses, new security assistance for our allies and partners in the region, and once and for all eliminating the specter of sequestration.

This Congress should take up this effort with new legislation. I look forward to working on it with my colleagues on both sides of the aisle. That time will come. However, the question now before this body is whether to disapprove of the administration's deal with Iran. I will vote yes. I disapprove of this deal because it would not cut off Iran's path to a nuclear weapon, it would pave a new one. I disapprove of this deal because it would legitimize the Islamic Republic as a threshold nuclear state with an industrial enrichment capability that will grow unfettered after the key terms of the deal end.

I disapprove of this deal because it unshackles Tehran's pursuit of conventional military power. I disapprove of this deal because it rests on the assumption—the hope, really—that in a decade or so we may be dealing with a better Iranian regime. Yet the deal itself will likely strengthen the current Iranian regime. This deal is not in our national security interests. Congress and the American people should reject it.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. COTTON). The Senator from Tennessee.

Mr. CORKER. Mr. President, as has been said, the time is equally divided. Obviously, Republicans have spent a great deal of time on the floor. The order, just for people on our side who are coming and going on our side—we know the next speaker is Senator FEINSTEIN, but it was a preagreed order of HATCH, CORNYN, BARRASSO, and GARDNER. It is my understanding that we may only have about 15 to 20 minutes of time left on our side until 5 o'clock. I just say that for the convenience of Members.

Will the Presiding Officer tell us exactly how much time we have on our side?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Republicans have approximately 10½ minutes remaining.

Mr. CORKER. I say that for the convenience of people on our side who may come and go. That is the order. I know that obviously—how much time does the Democratic side have?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Democrats have approximately 1 hour 15 minutes.

Mr. CORKER. So just based on the process put forward by the minority whip—obviously we will have one more speaker over here. I assume you will have Democrats to fill the time on your side until 5. I want to make that known to people. Thank you.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from California.

Mrs. FEINSTEIN. Mr. President, I rise in strong support of the nuclear agreement with Iran. I do so because I believe this diplomatic achievement provides the only option that prevents Iran from obtaining a nuclear weapon. I would like to take just a moment to say thank you to our negotiating team and commend them on a job that I believe was well done and to thank them for their concerted effort to explain the agreement to the Congress over the past 2 months.

I have been in this body for a long time. There have been many different agreements. I can never remember a time where the Senate has been briefed more assiduously than it has with this agreement. As the Presiding Officer knows, we sat this morning for 2 hours and listened to the top heads of our intelligence agencies discuss with us the particulars of this agreement.

American negotiators have worked with negotiators from the world's major powers—the United Kingdom, France, Germany, China, Russia, and the EU—and reached an agreement that will prevent Iran from developing a nuclear weapon for at least the next 15 years and I believe longer.

I cannot emphasize this enough: the agreement represents the world coming together to put an end to Iran's nuclear program. By contrast, if the Senate disapproves of this agreement, we are on our own.

As of last night, 42 Senators have announced their support for the agreement. In practical terms, that means the Senate will not disapprove of this agreement. We have conducted a full review and the opponents of this deal have failed, but the opponents are still holding out the false hope that there can be a better deal.

Let me be clear: there is no better deal. No one, no state, no leader has proposed one. The only alternative to the agreement we now have is no agreement at all. Should the Congress reject this accord, the United States, which led this effort, would be deserting our allies and negotiating partners. That is because this is not just an agreement between the United States and Iran. It is an agreement between the world's major powers, the largest most powerful Nations in the world, and Iran. It is one approved by the 15 members of the United Nations Security Council.

Brent Scowcroft, someone I know well, see annually, and the former National Security Advisor to President George H.W. Bush, recently wrote:

There is no credible alternative were Congress to prevent U.S. participation in the nuclear deal. If we walk away, we walk away alone.

I think it may be helpful to remind my colleagues and the American people how we got where we are today. First of all, preventing Iran from acquiring a nuclear weapon has been a longstanding and bipartisan national security objective. In 2003, Europe led the first effort to halt Iran's nuclear program. The next decade saw five separate major rounds of failed negotiations and an ever-advancing Iranian nuclear program. Iran went from having a few centrifuges spinning to being a threshold nuclear power.

Following the revelations that Iran was installing centrifuges at Natanz last decade and disclosure in 2012 by our government and allies that Iran was turning a mountain near Qom into a deeply buried centrifuge chamber, Iran has seen sanctions escalate and felt international isolation, but its nuclear enrichment continued and advanced.

The United States, with strong support from this Chamber, led an effort to install devastating multilateral sanctions with the goal of bringing Iran to the negotiating table. Those sanctions were effective because they were supported by the world's powers and importers of Iranian oil. In fact, the United States does not do much business with Iran. We do not import Iranian oil and U.S. banks don't process Iranian financial transactions. Unilateral U.S. sanctions are of little value by themselves, unless we are willing to sanction allies' banks.

Indeed, multiple U.N. resolutions, EU sanctions, and the cooperation of our partners and allies successfully pressured Iran over its nuclear activities. Over time, the international sanctions that we helped build and continually enforced reduced Iranian oil exports from 2.5 million barrels per day to less than 1 million, reduced the number of countries that import Iranian oil from 23 to 6, prohibited Iran from repatriating more than $100 billion in foreign currency, reduced Iran's GDP by nearly 6 percent in 1 year, caused major inflation, and basically ended international investment in Iran's economy.

The sanctions worked. Iran elected a reform government with a new President to negotiate an end to the sanctions and revive its economy. And despite its doubts, Iran sent a negotiating team to meet with the governments of the P5+1 nations.

In November 2013 we signed the interim agreement that froze and even reversed Iran's nuclear program. According to the IAEA, and verified by U.S. intelligence, Iran has abided by the interim agreement for more than 1½ years. As we all know, in July 2015 the P5+1 signed the final agreement, officially known as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action.

The agreement is the result of years of careful diplomacy among the world's powers. It was only possible because other nations abided by our sanctions at their own economic sacrifice. They believe that these sanctions worked, have achieved their result, and now should be suspended as Iran dismantles much of its nuclear infrastructure. These countries, which were so critical to our ability to impose sanctions, have told us directly they won't go back to the table to negotiate a new deal.

To my colleagues who plan to vote in opposition to this agreement, I hope they have thought long and hard about what message this would send to the world. The consequences of rejecting this carefully negotiated deal would reach far beyond Iran. It would signal that the United States isn't willing or able to lead the world in confronting global challenges.

Since the agreement was reached, I have spoken with many diplomats and statesmen. They are scratching their heads, wondering why the U.S. Congress is lining up with Iranian hard-liners in opposition to this agreement, instead of siding with the UK, France, Germany, Russia, and China, along with all the other members of the U.N. Security Council.

Last week, Saudi Arabia announced its support for the agreement. Foreign Minister Adel Al-Jubeir, who is known to many in this body, concluded his country's support by saying this agreement ''will contribute to security and stability in the region by preventing Iran from acquiring a nuclear capability.''

During the August recess, a former head of state from one of our closest allies sat with me and said: ''You know, we are one of the nations you trust the most. We follow U.S. leadership and have agreed to the Iran deal, and now your Congress wants to back out. Why should we ever follow you again?''

Many diplomats I have spoken with have echoed the former Prime Minister's statement. If Congress rejects the agreement, the world will be unlikely to follow us on other important issues in the future and I believe the Executive foreign policy obligations and responsibilities of a President of our country are diminished. Our ability to lead against global threats, to be the indispensable nation, I believe, ends.

I understand that many Members of the Senate don't support our President, but by disapproving of this agreement we also undermine the ability of any future President to speak for the United States and carry out his or her constitutional role in conducting foreign policy.

I have been involved in national security issues for many years, and I can't recall a time in recent memory when the world was united to this degree on such a complex issue. Even Russia and China are with us. We shouldn't squander the opportunity.

Many of my colleagues have already described the terms of the agreement and how it constrains and allows for intrusive monitoring of Iran's nuclear program. For me, the arguments of Secretary of Energy Ernest Moniz are particularly persuasive. As we all know, he is a distinguished nuclear physicist from MIT, and he played a central role in the negotiations. He is a true expert of unimpeachable integrity, and he knows the nuclear world.

He has said over and over again—and I have heard it personally at least five times—that every pathway to a bomb—plutonium, uranium, and covert—is blocked by this deal. The deal blocks Iran's uranium pathway to a bomb at Natanz and Fordow by reducing Iran's installed centrifuges by two-thirds—from more than 19,000 to 6,000—for at least 10 years. It reduces Iran's stockpile of enriched uranium by more than 97 percent, to no more than 300 kilograms of 3.67 percent enriched uranium for 15 years, not enough nuclear material for a single weapon. It requires intrusive IAEA inspections of Iran's centrifuge production—their careful labeling—and storage facilities for 20 years. And it requires IAEA inspections for 25 years of Iran's entire nuclear supply chain.

The agreement blocks Iran's plutonium pathway to a bomb at Arak by modifying Iran's only heavy water reactor so that it cannot produce weapons-grade plutonium and requires all spent fuel capable of being reprocessed for plutonium to be shipped out of the country.

The agreement blocks Iran's covert plutonium pathway to a bomb nationwide by requiring 24/7 IAEA access to all of Iran's declared nuclear sites for 15 years and by empowering the IAEA to use its most advanced monitoring techniques and equipment to ensure Iran cannot tamper with its devices or evade nuclear monitoring, and it guarantees IAEA access to any suspected—suspected—nuclear site within 24 days, including military facilities, and providing access to all of Iran's nuclear sites under the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty permanently.

Most notably, the agreement imposes a perpetual prohibition against Iran ever seeking, developing or acquiring a nuclear weapon.

The terms of this agreement are unparalleled. The IAEA has never had this kind of access in any country. As the vice chairman of the Intelligence Committee, I can say we have looked at this issue very carefully.

As the Presiding Officer knows, as late as this morning, I can say that if Iran doesn't comply with its obligations, we will know about it, and we will be able to snap-back the sanctions that are suspended under this agreement.

The administration has provided Congress with documents detailing the verification measures in this agreement. At an unclassified level, the executive branch has written: ''The United States is confident that it will be able to verify that Iran is complying with its commitments under the JCPOA, including its commitment not to pursue a nuclear weapon.''

The Senate has also received a classified annex to the assessment from the intelligence community, which I think some of my colleagues have reviewed, and I would hope everyone would. The Senate Intelligence Committee has met with the heads of the U.S. intelligence agencies—as I just said—as recently as this morning to receive testimony and ask questions on our ability to ensure that Iran is complying with the terms of the nuclear agreement. From the reports and those hearings, I am very comfortable saying that the covert path to a bomb is closed, period.

I recognize that this agreement doesn't address other problems the United States and the international community have with Iran. Iran continues to support terrorist groups, prop up Bashar al-Assad, and undermine stability across the Middle East. It is a serial abuser of human rights and is improperly detaining American citizens. These are, of course, reprehensible policies and, of course, we will continue to oppose them. But a nuclear-armed Iran would dramatically compound these problems.

In my view, this agreement presents us with an opportunity to begin a broader discussion with Iran. As Iran, hopefully, will become more integrated into the global community and give up some of its bad ways, we can test whether Iran will move toward rejoining the community of nations. Rejecting this agreement only strengthens the hard-liners who lead the chants of ''Death to America.''

Eighty-eight percent of Iranians are under the age of 54, and 41 percent are under the age of 25. They defied predictions and elected a moderate replacement to President Ahmadinejad in the hopes that Iran will chart a new course. Clearly, this agreement won't change Iran's behavior overnight, and it would be unrealistic to expect Iran's cooperation on every issue, but it would also be foolish to throw the opportunity away and to give the hard-liners another reason to turn their backs on reform.

More importantly, I am not willing to cede America's global leadership to reject this nuclear agreement or ignore the possibility of resolving the region's crises in favor of the myth of a better deal. There is no better deal.

For these reasons, I join the large numbers of diplomats, scientists, retired U.S. flag officers, rabbis, arms controls advocates, national security experts, and intelligence professionals in supporting this agreement with Iran.

I urge my colleagues, most sincerely, to oppose the resolution of disapproval and support this historic agreement.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. GARDNER). The majority whip.

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I listened carefully to the eloquent remarks of the distinguished Senator from California and all of the countries around the world that embrace this deal, and I didn't hear mentioned once the nation of Israel, our most significant and important ally in the Middle East. And it is because, in fact, they do not approve.

As we have heard from the Prime Minister several months ago, this paves the way to a nuclear weapon. It completely transforms American policy, which had been to deny Iran a nuclear weapon, and it paves the path to a nuclear weapon.

But as I was contemplating this debate, I decided it was important for me to visit with Rick Kupke of Arlington, TX. Rick was one of 53 Americans who were held hostage and held for 14 months in Iran at the time of the Iranian Revolution. In an interview with one of our newspapers in Fort Worth, when asked about this deal with Iran, he said:

> This is probably the worst agreement of this kind I've seen in my lifetime.

This is an experienced, seasoned Foreign Service officer. He continued:

> I don't know why they think the Iranians are going to abide by any agreement. They never have.

So I approach this agreement between President Obama and the regime in Tehran with a tremendous amount of skepticism.

But this debate shouldn't be a partisan one, and I worry that it is quickly becoming partisan, based on the stated intention of the minority leader, Senator REID, the Senator from Nevada, to actually filibuster and prevent an up-or-down vote on this resolution of disapproval. This is something that apparently is being actively encouraged by the President of the United States. Just a short time after the President himself signed the bill—a bipartisan bill with 98 votes in the Senate, which sets up the procedure by which this resolution will be voted on—the President, the minority leader, and, apparently, many Democrats are tempted to filibuster this most important national security issue that I have confronted and seen since I have been in the Senate—and many would say during their lifetime.

The President has really taken the low road, I am sorry to say. He has claimed that those chanting ''Death to America'' in Iran are ''making common cause with the Republican caucus.'' That is the President of the United States. I would like to point out there are several influential leaders of the President's own party who are opposed to this deal and they include some of this Chamber's most expert and respected Members in the field of foreign affairs.

First of all, the ranking member of the Foreign Relations Committee, Senator CARDIN, to whom I personally express my admiration and respect for his courage—he pointed out in his remarks, when he announced he would vote for the resolution of disapproval, that the deal ''legitimizes Iran's nuclear program.'' He also said: ''Under this agreement, Iran is permitted to be able to enrich to a level that will take them extremely close to breakout, legally.''

The junior Senator from Maryland has made clear he shares the concerns many of us have expressed; that this deal leaves far too much of Iran's nuclear infrastructure intact and indeed legitimizes their nuclear program—something our stated national policy just a short time ago was to oppose.

The senior Senator from New York, Mr. SCHUMER—perhaps one of the Members on that side of the aisle whose vote was most anticipated before he announced it—announced he is for the resolution of disapproval. He said: ''I believe Iran will not change, and under this agreement it will be able to achieve its dual goals of eliminating sanctions while ultimately retaining its nuclear and non-nuclear power.''

Senator SCHUMER makes the point that Iran has gotten everything it wants. It has a pathway to a nuclear weapon, it has retained its nuclear infrastructure, and it has gotten an elimination of sanctions.

The former chairman and ranking member of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, Senator MENENDEZ, on August 18 announced his decision to oppose this bad deal. He said the deal ''failed to achieve the one thing it set out to achieve—it failed to stop Iran from becoming a nuclear weapons state at a time of its choosing.'' In fact, he said it ''authorizes and supports the very roadmap Iran will need to arrive at its target.''

These are not members of the Republican caucus. These are respected members of the Democratic caucus.

There used to be a time—and I hope it returns quickly—where matters of this gravity and seriousness, threats to our national security, were treated with bipartisan cooperation and consensus building, but apparently the President didn't get that memo—encouraging folks on that side of the aisle to prevent even an up-or-down vote on the resolution of disapproval and presumably cutting short the debate and hoping people across America aren't really paying attention to exactly how bad this deal is and how

much it makes the world more dangerous rather than safer.

I hope our colleagues, even if they will vote for this deal or will vote against the resolution of disapproval—I hope they will allow us to have the sort of fulsome debate this serious issue deserves. Then they will be held accountable, as we will, for their vote either for or against the resolution of disapproval.

I note that President Obama seems to want to arrogate to himself not even an authority that the Ayatollah Khamenei appears to have. Ayatollah Khamenei said the Iranian Parliament will vote on this deal, but apparently President Obama doesn't feel the United States Senate should have the same opportunity the Iranian Parliament is going to have—to vote on the merits or lack of merits on this deal.

I hope our colleagues across the aisle will rethink their partisan opposition to actually even having an up-or-down vote on the resolution of disapproval. This could well be, as many have said before me, one of the most consequential foreign policy issues to come before us in a long time, and we ought to treat it with that sort of seriousness.

The American people need to listen—and they are listening—and they will hold all of us accountable for our decisions.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Maryland.

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. President, I have been listening to my friend from Texas, and I couldn't agree with him more about the need for us to work in a bipartisan manner to strengthen America's foreign policy.

I believe in the independence of Congress, and I very much support, along with Senator CORKER, the review we are doing. I think this is critically important to the American people. We are having our debate, as we should. I do think, though, that while we are an independent branch, when this debate is over, we have to come together and work in the best interests of America, and I look forward to broad support in Congress to do everything in our power to make sure Iran does not become a nuclear weapons state. I think we can, in a positive way, as we move forward. I mentioned yesterday when I was on the floor about things we can do.

Yes, there is disagreement on whether to vote for or against the resolution of disapproval, but I hope there is no disagreement that we need to work together with a broad consensus of Congress to give this country its strongest possible position moving forward, whether this agreement is approved or not.

With that, Mr. President, I yield to one of the important members of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, the junior Senator from Delaware, who has spent a lot of time on this issue. He has been a very constructive member of our committee, very instrumental in the passage of the Iran review act. Senator COONS.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Delaware.

Mr. COONS. Mr. President, I rise to discuss one of the greatest threats we face today in America, a great threat to our vital ally Israel and to global security—the nuclear weapons ambitions of Iran and the options that remain before us for blocking those ambitions.

On July 14, after years of negotiations between the United States, our international partners, and Iran, the administration reached a comprehensive agreement to freeze and roll back aspects of Iran's nuclear program in exchange for relief from the sanctions that have crippled Iran's economy. Our key partners in imposing and enforcing the sanctions that drove Iran to the negotiating table—the UK, Germany, France, the EU, China, and Russia—also joined in negotiating and ultimately ratifying this deal.

Thanks to bipartisan legislation that passed this Chamber nearly unanimously, Congress is now fulfilling its duty to review this deal under the authority of the Iran Nuclear Agreement Review Act. As a public servant and Member of this body, I am grateful for the opportunity to join my colleagues to thoughtfully debate this vital and important issue. As a body, we owe that to the American people. As a Senator from Delaware, I owe that to Delawareans—to participate in a vigorous debate on an issue with profound and far-reaching consequences, not just for our Nation but for the whole global community.

In preparation for this vote, I have dedicated myself to studying and understanding the content and consequences of the deal, and I am grateful to the bipartisan leadership of Chairman CORKER and Ranking Member CARDIN in convening more than a dozen hearings of the Foreign Relations Committee, as well as classified briefings; to the dozens of experts who came before us, both against and in favor of the deal, to provide us with analysis and insight; and to the thousands of Delawareans who have reached out to me by phone, by email, by text, and in person to express their strongly held views both against and for this agreement.

As are many of my fellow Delawareans and Americans, I am deeply suspicious of Iran, the world's leading state sponsor of terrorism. I am also deeply suspicious of Iran's intentions for its nuclear program, given its long record of cheating on past deals and of consistently expressing virulently anti-American, anti-Semitic, and anti-Israel views.

Iran is a dangerous regime that is today dangerously close to having enough fissile material to build a nuclear bomb. A nuclear-armed Iran would be a profound threat to our Nation's security and our interests around the world, as well as the security of our vital ally, Israel, and all of our partners in the Middle East.

In response to these undeniable realities, we have successfully built a global coalition over the past decade united in their determination to prevent Iran from acquiring a nuclear weapon. They, too, see clearly the threat of a nuclear-armed Iran. Bipartisan actions by Congress and the administration to enact and enforce sanctions have brought us to this point where our major European allies, as well as Russia and China—countries with which we often disagree—have all signed off on a comprehensive agreement to roll back and restrain Iran's nuclear program. The challenge we are discussing on the floor today is whether to move ahead with our partners in this deal or to turn aside from it and attempt to seek a stronger deal.

From the day it was announced, this agreement has been sharply criticized by many in Congress and by the leaders of our vital ally Israel. After a close reading of this lengthy and complex agreement, I, too, have deep and persistent concerns about this deal.

If Iran simply complies with the plain language of this deal, it will first gain tens of billions of dollars in sanctions relief that it will likely use to strengthen its support for terrorism and its proxies and rogue regimes and that will make it more resilient to future sanctions. Most importantly, the deal leaves in place key nuclear facilities and programs that over 10 to 15 years or more will allow Iran to develop a large-scale uranium enrichment capability that could be used to quickly make material for nuclear weapons if it decides to violate this agreement and the nonproliferation treaty.

To look at those realities and not recognize them as significant challenges or flaws would be to miss the core content of this deal. On the other hand, the agreement achieves several critical goals that could not be easily achieved by any other means, that freeze or roll back Iran's nuclear ambitions. To get any sanctions relief, Iran must give up 97 percent of its existing stockpile of 12 tons of enriched uranium. It must disable two-thirds of their 19,000 centrifuges and permanently restructure its heavy water reactor at Arak so it can no longer produce weapons-grade plutonium.

I have heard no questions or challenges to the technical aspects of these significant accomplishments in the deal.

Most importantly, in my mind, Iran has agreed to thorough, intrusive, around-the-clock inspections of all of its declared and known nuclear sites, its uranium mines, uranium mills, centrifuge production, and uranium enrichment facilities for 15 years and more. Iran pledges under this agreement to abandon all efforts to develop or acquire a nuclear weapon, and the U.N. has ratified a unique arrangement under which the United States alone is able to reimpose U.N. sanctions on Iran for cheating on this deal at any point.

Finally, our own military and intelligence community confirm that the option of military action against Iran remains available at all times and will only be strengthened by the significant additional intelligence we will likely gain through regular inspections of Iran's nuclear infrastructure.

While many Americans, including thousands in my home State, have expressed strong opinions about this agreement, and while I, too, agree with many criticisms of this deal, none of us knows with certainty what will happen if instead Congress rejects this agreement. Will the strength of the U.S. banking system and our unilateral sanctions genuinely be strong enough to force our key allies and Iran back to the negotiating table? Is it possible to negotiate a stronger deal than this or will the nations that have dedicated years, along with us, to these negotiations now abandon sanctions and proceed without us to implement the deal with Iran, simply isolating us rather than Iran?

Meetings and discussions I have held with ambassadors of our key partners, as well as with leaders in financial policy and foreign policy, have ultimately persuaded me we are unlikely to be able to reimpose effective multilateral sanctions and renegotiate our way to a better deal if we reject this one.

Don't just take my word for it. Former Secretary of the Treasury Henry Paulson and former Chairman of the Fed Board Paul Volcker have reached the same conclusion publicly and in a whole series of private conversations have reinforced my conclusion.

Last week I delivered an address at the University of Delaware in my home State to explain in more detail why I have ultimately decided to support this deal. Today I am here to speak to my colleagues in the Senate because I believe strongly this floor must be a place of vigorous, spirited, and honest debate. Though nearly every one of my colleagues—in fact, probably as of today all of my colleagues—have made their arguments, announced their positions and decisions, and discussed their conclusions, as I have in my home State and as many others have with the media, I still believe we cannot ignore this floor as an important place for debate and discussion. I think it is particularly important on an issue that has always in the past garnered such strong and bipartisan support as our Nation's enduring support for Israel.

So let me be clear about my position and where I stand. I will support this agreement and vote against measures to disapprove it in this Congress. I will support this agreement because it puts us on a known path of limiting Iran's nuclear program for 15 years with the full support of the international community. The alternative, I fear, is a scenario of uncertainty and isolation.

Finally, I will support this agreement despite its significant flaws because it is the better strategy for the United States to lead a coalesced global community in containing the spread of nuclear weapons. I support this deal aware of its flaws, and I am committed to working tirelessly with my colleagues to overcome the limitations of the agreement, to ensure the security of Israel, and to contain and deter Iran's ambitions.

That is why I did not make my final decision to support this deal until I secured, to me, valuable additional commitments from the administration—including a letter from the President offering specific reassurances across seven different areas, including that our allies and other members of the P5+1 will stick by us in strictly enforcing this deal, even as their economic engagements with Iran grow, and that we will continue to aggressively and by all means necessary address Iran's support for terrorism and its proxies, and that our commitment to Israel's security will remain unshakeable.

Moving forward, I hope to work with colleagues to focus on strengthening Israel's conventional military deterrent against Iran, vigorously interdicting and countering Iranian support for terrorism and its proxies, strengthening the nonproliferation treaty, so that in 15 years Iran leaves one cage—the JCPOA—and enters another—the constraints of an appropriately strengthened and bolstered NPT, and developing a clear and thorough plan with our European allies for active enforcement to enact a policy of zero tolerance of Iranian cheating on the agreement.

There are few votes in the Senate that will have as much consequence to the security of our Nation and Israel's as this one. I am voting to support this agreement not because I think it is perfect or because I believe it is a perfect mechanism to end nuclear proliferation. I am voting for it because I believe it is our most credible opportunity in our current situation to lead a global community in containing a profound nuclear threat while preserving America's ability in the future to use economic power and military might to successfully dismantle Iran's nuclear program should diplomacy fail.

My support for this agreement also represents a statement about U.S. leadership of an international system based on institutions that we developed following the Second World War to help bring about a rules-based international system of mutual security.

The United Nations and the IAEA were established following the great conflict of the Second World War to help prevent the spread and threat of nuclear war. We, the United States, helped lead the establishment of these institutions just as we led the international community to reach this deal to limit Iran's nuclear program.

While neither our current international system nor this deal with Iran is perfect, they represent the collective will of our international partners and a vision for America's place in the world for which I will fight. While we reserve the right to use force, if necessary, to prevent Iran from acquiring a nuclear weapon, we should uphold the international system that we helped create, and to do so we should support this deal.

The legitimacy of this order is yet another reason we must ensure adequate oversight and verification of this nuclear deal because its failure will be a blow to the international system which gave it birth.

In closing, Scripture offers us many stories, from Genesis to Deuteronomy to Isaiah and the gospels, in which we are encouraged to pursue diplomacy before resorting to conflict. My support of this agreement in no small part is an attempt to heed that advice.

We cannot trust Iran. But this deal, based on distrust, verification, deterrence, and strong multilateral diplomacy, ultimately, I have concluded, offers us our best opportunity to prevent a nuclear-armed Iran.

I support this deal with my eyes wide open, aware of its flaws as well as its potential, and I will remain committed to work with my colleagues to minimize the negative consequences and ensure we reap the maximum benefits of this agreement.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Maryland.

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. President, I thank Senator COONS. I know he went through a very deliberative process in reaching his conclusions. I know of his commitment to preventing Iran from having a nuclear weapons capacity, his strong support for regional security in the State of Israel. I know the process he went through because we had many conversations during the August recess. I know his statement is heartfelt, and I know he did what he thought was best. I just want to underscore that and thank him for his counsel and friendship.

I am going to yield to Senator KAINE. Before I do that, I think it is important to point out that we are here today in this review in a very open and transparent way in large measure because of Senator KAINE.

Senator CORKER filed a review statute—I guess it was now several months ago—and through conversations with Senator KAINE he was able to get a framework that ultimately led to the passage of the Iran Nuclear Agreement Review Act by a 98-to-1 vote on the floor of the U.S. Senate. I was proud to be part of that effort, working with Senator CORKER, but it would not have been possible without Senator KAINE. He was the one who recognized that we needed to find a common path—a nonpartisan path—for a transparent review that protected not just the role of the United States Congress, but the executive and legislative branch, and I applaud him for those efforts.

Senator KAINE is a very valuable member of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, one of our most

trusted members in so many areas of foreign policy, and I am proud to have him as my friend and colleague.

I yield the floor to Senator KAINE.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Virginia.

Mr. KAINE. Mr. President, I thank my ranking member and friend, the Senator from Maryland, for those kind words.

Mr. President, I rise to discuss the Iran deal currently being debated in the Senate. We have not had a national security issue during my time in the Senate that has received so much attention in committee and on the floor of this body as this, and that is appropriate. The debate has been, and will continue to be, thorough and vigorous. That is appropriate, and I respect the views of my colleagues regardless of how they will vote on this matter.

I wish to spend a few minutes recapping why I support the deal. I did speak on the floor early in August about this. Since that time, a number of leaders have come out in support of the deal: former Senators John Warner, Richard Lugar, Sam Nunn, and Carl Levin; General Brent Scowcroft, General Colin Powell; and today, former head of the IAEA Commission Uzi Eilam. After I briefly talk about my reasons for support, I want to address three final points: one, the Republican argument on the floor today that it is wrong to have a 60-vote threshold for the vote on a resolution of disapproval; two, the arguments that Vice President Cheney made against the deal yesterday; three, finally, the place of vigorous diplomacy as a tool of American strength.

So first, to quickly recap why I support the deal: I support it because it is better than the status quo for 15 to 25 years. I don't compare it with a hypothetical alternative. We can create a hypothetical to justify a position. If we can, let's talk about the status quo.

Before diplomacy started, Iran had rocketed ahead to 19,000 centrifuges and 12,000 kilograms of enriched uranium, a plutonium reprocessing facility under construction, and we had very few inspections. The system was very opaque. That was the status quo.

The best description of the Iranian status quo was the description that Prime Minister Netanyahu made to the U.N. in September of 2012. That was a speech known because he drew a bomb dialogue, and that sort of cartoon was known. But if we go into the guts of his speech, he gave a description of where the Iranian program was, and then he concluded and he said this: I want to thank the international community because the sanctions you have imposed together have hurt the Iranian economy, but ''we have to face the truth.'' The sanctions have not stopped the Iranian nuclear program. In fact, there is a pretty good argument that the sanctions accelerated the program.

So if we go back to the status quo, it is an accelerated program, with 19,000 centrifuges and enough enriched uranium for multiple weapons. What we get with this deal, for 15 years disabling two-thirds of the centrifuges, for 15 years rolling back enriched uranium to 300 kilograms—not even enough for one weapon—for permanently disabling the plutonium facility, for 25 years enhanced inspections—more than any nation has to comply with—we get in this deal much better than we would have with the status quo that existed before diplomacy, and that is why I support it.

The second point, the argument about the 60-vote threshold. I am surprised to hear arguments on the floor that it is somehow wrong to use a 60-vote threshold on this bill. When I was in my first 2 years in the Senate and in the majority, the 60-vote threshold was used on everything—immigration, minimum wage, turning off the sequester. Sometimes we exceeded the 60-vote threshold. Many times we exceeded 50 votes, but we couldn't get to 60 on minimum wage. We couldn't get to 60 on turning off the threshold, but there was an insistence: We need to get to 60 votes. I can't think of a single issue of importance in my first 2 years in the Senate where the 60-vote threshold wasn't invoked.

As my ranking member, Senator CARDIN, mentioned, I was one of the coauthors of the Review Act under which we are now proceeding. The act was clear, and it was understood by all that action in the Senate to pass either a motion of approval or a motion of disapproval, either one, would be by a 60-vote threshold. We talked about this explicitly in committee, we talked about it before the vote on the floor, and we voted in favor of the act by a 98-to-1 margin. I think the current majority party understood that. As was indicated in the letter of 47 to the leadership of Iran, it was stated very plainly we would understand this would be a three-fifths, 60-vote threshold. That is what happens in the Senate, so we shouldn't change the rules now.

The debate has been full, vigorous, and fair. We have spent a lot of time on this and we are going to spend more, and that is appropriate. There is now a complete accountability because all 100 Senators have declared exactly where they are and their position. We should stick with the agreement we made a few months ago, and treat this Resolution of Disapproval under a 60-vote rule.

Point No. 3, the Vice President's arguments yesterday. I respond to them because I think Vice President Cheney basically made two arguments, and they are the two arguments that have been repeated in different ways on the floor. Let me address those two main arguments.

No. 1, we can't trust Iran. I agree. I think everyone on the Democratic side agrees, and there is nothing about this deal that involves trust. That is why we have insisted that Iran subject itself to intrusive inspections by the IAEA for 25 years, and then, following that, to the additional protocol inspections required of all NPT members. The IAEA inspections—130-plus inspectors in the country—will enable us to catch Iran cheating and give us the intel that will be incredibly helpful if we ever need to take military action against them. It is that inspections intel that caused our two former colleagues, Senators John Warner and Carl Levin—chairs of the Armed Services Committee—to write an article recently, ''Why Hawks Should Also Back the Iran Deal.'' It is because inspections give us intel, which increases the credibility of our military threat.

Now, the Vice President's response to this, interestingly enough, is: Wait. We can't trust IAEA inspections. They are going to do it wrong. They have the wrong protocols, and we can't trust them.

Folks, that argument has been made in this body before by the Vice President and others. Vice President Cheney promoted that we go to war with Iraq, and he repeatedly made the case in 2002 and 2003 that we had to do that to stop Iraq's nuclear weapons program. Two weeks before the war began, in early March, the IAEA issued a report indicating, ''we have to date found no evidence or plausible indication of the revival of a nuclear weapons program in Iraq.'' The Vice President then went to the airwaves with others and led a campaign to trash the credibility of the IAEA, to say that neither the integrity of their inspections nor their accuracy could be trusted. After that, we entered into war against Iraq saying that the IAEA was wrong. And what did we find? What we found was the inspectors and investigators and engineers and scientists of the IAEA were right, and Vice President Cheney and others were wrong. We have been down the path before of trying to trash the IAEA and said they couldn't be trusted, and it was a horrible disservice to America and the world that we didn't give those inspections a chance. We shouldn't go down that path again.

The Vice President made a second argument yesterday—here is a different and better strategy for dealing with Iran—the same strategy that the previous administration followed: Heavy sanctions, threats of military force, but no diplomacy.

But the Cheney doctrine didn't work with Iran. Under that strategy, the Iranian nuclear program rocketed ahead, centrifuges, enriched uranium, growing by the day. The Prime Minister of Israel, Prime Minister Netenyahu, acknowledged this before the U.N. in September of 2012. And when the Vice President was confronted with this by Chris Wallace over the weekend on television, he had no answer for it. He couldn't answer for it because the advance of the Iranian program under the Cheney doctrine cannot be disputed.

I was interested in his speech yesterday when he tried to justify that the strategy had worked when they tried it. Again, he ignored it.

So if we go back to the preferred doctrine of no diplomacy, sanctions, and

military threat, we are likely to get what we just got before, and that is an acceleration of the Iranian nuclear program. We should not go back down that path.

Let me conclude with a story about my favorite President, Harry Truman. Truman was a bold and courageous wartime President. He fought in World War I as a captain. He made tough decisions to use the atomic weapons in Japan. He came back to a war-weary Congress and said: Give military support to Greece against Soviet bloc expansion. He came to a war-weary Congress and said: We have to put troops into North Korea. Nobody would say Harry Truman was a softy. He had military bona fides. Truman also was the President who made sure that America was the first nation to recognize the State of Israel, and he always held that as one of his proudest accomplishments. It is one of the reasons that he is my favorite President.

In October 1945, 70 years ago next month, President Truman did something that seems minor but was really important. He called reporters into his office at the White House and said: I have something to show you.

He unveiled that he had redesigned the seal of the Presidency of the United States. The seal is the eagle. The seal has the arrows of war in one claw and the olive branches of diplomacy in the other claw. Truman had redesigned the seal so that the eagle was now turned to face the olive branches of diplomacy before the arrows of war—this wartime President. He explained: Look, I am a wartime President and I will use military force, but American values are such that we should always prefer diplomacy before the military.

We have the strongest military in the world. As a Virginian, I am so proud of it. We use it when needed. I have voted twice in 2½ years in the Senate as a member of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee to use military force. When I cast that vote, it is a very personal one for my State, for me, and my family. These votes are the hardest votes we take. But Truman believed—and I believe—that it is fundamentally a part of our values that we prefer diplomacy first. Before we use military action, we have to be engaged in vigorous diplomacy with allies and adversaries if we can see a path to possibly create a more peaceful world. Other Presidents have reached the same conclusion, not only President Truman—President Kennedy, in negotiating the Nuclear Test Ban Treaty with the Soviet Union; President Nixon, in going to China when China was supporting the North Vietnamese against us; President Reagan, in negotiating against the evil empire, the Soviet Union, over their nuclear program; and now President Obama. Our great Presidents have realized that diplomacy isn't just for friends. Diplomacy is important, even and especially with adversaries if you can see a path—a possibility—to a more peaceful world.

Here is something that is fascinating. Just as a strong military enhances diplomacy, strong diplomacy enhances our military might. That is true in this case. If we do a deal, we get an Iranian pledge that they will never pursue, develop or acquire nuclear weapons, caps on their programs for 15 years, and inspections forever. These tools will increase our intelligence. They will increase our legal justification to take military action if they break the pledge that is in paragraph 1 of the agreement.

It will also increase the likelihood that America will have global support if military action is necessary. But what if we walk away from diplomacy now? We lose the military intelligence that inspections will give us. We give up a clear legal justification for military action if—God forbid—we should need it. We weaken the likelihood that other nations will support military action if it is necessary.

In this case, diplomacy strengthens—not weakens—the American credibility of our military threat. Trying diplomacy here will keep the world's attention on Iranian behavior. Walking away from diplomacy here will put the world's attention on American negotiating tactics and why we decided that we would rather go it alone. I believe the article I branch should send the message that we value diplomacy as a first option, just as President Truman did 70 years ago.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Maryland.

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. President, I thank Senator KAINE for his leadership on the review act. I know the statements and his position are heartfelt and ones that he comes to with full passion. I thank the Senator very much for his contribution.

I am now pleased to yield to Senator SANDERS. The two of us came to the Senate together. We served in the House of Representatives. He is one of the most passionate voices in this country. It is an honor to have him here on this issue.

I yield to Senator SANDERS.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Vermont.

Mr. SANDERS. I thank my friend from Maryland.

Mr. President, I rise to speak about the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action, the agreement that the United States negotiated with China, France, Germany, Russia, the United Kingdom, and Iran. I support the agreement and will oppose the resolution of disapproval, as I believe this approach is the best way forward if we are to accomplish what all of us want to accomplish; that is, making certain that Iran does not acquire a nuclear weapon, an occurrence which would destabilize the region, lead to a nuclear arms race in the area, and would endanger the existence of Israel.

It is my firm belief that the test of a great nation, with the most powerful military on Earth, is not how many wars we can engage in but how we can use our strength and our capabilities to resolve international conflicts in a peaceful way. Those who have spoken out against this agreement, including many in this Chamber, and those who have made every effort to thwart the diplomatic process are many of the same people who spoke out forcefully and irresponsibly about the need to go to war with Iraq—one of the worst foreign policy blunders in the modern history of our country. Sadly, people such as former Vice President Dick Cheney and many of the other neocons who pushed us into war in Iraq were not only tragically wrong then; they are wrong now. Unfortunately, these individuals have learned nothing from the results of that disastrous policy and how it destabilized that entire region. I fear that many of my Republican colleagues do not understand that war must be a last resort, not the first resort. It is easy to go to war. It is not so easy to fully comprehend the unintended consequences of that war.

As the former Chairman of the Senate Veterans' Affairs Committee, I have talked to veterans from World War II to Iraq, and I have learned a little bit about what the cost of war entails. In Iraq and Afghanistan, we lost over 6,700 brave men and women, and many others have come home without legs, without arms, and without eyesight. Let us not forget that 500,000 veterans of the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan came back to their families with post-traumatic stress disorder and traumatic brain injury—500,000 brave Americans. The suicide rate of young veterans is appallingly high. The divorce rate of those who served is appallingly high, and the impact on their children is appallingly high. God knows how many families have been devastated by these wars.

We should also not forget that many hundreds of thousands of innocent Iraqi men, women, and children who died in that war, and those whose lives who have been completely destabilized, hundreds of thousands of people whose lives have been totally altered, including those who are fleeing that country today with only the clothes on their backs as refugees. The cost of war is real. It is easy to give great speeches about how tough we are, but let us not forget the cost of war on the men and women who serve in our military and people in other countries.

Yes, the military option should always be on the table, but it should be the last option. We have to do everything we can to reach an agreement to ensure that Iran does not get a nuclear weapon without having to go to war. I believe we have an obligation to pursue diplomatic solutions before resorting to military engagement—especially after nearly 14 years of ill-conceived and disastrous military engagements in that region.

The agreement before us calls for cutting off Iran's pathways to the

fissile materials needed for a nuclear weapon by reducing its stockpile of uranium by 98 percent and restricting the level of enrichment of uranium to well below the level needed for weaponized uranium. The agreement requires Iran to decrease the number of installed centrifuges by two-thirds, dismantle the country's heavy water nuclear reactor so that it cannot produce any weapons-grade plutonium, and commit to rigorous monitoring, inspection, and verification by the International Atomic Energy Agency.

Only after Iran has demonstrated to the international community its compliance with the tenets of this agreement, the United States and European Union will lift the sanctions that helped bring Iran to the negotiating table in the first place. This agreement also contains a mechanism for the snapback of those sanctions if Iran does not comply with its obligations.

Does this agreement achieve everything I would like? No, it does not. But to my mind, it is far better than the path we were on with Iran developing nuclear weapons capability and the potential for military intervention by the United States and Israel growing greater by the day.

Let us not forget that if Iran does not live up to this agreement, sanctions may be reimposed. If Iran moves toward a nuclear weapon, all available options remain on the table. I think it is incumbent upon us, however, to give the negotiated agreement a chance to succeed. It is for these reasons that I will support the agreement.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Illinois.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, how much time is remaining on the Democratic side?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. There are 16½ minutes remaining.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I don't know that we have faced a debate of this historic importance for 12 years, because it was about 12 years ago that we voted on the floor of the Senate on whether to invade Iraq. Senators don't forget those debates. What is at stake is war. What is at stake is human lives—not only the enemy but the innocent and those who are friends.

I remember that debate very well. There were 23 of us who voted against the invasion of Iraq—one Republican, Lincoln Chafee, and 22 Democrats. At the time, we were told by Vice President Cheney, Secretary Rumsfeld, and others that Iraq had weapons of mass destruction and we had to stop them for fear that they would use those weapons against our allies and our friends and even against the United States. It turned out that there were no weapons of mass destruction—none. After the invasion, they scoured the country and could find no evidence of those weapons.

The cost of that war is incalculable. The numbers only tell part of the story. There were 4,844 Americans who lost their lives. Tens of thousands have come home with traumatic brain injury, post-traumatic stress disorder. The cost to our Treasury is in the trillions. That and the war in Afghanistan—incidentally, the longest war in our history—were efforts in the Middle East to try to bring some order to chaos. Only limited success emerged from those efforts after all of the costs were paid in human life and treasure.

Those who are quick to talk about a military option to deal with the Iranians should be reminded, as the Senator from Vermont just said, of the extraordinary cost of that alternative. I have always felt then and now that diplomacy should be the first effort to try to avoid military action, to try to avoid a war. That is what this is about.

This President, Barack Obama, decided to make the sanctions regime tougher than ever. To do it, he had to engage countries from around the world that depended on Iranian oil and were prepared to stop importing Iranian oil to punish them until they would come to the negotiating table. He gets absolutely no credit for that from the other side of the aisle—none—but he should.

He then took our major leaders and allies in the world and brought together a P5+1 coalition. We met with the Ambassadors from these countries. It was hard, just as an amateur student of history, to sit across the table from the Ambassadors of China, Russia, the United Kingdom, Germany, and France and imagine that coalition coming together for any purpose that would serve the United States in the cause of world peace, but they did. The P5+1 came together and entered into a serious negotiation in an effort to stop the Iranians from developing a nuclear weapon. That was the goal. That was the reason for the sanctions.

There are many aspects of Iranian foreign policy and conduct which are reprehensible to me even to this day that don't reach that level of nuclear weaponry, but we focused on nuclear weaponry because we knew that was critical. If Iran developed a nuclear weapon, it would threaten our greatest friend and ally in the Middle East, Israel, as well as other countries that have worked closely with the United States, and trigger an arms race on the Arabian Peninsula, which would have been devastating. So we set out to stop that from happening.

Something happened during the course of that negotiation which was unprecedented in the history of the United States. On March 9, 2015, 47 Republican Senators sent a signed a letter to the Ayatollah, the Supreme Leader in Iran. I have read the letter over and over again and still cannot believe it. On March 9, 2015, 47 Republican Senators sent an open letter to the leaders of the Islamic Republic of Iran which basically said: We know you are in negotiation with the United States over stopping the development of a nuclear weapon, but understand—this letter makes it clear—that this President does not have the last word.

That has never happened before. I have asked those who studied the history of this country if there was ever a time when the United States of America was involved in delicate international negotiations and a group of Senators or Congressmen wrote to the other side—to the Iranians—to tell them to think twice before negotiating with the United States of America. It has never happened. It is unprecedented.

So 47 Republican Senators who did not want to wait until the agreement was reached or written decided in advance to warn the Ayatollah in Iran not to negotiate with the United States or to assume that any agreement would be enforceable with Congress or future Presidents. What a contrast that 47 Republicans would decide in the midst of negotiations to send that letter—what a contrast with the Democratic side of the aisle.

For the last 6 weeks, I have been in touch with my colleagues over here—they are probably tired of hearing from me—talking about this agreement and where they stood. I know, but for a few, what they went through. Many of them were trying to educate themselves on the terms of this agreement because it is complicated. They were talking to experts in the field. One Senator came back and spent 5 hours with the intelligence agencies here in Washington trying to understand the complexities of this agreement and how they worked.

After all of that time, after all of that reflection, and after all of that study, these Senators announced their positions. Forty-two supported the President's position, and four opposed the President's position. Instead of prejudging the agreement or assuming the agreement was bad, they took the time to read it and study it. They took the time to use their responsibilities as Senators to make sure they understood this historic document, and 42 came out in favor of it.

I will tell the Presiding Officer that at this point in history, we have a tough decision to make—whether we as a nation will pursue this agreement in an effort to stop Iran from developing a nuclear weapon or the alternative. I have yet to hear a critic of this agreement honestly present the alternative. The alternative is obvious.

Today Iran owns enough fissile material to make 10 nuclear weapons. The Prime Minister of Israel has warned the world that they are only months away from developing a nuclear weapon in Iran. Yet we hear from the other side of the aisle that we should walk away from any inspections or agreement to stop a nuclear weapon. What is going to happen the next day in Iran if that point of view prevails? What happens if this agreement we have entered into should founder and fail? The door is closed, no inspectors, no negotiations, and Iran is on its own. That is not the recipe for a safer world. That is not the recipe for a safer Israel, as far

as I am concerned, and that is why I support this.

I am happy to be joined in my support with leaders such as GEN Colin Powell, former Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff under a Republican President and former Secretary of State under a Republican President, who has endorsed this agreement. He has told us: Don't trust Iran. Mistrust Iran, if you will, and verify.

We are going to send in scores of inspectors to verify—inspectors who have access to everything in Iran—and if there is a dispute over access, it is one that can be resolved in a matter of days or weeks.

I might add that there are telltale pieces of evidence for the development of nuclear weapons that the Iranians could never destroy in that of period of time. We will know if they have breached this agreement, and in knowing that, we have created the authority within the United Nations for the United States alone to reimpose sanctions based on a breach of this agreement by Iran.

It is an extraordinary agreement. Could it be stronger? Of course. But when we look back throughout history at the skeptics who have attacked Presidents of both political parties who have tried to reach agreements to create a more peaceful world, this is no different. When President Ronald Reagan—literally a deity in the Republican Party—decided to sit down and negotiate with Mikhail Gorbachev over nuclear weapons, the conservative wing of the Republican Party said he was signing a suicide pact, wasting his time, and threatening the United States—Ronald Reagan—in negotiating with Gorbachev. The same held true when Richard Nixon decided to open negotiations with China. The critics on the right were quick to condemn him. Chinese were sponsoring North Vietnamese who were killing American soldiers. There were plenty of reasons not to do it. Richard Nixon did it with bipartisan support, and the world is a better place for the courage he showed.

At this point, as we bring this aspect of the debate to a close—and I see Senator REED is here and will be recognized soon—we listened carefully to those who are critical of this agreement. It turns out that not a single Republican Member of the House or Senate is supporting this agreement—not one. It is hard to think back in diplomatic history when there has been such a partisan division within Congress on an issue of this historic importance and magnitude, but that shouldn't deter us. We need to work with our allies so we can move forward with the inspections and the deadlines to make certain we do everything in our power to bring peace to the Middle East, short of war. Those who want military action should speak up and say so. I don't. I want to see this done through diplomatic means, and I believe this effort is a good-faith effort to achieve that.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Rhode Island.

Mr. REED. Mr. President, the vote the Senate will soon take on a resolution to disapprove the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action, or JCPOA, is both momentous and historic. I, along with my colleagues, have carefully and conscientiously reviewed this agreement. We have each applied our independent judgment as to whether or not it achieves the primary objectives the President set out in the negotiations when they began in November 2013—to prevent Iran from acquiring a nuclear weapon.

Since the conclusion of the negotiations, I have reviewed the text of the agreement, attended and participated in hearings of the Armed Services Committee and Banking Committee with government witnesses and nongovernment witnesses, received a series of classified briefings, and reached out to Rhode Islanders for their views. These venues—all of them—provided a full range of views and opinions and were critical in my review and decision with respect to the JCPOA.

In my view, evaluating the JCPOA rests on three factors. The first is the sufficiency of the provisions to cut off all Iranian pathways to a nuclear weapon. The second is the ability to conscientiously and continuously monitor and verify adherence to these provisions. Finally, we have to evaluate whether this agreement will leave us in a better position than a rejection of the agreement.

This last point of whether the agreement leaves us in a better position than rejecting it touches on two alternatives suggested by opponents of this agreement. The first suggested alternative is that there is a better agreement awaiting us if we simply reject the JCPOA and impose even more stringent sanctions. The second suggested alternative is that, without the JCPOA and with the possibility that an enhanced sanctions regime cannot be reconstituted, we can exercise a military option which will be more effective and less costly than following through with the JCPOA.

For reasons I will discuss in detail in the course of my remarks today, the JCPOA, in my view, does provide adequate measures to interdict Iranian pathways to a nuclear weapon and an unprecedented monitoring and verification regime moving forward. In addition, our national intelligence means will provide further insights into Iranian activities. In this regard, we will be aided by many international partners whose intelligence activities are acutely focused on Iran.

As such, I believe the JCPOA, if scrupulously implemented, will accomplish our objective of preventing Iran from acquiring a nuclear weapon and is a better option than the alternative suggested in lieu of the JCPOA. That is why I intend to support the agreement and will vote against the resolution of disapproval.

To begin this discussion, I think it is important to recognize where we were when President Obama began his efforts to cut off all Iranian pathways to a nuclear weapon. Perhaps the most revealing description comes from Uzi Arad, who in 2009 was the National Security Advisor to newly elected Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu. Arad described Iran's nuclear capacity in an interview with Ha'aretz, an Israeli newspaper. In his words, ''The point of no-return was defined as the point at which Iran has the ability to complete the cycle of nuclear fuel production on its own; the point at which it has all the elements to produce fissionable material without dependency on the outsiders. Iran is now there.'' That was in 2009.

This was the situation that confronted the President and the world in 2009. To glibly suggest today, as some do, that the international community could negotiate Iran back, after they pass the ''point of no return,'' to a position of ''no enrichment'' is to ignore the reality of Iranian efforts, particularly from the mid-2000s forward. For example, in 2006 the Iranians possessed fewer than 400 centrifuges in a research facility. By 2009 they had well over 8,000 centrifuges, together with the essential elements of a nuclear program, taking them beyond the ''point of no return,'' as indicated by Uzi Arad.

Former Secretary of State and National Security Advisor to President George Herbert Walker Bush, GEN Colin Powell, recently made this point as well. He said that Iran has ''been on a superhighway for the last ten years to create a nuclear weapon or a nuclear weapons program, with no speed limit.''

In a similar vein, Amos Yadlin, former head of the Israeli Defense Forces Military Intelligence Directorate and now director of the Institute for National Security Studies, made the point that any analysis or possible options regarding the Iranian nuclear program must begin with the recognition that they have already passed the ''point of no return.'' In his words, ''[t]he starting point for comparing the various scenarios is not one in which Iran has zero nuclear capabilities, but one in which Iran has been—however illegitimately—a nuclear threshold state since the beginning of the current decade.''

The Iranians advanced their nuclear program as the international community insisted on no enrichment but failed either through sanctions, negotiations, or other actions to significantly interrupt Iranian progress on its nuclear infrastructure or nuclear know-how. Instead, when the negotiations began under President Obama, Iran had already acquired approximately 19,000 centrifuges and other essential components of the nuclear program.

Indeed, the administration's diplomatic effort to build an international

coalition to give effect to the sanctions, which ultimately forced the Iranians to negotiate, was done with the P5+1's recognition that a ''no enrichment'' approach would not lead to negotiations. This was not a realistic option.

With that prologue, let me now turn to the elements of the agreement that were critical to my judgment. In the area of cutting off pathways to provide nuclear material for nuclear weapons and Iran's enrichment capacity, this agreement accomplishes a key objective. It constrains and, through the interrelated verification measures, eliminates Iran's ability to produce either plutonium or uranium for a nuclear weapon.

On the uranium pathway, the JCPOA requires Iran to cap its stockpile of low enriched uranium, LEU, to 300 kilograms over 15 years. Why is this significant? First, before November 2013 and the initiation of the interim agreement, Iran had more than 12,000 kilograms of LEU. If fully enriched, this is enough to make seven to eight nuclear weapons.

Second, with this cap Iran will not have sufficient LEU in country to enrich and achieve the quantity necessary to produce a single weapon, even with additional enrichment. In other words, it will have to break a term of the agreement—the 300 kilogram cap of LEU—to have enough feedstock to further enrich and to make the quantity needed for even a single weapon.

On the plutonium pathway, Iran has agreed to redesign and rebuild the heavy water research reactor in Arak. The redesigned and rebuilt reactor, the design of which must be approved by the P5+1, may only support nonmilitary nuclear research in radioisotope production. Why is this significant? Arak has been one of the most concerning elements of Iran's suspected nuclear weapons infrastructure, and this fundamental change to the reactor ensures Iran's plutonium pathway for a nuclear weapon is shut off.

In an alternative scenario, if completed, the heavy water reactor at Arak could have been a proliferation risk of unmatched proportion within their program. It could have allowed Iran to take easily acquired natural uranium from the ground and, over a period of time and through a series of reprocessing steps, make weapons-grade plutonium without the need for centrifuges for enrichment. The elimination of this heavy water reactor, as the Iranians previously envisioned it, is enormously significant.

Further, under the agreement, Iran will be forced to use its first generation centrifuge technology, known as IR–1s. This is a significant check on the program because these are Iran's most inefficient centrifuges. While Iran will be able to install more advanced centrifuges in the future, it will be required to abide by the enrichment plan submitted to the IAEA and to be consistent with the limitation inherent in the Additional Protocol. Also, it is significant that the P5+1 will have 10 years of evaluating, measuring, and assessing Iran's intentions to determine whether its plans and programs are indeed exclusively peaceful, as stated by the preamble to the JCPOA.

More broadly, the agreement's research and development measures provide the international community with insight into Iran's nuclear program. This is a significant opportunity to gauge Iran's intentions and willingness to abide by and comply with its commitments. The JCPOA establishes limitations on advanced centrifuge research, development, testing and deployment in the first 10 years. After that period of time, the international community will continue to have a critical ''distrust-and-verify'' mechanism built into the program. Iran must abide by its enrichment and research and development plan and submit it to the IAEA. This plan is subject to all of the IAEA's inspection and monitoring tools.

Furthermore, the JCPOA includes a permanent prohibition on Iran conducting research and development activities that could contribute to design and development of a nuclear explosive device. This significant prohibition goes well beyond the limitations of the non-nuclear weapons statement in the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty.

Taken together, closing off the pathways to a weapon and the constraints on enrichment and R&D, Iran's breakout time for a single nuclear weapon will remain at least 1 year for each of the first 10 years of this agreement and, critically, Iran's breakout time will remain longer than the two to three months it was in November of 2013.

Before I move on to the next area of discussion, I acknowledge that legitimate concerns have been raised about Iranian activities after the first 10 years of the agreement, sometimes referred to as the ''out years.'' During this time, Iran's breakout time could shrink substantially. However, the initial 10 years of the JCPOA will be critical for the international community to measure and assess Iran's intentions.

A recent analysis of the JCPOA by Robert Einhorn, a noted expert in nonproliferation and a senior fellow at the Brookings Institution, is instructive in this area. In his words:

> If Iranian leaders . . . believed their national interests were best served by having nuclear weapons, they would run major risks in going forward, with no guarantee of success. Even in the 'out years,' the JCPOA's rigorous monitoring arrangements will remain in force. The world will have gained intimate knowledge of Iran's nuclear program, which would give the United States prompt warning of any Iranian effort to make a dash for the bomb.

In any case, the P5+1 must begin now to communicate its insistence that Iran operate consistent with a peaceful nuclear program after the initial 10-year period. The international community must convey in stark terms to the Iranians that a rapid buildup of enrichment capacity after 10 years, beyond what they need for their existing nuclear fuel cycle, will be considered an abandonment of the principles embodied in JCPOA, and that the P5+1 will need to evaluate alternative options.

Now, if my colleagues will allow me to discuss the area of inspection, monitoring, and verification. For me, the agreement must be built on a principle of ''distrust and verify.'' Former Secretary of State Colin Powell put it nicely. He said: ''It's don't trust, never trust, and always verify.'' And the architecture our negotiators designed to verify compliance with this agreement took this approach and set new precedents in key areas: access, modern technological monitoring, and the requirement for affirmative approval for certain actions. Thus, this is a custom-built, rigorously ''red teamed'' verification regime that is more stringent than any other previously created.

Specifically, the JCPOA does the following: Inspectors from the IAEA will have regular access to all of Iran's nuclear-related facilities. This includes Iran's two primary sites at Natanz and Fordow.

Inspectors will have cradle-to-grave access to Iran's nuclear supply chain, including uranium mines, mills, and centrifuge production and storage facilities that support Iran's nuclear program for at least 10 years and in many cases longer.

The verification regime established by this agreement has the effect of making the entire Iranian nuclear program auditable. This is a powerful tool that will make it possible for IAEA inspectors to know whether Iran is diverting material to a possible covert program.

Iran has agreed to apply provisionally the IAEA's Additional Protocol. This Additional Protocol to the IAEA comprehensive safeguards agreement further augments the agency's ability to investigate suspected clandestine facilities and activities. Of great importance, this is an enduring requirement for Iran beyond the JCPOA's terms.

A dedicated and exclusive procurement channel for Iran's nuclear program will be established to manage all purchases of the nuclear supplier group's ''trigger list'' and dual-use items. This additional step provides an intrusive authorization and transparency mechanism through which the IAEA can control what is coming into the country and gauge whether the requirement is consistent with the needs of the program and Iran's intentions. Any such procurement outside that channel would be a violation of the JCPOA.

This agreement is often casually compared to the 1994 Agreed Framework with North Korea. Not only are there significant differences between the two, but provisions of the JCPOA were specifically written to provide

more stringent verification based on the lessons from the 1994 agreement. One of the most significant differences was pointed out again by Robert Einhorn. As he indicated, a key weakness of the 1994 Agreed Framework was that ''it only provided for IAEA monitoring at the nuclear facility at Yongbyon. It did not provide for monitoring in the rest of the country because that was the only declared site.''

Under the JCPOA, Iran must implement and abide by the Additional Protocol to its Safeguards Agreement under the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, an addendum that the IAEA designed to address the ability of a nation to covertly develop a nuclear weapons program, as Iraq did after the first Gulf War. The Additional Protocol applies to all facilities that take part in any element of the nuclear fuel cycle of a state. The JCPOA is significantly more stringent in this regard than the 1994 framework.

More specifically, the Additional Protocol will allow IAEA inspectors access to suspected undeclared nuclear sites anywhere in the country so as to prevent Iran from conducting clandestine nuclear activity. If Iran does not provide access, it is in violation of the agreement and sanctions will be reimposed.

Iran's compliance with the Additional Protocol in the years after the term of the JCPOA will continue to provide the IAEA with a powerful tool to conduct inspections of Iran's nuclear infrastructure. Again, the creation of the Additional Protocol was in direct response to previous efforts to circumvent the IAEA's monitoring efforts in Iraq and North Korea.

An additional element of the monitoring and compliance regime is the independent and unilateral role that the U.S. Intelligence Community and its intelligence liaison services will play in validating Iran's compliance or noncompliance. While we can never be certain that these intelligence efforts will provide a complete picture of all Iranian nuclear activities, they provide a critical assessment of Iran's compliance with the agreement, Iran's perceptions of the cost and benefits of compliance with the agreement, and key insights into the Iranian leadership's priorities for the program. As a member of both the Armed Services Committee and the Select Committee on Intelligence, these activities and insights will also serve as a critical tool for my colleagues and me to gauge the success or failure of this agreement.

Over the course of the Armed Services Committee hearings, there was detailed questioning on several topics but one in particular: the 24-day period of time that Iran has available to it under the agreement to potentially delay access for IAEA inspectors to a facility suspected of prohibited activity. Secretary Moniz offered a helpful insight into this area. He said:

> The 24-day period is itself new in the sense there has never been any time limit in terms of access to undeclared sites. Again, to repeat, on nuclear materials we have very, very sensitive capabilities and historically those have been proved.

But Secretary Moniz went on to speak candidly as he said:

> With regard to nonnuclear materials, it gets more difficult. However, when one has nuclear weapons specialized activity, such as explosively driven neutron initiators, we would not be without tools to detect activities in that kind of a time period. But clearly, as one gets farther and farther away into let's say, just conventional explosive testing, which is something militaries do normally, then it's a question of intelligence putting together the context for suspicious activities. But nuclear material, in the end, you need to do nuclear materials to get to the weapon and that's where we have extraordinary techniques.

Now, critics of the agreement have said that this 24-day period of time is too long and offers Iran too much time to cover up its activities. As Secretary Moniz stated clearly, this is a possibility as it relates to certain non-nuclear activities. However, if Iran introduces fissile materials into these activities, Iran's ability to cover its tracks in 24 days is extremely unlikely.

I also believe this part of the agreement is an area where Iran's intentions need to be subjected to constant questioning and evaluation. If Iran is challenging the IAEA inspectors at every turn, it should be interpreted as an indication of its intent with respect to the permanent commitment it made on the third page of the agreement: ''Iran reaffirms that under no circumstances will Iran ever seek, develop, or acquire nuclear weapons.''

This is a strong restatement of its basic obligations as a non-nuclear weapons state under the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty. A pattern of frustrating IAEA inspectors should be seen as a clear warning of possible reneging on this central commitment.

Let me at this juncture discuss the duration of the agreement. Critics have made a variety of comments in this area of duration. Some argue that Iran can begin enriching beyond the low-enriched limit of 3.67 percent fissile uranium at year 16. That is true, but Iran could do that tomorrow without this agreement. Nevertheless, some argue that this agreement simply suspends Iran's program in place for a decade. In my view, this is not an accurate characterization as many of the access and verification elements of the agreement go well past 10 years or 15 years. Indeed, some are permanent. Iran's commitment under the Nuclear Non-proliferation Treaty and its Additional Protocol remain in place, and their compliance with it will be a key metric for the P5+1. Further, the international community's ability to impose sanctions always remains available.

Now I want to address the area of possible military dimensions or PMD. Iran has agreed to address all the past and present outstanding PMD issues in a comprehensive and time-limited manner. This requirement is laid out clearly in paragraph 66 of Annex I of the JCPOA. It is further articulated in more detail in the IAEA's July 14, 2015, ''Road-map for the Clarification of Past & Present Outstanding Issues regarding Iran's Nuclear Program.''

Resolving the issue of PMD is critical for a number of reasons. It is critical that the IAEA is able to complete its investigation of PMD and issue an independent assessment of any nuclear weapons-related work Iran has conducted in the past. The IAEA made clear in the Director General's November 2011 report on PMD that unanswered questions remain. The U.N. Security Council has endorsed and reinforced the requirement that Iran address these questions.

Under the agreement, if Iran complies, the IAEA will again gain access to Parchin, and the IAEA will be provided the additional accesses to people, places, and other items it has requested. However, Iran gets nothing in the way of sanctions relief if it does not address these unanswered questions to the satisfaction of the IAEA.

Some critics of the agreement have also suggested that IAEA has outsourced to Iran its inspection of Parchin, the most infamous of Iran's suspected facilities. I have been briefed extensively on this matter in a classified setting. Those briefings are consistent with the conclusion of IAEA Director General Yukiya Amano. He has stated the agreement with the Iranians is, in his words, ''technically sound'' and does not—again in his words—''compromise [the IAEA's] safeguards standards in any way.''

Secretary Moniz has further assured me of this fact. We know the Iranians have repeatedly attempted to eradicate any sign of their activities at the Parchin site. Thus, it is unlikely that any significant PMD-related activities have occurred there in the last 4 years. We do not know what signs of past activities will remain at the site. Importantly, the IAEA will be able to confirm whether there is any ongoing nuclear-related activity at that location.

Critics of the arrangement to inspect Parchin have also suggested that the IAEA has entered into a secret side deal with Iran. In fact, the United States and all the other NPT member countries—Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty countries—have confidential agreements with the IAEA which cannot be shared.

These agreements vary by country, but they are designed to protect the integrity of the IAEA inspection process and the sensitive technical and design information about peaceful national nuclear programs. The IAEA and the Obama administration have taken extraordinary steps to brief Congress on this agreement in a classified setting. These briefings have been informative and helpful to understand more fully what we can expect in the months and years ahead.

Now, I would like to discuss at this point the topic of the arms embargo

and missile sanctions, which is part of this arrangement. Like many of my colleagues, I remain concerned about the elements of this agreement that relate to these issues. The inclusion of these provisions in the JCPOA is directly related to the fact that the United States secured these measures in U.N. Security Council Resolution 1929 to pressure Iran to address the international community's concerns with respect to its nuclear program. Since these sanctions were deemed by the P5+1 to be related to the nuclear program through the U.N. Resolution, they were within the ambit of sanctions relief.

Nevertheless, moving forward, this is an area where the United States needs to leverage the available sanctions and additional tools under other U.N. Security Council resolutions to keep pressure on Iran. For example, other U.N. Security Council resolutions prohibit Iranian transfers of arms to groups such as the Houthis in Yemen, nonstate actors in Lebanon, which includes Hezbollah, the Taliban in Afghanistan, and Shi'a militias in Iraq, as well as North Korea, Libya, and several sub-Saharan states in Africa.

This will mean the Treasury Department, the State Department, and the Intelligence Community must double their efforts to identify prohibited activities and build the international architecture necessary to counter it and deter them.

It also means working with our partners on the Missile Technology Control Regime, or MTCR, to prevent the spread of critical missile technologies, and with our more than 100 partners under the Bush administration's Proliferation Security Initiative, or PSI, to help limit Iranian missile-related imports or exports.

It may also mean what former Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs Nick Burns recently suggested to the Senate Armed Services Committee, which is that we will need to, in his words, ''reconstitute a coalition of sanctions countries against Iran five years from now on conventional weapons, eight years from now on ballistic missiles.'' I believe the next 5 years will provide the international community a critical measuring stick for Iranian intentions, and we must be prepared to lead efforts to preclude Iran from obtaining enhanced military technologies.

Now, a bulk of the work that will be done and will be so central to our efforts will be done by the IAEA. The IAEA will be responsible for carrying on the ground the implementation of this agreement on behalf of the P5+1. While critics of the agreement are quick to call into question the technical expertise and skills of the IAEA, it is comprised of individuals with extensive training and experience and a deep commitment to the importance of nonproliferation work.

A recent study by Tom Shea, a noted safeguards expert with experience at the IAEA and in the laboratory community, concludes:

> The IAEA's capabilities have been extended, strengthened and refined over the years in response to real-world proliferation cases in Iraq and North Korea. Its current capacity reflects the international community's decades-long investment in the organization, and the continuing commitment of states around the world to its mission.

I would also note that upwards of 200 IAEA technical experts will be devoted to implementing this agreement. This number far exceeds any number of experts and inspectors devoted to any one country by the IAEA.

Allow me now to focus on the area of sanctions and our ability to reapply them. First, it is critical that we remember Iran will receive no new sanctions relief if it does not complete its nuclear commitments and the IAEA's inspectors verify those steps. Let me be specific here. Prior to granting any further sanctions relief, Iran must, as verified by the IAEA, demonstrate that it has implemented the necessary steps with respect to, No. 1, the Arak heavy water research reactor; No. 2, its overall enrichment capacity; No. 3, its centrifuge research and development; No. 4, the Fordow fuel enrichment plant; No. 5, its uranium stocks and fuel; No. 6, its centrifuge manufacturing; No. 7, completing the modalities and facilities-specific arrangements to allow the IAEA to implement all transparency measures and the Additional Protocol and Modified Code 3.1; No. 8, its centrifuge component manufacturing transparency; and, No. 9, addressing the past and present issues of concern relating to PMD.

This means that Iran must take significant steps to roll back and freeze its nuclear program before it gets anything in the way of sanctions relief. In testimony before the Senate banking committee, Adam Szubin, the acting Under Secretary of Treasury said:

> We expect that [process] to take at least six to nine months. Until Iran completes those steps, we are simply extending the limited relief that has been in place the last year and a half under the Joint Plan of Action. There will not be a cent of new sanctions relief.

Moreover, while the President will waive the application of the nuclear-related sanctions under the terms of the JCPOA, the U.S. sanctions, which include the Central Bank and other financial sanctions, will remain available until Congress acts to terminate them. This will allow Congress to monitor an extended period of Iran's compliance before taking any such action. This also gives the President a strong hand because the ability to quickly snap back nuclear-related sanctions means that we can again shut off, to a substantial degree, Iran's access to the international financial system, to international markets, and to international financing that relies on access to the U.S. banking system.

It is important to note that this agreement does not take away the tools available to the President to target sanctions against Iran's violation of human rights or to damage Iran's ability to finance terrorism. U.S. secondary sanctions remain in place.

As Richard Nephew, a fellow at the Center on Global Energy Policy at Columbia University, recently told the Senate Armed Services Committee, under the agreement:

> [The] United States will still be able to pressure banks and companies into not doing business with the IRGC, the Quds Force, Qasem Soleimani, and Iran's military and missile forces. This is both due to direct risk of U.S. secondary sanctions, which remain in place, and an improvement in international banking practices since 9/11.

These secondary sanctions are not insignificant tools, and our use of them in response to human rights violators and terrorism are not a violation of the agreement. As Under Secretary Szubin recently told the Senate banking committee on the matter of terrorism sanctions:

> [O]ne of the most powerful [tools] . . . is that when we sanction Iranian terrorist supporters, our designation is amplified internationally. What I mean by that is, when we name a Hezbollah financier, a Hezbollah money launderer, any bank worldwide, not just American banks, any bank worldwide that facilitates transactions for that designated entity faces very severe sanctions from the U.S., sanctions that no bank wants to face.

Under Secretary Szubin has also indicated that the United States will do more in the area of terrorism-related sanctions. Should Iran decide to continue its destabilizing actions in the region, increasing the cost in this area will be critical, so it is important to note the administration's willingness to ramp up pressure in the face of such conduct by the Iranians.

Particular attention has rightly been paid to the amount of sanctions relief Iran will receive and Iran's likely use of that sanctions relief. This is an important issue. While we do not know what Iran will do with it, we do know a couple of things. First, the amount of sanction relief is not $100 or $150 billion as some critics of the deal have suggested. According to the Treasury Department, the number is between $50 and $60 billion. While this number is significant, it is one-third of what many critics have asserted.

Second, it is likely that Iran will invest a portion of this money into its economy to address the concerns of its people and to begin to recover from the international sanctions regime, but it may also invest in its financing of terrorism across the region. General Dempsey has rightly suggested, ''[t]he answer is probably a little bit of both.'' What we will need to do is monitor closely, particularly via our Intelligence Community, where Iran is making its investments and actively counter those maligned activities.

Now, I believe the JCPOA is the best option available to us right now. Critics recommend rejecting the JCPOA and advocating a regime of new and increasingly crippling sanctions that are

more effective to ensuring Iran does not acquire a nuclear weapon. It is my view that this alternative is not feasible at this time and may, indeed, be counterproductive.

Moreover, the options for enhanced sanctions and even military operations remain available to the United States and our P5+1 partners should Iran at any time fail to comply with the JCPOA. Indeed, noncompliance would be more likely to find an international commitment for aggressive action than a rejection of the JCPOA. Such a rejection could give the Iranians the opening to argue that it can resume all of its existing activities prior to the interim agreement and insist that international sanctions have been nullified by our rejection of the JCPOA.

If the United States were now to say ''this deal is not good enough,'' it would likely have the immediate effect of alienating us from our partners and, therefore, empowering Iran. Iran would seize this opening to drive a wedge between us and our European allies, as well as Russia and China. Such an action by the United States would play right into the hands of Iran, both in terms of the viability of the multilateral sanctions regime and in terms of the obligations it has already agreed to take under this agreement.

It is difficult to imagine a scenario in which the United States can break, at this juncture, with its most critical economic partners on the Iran nuclear program and then secure more stringent sanctions.

Another complicating factor in this scenario is the outcome for the hardliners in Iran. Undoubtedly, their narrative can gain additional traction in Tehran and they may be able to seize an even greater amount of power and influence. This makes the ''more sanctions'' approach more concerning because it could produce the unintended consequence of empowering the most strident elements in Iran.

The second most common option discussed by critics of this agreement is the military option. In this regard, it is critical that we understand some points up front. Unless we are prepared to invade and occupy Iran, executing a military option to destroy the nuclear infrastructure will only delay Iran's nuclear program. It will not bomb away Iran's knowledge, and it will empower significantly the hardliners in Iran who are committed to developing a nuclear weapon. They will likely disperse and disguise their activities so that military strikes are increasingly ineffective and produce significant collateral damage, which will be exploited by the Iranians for propaganda purposes.

On this issue of delay, General Dempsey provided two important insights. First, in response to a question asking for his military assessment on what is more effective in delaying or stopping the Iranian nuclear program at this time or in the near future, a military strike or this P5+1 agreement, he said:

> First . . . I would like to point out that the military options remain. Secondly, I think a negotiated settlement provides a more durable—and reduces near term risk, which buys time to work with regional partners to address the other malign activities.

He also said:

> Our government's policy has been they will not get a nuclear weapon and nothing we're talking about here today should change that policy.

This agreement does not change that longstanding and clearly articulated U.S. policy.

I also agree with the assessment of former Senators John Warner and Carl Levin—both of whom served terms as the chairman of the Armed Services Committee—that a vote against this deal is a vote to undermine the deterrent value and credibility of our military option.

Closer examination of the military option raises the critical question of our objective if we were to use force—to delay the nuclear program or to overthrow the regime so as to eliminate the nuclear threat? In either case, a daunting scenario emerges. As previously discussed, if our focus is limited only to Iran's nuclear program, the United States—likely alone or nearly alone—will need to conduct a similar option every few years, as the Iranians will undoubtedly make their nuclear program an operation that is conducted in smaller and more numerous locations in areas that are increasingly difficult to locate and deeper in the ground or masked by civilian activities in populated areas.

If we conduct such targeted strikes, analysts suggest that the Iranians will respond. Such responses could include attacks against U.S. forces in the gulf region and Afghanistan; attacks against Israel by Iran's most capable proxy, Hezbollah; attacks against our partners in the GCC; attacks against the region's energy infrastructure; or a combination of all of the above. Along with the significant economic consequences, the loss of personnel and resource drain on our Nation's military could be severe. Ironically, an additional consequence would be a shift in resources away from the campaign against the Islamic State in the Levant—or ISIL—particularly in Iraq, and our ongoing efforts to consolidate the international community's gains in Afghanistan.

On the other hand, if our military objective was regime change, I would first remind my colleagues of the Iraq war and all of the implications that exercising that military option had on the region.

In 2012, Michael O'Hanlon of the Brookings Institution wrote:

> An occupation of Iran would require up to one million U.S. and other foreign troops over an extended time and, hence, would indeed be implausible. But an invasion, with the single goal of deposing the government, could be considered a possibility under extreme circumstances—if for example there were unmistakable evidence that Iran's current government was preparing a major attack on Israel, or if it responded to any U.S. ''surgical'' air campaign with an all-out global terrorist response, using Hezbollah and various elements of its security apparatus.

Although Michael O'Hanlon makes a distinction between an ''occupation'' and an ''invasion,'' our experience in both Iraq and Afghanistan should demonstrate that the deployment of ground forces to effect regime change is unlikely to produce a quick exit, so we must be prepared for his ''implausible''—an expensive occupation with a million military personnel on the ground.

Thus, as some observers continue to discuss the military option regardless of the scope and intent of it, I would urge them to ensure that their analysis goes beyond the first day, first month, or first 6 months of conflict and rather considers the first year, first 5 years, and first decade of conflict. Our Nation has seen the great cost of war over the past 15 years.

This agreement retains the military options for the Commander in Chief and at the same time establishes an arrangement with the Iranians that allows us to test vigorously and monitor invasively the intentions of the Iranian regime's nuclear program. This is one major reason at this point that the JCPOA is the most compelling option.

A number of noted national security experts and a number of my colleagues and Americans have discussed the importance of ensuring Iran is not only constrained with respect to its nuclear program but also with respect to its regional hegemonic aspirations and its support directly and indirectly of terrorism. These negotiations did not cover other hostile, objectionable actions by Iran—namely, its support of terrorism, its destabilizing activities across the region, its abuse of its own people, and ongoing detention of American citizens. We cannot condone or ignore these critical issues, and they all must be addressed. But absent implementation of this agreement, the threats posed by Iran would likely be amplified as it returns to deliberate and focused efforts to build a nuclear infrastructure.

The choice before us under the Iran Nuclear Agreement Review Act is exclusively on the nuclear dimension. But without the JCPOA, I suspect the Iranian nuclear challenge will grow quickly, adding further menace to their regional aspirations and their support of terrorism. Critically, any of these other objectionable Iranian behaviors would be far more dangerous if Iran acquired nuclear weapons.

As I said earlier, I evaluate this agreement with great skepticism. Iran is a major sponsor of terrorism and a leader in other destabilizing activities across the Middle East. As I mentioned previously, though, the negotiations to secure this agreement were not focused on Iran's support of terrorism. This matter remains outstanding, and charting a pragmatic and implemen-

table strategy to counter it is critical to U.S. national security interests.

More broadly, however, these negotiations are not without precedent. During the Cold War, we negotiated with the Soviets despite their persistent destabilizing activities in many parts of the world. In fact, President Nixon was still in negotiation with the Soviets even while they still supported the North Vietnamese.

Graham Allison, a noted nonproliferation expert at Harvard's Belfer Center, noted in testimony before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee recently that ''claims that the U.S. cannot reach advantageous agreements to constrain nuclear arms with states we are seeking to contain, or subvert, or even overthrow . . . are . . . wrong. [The Reagan] administration's core national security strategy for competition with the Soviet Union . . . states that 'U.S. policy towards the Soviet Union will consist of three elements: external resistance to Soviet imperialism; internal pressure on the USSR to weaken the sources of Soviet imperialism;' and 'engaging the Soviet Union in negotiations to attempt to reach agreements which protect and enhance U.S. interests and which are consistent with the principle of strict reciprocity and mutual interest.' ''

Even with the JCPOA, I do not suspect that the Iranian support for their proxies will automatically abate under this agreement, and I do not think this agreement is a forcing mechanism for modifying Iranian behavior in the region. I do, however, think this agreement takes the near-term scenario of a nuclear-armed Iran bent on supporting its proxies in the Middle East off the table. And I believe it is for the time being sensible for the United States and our partners to take stock of Iran's willingness to comply with this agreement; monitor its activities closely in the region to see if they increase, decrease, or remain the same; and, in parallel, work with our regional partners to counter Iran's asymmetric threats.

On the matter of our regional partners in the Middle East, I see two critical matters that must be addressed.

First, our partners in Israel rightly see Iran as a significant and ongoing threat to their national security. It is incumbent upon the United States to better understand the concerns of the Israelis with respect to their gaps in addressing the Iranian problem set and to identify areas of cooperation on military and intelligence matters that address these gaps and maintain their qualitative military edge at all times.

Second, it is also critical that our partners and allies know that the United States will not abandon the region in the wake of this agreement. This message is critical for all of our partners to hear and understand.

The May 2015 joint statement following the United States and Gulf Cooperation Council meeting at Camp David provided a roadmap for how the administration intends to proceed. The joint statement indicates that the United States will be increasing training and exercise engagements with GCC special operation forces elements so as to better enable our partners to confront Iran's asymmetric capabilities, as well as enhancing the ballistic missile defense capabilities of the GCC and improving their interoperability to increase collective defense in order to counter Iran's support of terrorist proxies. These are important and essential efforts that will consume significant time and effort in the Middle East, and it will be critical that we ensure that they are resourced appropriately. The added benefit of these activities is that they will provide the U.S. military with additional access and capabilities in the region to ensure that the military option remains credible to the Iranians and available to the President.

Mr. President, I approached this vote with deep suspicion regarding Iran, and I see the agreement for what it is—a combination of opportunities and risks. I believe these negotiations were necessarily focused on denying Iran a pathway to a nuclear weapon. A nuclear-armed Iran would be a formidable force in the Middle East and, as it has repeatedly demonstrated, not a force for peace and stability. Moreover, a nuclear-armed Iran would likely prompt a nuclear arms race in the region that through accident or design could lead to catastrophe. This agreement provides a framework to close off Iran's pathways to a nuclear weapon.

Rejecting the resolution of disapproval is vitally important, but effective, unrelenting implementation of the JCPOA will be the real test. As such, it is critical that both the President and the Congress exert every effort to ensure that there are unstinting efforts to monitor and sustain the provisions of the agreement. This effort demands constant attention and ample—more than ample funding for the indefinite future.

As Gen. Brent Scowcroft, former National Security Advisor to President George Herbert Walker Bush, recently stated in a Washington Post op-ed supporting the agreement:

> Implementation and verification will be the key to success, and Congress has an important role. It should ensure that the [IAEA], other relevant bodies and U.S. intelligence agencies have all the resources necessary to facilitate inspection and monitor compliance.

I believe General Scowcroft is correct. Iranian compliance and the implementation phase of this agreement is critical no matter how you vote on the resolution of disapproval.

It is also important that we ensure that the administration is able to follow through on the commitments they have made to our allies and partners in the Middle East, especially to the State of Israel. Again, General Scowcroft makes an excellent point. The United States must work, in his words, ''closely with the GCC and other allies to moderate Iranian behavior in the region, countering it where necessary.'' Absent support and resourcing for the implementation phase of this agreement, these efforts may not happen and our efforts to reassure our partners in the region may fail.

Soon, this debate will be over. I believe sustaining the JCPOA will leave us in a strong position to counter potential Iranian proliferation. But regardless of the outcome of this debate, we must not relax our efforts in countering Iranian nuclear aspirations, regional aggression, and the sponsorship of terrorism. I believe the JCPOA will give us valuable tools to monitor and interdict their pathways to a nuclear weapon, but it will require day-to-day surveillance and, where necessary, intervention to increase our chances of success.

In many respects, we are at a moment that recalls the emotional words of Winston Churchill:

> Now this is not the end. It is not even the beginning of the end. But it is, perhaps, the end of the beginning.

We have concluded an agreement that dramatically constrains Iran's nuclear ambitions. Now the hard work begins each day to ensure that our aspirations become real.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. LEE). The Senator from Connecticut.

Mr. BLUMENTHAL. Mr. President, I am honored to follow my friend and colleague from Rhode Island in his very eloquent and powerful remarks, and I wish to add my own on the same topic. The question of whether the Senate should accept the agreement between the P5+1 and Iran to end their illicit and treacherous nuclear program is one of the most difficult and critical matters of national security that I have confronted since my election to the Senate.

I am deeply grateful to many in my State of Connecticut, here in Washington, DC, and around the country who have offered me their insight, interest, and involvement—most especially the people of Connecticut who have given me their thoughts in letters, in emails, phone calls, and in one-on-one conversations across our State in a vast variety of settings, whether at parades or fairs or in one-on-one meetings or meetings in groups. I have made my decision based on conscience and conviction. I will vote to accept the proposed agreement concerning Iran's nuclear program and against the resolution of disapproval before the Senate.

My two paramount goals have been consistently and constantly to prevent a nuclear-armed Iran and to do so by peaceful means. I believe this agreement, using diplomacy, not military force, is the most viable remaining path now available—now available—to prevent a nuclear-armed Iran.

This agreement is not the one I would have negotiated or accepted, but

it is better than no deal. This agreement is an opportunity for us to push back and deter Iran, and it brings on us a special obligation of vigilance and vigorous enforcement. It can be made better. It can be improved and strengthened through unilateral action by the United States and through consultation and collaboration with our allies, not resuming or reopening the negotiations but acting in collaboration with our allies, as well as through actions we can take as a nation alone and working closely with our ally, our friend, our critical partner in the Middle East, the State of Israel.

The administration set forth a case that the current agreement immediately reduces Iran's nuclear program and places it under a series of overlapping safeguards. Together these measures push a threshold nuclear power back from the brink. The agreement imposes an intrusive inspection and surveillance regime relying on international certification and verification by the International Atomic Energy Agency. Future U.S. Presidents have the authority immediately and through Executive order to reimpose our sanctions if Iranian actions are inconsistent with our national security.

Rejecting this agreement is fraught with unacceptable risk. Our formal negotiation partners and allies have signaled clearly they are simply not coming back to the table—a point confirmed in my direct conversations and meetings. There is no better deal available now. The present sanctions will soon become unenforceable, producing an economic windfall for Iran whether or not the United States accepts this agreement. The United States, instead of Iran, would be isolated, and Iran's nuclear program would be unconstrained. Rejection would fracture our unified efforts with our allies and greatly weaken international pressure on Iran and undermine American leadership on this issue and others, especially if economic sanctions are needed in the event of a violation.

This agreement has shortcomings, no doubt, and they are serious. I have listened to my colleagues, including Chairman CORKER, whom I deeply respect, and others here today, enumerate a number of them. Yet I remain convinced the most constructive and clear-eyed role for Congress is to support specific steps to make implementation and enforcement of this agreement stronger and more effective. In fact, in my view, the day after this agreement is approved and accepted is as important as the agreement itself—the day after, the months after, and the years after because that is when this agreement must be enforced vigorously and strenuously and unyieldingly.

I have taken additional time to look beyond this agreement to create a blueprint for diplomatic steps to strengthen it. Specifically, I am working with the ranking member of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, Senator BEN CARDIN of Maryland, to craft new legislation. Congress must act to encourage and enable diplomacy with Iran, which is not only possible but critically important. Now we must begin the process of addressing those shortfalls and shortcomings, unwanted impacts and consequences revealed during congressional review of the agreement.

No. 1, countering Iranian terror with dollar-for-dollar sanctions. To counter Iran's role as a leading state sponsor of terrorism, Congress must sustain and expand existing sanctions that crack down on terror financing and demand their full enforcement by both the United States and the European Union.

I will continue—indeed, I will increase—pressing Secretary of State John Kerry to take long overdue, aggressive steps to interdict arms to Hezbollah, and I will work to block Hezbollah's financing and logistical support from Iran, applying tools and techniques available through our banking and financial system.

No. 2, empowering our allies to counter Iran and terror proxies. We must renew and reinvigorate our efforts to protect our allies, especially Israel—our major strategic partner in the Middle East—from the threat of Iran and its terror proxies. We need a new framework of defense cooperation that takes into account how this agreement will affect the changing threat from Iran.

Congress must work to expand Israel's qualitative military edge and bolster intelligence cooperation. The Pentagon must establish new joint training exercises that involve strategic air assets and invite Israeli pilots to train flying long-range bombers. Now is the time to aid Israel with extra F–35 Joint Strike Fighter squadrons and the tankers they need to cut off any threat to Israel—well before it reaches their borders. No equipment should be precluded if needed for Israel's self-defense.

As a member of the Senate Committee on Armed Services, I will work to establish such a parallel agreement with Israel to cover threats, both nuclear and conventional, along with an ongoing joint review forum, bringing together the United States, Israel, and NATO members to enhance our deterrent capabilities.

No. 3, preventing a nuclear-armed Iran. The United States must reaffirm unequivocally that Iran will never be allowed to obtain a nuclear weapon and that all available options will be used to stop it from ever accumulating enough highly enriched uranium or weapons-grade plutonium to produce one. Such a policy is consistent with this agreement.

Congress must articulate in statute that that policy is unchallengeable and that Iranian violations both during this agreement and afterward will be met with strong, unquestionable action. It must be clear we will defend our vital interests in the Persian Gulf region, and those vital interests include preventing a nuclear-armed Iran. It is a fundamental tenet of our foreign policy.

As a member of the agreement, the United States is in a stronger position to deter and remedy violations, whether through economic sanctions or military action as a last resort. If the agreement is rejected and economic sanctions or military actions are ever necessary, we would act alone. That is a simple fact about our rejection. If the agreement is accepted, we act with a coalition of allies and partners with the legitimacy and credibility of diplomacy having run its course and with the intelligence produced by inspections that will help to guide any military action necessary as a last resort. There will be popular support at home, which is absolutely necessary for such action. That support is essential because acting without it will make it difficult, if not impossible, for the President to in effect seek to enforce the very terms of an agreement this Nation has rejected, if that is the result.

Most importantly, this agreement cannot be based on hope or trust. History belies both in our experience with Iran. This deal is not an agreement I have long sought, it is not the agreement I would have preferred, but it makes the threat of a nuclear-armed Iran less imminent. It requires the United States and the international community to sustain their commitment to verify and enforce its provisions over many years, and I am ready to join in the hard work of preventing a nuclear-armed Iran on this difficult diplomatic path.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New Hampshire.

Ms. AYOTTE. Mr. President, I come to the floor to discuss what I believe is probably the most important foreign policy issue I have worked on in my time in the Senate. It is one of great consequence to our Nation and also to our allies.

I don't come to this decision lightly, but there are many reasons I would urge this body to disapprove the agreement that has been entered into between the Obama administration, the Iranian Government, and the P5+1 nations.

First of all, we need to understand the country we are dealing with. Just today the Iranian Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei said: I am saying to Israel that they won't live to see the end of these 25 years. With Allah's help, there will be no such thing as a Zionist regime in 25 years.

Of course, this is not the first time we have heard this from the Supreme Leader or the leaders of Iran. We are in this position even after having entered this agreement and having had the President go to the U.N. to seek approval of this agreement prior to coming to the Congress. We know that while this agreement was being negotiated, the Iranian Foreign Minister

was smiling for the cameras and negotiating the agreement, while the President of Iran was actually at rallies in Iran where they were shouting ''Down with America'' and ''Death to Israel.''

Iran itself has a history that is important for us to understand. That history is a history of noncompliance. Iran has time and time again failed to comply with U.N. resolutions and failed to meet its obligations. Iran has violated U.N. Security Council resolutions. Iran has violated the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty in the past. Iran has consistently been unresponsive to the International Atomic Energy Agency in the past—the IAEA—and Iran has failed to answer questions about its past nuclear weapons activities. If there is no covert, undeclared nuclear facility in Iran today, Olli Heinonen, a former IAEA Deputy Director, has said it would be the first time in 20 years.

So one of the important issues, I believe, for any of us in reviewing this agreement is: What is the inspection regime that would be put in place to assure not only that we are doing a full inspection at the declared facilities of Iran but also the undeclared facilities? The reality is that under this agreement, the process for seeking inspection by the IAEA for undeclared facilities is a process that only a lawyer could love—and I happen to be one—because if we look at the language of the actual agreement, we will see in paragraph 75 that ''if the IAEA has concerns regarding undeclared nuclear materials or activities, or activities inconsistent with the JCPOA, at locations that have not been declared under the comprehensive safeguards agreement'' the IAEA first has to ''provide Iran [with] the basis for such concerns and request clarification.''

So that is the first step. Then, ''if Iran's explanations do not resolve the IAEA's concerns, the Agency may request access to such locations for the sole reason to verify the absence of undeclared nuclear materials and activities'' and the IAEA also has to ''provide Iran the reasons for access in writing and will make available all relevant information.''

Then, Iran may come back and ''propose to the IAEA alternative means of resolving the IAEA's concerns that enable the IAEA to verify the absence of undeclared nuclear materials and activities . . . . ''

So if those alternatives aren't accepted from Iran, then, ''if the two sides are unable to reach satisfactory agreements to verify the absence of'' an undeclared nuclear facility, then at that point there is a process that goes into place, and that process—which has been described on this Senate floor—can take up to 24 days.

But we need to understand there is a whole litigation process that occurs even before those days, and this can be a much longer process.

Then, how does this get resolved? This gets resolved essentially by a committee process. So then we have a committee resolve all of this. That is why I say this is a lawyer's dream in terms of an inspection regime here.

Then, if we look at paragraph 78 of the agreement, ''The members of the Joint Commission, by consensus or by a vote of 5 or more of its 8 members, would advise on the necessary means to resolve the IAEA's concerns.''

This process, if we add up all the days, is a lengthy process. Again, it certainly is so far away from the anytime, anywhere inspection regime. We have to understand that Iran has a history of using every means possible to delay inspections, especially to areas that are undeclared or they are trying to hide their nuclear facilities. That is why I describe it as an inspection regime that only a lawyer could love because this will allow Iran to litigate access to their undeclared sites, and we already know they have a history of doing that.

One of the issues I have taken a keen interest in since I have been in the Senate is Iran's missile program. We have heard all along from the administration that they were not going to address Iran's support of terrorism, that they were going to keep that issue separate—that they were going to keep separate issues of Iran's support for terrorism around the world—we have heard about that in this debate today—their support for groups like Hezbollah, Hamas, their support for the Houthis in Yemen, their support for the Taliban in Afghanistan, their support for terrorism around the world. Yet at the last minute in this agreement, the administration conceded two incredibly important points: No. 1, allowing Iran to have the resolutions lifted on having arms sales and transactions within 5 years, and then, No. 2, within 8 years, lifting the U.N. resolutions on missiles or ICBMs.

As our own Secretary of Defense has described, the significance of course in ICBMs is the ''I,'' which means intercontinental, meaning missiles that can hit the United States of America. Yet that was lifted at the last minute, and that was lifted over the objections, over the recommendations of our highest military officer, the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Chairman Martin Dempsey.

This has been a focus of mine in the Senate because I have been concerned that we have heard in the Armed Services Committee from many of our top defense and intelligence officials that the preferred method for Iran to deliver a nuclear weapon to the United States of America would be an ICBM and that this certainly represents a threat to America and to our allies.

In fact, I was so concerned about this that last summer I wrote the President of the United States, and 26 Senators joined me in the letter that I wrote to the President. In that letter, I expressed the belief that the Iranian deal should address Iran's ICBM missile program. The reason I wrote and led this effort is because we had been hearing for years before the Senate Armed Services Committee from people such as the Director of National Intelligence, James Clapper, who testified before the committee in February of 2014, that ''we judge that Iran would choose a ballistic missile as its preferred method of delivering nuclear weapons.''

In 2013, we also heard from Director Clapper that the Iranians are developing two systems that could have intercontinental capability as early as 2015. Here we are in 2015. Some have estimated it may take a few more years. Regardless, according to public testimony from our intelligence community, Iran could have ICBM capability in the next few years, and here we have, in conjunction with this agreement, our blessing because we agreed that the U.N. resolution against their missile program that said, no, Iran, you cannot have ICBM capability, now it is OK. It will be legitimate for them to have ICBM capability.

Why do they need ICBM capability if they don't have any interest in delivering the most destructive weapons to the world—to countries on the other side of the world, including our own?

So as I said, this issue was against the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff's advice. When I heard public reports—there were reports bubbling up about the agreement before it was signed that Iran was pressuring, with support from other countries like Russia, to lift the arms embargo, to lift the missile embargo. I was so worried about it that a week before the agreement I asked Chairman Dempsey in the Armed Services Committee, on July 7, about the reports that these resolutions may be lifted on arms and missiles. He told me that under no circumstances should we relieve pressure on Iran relative to ballistic missile capability and arms trafficking. Yet that is exactly what happens in this agreement.

The Chairman came back to our committee after the agreement was signed to testify about the agreement, and I asked him again about including this in the agreement. He told me it was against his military advice to lift the arms resolution and to lift the missile resolution.

So as I look at the grave concerns we should have for our national security, this is one of the top concerns—an insufficient inspection regime legitimizing their ability to have ICBM capability, allowing them in 5 years to legitimately have more arms. We already know they are supplying arms and cash around the world to their terrorist proxies. This agreement of course gives them, within a 9-month period, billions of dollars more cash to support terrorism.

One of the things I have heard on the floor today from my colleagues on the other side of the aisle who are supporting this agreement is that somehow this leaves on the table all of the

tools we need to deal with Iran's support for terrorism—which, of course, destabilizes the region. Except the problem is that nobody has told the Iranians this point because they have a very different viewpoint on this agreement. Iran has taken the position that if any of the sanctions are reimposed, they can walk away from the agreement.

If we look at paragraph 26 of this agreement, I would argue the language in the agreement actually allows them to make that argument, unfortunately.

Tehran has specifically stated that it will treat the imposition of any sanctions that are similar to those that were in place before this deal as a reason to walk away.

So why is this important? It is important because we know they support terrorism around the world. My colleagues have said we have to deal with their support for terrorism, and we still have the tools in our toolbox to issue tough sanctions to deal with their terrorism, even while being part of this agreement. The problem is that the language doesn't necessarily bear that out in the agreement.

In a July 20 letter, Iran told the U.N. Security Council that it would ''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.''

In other words, Iran is taking the viewpoint, under the language of this agreement, that if we reimpose any of the sanctions that are lifted as part of this agreement—which, by the way, these are the toughest sanctions, right? These are the tools in our toolbox—even if they commit acts of terrorism, they can walk away from this agreement.

So let's put this all together. Iran, within 9 months, gets more cash for this agreement. They get to keep their infrastructure for their nuclear program because they get to keep their centrifuges. They are now in a position where people are doing business with them—because we know that many countries around the world want to be able to do business with Iran, so an infusion of cash and relationships there. And then they are continuing to support terrorism. They commit through their proxies a major terrorist event that triggers something that we want to do here—we want to take tough sanctions against them because they have supported a terrorist attack against us or our allies. Yet they are going to take the position that we can't reimpose any of their sanctions no matter what they do because of the language of the agreement in paragraph 26. They are interpreting it that way.

So if you are Iran, right now, this is a pretty good deal for you. You can get the cash. You can get the legitimatization. People are doing business with you again. You can continue to support terrorism, and our hands apparently, in their view, are tied on sanctions.

So when I hear from those supporting the agreement that somehow we still have all the tools in our toolbox to deal with terrorism, it seems to me that if we look at the language of this agreement and how the Iranians are supporting it, we have tied our hands, and we will be in a weaker position to deal with their support for terrorism around the world no matter how egregious their behavior is.

This is a real issue when I think about our national security, when they have the largest state sponsor of terrorism in the world and they will now have legitimate access to developing their ICBM program with the lifting of sanctions in the U.N. and the legitimate purchasing of arms. We know there are countries like Russia that are lining up to sell these arms to them, and then we are going to weaken our ability to impose terrorism-related sanctions in the future.

I heard many of my colleagues talking earlier about the 60-vote threshold in the United States Senate. When we voted on the Iran Nuclear Agreement Review Act, we voted on it, I believe, 98 to 1. We would think at that point we wouldn't be worried at all about actually getting to the debate on the actual bill. So I hope my colleagues on the other side of the aisle, when they voted for the Iran Nuclear Agreement Review Act, were serious about having a substantive vote, given that this was a vote of 98 to 1 on this agreement. I believe the American people deserve nothing less than a substantive vote on the merits of this agreement as provided for by the Iran Nuclear Agreement Review Act.

I know that many of my colleagues are here to speak, but I want to raise one final issue that we have heard about on this floor; that is, actually being able to see the full text of this agreement. We all know that when you have an agreement, especially with a country that has a history of cheating, language matters. We know that because the Iranians are already taking all kinds of different positions on what the language means in this agreement to their benefit. Yet we have not been given access to the two-side agreements between the IAEA and Iran. By the way, that is in direct violation of the express language of the Iran Nuclear Agreement Review Act, which says Congress should have access to side agreements. But what we do know about these side agreements that has been reported in the press is truly disturbing; that is, as to the side agreements themselves, information has been leaked that indicates Tehran could declare some areas as suspected nuclear sites, including the Parchin military complex, off-limits to inspectors and that Iran could even be permitted to self-inspect there.

Can you imagine allowing a country with a history of cheating the ability to self-inspect or collect their own samples in terms of how inspections would be done? Yet those who are supporting the agreement are saying this is a robust inspection method.

I would ask my colleagues on the other side of the aisle who are supporting this agreement, does it not trouble you that you have not been given access to the language of these side agreements given that what has been leaked about them is that they pertain to the actual inspection process at important sites such as Parchin? I would hope that our constituents would expect us to review every word of the language of something so important to our national security. That, in and of itself, I would say, is a reason to be highly skeptical of this agreement, along with the other issues I have raised.

Finally, we have a long history in this body of debating important international agreements, including agreements that deal with very fundamental issues involving our foreign policy—issues that involve nuclear nonproliferation, issues that involve many sensitive treaty issues. We have a long history of actually debating these in a bipartisan manner and working in a bipartisan manner to approve agreements. Yet on this agreement, we are left in a position where a majority of the Senate on a bipartisan basis has said that we have serious reservations about this agreement and have declared that we are going to vote against this agreement. Yet the administration is continuing to push forward to get this done, to make sure that this agreement is fully implemented without reaching out in a bipartisan fashion to ensure that the strength of the Congress in a bipartisan fashion is behind something so important to our national security.

That should say something about the merits of this agreement. This agreement is deeply flawed. This is an agreement that I believe does not protect our national security. In fact, in the long run it will undermine our security in this country by giving Iran more cash, legitimizing their nuclear weapons program in terms of keeping their infrastructure for that program, legitimizing their ICBM program, and hurting our ability to impose further sanctions if they conduct acts of terrorism, which they certainly have a history of doing through their proxies.

I hope as we continue this debate, we will disapprove this agreement, which I do not believe protects our national security.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. TILLIS). The Senator from Indiana.

Mr. COATS. Mr. President, I intend to speak at much greater length on this issue perhaps tomorrow. I am pleased to have the opportunity to participate in this colloquy. I will be brief. I know my colleagues are waiting to speak also.

First, I want to commend Senator CORKER, the chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee. Together with his work with Senator CARDIN, we have a bipartisan agreement supported by some of the most knowledgeable foreign policy experts on the Democratic side and on the Republican side before us. Had Senator CORKER not been able to make that arrangement, it would have been a done deal before the Congress even saw what was agreed to in this negotiation with Iran.

I think my colleagues here have been amazed at the difference between what we were told the agreement did and didn't do and what we actually learned it does and doesn't do as we pored over it, word by word, annex through annex, looking at every piece of information here that is relevant to our decision. I am thankful for the work of Senator CORKER, who has taken some heat for not doing more. He saved us and saved the American people from not having the ability for us to examine this in detail. That is what this debate here is all about. The American people deserve to know what is in this agreement. The consequences of this for the future of America, for the future of the world are significant and almost mind-boggling. We have to get it right. To get it right, we need to read every word.

Here I am, shortly after the delivery of the 157 pages, together with the annexes, over a weekend poring through each sentence, trying to understand exactly what we have here and what we are dealing with, and I am amazed at what I have come up with. Instead of going through the various items—I will talk about more about this tomorrow, and it has been well presented by my colleague from New Hampshire and others this afternoon, including the majority leader—I would like to discuss something that I don't think has been raised yet. That something is the ambiguity that exists throughout this agreement and particularly in the annexes to the agreement. We know that there are two secret agreements which we don't have access to. How anyone can go forward and support an arrangement when you have side secret agreements and you are not allowed to know what they are—that in and of itself should be reason not to support an agreement. But having said that, let me spend a little bit of time regarding these ambiguities and the vagueness of some of the language here that I think have major implications.

The annex uses familiar forms of mushy language. I am going to quote here: ''as determined,'' ''where appropriate,'' ''among others,'' ''as mutually determined,'' and ''when beneficial.'' What are the actual obligations that we are undertaking if we vote for this agreement that is full of words like that? This is not clear to me, nor would I think it is clear to anyone in the administration.

We questioned the administration on this issue. They have essentially said: Well, this is to be determined at a later date or if this issue comes up, we will try to get some consensus on how to go forward. My own conclusion is that this language is not a mistake. These people who negotiated on our benefit have had a lifetime of negotiating engagement. I assume many of them were attorneys, lawyers that know and understand that a definition of a word or a phrase is everything. You have to understand exactly what it is or you are going to end up with confusion.

These ambiguous obligations, I think, were purposefully designed to placate the Iranians, offering them a vision of a robust military nuclear infrastructure, developed not only with the acquiescence of the West but with our material assistance. Further, if we examine the agreement text—let alone the annex text—this same pattern with misleading ambiguity holds. In many of the detailed commitments that are specified in the agreement and the annexes available to us, these conditional ambiguous terms dominate.

I couldn't help but notice that this wasn't an occasional occurrence. I asked my staff to go through and look at some of these ambiguous definitions and count the number of them. The phrase ''as appropriate'' or ''where appropriate''—''achieving this as appropriate'' or ''obligated to this as appropriate'' or ''where appropriate''—was sprinkled throughout the text 34 times. ''As mutually determined'' or ''by consensus to be concluded'' occurred 28 times, implying that future agreements or conditional commitments are there as against current commitments. At the same time, the phrase ''Iran intends to'' occurs more frequently than it should in place of affirmative obligations.

To any lawyer representing a client, whether you are buying a house, leasing a car, leasing an apartment or entering into a business contract, you can go to that lawyer and basically say: Look, I want an out. Or if you are on the other end of the negotiating process, you can say: Put some ambiguous vague language in there—''to be determined,'' ''as appropriate,'' ''by consensus''—so that if something goes wrong here, I have an excuse to opt out.

I think that is exactly what Iran was trying to do. If we come up with what we think is a breach of the agreement, it is easy for Iran to say: That needs to be by consensus; and without consensus, we see that as saying such and such, and you see it wrong. If we press the case with Iran, that, of course, gives them the option of withdrawing from the agreement. At an important time, now having over $100 billion in their hands, now having signed up contracts with many nations around the world—long-term contracts for delivery of oil, minerals or whatever—now having put themselves in a much different position with the sanctions lifted, they may use that exact language as a means of escaping. Or if you turn it on its head and turn it the other way around, Iran says: Well, wait a minute; our intentions are such and such. You didn't understand what we were trying to say to you.

Then how are we going to respond? This puts us in a very tenuous position.

I can recall a number of times when I told my wife: I thought you were going to stop and pick up milk on the way home.

Well, I intended to do that, but I got a phone call.

Wait a minute. I thought you were going to clean the garage on Saturday.

I intended to do that, but Joe called and said: Let's go play golf.

I intended. It was a good intention. That is fine in any kind of a marital relationship or any other kind of relationship. Many of those are just meaningless things. But when you are talking about an agreement that binds the United States on the basis of how its negotiating adversary interprets and uses these words, it can put you in real trouble.

I don't think anybody has talked about that yet. I wanted to bring that up. As I said, I am going to be talking about my position and how I came to the decision not to support this tomorrow. This is a sloppily written agreement that can bind the United States to obligations that we are not even yet aware of and that can give Iran an out if it so chooses. It comes to that point in time when, with a 3-month or so breakout toward having nuclear weapon capability, they simply say: Sanctions are gone, we have our money, we have done the research, even some with assistance of U.S. scientists and the members of the negotiating team, we are in a great position to go forward, and we are just going to do it. We can use this language to opt-out of the agreement. That is just one more reason why each of us should carefully try to understand what is and what isn't in this agreement and weigh this as we try to make a judgment in terms of whether we should go forward or whether we have signed on to a very bad deal here and should vote against it.

With that, I yield to my colleagues who have been patiently waiting to speak.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Oklahoma.

Mr. LANKFORD. Mr. President, I would like to take a moment and recap the day and some of the issues I heard on the floor. I have been on the floor quite a bit today and heard a lot of the debate. As I processed through some of the debate, I heard—and we will see if some of my colleagues agree with this—a lot of conversation on the details of the agreement in trying to

walk through the actual process. What does the text say? There seem to be two very different opinions about this. I will share what I am hearing.

There are key things that Iran needs to be able to complete a nuclear weapon, and it doesn't seem that this agreement stops them in the process, and it seems that the goal of this agreement was to stop them from acquiring a nuclear weapon.

What does Iran need? Well, they need time. This agreement gives them time. It lays out a schedule, backs up and slows down the process of inspections. It allows them time to be able to finish their research.

It allows them money. That is a key aspect that they need not only for their funding of terrorism but to actually be able to complete the technological research they have to have in those facilities. Billions of dollars are released to Iran almost immediately in this agreement for them to be able to complete their research.

It allows them ballistic missile capability, which is shocking to a lot of people I talked to in my State. They assume this deal actually slows down their ballistic missile research and capability. It actually doesn't. It actually paves the path for them and gives them permission to continue their ballistic missile research.

It allows them to be able to continue toward highly enriched uranium. Again, a lot of people I talked to have been surprised at that because the assumption was, after hearing about it from the President so many times, they shouldn't be allowed to have uranium and shouldn't be allowed to do that. That was the conversation 5 years ago, but now the conversation is, how much uranium can they enrich and what does that look like?

There have been some conversations today by individuals who have said that this will decrease the number of centrifuges they have. That is entirely correct. It does decrease the number of centrifuges, but let me give an illustration. If your company had 20 computers that were built in 1995 and you were told you could replace those 20 computers from 1995 with 3 computers from this year, would you take that deal? I bet you would. That is the deal we are giving to Iran. We are telling them they will have to get rid of two-thirds of their oldest centrifuges—their oldest, originally built—but they can still keep 5,000 of even their oldest centrifuges and they can install 1,000 of their newest technology centrifuges and keep those going. I would certainly think that is a deal they would take—and by the way, they are taking it, and they are asking us to take it as well.

They have time, they have money, they have ballistic missile research, they have highly enriched uranium and the permission to be able to continue their work on their most advanced centrifuges, and they have additional defensive capabilities. They are allowed to continue to stockpile conventional weapons under this agreement and to even add things such as surface-to-air defense capabilities to be able to defend their military sites.

So you tell me, does Iran have what it needs to be able to complete a nuclear weapon under this deal—time, money, ballistic missiles, ability to be able to complete their research, advanced centrifuges, and defensive weaponry to be able to put around their facilities? Yes.

Here are some of the things which we don't know, which we really can't discuss, and which we would appreciate being able to discuss today—the side deals. We have the documents that have come in. In fact, I have posted them on my Web site, and many others have done the same. We want Americans to be able to read those things because most Americans, when they read them, are stunned with what this agreement says. But what we can't get is the side deal.

Again, I have heard over and over from the President that we are not going to trust Iran, we are going to verify. We don't trust, we are going to verify. Literally, with the side agreements—people keep hearing ''What is the side agreement?'' Here is what the side agreement is. The main agreement gives broad parameters. For instance, it says we will have inspections. Well, that is great. How are the inspections to be done? Well, that is in the side agreement. So we are agreeing that, yes, there will be inspections. When we asked the question about how the inspections were to be done, we were told that we can't read that document, that it is a separate agreement between the U.N. and Iran. Literally I cannot verify how we are going to verify. I have been told to trust and verify. I can't verify how we are verifying. That seems absurd to me, and it is hard for me to imagine anyone in this body would say: Yes, I would sign off on something I have never read and have never seen. In fact, the people in the administration have said they have never read or seen it. Yet we are being asked to sign off on it and to give our authorization to say: Yes, we will support that. I have a problem with that, and it is one of many reasons why I cannot support this deal.

What I have heard over and over again by individuals who do support this deal today is that this is the deal, it is in front of us, the President has agreed to it, and it will look bad if we don't agree to it. My problem is not looking bad; my problem is a nuclear-armed Iran. That is the problem. At the end of the day, this is not about saving face as America, this is about protecting U.S. interests and U.S. citizens and those of our friends in the gulf. This is not about saving face for the President.

I have heard over and over again: It would be too hard to get the coalition back together to be able to renegotiate this. May I remind everyone that the reason we have this coalition together is because the crippling sanctions are one thing—you cannot do business with America and with Iran. That is the deal. If we continue the sanctions in place, it is not about getting the band back together, it is about leaving those sanctions in place, and if you want to do business with the United States, you will also have to agree to not do business with Iran. It is not about getting everyone back together. Leave them in place and let's finish renegotiating it.

I have heard over and over again: It is either war or it is this. Quite frankly, I think this deal in its place takes us closer to a conventional war. Why? Because it allows Iran to begin to almost immediately begin stockpiling conventional weapons. Those in the gulf region are so concerned about that that we are promising them they can get more weapons and buy more advanced weapons from us. How does a conventional arms race in the Middle East take us further from war? Under this agreement, it destabilizes.

I have heard over and over again today: What is our message to the world when the rest of the world has signed off on this and yet we say no? Well, here is our message to the world: Iran is screaming ''Death to America,'' not death to other countries, except for Israel. They are chanting ''Death to Israel.'' Israel is also standing up and saying: This is a terrible deal for our nation and the stability of the world.

It is not about our message to the world; it is about standing up and being the world's superpower. That is who we are. Let's take responsibility for our position in the world and be able to finish well while we are doing it.

I have also heard multiple times today: Well, let's sign off on this deal and then we will have tougher diplomacy in the future. I have to say that every time I heard that, I smiled and thought, are you kidding me? What do you mean, we will sign off on this deal and then we will do tougher diplomacy in the future? With what leverage? This is our leverage. The sanctions are the leverage. We are not going to get tougher in the future. This is the toughest moment. It gets softer from here.

Iran is still the single largest sponsor of terrorism in the world. They made no change in their actions against Yemen and leading the coup in Yemen. They made no change in their actions propping up Assad in Syria.

We are giving this away if we sign on to this agreement. This deal is built on hope, not on facts and trust, and I know everyone in this body hopes to get a diplomatic solution. We cannot base an agreement with Iran on hope. If we cannot verify it, if we cannot see the documents, if there has been no change in behavior, I think we should assume we still have status quo Iran.

Let's push back. Let's get the better deal. Let's not allow advanced centrifuges to stay in place. Let's not

allow them to continue their ballistic missile testing. These are not hard issues to be able to finish. The deal is half-cooked. Let's get it fully baked, and let's finish a diplomatic solution but not just hope that this works out in the days ahead.

With that, I yield back.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Georgia.

Mr. PERDUE. Mr. President, I rise tonight to speak about a very troubled time in my life and in this body. I didn't think this moment would arise in my tenure here in the U.S. Senate, but tonight I am very troubled about being a Member of this body.

Just a few short months ago, we told the American people, in our Foreign Relations Committee, that we could work together. We unanimously passed a bill that gave this body, the U.S. Congress, a right that the President and his administration had denied us by not allowing this to be treated as a treaty. Yet we stand here tonight—even though a unanimous bill came out of the committee and 98 Senators voted for us to get a look and a vote on this deal—without the ability to tell the people back home that we will, in fact, have a vote on this deal. I find that terribly troubling. As a matter of fact, I am embarrassed. The people back home deserve better than this body is providing.

There is bipartisan opposition to this deal. There are good Democrats who in their deep conscience are going to oppose the President, and I respect that, but there is not bipartisan support for this deal. There is a huge difference. Only one group in this body is supporting this President's deal with Iran. I am troubled by that.

I applaud Senator CARDIN, the ranking member of the Foreign Relations Committee. I applaud Senator CORKER as the chairman of that committee. Under their leadership, we got to this point. Without this deal, without a vote, we wouldn't even be sitting here tonight. We would already be implementing this deal, and we would have told the American people: Yes, we don't have the constitutional balance between the United States and the House of Representatives and the legislative branch that the Constitution calls for. We gave up.

Well, here we are. I would like for every Member of this body who is going to vote for this deal to answer to the people back home: How does this make the world safer for their children and their children's children?

In the Presiding Officer's business career and in my business career, we have seen a lot of deals and we have negotiated a lot of deals. The way I look at deals is to try to evaluate what both sides get in a deal. So let's look at this from that perspective.

First of all, Iran gets a windfall for bad behavior. They have 30 years of noncompliance with NPT requirements, and the first thing we are going to do is give them a windfall—somewhere between $60 and $150 billion.

We know by the administration's own admission that we can depend on some of that money—last year $6 billion went to terrorist support around the Middle East and other parts of the world from Iran. Last year Iran spent $17 billion supporting their own military. That puts this windfall into perspective. One of the first things Iran did when the administration announced this deal is they sent representatives to Moscow. Does it take much imagination to see that their behavior is not going to change in this deal just because we give them a windfall? As a matter of fact, we are encouraging bad behavior.

Second, I would like to know where our four American hostages are. They get to keep them.

Third, Iran gets to enrich. This is my biggest problem, and I have said it many times. My biggest problem with this deal is that we gave up the ability right off the bat to stop Iran from enriching. To me, that is the fundamental problem in this deal. Breakout without enriching capabilities is 2 to 3 years, not 2 to 3 months like this deal provides. As a matter of fact, the President himself said this deal, after 13 years, allows Iran to have a breakout period that is basically zero. Who are we kidding here? And after 15 years, all bets are off. What we have done is provided a pathway to enriched uranium, and I find that very troubling.

Unlike many other countries that have similar nuclear programs that are peaceful and are not allowed to enrich, we allowed this bad actor to step up and be treated the same as countries such as Germany, Japan, Holland, Brazil, and Argentina. I find that very troubling.

Fourth, they get access to the world's arms market in just 5 short years. Why is that important? It is important because of their support of terrorism, but also, more importantly, it gives them access to a nuclear weapons capability through technology available only through the arms market.

Fifth, after 8 short years, they get access to the intercontinental ballistic missiles technology. Why in the world does a rogue nation like Iran that says they only want a civil nuclear program for power generation—why in the world in the eleventh hour do this administration and our negotiators give up and give them the right to have access, after 8 short years, to ballistic missile technology? They currently have a missile that has a 1,200-mile range. That very easily brings Israel and Eastern Europe into range. If they have access in 8 years to ballistic missile technology, their only intent can be to have a missile that can deliver a missile armed with a nuclear warhead to Washington, DC, and points beyond. I find that very troubling.

Sixth, Iran gets access to technology for centrifuges. This is almost the most unbelievable thing. Not only do they get to keep every centrifuge, they are not destroying every centrifuge; they don't have to destroy any one. But I agree with what Senator LANKFORD just said, and that is this: They have antiques right now. What we are allowing them to do is to trade up to modern technology, and IR–6 and IR–8 centrifuges. There is only one reason for that. It shortens the time for them to develop enough fissile material to have a nuclear weapon.

Seventh, Iran gets to limit and delay inspectors. This is only important because we allow them to enrich; don't miss that. But what we have done is allow them to dictate the inspection protocol. I have never seen a deal where that was allowed, honest to goodness. This to me is unconscionable. The fact that we have secret deals, yes, this is important, but the fact that we are allowing them—with no U.S. participation, by the way, on the ground in Iran with the IAEA—we are allowing Iran to actually take samples under the protocol of inspection.

The side deals are unconscionable. I would never in business sign a deal where every legal document was not exposed. How in the world—I understand these side agreements are normal operating procedure within the IAEA and their countries that they are inspecting. This is different. This is a public global deal, dealing with a rogue country such as Iran, and we need to see that. I can't imagine how we would approve a deal—anybody would approve a deal and go home and explain to their constituents how this makes sense for the safety of their children and grandchildren when we don't know what is in every legal document.

Now, what did we get? I would argue that basically, from what I hear, the No. 1 goal of this administration is a legacy for this failed President. I am sorry, but that is the only real benefit I can see. We get Iran, the world's largest sponsor of terrorism and proven violator of past nuclear agreements to promise to be a good actor. Really? That is what we get? Yet, the Ayatollah just today—just today—said that Israel will not exist in 25 years. This does not sound to me like a good actor who is going to change their behavior because we have brought them into the community of nations.

Why do we believe the word of a nation that has been a revolutionary pariah since 1979? Have we forgotten that 52 United States American citizens, members of our embassy, for 444 days were held hostage in Tehran just 35 short years ago? This is the same regime, these are the same clerics, the same mentality, that created that situation. We just now have entered into the most devastating foreign policy agreement in my lifetime and maybe in the history of the United States. No deal that I can read in history puts the United States in more jeopardy going forward than this nuclear deal with Iran.

Under this deal, we get an Iran that will continue its bad behavior. I think that is easy to predict. Their sponsorship of terror continues. Their human

rights violations have worsened. Even during the negotiations, they continued to back Assad's murderous regime in Syria, which is the source of one of the most devastating humanitarian crises of the 21st century that is just now coming to light.

The Presiding Officer and I made a trip, along with the leader, just a few months ago. We sat in Jordan and we listened to the plea of those people over there who are receiving refugees. They are telling us how serious this plight is. Now the media has picked up on it, and we see the devastating impact of what is going on in the Middle East. This deal is a manifestation of a much bigger problem.

This President has failed in this foreign policy requirement that the executive branch is given in our Constitution. This is just a manifestation of a bigger failure, but it is devastating to the future security of our kids. Today, Iran has a national holiday called Death to America Day. As a matter of fact, one of the hostages, one of the four hostages just this year, earlier this year, was moved from the second worst prison in Iran to the worst prison in Iran, and guess what day he was moved on? Death to America Day. I find that insulting.

As we just heard, there are three things—I have a little different view of what a country needs to have a nuclear weapon. First of all, I am an engineer, so this will be very pedantic, and I will move very quickly with this. But, quickly, a country needs three things. First of all, they have to have fissile material. We allow this in this deal. There is a pathway for them to get there legally. They don't have to violate this agreement. They will eventually get there in a very short period of time.

The second thing is they have to have a device for a warhead. In five short years they have access to the military arms community where that is totally accessible today.

Third, they have to have a delivery mechanism. In eight short years, as we just said, they will have access to intercontinental ballistic missile technology. Basically, in eight years, if they want to break out, they will have missile technology that can bring a missile warhead right down on our heads here in this chamber.

Without domestic enrichment, Iran's breakout period is really 2 to 3 years, again, not 2 to 3 months. President Obama has claimed that we could not get a deal without giving them the right to enrich. I don't understand that. This brought them to the table in the first place. We gave up on that too early. The President gave us a false choice, and I am insulted by that, and people back home are too. It is either this deal—and everybody agrees this is a bad deal; even the Democrats today are telling us how flawed this deal is. I didn't hear one person today stand up and tell us how great this deal was. Basically, I heard this is the best deal we can get. Let's give it a try. We can't be any worse off in 10 years. I would argue yes, we can, and yes, we will be worse off in 10 years.

It is absolutely possible to have a better deal. We don't need P5+1 if, in fact, we have the determination to make our own sanctions stick. This $18 trillion economy is big enough to bring them back to the table and absolutely get the kind of deal that would protect our kids and grandkids.

In previous deals with South Africa and Libya, just as two examples, they gave up their enriching capabilities in order to be accepted into the NPT fraternity of countries that are good actors regarding proliferation of nuclear technology. This deal not only allows Iran to enrich but it gives their illicit nuclear enrichment program the blessing of the international community. The President and the negotiators even threw in technical assistance for Iran's enrichment program. I just don't understand that. As a dumb business guy, I just don't understand how they, in good conscience and without smirking, can stand in front of the American people and say this is a good deal. In fact, I don't hear many people saying that. Even Secretary Kerry basically said this is the best deal we can get, we can't get a better deal, and the only alternative is war. I am insulted by that.

The second thing, they need to design for a warhead. We talked about how getting into the arms community allows them to do that. We don't know whether they have it or not today. Iran would need many things, but one thing they need is access to capital and access to global markets to drive their economy. But let's remember one thing: Why do they need all of this in the first place? Why did this get negotiated? Because they want a nuclear weapon.

The goal in this agreement, according to the administration, was never to allow Iran to become a nuclear weapons State. Yet, we see nothing but pathways that allow them to do that, even legally. I just don't understand how the administration and a few Democrats are standing up today and saying this is a good deal, and we need to vote for it because it won't preclude Iran from ever becoming a nuclear weapons State. It just doesn't do that.

As a matter of fact, in 1994, we signed a similar deal with North Korea. The President at that time, President Clinton, told the American people that if we voted on that deal, that deal would guarantee we would never have a nuclear weapon on the peninsula of Korea. How did that work out for us? I would argue today that we are facing a similar situation that is just as predictable. Looking at the facts, we can see this deal all but guarantees a nuclear Iran. I can't support this in good conscience.

This is one of the worst deals I have seen in my lifetime. I am embarrassed that we sit here in front of the American people and actually have to discuss this. This is so bad, it is so threatening to our children and our children's children that we have to stand up and we have to fight this all the way through to get a vote on it, first of all, and to defeat this.

I urge my colleagues to join me tonight and this week in opposing this deal.

Thank you, Mr. President.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader.

CLOTURE MOTION

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I send a cloture motion to the desk for substitute amendment No. 2640.

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

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on Senate amendment No. 2640.

Mitch McConnell, John Cornyn, James Lankford, Kelly Ayotte, John Thune, Cory Gardner, Mike Crapo, Ron Johnson, Joni Ernst, Tom Cotton, James M. Inhofe, Thad Cochran, Bill Cassidy, Pat Roberts, Johnny Isakson, Jerry Moran, John McCain.

CLOTURE MOTION

Mr. MCCONNELL. I send a cloture motion to the desk for the underlying resolution, H. J. Res. 61.

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

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on H.J. Res. 61, a joint resolution amending 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.

Mitch McConnell, John Cornyn, James Lankford, Kelly Ayotte, John Thune, Cory Gardner, Mike Crapo, Ron Johnson, Joni Ernst, Tom Cotton, James M. Inhofe, Thad Cochran, Bill Cassidy, Pat Roberts, Johnny Isakson, Jerry Moran, John McCain.

Mr. MCCONNELL. For the information of all colleagues, this cloture motion would ripen on Friday, but I am optimistic that we will be able to get consent to have the vote tomorrow afternoon.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Arkansas.

Mr. BOOZMAN. Mr. President, I appreciate the remarks of the Senator from Georgia, and I certainly associate myself with them.

This debate is vital. Despite President Obama's initial objections to congressional oversight, the American

people deserve a vote in this critical national security matter, which I would note has been negotiated behind closed doors.

The bill that we passed in May accomplished that. Now the Senate Democrats are talking about taking that away by filibustering this debate.

How we went from passing Senator CORKER's bill by a vote of 98 to 1 just a few months ago to a potential filibuster is baffling to the American people. Our constituents want this debate. They have a number of concerns about this deal. We are their voice. We are here to represent them, not to protect the President from a difficult veto.

When these discussions began, President Obama claimed we would be able to diplomatically dismantle Iran's nuclear program. The final agreement suggests this is far from the case. It is apparent that the President and his negotiating partners were willing—eager, even—to give in to every demand made by the world's largest State sponsor of terrorism. The goalposts were moved from dismantling Iran's clandestine nuclear weapons program to blindly hoping we can contain it.

The deal President Obama and Secretary of State Kerry have orchestrated has several key faults. For starters, under the deal, Iran is not required to destroy a single centrifuge, not one. That means well over 1,000 centrifuges will remain in place at Fordow, one of Iran's most infamous nuclear sites. Many will continue to operate. This is no ordinary facility; it is a fortified, underground military bunker built into the side of a mountain. It was constructed in secret, and it has served only one purpose: to covertly produce weapons-grade, highly enriched uranium.

When the talks began, the President was adamant that Fordow must be closed as part of the final agreement. However, over the course of the negotiations, the President caved. The Iranians will be able to maintain the capacity to continue enrichment activities at Fordow.

The President claims that verification will ensure Iran's compliance. Verification appears to be exactly where this deal is lacking any punch. There is nothing in this deal that lets us confidently say we know what is truly going on at any of the nuclear sites in Iran.

There are no anytime, anywhere inspections, including at Fordow. Even worse, international inspectors will not even be the ones handling the inspections at the country's military complex in Parchin. The Iranians themselves will be. How this is acceptable to anyone is astonishing. There is absolutely no reason, given the regime's history, to believe that the Iranian inspectors will be honest about what is going on in Parchin.

A lack of verification is far from the only troubling aspect of this agreement. The Iranian regime believes that the agreement gives them full, permanent relief from sanctions.

Lifting sanctions will provide Iran with approximately $100 billion in previously frozen assets which the administration has ultimately admitted will go, at least in part, to the Iranian military and its terrorist offshoots. It was hard enough to get the international community to commit to sanctions in the first place. With a reprieve of this nature, we will never be able to reestablish them should Iran not live up to its end of the agreement, which is a strong possibility given the Iranian regime's actions in the past.

Along with sanctions relief, the international arms embargo and ban on ballistic missile research will also be lifted. Within the next 8 years, Iran will have access to modern offensive weapons. This does not bode well for peace in the region. It puts our security and that of our allies at great risk. Remember, we are talking about the world's leading state sponsor of terror.

What we are giving up as a result of this deal, the sanctions relief, the arms embargo, the ongoing enrichment, makes the world a more dangerous place. We have a responsibility to ensure that Iran never achieves its goal of becoming a nuclear power. If Iran goes nuclear, Saudi Arabia and other nations in the region surely will follow. The deal gives us little confidence that we will be successful in this regard.

A nuclear Iran could be devastating for America and our allies. This is about saving our children and grandchildren from the prospects of nuclear war. I cannot confidently say this agreement will accomplish this goal. In fact, I fear it moves us in the wrong direction. For that reason, I oppose the deal and intend to support the resolution of disapproval.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Iowa.

Mrs. ERNST. Mr. President, as we come together and debate President Obama's agreement on Iran, I believe it is one of the most consequential national security decisions we may ever face. I have heard my peers talk many times about the things that trouble them, the things they fear, the ''things that keep us up at night.'' I will tell you that this nuclear agreement is one of those things that keeps me up at night, as a mother, as a grandmother, and as a soldier.

Having proudly worn our Nation's uniform for over 20 years and having deployed to the region, I can tell you that protecting and defending this country is something I take very seriously and very personally. I had hoped our President would approach the American people with a deal that reflected the high ground our Nation has stood on against Iran for decades.

Unfortunately, now that I have seen the available details, I believe the President has not negotiated a good deal with Iran. The agreement before us fails to dismantle Iran's nuclear program and does not end Iran's support of terrorism. The President has squandered his opportunity to enhance our national security and the security of our Israeli and Arab allies by failing to live up to his own goal of ending Iran's capability to build a nuclear weapon.

The administration is asking the American people to accept a deal which will, at best, freeze Iran's nuclear program for 8 years—that is, if the Iranians actually live up to their end of the bargain. One of the major failures in this deal is the lack of anytime, anywhere inspections to ensure that they do. In April, the President's own Secretary of Energy, Dr. Moniz, a nuclear physicist whom the President often refers to as a leading authority on nuclear programs. He said: ''We expect to have anywhere, anytime access'' when referring to what our country needed to ensure Iran was abiding by a nuclear agreement.

How can we ever be certain of compliance if Iran decides to cheat and we have a weak inspection regime as part of this deal? I would argue that we can't. Another part of this debate that has been very troubling to me is that the President continues to tell the American people there are only two options: his agreement or war. During one of his major speeches on this deal, he actually mentioned the word ''war'' 50 times in an attempt to hammer this false choice home.

Despite this misinformation campaign designed to pressure the American people into agreeing to a bad deal, our military leaders and distinguished former administration officials clearly denied that our choice is either support the deal or go to war with Iran. In testimony before the Senate Armed Services Committee, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff GEN Martin Dempsey disagreed with the President's assessment that the American people face a choice of supporting the agreement or going to war with Iran.

Later that same week, the President's pick to lead the U.S. Navy said war was not the only alternative and that we need to use the full set of capabilities that the joint force and the Navy can deliver to deter that. The military contribution is also just a subset of a whole-of-government approach, along with our allies in the region. It is not just leaders within our military saying this.

Gen. Michael Hayden, former Director of the CIA and NSA, said:

> There is no necessity to go to war if we don't sign this agreement. There are actions in between those two extremes.

Dr. Richard Haas, president of the Council on Foreign Relations, said: ''I would echo that'' during the same hearing. Ambassador Edelman, a former Under Secretary of Defense for Policy and Ambassador to Turkey, said: ''I agree with you, I don't think those are the only alternatives.'' Ambassador Nicholas Burns, a former top U.S. negotiator with Iran on its nuclear programs and former Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs, said: ''I don't believe that war would be inevitable. . . .''

Rather than misrepresenting the facts and our country's options, I challenge the supporters of the agreement to explain to the American people why they are supporting a flawed and bad deal today, when we should be putting our citizens' interests and their security first. I would also note that this administration was willing to leave the negotiating table without securing an end to Iran's support of terrorism.

Iran is the world's leading sponsor of terror. We are giving them a free pass in this deal to continue those efforts. In addition to the billions of dollars in sanctions relief, which leaves Iran poised to double down on its support of terrorism, the President also agreed to lift the U.N. arms embargo for advanced conventional weapons and ballistic missiles.

As a veteran of Kuwait and Iraq in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom, I am beside myself, as are many other Americans who served in Iraq, regarding the President's support for sanctions relief for one terrorist in particular: the leader of Iran's elite covert force, the Quds Force, General Qassem Soleimani.

General Soleimani is directly responsible for the deaths of several hundred Americans and the wounding of thousands more during the Iraq war. Throughout the Iraq war, we lost many Americans, killed in action, and many more wounded by Iraq Shia militia who were supported or controlled by General Soleimani. In 2010, Ambassador James Jeffrey, then-U.S. Ambassador to Iraq, said: ''Up to a quarter of the American casualties and some of the more horrific incidents in which Americans were kidnapped . . . can be traced without doubt to these Iranian groups.''

One of the significant tolls to attack American servicemembers was an improvised explosive device, IED, known as an explosively formed penetrator or EFP. These EFPs were provided by Iran exclusively to groups they controlled in order to kill Americans.

If you ask American servicemembers who served in Iraq during the war, they will tell you these types of IEDs used by Iranian-supported Shia militias were some of the most deadly and devastating types emplaced by any of the Iraqi insurgency groups, including Al Qaeda in Iraq. While many of my colleagues share the concern regarding General Soleimani and Iran's targeting of Americans during the Iraq war, we seldom hear from Americans who have firsthand experience in fighting these Iranian-supported Iraqi Shia militias.

My staff recently spoke to a currently serving U.S. Army officer, originally from Waterloo, IA, who deployed with the 1st Calvary Division on a 15-month deployment to Iraq during the surge. This Iowan described to us the impact Iran's effort in Iraq had on him and his tank platoon in Baghdad saying:

> The threat of EFPs was quite real during our deployment to Iraq. Understanding the pipeline from Iran into Iraq, the abundance of the munitions and the lethality on US Forces, the sense of peril never left our psyche. While I was never fearful of losing a limb, I knew if I was struck, I would follow certain death, one that I welcomed ten months into a fifteen month deployment.

Removing sanctions on Soleimani is an embarrassment for this administration and in the words of some of our Iraq veterans, ''a slap in the face.'' Then there is Luke, a retired Army servicemember with the storied 101st Airborne Division. While on patrol during the division's second tour to Iraq, Luke lost his leg in combat, after his vehicle was hit with an Iranian-made EFP.

He told us that ''we come home blown up and try to put our lives back together only to hear that our country is going to be lifting sanctions that will free up billions for Iran to kill more innocents. We may not be at war with them, but they're at war with us. I'm a wounded veteran and I spend a great deal of time helping other guys like me. I can assure you that this deal directly affects us. It is a slap in the face to all veterans. All those who served. . . .''

We owe it to veterans and our current servicemembers who have sacrificed to stop Iran's support of terror. I urge the President and my colleagues to consider Iran's true intent and not to underestimate Iran's will to enhance its capability to destabilize the Middle East, threaten American security, and the security of our allies in the region and around the globe.

In closing, the decision we make on this agreement will have lasting results for our Nation, the world, and future generations of Americans.

I urge all of my colleagues to reject the President's bad deal and put the security of the American people, our allies, and the global community first.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from North Carolina.

Mr. BURR. Mr. President, we are here today to engage in an honest and open debate about the nuclear agreement that the administration has brokered with Iran.

Let me at this point commend Chairman CORKER for the way he and his committee have handled a very difficult process that has not been coordinated with the administration, where their consideration was for Congress to be cut out. I think Chairman CORKER has done a wonderful job and inserted the Senate of the United States where it should be, as part of this agreement.

I am here to tell you that this deal is not based on absolute value, absolute knowledge of Iran's activities or its intentions—including its nuclear ambitions—but it is naively and dangerously based on faith and hope. Our national security should not be based on faith and hope. Our Nation's security is too precious to be based on faith and hope alone—faith that we will detect any Iranian efforts to cheat and hope that the Iranians will not cheat.

Secretary of State John Kerry told the American people in June that ''we know what they did,'' ''we have no doubt,'' and ''we have absolute knowledge of the possible military dimensions of Iran's nuclear program.'' Let me say that again: ''We have absolute knowledge of the possible military dimensions of Iran's nuclear program.''

As chairman of the Intelligence Committee, I can tell you we don't have absolute knowledge of anything. Our intelligence is good, but it is not perfect, and it is disingenuous for Secretary Kerry to suggest otherwise.

We must accept the self-evident fact that Iran has a horrific record of complying with nonproliferation commitments. When our best tools are faith and hope, we are putting our own national security, as well as our allies', at risk.

I respectfully ask my colleagues, as you consider your vote on this agreement, to think about the following questions:

Do you know where every potential nuclear facility is located?

Do you know the location or activity of every nuclear-related laboratory, whether it is in a military facility or a university campus?

Do we know whether Iran intends to purchase sensitive nuclear materials from a rogue nation or whether we will detect the sale or the transfer of that nuclear material?

Do we know the intentions of the Supreme Leader or what he and his successor may be thinking in 10 years?

Do we know everything about Iran's past culpability, its future intent or ability to conceal illicit, nuclear activities?

Have we assumed too much about Iran's willingness to abide by the agreement?

Unlike Secretary Kerry, I do not believe that we know everything about Iran's past nuclear efforts. I do not have faith that we know, with any degree of certainty, this regime's intentions, as he suggests.

Our intelligence community does amazing things, and I am continually impressed with the dedication, drive, and the capability of its people. Our intelligence community regularly provides our civilian and military leadership insights and assessments on the toughest national security problems, but they never—they never—claim—and I wouldn't believe them if they did—to have absolute knowledge of any issue. Again, intelligence is imperfect.

Secretary Kerry told the American people and the Members of this body:

> No part of this agreement relies on trust. It is all based on thorough and extensive transparency and verification measures.

With all due respect, the Secretary is oversimplifying the very complex and difficult world of treaty compliance and verification. The Secretary should come clean and truthfully state that this agreement does not rely on trust; it relies on hope and faith—faith that we will detect any Iranian efforts to

cheat and hope that Iran will not cheat.

My colleagues should be mindful before casting their votes. Your eyes should be wide open to the uncertainty we as a nation are accepting with this agreement. If the IAEA and our intelligence community are not 100 percent certain and our collective assumptions respect wrong and we get caught unaware or we are surprised, the consequences will be significant. They could be disastrous and we will, without a doubt, regret entering into this agreement.

The agreement the administration has negotiated with Iran is based on faith that we know everything about the nuclear program today and hope that the Iranian regime will abide by the terms of this agreement.

The administration is displaying misguided faith that Iran will not use the billions of dollars soon to be available to continue its efforts to fund terrorist proxies worldwide. I call my colleagues' attention to recent comments by National Security Advisor Susan Rice, who said: ''we should expect'' that some of the money Iran gets under sanctions relief as a result of the nuclear deal ''would go to the Iranian military and could potentially be used for the kinds of bad behavior that we have seen in the region.''

Again, this deal ignores the facts and instead hopes that it will work out. Iran is the world's central bank of terrorism, and this additional income is not likely to be solely dedicated to streamlining their postal delivery routes in Iran.

Secretary Kerry testified in July that ''they [Iran] are committed to certain things that we interpret as terrorism.''

The administration is relying on faith that the IAEA and our intelligence community will be able to detect any trace of nuclear material and any prohibited activity and has hope that the IAEA will continue to have ''access'' to Iranian nuclear sites—''access'' that in some cases is being defined as ''the ability to deliver things to Iranians at the gate of a facility, so they can conduct their own surveillance''—anytime, anywhere to deliver the equipment to the Iranians and ask them to do self-inspections inside the gate.

If the IAEA is prevented from gaining the necessary access to declared or suspected facilities in a timely manner, we will be at a significant—significant—disadvantage, and the sanctions pressures we have obtained over years of efforts cannot be remade overnight.

Our reliance on the IAEA is now also tied to two side agreements with Iran that Members of this body have not yet been provided. I will remind my colleagues that when the President signed the Iran Nuclear Agreement Review Act, the law required him to provide to Congress the agreement and ''all related materials and annexes,'' and that has not happened. Yet the administration asked that we have faith that these will not have a material effect on the agreement and our ability to ensure Iranian compliance with its terms.

It raises additional questions. Do we have absolute certainty that we know what those agreements include? Do we understand how they may affect Iran's activities, assumptions or willingness to abide by the terms of its agreements with the United States? Do we know without a doubt where every potential nuclear facility is located?

The President argued:

> Although it may take 24 days to finally get access to [a] site . . . high school physics will remind us that that [nuclear materials] leaves a trace. And so we'll know that, in fact, there was a violation of the agreement.

I don't have absolute certainty that this is true and question the administration's willingness to give up a requirement for anywhere, anytime access. If Iran isn't hiding anything, why wouldn't they offer that access?

Do we trust Iran's claim that they don't have a covert facility? Do we have faith that they do not? Are we hoping that they do not build one? Do we or can we have absolute certainty on this issue?

A former IAEA deputy director stated in 2013 that ''if there is no undeclared [nuclear] installation today . . . it will be the first time in 20 years that Iran doesn't have one.''

Ultimately, I believe this deal is built on a foundation that is far more unstable than the administration would have us believe.

While I realize that all the parties involved in this deal have been trying to spin the narrative to their benefit, I cannot believe that a deal as tough as the administration would have us believe would be referred to by the Iranian President as a ''legal, political, and technical victory for Iran.''

The administration has chosen to trade all of our economic leverage—leverage that was working—for a near-term possible delay in Iran's breakout timeline. No doubt we will still have leverage, but it will be limited, perversely, given the President's statements about opponents of this deal to military action, something we have tried to avoid for many years as it relates to Iran. The administration hopes that it will not have to use military action.

Can you tell me with absolute certainty what the Supreme Leader's intentions are? Can you tell me what he is thinking or what he will be thinking in 10 years when Iran will have rebuilt its struggling economy and will be nearing the end of what limited restraints may remain on its nuclear research and development activities? Did we just enable a regime based on a false choice that we didn't fully understand?

One of the President's chief criticisms, typical of his straw-man approach to debate, has been to suggest that opponents of the deal only want a military action. Oddly enough, it is the President's own agreement with the Iranians that has stripped us of all leverage except military action if the agreement is not adhered to. The strategic decision to engage Iran in the resulting deal cannot be based on absolute certainty of Iran's nuclear programs or its intentions. The agreement is based on questionable assumptions, allows far too much maneuvering by Iran, and naively trusts the regime that has a history of evasive activities and false declarations to the very body, the IAEA, entrusted with enforcing the agreement.

Do we know without a doubt what is going on in every laboratory in Iran, whether it is on a military facility or a university campus?

I applaud the efforts of our negotiators, our intelligence community, and our diplomats, but I am sorry to say that they were sent on a fool's errand by the President. They were provided a false choice between this agreement and war. The narrative just doesn't add up.

I have spent the better part of 15 years as a member of the House or Senate Intelligence Committee. I understand the nature and the nuance of intelligence work, and I know that there are no absolute certainties in this business.

This deal is based not on an absolute knowledge of Iran's activities and its intentions, as the administration would have us believe, but as you can see, it is naively based on faith and hope.

I, for one, will not vote to enable a regime that supports terrorism, evades international inspections, disregards U.N. Security Council resolutions, and is opposed to the very existence of another nation in the region. The United States has effectively led the international community and enacted sanctions that have restrained the hostile regime, and it now looks as though this administration will undo those years of efforts and enable the same regime by filling its coffers with badly needed resources.

I don't know with absolute certainty where this agreement will lead, but I do understand that there are too many unanswered questions to move forward.

I urge my colleagues to join me in opposing this agreement.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Oklahoma.

Mr. INHOFE. Mr. President, it has been a long day. We have heard about everything that can be heard from a lot of different people, and I have come to some conclusions that there are some things that are incontrovertible after hearing both sides of the debate all day long. There are six things we should be looking at. I will quickly summarize these. I think it is kind of a good wrapup.

There are six things. First of all, this deal rewards and legitimizes Iran for violating international laws and treaties and United Nations Security Council resolutions. I say it rewards and legitimizes.

The second thing it does is it rewards Iran with $100 billion dollars. You heard it today. That could be a floating figure. We are not sure just how much it is, but we do know this: what they do with their money is to expand their influence with terrorist organizations.

The third thing is it places the Middle East on the brink of a new arms race. This is something we have heard from others for quite some time, and now we already have some countries coming forward with what their intentions are.

The fourth thing is it fails to dismantle Iran's enrichment infrastructure. That has been stated by a lot of people. No one really is denying that.

And fifth, it places no restrictions on Iran's ballistic missile program. You have to keep in mind we have been talking about bombs all day, but you have to deliver the bombs to make them effective. That is when the missile program comes into play.

And sixth—and I think it is most important—there is, in my opinion, no verification at all.

I would like to summarize all of that real quickly. In speaking about the fact that the agreement rewards and legitimizes Iran's violations, keep in mind they have violated almost every international law or treaty or United Nations Security Council resolution. The Treaty on the Nonproliferation of Nuclear Weapons, for developing nuclear weapons—they have violated that. The International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, which has to do with the freedom of expression, the freedom of religion, freedom from discrimination, and freedom from torture—they have violated that. The International Convention against the Taking of Hostages—several people have mentioned today—I think the junior Senator from Georgia asked: What about the four hostages who are over there?

I would carry that one step further. One of the hostages is an FBI agent named Robert Levinson. Robert Levinson now holds the record of having been held hostage longer than anyone else in history, and he is still there. He is still there at a time we are in this process.

The U.N. security resolutions on access to nuclear facilities—they have violated that. I think everyone knows that.

Iran has shown from time to time they can't be trusted. The Director General of the IAEA has said Iran has consistently failed to provide information or access needed to allay the IAEA's concerns about the weapons potential.

So that is the first thing. The second thing is rewarding the world's leading sponsor of terrorism. The United States does not normally negotiate with terrorists. This is something I have heard for many, many years, as long as I have been here, until now. Iran remains the world's leading state sponsor of terrorism, as we have heard all day today.

According to the State Department's ''2009 Country Reports on Terrorism,'' they have provided training and weapons to the Taliban fighting our forces in Afghanistan. Iranian IEDs have killed U.S. troops in Iraq. They have paid the Taliban in Afghanistan to kill U.S. troops. Iran supports Hamas in Palestine, Hezbollah in Lebanon, and Assad in Syria.

I had occasion to be in the Persian Gulf on the USS Carl Vinson just a few weeks ago. It was during the negotiations. There I was in the Persian Gulf at the same time an Iranian ship was taking weapons down to Yemen to kill Americans. That was while we were negotiating.

Iran is bankrolling the slaughter of tens of thousands of Syrians and has publicly committed to the annihilation of the State of Israel and has called for ''Death to America'' while we are in the middle of negotiations.

General Austin, the commander of the U.S. Central Command, made the statement—and I was there when he made this statement—that ''Iran represents the most significant threat to the central region . . . Iran continues to pursue policies that threaten U.S. strategic interests and goals throughout the Middle East.''

As was stated by my good friend before me, even Susan Rice, who would do almost anything the President asks, has said we can expect some of this money—this $100 billion dollars or whatever the amount ends up being—is going to be used to fortify their terrorist friends. So we can only conclude the financial windfall estimated to be over $100 billion will be used to fortify more terrorism.

The third point I think was made today is—and these are the six I think have become incontrovertible—this agreement places the Middle East on the brink of a new arms race.

Dr. Kissinger, who testified before our committee—the Armed Services Committee just the other day—when testifying regarding the ongoing nuclear negotiations with Iran, said, ''The impact of this approach will be to move from preventing proliferation to managing it.''

We all recall last month, when Prime Minister Netanyahu warned us and said, ''The deal that was supposed to end nuclear proliferation will actually trigger nuclear proliferation. It will trigger a nuclear arms race in the Middle East.''

Saudi Arabia has been talking recently about possibly being the first to jump in there on this new program, so we can expect that to happen. We know it is going to happen.

The fourth thing is, the agreement fails to dismantle Iran's enrichment infrastructure. I think that has been driven home by many people here. And it permits Iran to retain its enrichment infrastructure, including advanced centrifuges and continued development of its enrichment technology. That is something that is now pretty much agreed to.

Fifth, and next to last, is it places no restrictions on Iran's ballistic missile development. People have not talked much on the floor about this fact. They have talked about the bomb, but there has to be a delivery system before the bomb can be effective.

I can remember in 2007 that our unclassified intelligence report said that by 2015 Iran would have the bomb and a delivery system. Well, here it is 2015, and they weren't that far off. So we know what the capability is out there, what they are planning on doing, and the U.S. intelligence assesses—this is the quote and this is very significant—''that Iran's ballistic missiles are inherently capable of delivering weapons of mass destruction and that Iran's program on space launch vehicles improves Tehran's ability to develop longer range missiles, including an intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM).''

What no one has mentioned on this thing is we made an arrangement in the previous administration knowing that Iran was going to have this capability. We have some 30 ground-based interceptors, but they are all on the West Coast, because we thought that was where it was going to have to come from. But guess what. All of a sudden Iran is going to be coming from the other direction. Well, the first thing this President did when he took office was to do away with our commitment.

We had an arrangement with the Czech Republic to have a ground-based interceptor there. I remember so well that one of the best friends we have over there made the statement: Are you sure if we enrage Russia by having this system that you are not going to pull the rug out from under us?

I said: Absolutely.

That was Vaclav Klaus, one of our best friends over there.

I said: Absolutely.

Of course, that is what the President did. Now we have that same problem with the delivery system.

The last thing I think is most important—and I may be the only Member of the Senate who believes this, but I look at this and I go back home. A lot of times you don't find the wisdom here in Washington; you have to go back home. Certainly over this past month, being around my State of Oklahoma, people have asked the question: Well, wait a minute, if they have all this time once accused of something or if the IAEA should say ''We believe they are making a bomb in a certain location''—once they do that, if they have the ability under this deal to delay that not just 24 hours, not just 24 days, but they can go on and delay it for two additional periods by applying to the joint commission for 15 days and then the Minister of Foreign Affairs for 15 days—that is 54 days. I suggest we stop and think about that. If we know somebody has something, but they have 54 days to either destroy it or hide it or put it someplace else, they are going to do it.

So my people in Oklahoma say there just isn't any kind of verification. And we all remember what Ronald Reagan said: ''Trust, but verify.''

These pages are too young to remember what happened with the Soviet Union and all those problems, but clearly that was the major concern at that time. So this is the situation that was pointed out way back during the joint presentation of the House and the Senate by Netanyahu. If he would just change his registration, I would love it if he would run for President of the United States. He is the kind of guy we need. He made the statement at that time that no deal is going to be better than the bad deal that is on the table. I believe that is true.

I had occasion to publish an op-ed last week in the Wall Street Journal urging States to hold fast to their sanctions on Iran. Even if they consider strengthening and expanding those sanctions, here is the thing people don't understand. The reason the President gets by with not calling this a treaty that would have to be confirmed and verified by this body is that it is dealing with the States and not the Federal Government. So my hope is that many other States will be doing what we are doing in the State of Oklahoma and holding on to our sanctions and not releasing any of them. I think that could certainly be, if this thing becomes a reality, one of the few things we can do.

I will end with a quote from then President Bill Clinton in 1994. I remember this because I was there, and I heard him make this statement. After the deal with North Korea, this is what he said:

> This is a good deal for the United States. North Korea will freeze and then dismantle its nuclear program. South Korea and our allies will be better protected. The entire world will be safer as we slow the spread of nuclear weapons. The United States and international inspectors will carefully monitor North Korea to make sure it keeps its commitments.

Two decades later, the Defense Intelligence Agency announced that it had ''moderate confidence'' that North Korea has a nuclear weapon small enough to be placed on a ballistic missile.

So that is what is going on. In today's New York Times—I don't know how anyone can take them seriously when we have the guy who is the real boss over there—the Ayatollah Khamenei, talking about Israel, said: I'm telling you first, you will not be around in 25 years. We will annihilate you in that period of time. Then he talked about the United States. He said: Iranians must not forget the United States is the Great Satan. Ayatollah Khamenei warned, criticizing those calling for better relations, wanting to show this Satan as an angel, but the Iranian nation has pushed this Satan out. We should not allow it to sneak back in through the window.

These are the guys we are negotiating with. With that, I would say this is not a treaty, it is not a deal, it is surrender.

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

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

PLANNED PARENTHOOD

Mr. LEE. Mr. President, last month, before the August recess, the Senate took up legislation introduced by my friend Senator JONI ERNST that would have ended Federal funding for Planned Parenthood, transferring subsidies to other women's community health clinics. Unfortunately, the bill failed on its first vote, but the questions raised by the Planned Parenthood scandal and the challenges it presents to Congress and to the American people have only grown since then.

At issue are undercover videos released over the last few months that provide an unprecedented behind-the-scenes glimpse inside America's leading abortion provider. These undercover videos were captured by a pro-life organization called the Center for Medical Progress. They contain images and conversations unlike anything ever before submitted for public scrutiny. So far, CMP has released 16 hours of footage depicting what appears to be the routine mutilation of American children, born and unborn; the harvesting and sale of those children's body parts for profit; the means by which Planned Parenthood avoids public detection of and perhaps criminal prosecution for their actions; and, finally, in many ways the most terrifying of all, the nonchalant, blood-chilling amusement Planned Parenthood personnel seem to derive from all of the above.

To date, no one has rebutted the evidence contained in these videos. Planned Parenthood's friends and political clients gamely try to change the subject. They take umbrage and they shoot the messenger. They deflect and distract as best they can—the political equivalent of a checkmated lawyer banging his shoe angrily on the table. Even the guilty deserve a defense, after all. But they are guilty. We all know it. You only have to watch the videos for 5 minutes and you know it is true.

The subjects of these videos are sincere and candid—casually sharing the secrets of their grisly business with people they think are their co-conspirators. The evidence points to only one conclusion: Planned Parenthood really does these horrifying things. Planned Parenthood makes money at it and laughs about it over lunch. But aside from the primary evidence, do you know how else we know it is true? Because if it were false, we would know for sure that it was false. The mainstream media—Big Abortion's loudest shoe banger of them all—would be thundering Planned Parenthood's vindication from every headline, every homepage, every network satellite. If these videos were false—if a pro-life group somehow fabricated this narrative of Planned Parenthood's greed, barbarism, and cruelty—it would be a story.

Who are we kidding? It would be the story, a career-making scoop, with fame, Pulitzer Prizes, lucrative book deals, and speaking tours awaiting the journalist who broke the story. Yet if you open a newspaper, click on the legacy media sites, and turn on the news—nothing. You see nothing. The major networks have gone dark on the videos over the last month, and major newspapers have scrubbed the scandal from their front pages.

Why the silence? Simple. They know it is true too. The media looked for the facts, they found them, and then they turned away. In the case of the Planned Parenthood undercover videos in the court of public opinion, as they taught me in law school: Qui tacit consentire videtur—the media's silence indicates the media's consent.

Everyone who has watched these individual videos knows they have the power to change minds and in only one direction. So the pro-abortion news media is doing everything they can to suppress the videos' exposure.

So tightly have the wagons been circled that the media can't even attack the Center for Medical Progress as much as they would surely like to because doing so would require context. That context would be exceedingly painful here.

Even describing these videos—even mentioning them to a wider audience—can only lead to curious Google searches, then tweets, then Facebook shares, YouTube views, and inevitably to public horror at what people would see and the organization responsible for that horror. This, Planned Parenthood's friends in the media cannot allow, and so they ignore the undercover videos, just like they tried to ignore the harrowing case of Dr. Kermit Gosnell in 2013, the perennial scandal of dangerous clinic conditions and the horror of partial-birth abortion in years past.

Every pro-choice activist, including those with press credentials, knows that the greatest threat to abortion-on-demand is the truth about what it entails. As Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn put it in his Nobel lecture: ''[Violence] is necessarily interwoven with falsehood.''

The media hides the truth about Planned Parenthood and about Big Abortion—even at the expense of their own credibility, even to the endangerment of vulnerable women and the enrichment of monsters.

Like Tolkien's Gollum, they must protect the ''precious.'' I am not a reporter, nor am I an editor or a producer. I am certainly not a network

news anchor, a job for which I lack the skills, the experience and, alas, the hairline necessary for that position. I am a lawyer by training and now a Senator. Therefore, I cannot make leading newspapers, news sites, and television networks tell this story, but it occurs to me I can try to tell it myself on the Senate floor. More than just tell that story, I can make the case to our colleagues and to our fellow Americans. For the next several weeks, for as long as it takes, I will come to the floor of the Senate—the American people's great deliberative Chamber—and make that case. The public deserves to know the truth about Planned Parenthood, the inhumanity it practices, the laws it may be breaking, and the lies it tells. Taxpayers deserve to know what their money—more than a half billion dollars last year alone—is paying for and how their taxes might be more conscionably spent.

Americans deserve to know what evil is abroad in their land and what good can be done to overcome it. In the struggle between Planned Parenthood and its victims, President Obama and his party have sided a rich and violent special interest group over the innocent women they exploit, the tiny children they mutilate, and the vulnerable communities they poison.

I harbor no illusions about softening such weaponized extremism with a few floor speeches, nor do I believe that the 45 Senators who voted in August to reaffirm Planned Parenthood's eligibility for hundreds of millions of dollars in Federal funding will change their minds—at least not yet.

The history of our Nation is the story of a good and loving people who stubbornly, if sometimes slowly, overcome narrow, prejudicial legacies. When presented with the truth, Americans have always come to see and defend the innate dignity of our once overlooked brothers and sisters and welcome them out of the shadows and into our hearts and our society.

Indeed, the gradual embrace of our youngest Americans is well underway. In fact, it is gaining momentum all the time. With every Instagrammed ultrasound image, every overjoyed Facebook post, and every advance in embryology and obstetrics, Americans move closer and closer to the truth about the unborn. At the same time, every new undercover video released by the Center for Medical Progress is bringing us all a little closer to the truth about Planned Parenthood.

In coming weeks, I hope these speeches might help my colleagues and anyone who might be listening to come a little closer to the truth about both. As I make the case against using taxpayer funds to facilitate, protect, and promote Planned Parenthood's deceptions and violence, I hope my colleagues on the other side of these questions will join me from time to time. A good debate is always more fruitful than a monologue. But as long as Planned Parenthood's friends remain mute, I will endeavor to improve upon the silence and, hopefully in time, improve upon our inadequate legal protections for the dignity of human life.

As I said, even the guilty deserve a defense, but so do the innocent. However vulnerable they may be—both children in the womb and mothers in the waiting room—however forsaken, however afraid, the innocent are never defenseless. Their defense is the truth, and I am going to do what I can to tell it.

I thank the Presiding Officer and 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.

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

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

Mrs. FISCHER. Mr. President, I rise this evening to discuss the recent nuclear deal with Iran. I join my colleagues in opposition to this deal, and I agree with many of the arguments that have been put forward. Like so many Nebraskans who have contacted me to express their opposition, I have a number of concerns regarding this deal.

One of the difficulties when it comes to explaining opposition to the deal is the sheer volume of the problems with it. There is no simple and succinct way to package all of the deal's weaknesses, which range from highly technical questions about access to suspicious sites to broad overreaching problems.

Overall, I believe that, while the administration claims this deal permanently prohibits Iran from obtaining a nuclear weapon, the plain language of this agreement simply does not support that claim. I am very worried that inspectors do not have the access they need to verify Iran's compliance. Moreover, there is no effective mechanism for punishing the low-level violations that Iran is sure to attempt. However, even if you put aside the technical questions and assume the agreement will function exactly as it is intended, the fact of the matter is that all meaningful restrictions on Iran's nuclear program expire in 15 years. At that point, Iran's program is legitimatized, and it is free to build an industrial-scale enrichment program if it chooses. This means the 1-year breakout time the administration has placed so much emphasis on is only temporary.

In their analysis of the agreement, the nonproliferation experts at the Institute for Science and International Security concluded that after year 15 of the agreement, ''Iran could have in place a nuclear infrastructure that could produce significant quantities of weapon-grade uranium rapidly and turn that material into nuclear weapons in a matter of months.'' Some may contend that even if it is not a permanent prohibition, as the administration claims, it is still better than the status quo. Even if we are right back where we started in 10 or 15 years, buying time isn't a bad thing, they insist. But, colleagues, we won't be right back where we started. We will be in a far worse position.

Iran's current program was built in violation of its Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty obligations and U.N. Security Council resolutions. The illegality of its program served as the basis for international sanctions, and it relegated Iran to a pariah status in the community of nations. Now, with this deal, Iran's program is legitimatized. It is welcomed as a member in good standing with the NPT, and the sanctions regime is repealed, not temporarily waived. Thus, if the United States sought to limit Iran's program after year 15, we would be attempting to rebuild a sanctions regime from scratch and to target a program that, under this agreement, is deemed to be acceptable.

Supporters of this agreement, many of whom argue that the sanctions regime is already on the brink of collapse, need to ask themselves this: How likely is it that sanctions could ever be imposed if Iran rapidly expands its program after year 15 of this agreement? I think the answer is that it would be incredibly unlikely. Is permanently giving up our ability to sanction Iran in exchange for a temporary delay of its nuclear aspirations a fair trade? Of course not. Is buying 10 to 15 years' time worth agreeing to the perpetual instability of an unrestrained nuclear Iran after that point? No.

There are many other reasons to conclude that we will be in a worse position in 15 years despite the administration's claims to the contrary. Not only will Iran's nuclear program be able to proceed without limitations, but it will be far richer with this agreement. There is some debate about how much Iran will receive when the agreement comes into effect. But whether it is $50 billion or $100 billion or $150 billion, there is no disagreement that Iran stands to profit massively from this deal. Moreover, as sanctions are repealed and trade resumes, Iran's economy will grow, bringing further profit to that regime. Although the administration argues that alternative restrictions can be used to hinder Iran's support for terrorist groups, it is difficult to believe that relieving sanctions pressure and infusing Iran with cash will do anything other than improve the positions of Iran's proxies and the terror groups that it funds.

The additional resources will also allow Iran to increase its military capabilities, which will further be enhanced by the negotiators' decision to end the U.N. conventional weapons and ballistic missile technology embargoes on Iran. I find this decision to lift the embargoes—particularly on the transfer of ballistic missile technology to Iran—highly concerning and a compelling example of just how this deal fails to advance our interests.

Rolling back Iran's ballistic missile program has been a key objective of the United States for some time because, as Director of National Intelligence Clapper put it in his statement assessing worldwide threats before the Armed Services Committee this year, ''Tehran would choose ballistic missiles as its preferred method of delivering nuclear weapons.''

Secretary Carter, in his confirmation hearing, built on this and unequivocally stated that Iran's ballistic missile development was ''a threat not only to the United States, but friends and allies in the region.''

Last year I joined a number of my colleagues in sending a letter to the President urging him to use the negotiations process to achieve further restrictions on Iran's ballistic missile program. The administration's response to our letter stated that Iran's ballistic missile program ''will need to be addressed in the context of a comprehensive solution.'' This position was repeated by the U.S. negotiators. Under Secretary of State Wendy Sherman also stated on multiple occasions that Iran's ballistic missile program ''has to be addressed as part of a comprehensive agreement.''

The Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, General Dempsey, weighed in at a July 7 hearing before our Senate Armed Services Committee, testifying that ''under no circumstances should we relieve pressure on Iran relative to ballistic missile capabilities and arms trafficking.'' Then, a week later, news reports surfaced that negotiators had agreed to an eleventh hour Iranian demand that the embargoes be lifted.

Indeed, when the deal was announced on July 14, the President revealed that after 5 years, the conventional weapons embargo will be removed, and after 8 years, restrictions related to ballistic missile technology would also expire. I will repeat that point. Instead of exchanging sanctions relief for further limitations on Iran's ballistic missile development, as many of us in this body had urged, U.S. negotiators agreed at the last minute to relax those restrictions. These are the weapons that our intelligence community tells us will be Iran's preferred way to deliver a nuclear weapon, and our most senior military officer testified that we should ''under no circumstances'' relieve that pressure. When the administration said Iran's ballistic missile programs would have to be addressed, few would have guessed that this is what they meant.

Now, Secretary Kerry has argued this concession won't have an impact because many other tools, such as the Missile Technology Control Regime and the Proliferation Security Initiative, are available to prevent Iran from acquiring ballistic missile technology. But the United Nations restrictions were imposed in order to bolster those measures which were on the books long before the U.N. measures were passed. Removing them will give our counterproliferation efforts one less tool to limit Iran's military development and, in particular, its ability to build an ICBM that is capable of hitting the United States.

The administration has also argued that keeping the embargo on conventional weapons in effect for 5 years and 8 years with respect to those ballistic missile restrictions is a victory. After all, they claim, Iran, Russia, and China wanted to have those restrictions removed immediately. Watering down last-minute demands of a minority of negotiators is not a victory for the United States. Any attempt to argue that we were lucky to avoid complete capitulation to the demands of Iran and Russia and China admits a negotiating atmosphere so dysfunctional that no positive agreement could have emerged.

I believe the repeal of the U.N. embargoes will foster Iran's conventional weapons and ballistic missile development. Thus, under this agreement, in 15 years we are likely to see an Iran that has emerged as a threshold nuclear state with an advanced enrichment program, has a more advanced conventional army, and commands a larger, better trained, and better equipped proxy force. It may even have an ICBM with which it can threaten to retaliate against any U.S. attack. All of this will be achieved without violating the agreement that is before us today, which reflects how far short it falls of advancing U.S. interests.

Worst of all, legitimizing Iran's nuclear program diminishes the chance that sanctions could ever be imposed on Iran in the future, and fostering its military development undermines the threat of force should Iran ever attempt to develop a nuclear weapon.

I believe this vote will be one of the most important I will make as a U.S. Senator, and it is worthy of a robust debate. I am disappointed that more of my colleagues—in particular those on the other side of the aisle—have not come to the floor to share their opinion, their position. I find their silence deafening.

As I have looked around this Chamber today, I have been wondering, where are the supporters of this agreement? Why are they not on the floor to defend the substance of this deal? Forget the politics. Forget the false choices, the straw men, and the bluster. We should be here to debate substance.

In conclusion, I cannot support an agreement that attempts to trade inadequate short-term limits for dangerous long-term concessions.

Nebraskans and all Americans and their families are depending on us to ensure that our Nation's security is protected. This deal should not be approved.

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.

Mrs. FISCHER. 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

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

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

RECOGNIZING LIEUTENANT GENERAL PATRICIA D. HOROHO

Mr. COCHRAN. Mr. President, it is an honor to commend LTG Patricia D. Horoho, the 43rd U.S. Army Surgeon General and Commander, U.S. Army Medical Command, upon her retirement following 32 years of service to our Nation and the U.S. Army. She leaves behind a legacy of transformation that will benefit the health care of our soldiers and their families for years to come.

Lieutenant General Horoho was commissioned as a second lieutenant in the U.S. Army Nurse Corps in 1982 upon her graduation from the University of North Carolina. Over the course of her service, she commanded medical units to include the U.S. Army Medical Command, the Walter Reed Health Care System, the Western Regional Medical Command, and the Madigan Army Medical Center. She also deployed in support of the International Security Assistance Force Joint Command in Afghanistan in 2011.

During her tenure as the 43rd U.S. Army Surgeon General, Lieutenant General Horoho demonstrated her resolve to transform Army Medicine from a health care system to a system of health. Her strong leadership efforts resulted in the Army and the Department of Defense adopting many initiatives to improve the quality of care for military members, families, and retirees—validating the Army Medical Department's professionalism as a High Reliability Organization. She is a national leader and innovator in health care who provided vision and direction that positively transformed Army Medicine.

Lieutenant General Horoho is a true patriot who has dedicated her life to the security, health, and welfare of our Nation. Her loyalty and commitment to the soldiers and their families have never wavered. She is leaving the U.S. Army Medical Department in a high state of readiness, capable of accomplishing its important missions. We thank her for her outstanding service to a grateful nation and wish her well in her future endeavors.

RECOGNIZING JOSEPH M. CASEY

Mr. TOOMEY. Mr. President, I wish to congratulate Joseph M. Casey on his

upcoming retirement as general manager of the Southeastern Pennsylvania Transportation Authority, also known as SEPTA. Mr. Casey has served SEPTA in this position for the last 7 years and will officially retire on September 30, 2015.

For those who do not know, SEPTA is the largest transit system in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and the sixth largest in the Nation. Services including bus, subway, commuter rail, light rail, and electric trolleybus are provided to over 3.9 million people in and around Philadelphia, PA, including parts of Delaware and New Jersey. A lifelong resident of the Philadelphia area, Mr. Casey's first memories of SEPTA were riding the trolley to visit his grandmother in the city and to attend games at Connie Mack Stadium.

Mr. Casey began his career at SEPTA in 1982. Before becoming general manager in 2008, he served for 6 years as chief financial officer and treasurer. In senior leadership positions at the Internal Audit and Finance departments, he received praise for his efforts to implement fiscal responsibility at the authority.

As general manager of SEPTA, Mr. Casey oversaw 9,000 employees and instituted several necessary programs for the authority. He shifted SEPTA's customer relations focus to reflect the ''Four Cs''—Cleanliness, Convenience, Courtesy and Communication—and implemented initiatives to reduce energy consumption on vehicles and at facilities. As a result, SEPTA received the 2012 American Public Transportation Association, APTA, Outstanding Public Transportation System Award.

Throughout his tenure, Mr. Casey has focused on community engagement and policy reforms with the aim of helping riders and the overall transit infrastructure system. I applaud Mr. Casey for his work with SEPTA over the past 34 years and his service to the residents of southeast Pennsylvania. His leadership and determination should serve as an example for his successor.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

FOSTER GRANDPARENTS PROGRAM 50TH ANNIVERSARY

• Mr. MORAN. Mr. President, today I wish to commend all foster grandparents on the program's 50th anniversary this year. The Foster Grandparents Program provides ways for volunteers age 55 and older to stay active by serving children and youth in their communities. These volunteers give their time and talents as role models, mentors, and friends to children in need.

More than 25,000 foster grandparents volunteer through over 300 programs throughout the United States. Last year, foster grandparent volunteers provided 23 million hours of service to their local communities, serving more than 189,000 children facing academic, social, and financial challenges. These volunteers serve at thousands of locations, helping children build reading skills, providing one-on-one tutoring, mentoring troubled teenagers and young mothers, caring for premature infants or children with disabilities, and assisting children who have been abused or neglected.

I am particularly proud to honor the more than 500 seniors in Kansas who contribute their time and talents serving children in my State. Foster grandparent programs operate across Kansas out of Augusta, Hays, Kansas City, Manhattan, Paola, Topeka, and Wichita. Volunteers serve in an array of locations throughout the State, including schools, hospitals, juvenile correctional institutions, and early childhood education and childcare centers. These compassionate individuals have reached more than 5,000 Kansas students over the last 50 years. The following are just a few examples of their inspiring service:

Alice Reid has been part of the Foster Grandparent Program since 2004. At the age of 92, she has consistently given an average of 33 hours per week and 11,341 lifetime volunteer hours. She primarily works on reading with children younger than 5 years of age, but Grandma Alice is happy to help any student. She often spends her lunch hour in the cafeteria eating with the children. Grandma Alice is so valued that the school had a big celebration for her 90th birthday. There were more than 400 children involved in this birthday celebration for their friend. The students made birthday cards and sang to her. A kindergarten teacher remarked, ''We love Grandma Alice and we appreciate all that she does for us. She has been a wonderful part of our school.''

In WaKeeney, Grandma Deb Fabrizius serves in kindergarten classrooms at Trego Grade School and has formed trusting friendships with many of the children she serves. She shared a story about a child, ''a sweet little guy who is quiet, very particular about his work and has a great smile. This little boy does not hug a lot, but when he does it, it is special—he's very sincere about it.'' The child told Grandma Deb that he wanted to share a secret with her. She followed him to his locker, where he took out a folder from his backpack with papers in it. The papers detailed what he wanted to be when he grew up. Grandma Deb was touched that he trusted her enough to keep his secret, and she told him that his parents would be proud of him and encouraged him to share his dreams with them. Foster grandparents such as Grandma Deb are sometimes the only adults with whom children have consistent, loving, nonjudgmental relationships. Grandma Deb and other foster grandparents do their best to encourage students and inspire them to have self-confidence and reach for the stars.

Carol Sheffield, Udena McKee, Naomi Graves, and Margaret Hill work as foster grandparents in the Manhattan area. These women note the work they do for the kids is very fulfilling, and they plan to continue to serve in the classroom for years. By giving positive attention to kids, the volunteers and teachers have been able to see a real turnaround in students' lives. Carmen Flaz, principal of Oakdale Elementary School in Salina, said that foster grandparents have a large effect in the classroom.

Grandma Linda Downs is the only foster grandparent in Waterville, a town of around 700 people in northeast Kansas. Grandma Linda serves students in her local preschool as well the afterschool and summer elementary programs. She volunteers at least 30 hours each week for her community.

Grandma Melinda serves as a foster grandparent at Lucas-Luray Elementary School in Luray. When she was younger, she lost her right thumb in an accident. While most people do not notice her missing thumb, Grandma Melinda says, ''Leave it to a kid! They look you over from head to toe. They spy my missing thumb right away. They watch me holding a crayon or glue stick. They are always watching my hand to see what I can do.'' When children at school ask her about her missing thumb, Grandma Melinda lets them look closer and touch her hand if they want. She uses this opportunity to teach the children a life lesson about each person being special in their own way and about accepting everyone.

Grandpa Hubert Brown serves in a Head Start classroom in Great Bend, where he gives special attention to three particular students. A set of two boys have formed a close bond with him. Another child, a little girl who is very shy and did not talk much with other students, always finds a place near Grandpa Hubert during circle time. Through her friendship with Grandpa Hubert, she has increased her involvement in class and developed friendships with her classmates.

The special way of life we live in Kansas and across this great country would not be possible without individuals committed to giving back to improve their own communities, and foster grandparents change the world for the better one soul at a time. Their acts of kindness and selflessness are inspiring to us all. I honor foster grandparents for their shining examples of service to others. This commitment to service enriches our own homes and strengthens our Nation.

Thank you, congratulations on your 50th anniversary, and all the best for many more years of helping others.•

REMEMBERING LIEUTENANT CHARLES GLINIEWICZ

• Mr. KIRK. Mr. President, on September 1, 2015, Lieutenant Charles Joseph Gliniewicz of the Fox Lake Police Department made the ultimate sacrifice. Lieutenant Gliniewicz, who

served his community as a police officer for over 30 years, was nearing retirement when he was shot and killed while in pursuit of suspects during his morning patrol.

Lieutenant Gliniewicz, known has ''G.I. Joe,'' was a pillar of his community, committed to his job, his family, and the children he trained at the Fox Lake Police Explorer Post 300. As founder of Post 300 and leader since 1987, Lieutenant Gliniewicz trained young people ages 14 to 21 for a career in law enforcement. Hundreds of these ''Explorers'' entered into law enforcement and military careers following Lieutenant Gliniewicz's training and mentorship. Prior to his career in Fox Lake, Lieutenant Gliniewicz was a member of the U.S. Army and proudly served his country from 1981 to 2007, receiving numerous service awards during that time.

While Lieutenant Gliniewicz dedicated much of his time to his community, he was also a loving family man. He was married to his wife Mel for 26 years and the couple have four children.

I wish to express my deepest condolences to the family and friends of Lieutenant Charles Joseph Gliniewicz and the entire Fox Lake community. On behalf of the people of Illinois, I thank Lieutenant Gliniewicz for his dedication and service to his community and his country. I encourage all law enforcement personnel to honor his memory by continuing his mission to foster positive relationships between police officers and the people they serve and to inspire the next generation of law enforcement.●

CUSTER STATE PARK BUFFALO ROUNDUP 50TH ANNIVERSARY

● Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I wish to recognize the Custer State Park Buffalo Roundup. The Buffalo Roundup will be celebrating its 50th anniversary on September 25, 2015. The exciting and historical event is accompanied by an arts festival, a buffalo wallow chili cook-off, concerts, and more.

Taking place in the beautiful Custer State Park, located in the Black Hills, the Buffalo Roundup is a spectacular event. Each year, thousands of visitors watch as a herd of approximately 1,300 bison is driven into corrals by cowboys on horses, all-terrain vehicles, and pickup trucks. Following the roundup, the bison are sorted for sale and medical evaluations.

Millions of bison roamed the Great Plains hundreds of years ago, but in the 1800s the bison population dwindled to less than 1,000. Custer State Park purchased 36 bison in 1914 as part of an effort to conserve the bison population, and the herd was often gathered for culling and inspection. It was not until 1965 that the roundup became an annual event.

The Buffalo Roundup is integral to maintaining a healthy bison herd in Custer State Park. At its largest, the herd included 2,500 bison. Once the bison are in the corrals, they are vaccinated, branded, and sorted for sale. Several hundred bison are sold each year in order to prevent overgrazing and preserve the grasslands.

I offer my congratulations to the Custer State Park Buffalo Roundup on its 50th anniversary and wish them prosperity in the years to come.●

TRIBUTE TO MARTIN GUTIERREZ

● Mr. VITTER. Mr. President, today I honor Martin Gutierrez, division director for Catholic Charities Archdiocese of New Orleans and the recipient of the 2015 Excelencia Award as a Community Leader by the Hispanic Chamber of Commerce of Louisiana.

Martin grew up in the New Orleans area, graduating from Chalmette High School and going on to receive a degree in business administration and management from the University of New Orleans. While still in high school, Martin took a job at a local bank where he continued to work for the next 14 years.

Following his banking career, he became the executive director of the Hispanic Apostolate of New Orleans. While there he supported the work of 16 church parishes that offered a ministry targeted to the Hispanic community. In 2007, he became the director of Immigration/Refugee Services and Hispanic Outreach for Catholic Charities in New Orleans. Since then, he has served as the executive director for Neighborhood Community Services and as vice president for Community Services Ministries. He was named division director last year and in that role he manages a number of programs that include a staff of around 100 people and a budget of approximately $7 million.

In addition to his work with Catholic Charities, Martin is also involved in a number of other community organizations. He serves on the board for the New Orleans Family Justice Center, UNITY for the Homeless, Puentes New Orleans, and ASI Federal Credit Union. He has also participated in training with the Jefferson Parish Sheriff's Office Citizens Academy, New Orleans Police Department Citizens Academy, and the FBI Citizens Academy.

In 2006, he received the Galvez Cut from the New Orleans Hispanic Heritage Foundation in recognition of his work in the Hispanic community and in 2010, he was presented with the Role Model Award by the Young Leadership Council. I am pleased to join with the Hispanic Chamber of Commerce of Louisiana to recognize Martin Gutierrez as an outstanding community leader.●

RECOGNIZING THE LIVINGSTON PARISH CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

● Mr. VITTER. Mr. President, I wish to honor the Livingston Parish Chamber of Commerce for being awarded the 2015 Louisiana Chamber of Commerce of the Year Award.

The Livingston Parish Chamber of Commerce is made up of more than 500 members from across Livingston Parish, representing a wide range of businesses including small mom-and-pop shops to large corporations. While serving the interests of more than 20,000 employees of local businesses, the chamber of commerce has worked to make Livingston Parish one of the fastest growing parishes in the State. Their exemplary hands-on approach to support members of the community is evident through programs such as ''Leads for Lunch'' and ''Breakfast on the Run,'' events designed to allow members to promote their businesses and encourage referrals for other chamber members.

One of the most distinctive aspects of the Livingston Parish Chamber of Commerce is its commitment to supporting and training local students and educators. Through scholarship opportunities, Student of the Month awards, and other educational programs, it is clear the chamber of commerce recognizes the importance of training the business leaders of tomorrow. Additionally, all members of the chamber can feel confident knowing they will have ample opportunities to learn from their peers, connect with members of the community, and network with local officials. By providing such a strongly interconnected business community, the Livingston Parish Chamber of Commerce has proved to be vital in the success of its local economy.

It is my honor to recognize the Livingston Parish Chamber of Commerce for their unwavering service to the local business community and for being an exemplary role model for the rest of the State and country.●

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 a withdrawal 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 2:19 p.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Mrs. Cole, one of its reading clerks, announced that the House has passed the following bill, without amendment:

S. 1359. An act to allow manufacturers to meet warranty and labeling requirements for consumer products by displaying the terms of warranties on Internet websites, and for other purposes.

The message also announced that the House has passed the following bills, in

which it requests the concurrence of the Senate:

H.R. 1344. An act to amend the Public Health Service Act to reauthorize a program for early detection, diagnosis, and treatment regarding deaf and hard-of-hearing newborns, infants, and young children.

H.R. 1462. An act to combat the rise of prenatal opioid abuse and neonatal abstinence syndrome.

H.R. 1725. An act to amend and reauthorize the controlled substance monitoring program under section 399O of the Public Health Service Act, and for other purposes.

H.R. 2820. An act to reauthorize the Stem Cell Therapeutic and Research Act of 2005, and for other purposes.

The message further announced that the House has agreed to the following concurrent resolutions, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate:

H. Con. Res. 70. Concurrent resolution authorizing the use of the Capitol Grounds for the District of Columbia Special Olympics Law Enforcement Torch Run.

H. Con. Res. 73. Concurrent resolution authorizing the use of the Capitol Grounds for the 2nd Annual Fallen Firefighters Congressional Flag Presentation Ceremony.

H. Con. Res. 74. Concurrent resolution authorizing the use of the Capitol Grounds for an event to commemorate the 20th Anniversary of the Million Man March,

MEASURES REFERRED

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

H.R. 1344. An act to amend the Public Health Service Act to reauthorize a program for early detection, diagnosis, and treatment regarding deaf and hard-of-hearing newborns, infants, and young children; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

H.R. 1725. An act to amend and reauthorize the controlled substance monitoring program under section 399O of the Public Health Service Act, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

H.R. 2820. An act to reauthorize the Stem Cell Therapeutic and Research Act of 2005, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EXECUTIVE AND OTHER COMMUNICATIONS

The following communications were laid before the Senate, together with accompanying papers, reports, and documents, and were referred as indicated:

EC–2659. A communication from the Director of Congressional Affairs, Nuclear Regulatory Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Miscellaneous Corrections'' ((RIN3150–AJ60) (NRC–2015–0105)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on August 6, 2015; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–2660. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Air Plan Approval; IL; MN; Determinations of Attainment of the 2008 Lead Standard for Chicago and Eagan'' (FRL No. 9932–63–Region 5) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on August 19, 2015; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–2661. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Air Plan Approval; Michigan and Wisconsin; 2006 PM2.5 NAAQS PSD and Visibility Infrastructure SIP Requirements'' (FRL No. 9932–65–Region 5) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on August 19, 2015; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–2662. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Approval and Promulgation of Air Quality Implementation Plans; Montana; Revisions to the Administrative Rules of Montana; Correction'' (FRL No. 9932–53–Region 8) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on August 19, 2015; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–2663. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Approval and Promulgation of Implementation Plans; State of Kansas; Infrastructure SIP Requirements for the 2008 Ozone National Ambient Air Quality Standard'' (FRL No. 9932–81–Region 7) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on August 19, 2015; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–2664. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Approval and Promulgation of Air Quality Implementation Plans; State of Missouri; Cross-State Air Pollution Rule'' (FRL No. 9932–95–Region 7) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on August 19, 2015; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–2665. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Approval and Promulgation of Air Quality Implementation Plans; State of Nebraska; Cross-State Air Pollution Rule'' (FRL No. 9932–84–Region 7) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on August 19, 2015; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–2666. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Approval and Promulgation of Implementation Plans; Klamath Falls, Oregon Nonattainment Area; Fine Particulate Matter Emissions Inventory and SIP Strengthening Measures'' (FRL No. 9932–40–Region 10) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on August 19, 2015; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–2667. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Approval and Promulgation of Air Quality Implementation Plans; State of Kansas; Cross-State Air Pollution Rule'' (FRL No. 9932–85–Region 7) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on August 19, 2015; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–2668. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Idaho: Final Authorization of State Hazardous Waste Management Program; Revision'' (FRL No. 9932–87–Region 10) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on August 19, 2015; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–2669. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''NORTH CAROLINA: Final Authorization of State Hazardous Waste Management Program Revisions'' (FRL No. 9932–93–Region 4) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on August 19, 2015; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–2670. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Partial Approval and Disapproval of Air Quality State Implementation Plans (SIP); State of Nebraska; Infrastructure SIP Requirements for the 2008 Ozone National Ambient Air Quality Standard (NAAQS).'' (FRL No. 9932–78–Region 7) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on August 19, 2015; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–2671. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Prevention of Significant Deterioration and Title V Permitting for Greenhouse Gases: Removal of Certain Vacated Elements'' (FRL No. 9932–11–OAR) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on August 19, 2015; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–2672. A communication from the Assistant Secretary of the Army (Civil Works), transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to the Calcasieu Lock, inland navigation project; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–2673. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Water Quality Standards Regulatory Revisions'' (FRL No. 9921–21–OW) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on August 11, 2015; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–2674. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Air Plan Approval; Indiana and Ohio Infrastructure SIP Requirements for the 2010 NO2 and SO2 NAAQS'' (FRL No. 9932–15–Region 5) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on August 11, 2015; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–2675. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Approval and Promulgation of Air Quality Implementation Plans; Virginia; Movement of the Northern Virginia Area from Virginia's Nonattainment Area List to its Maintenance Area List'' (FRL No. 9932–35–Region 3) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on August 11, 2015; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–2676. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Air Plan Approval; Indiana; Alcoa BART'' (FRL No. 9932–18–Region 5) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on August 14, 2015; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–2677. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Approval and Promulgation of Air Quality Implementation Plans; Rhode Island Low Emission Vehicle Program'' (FRL No. 9932–46–Region 1) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on August 14, 2015; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–2678. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Approval and Promulgation of Air Quality Implementation Plans; District of Columbia; Interstate Pollution Transport Requirements for the 2006 24-Hour Fine Particulate Matter Standard'' (FRL No. 9932–55–Region 3) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on August 14, 2015; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–2679. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Approval and Promulgation of Implementation Plans; Klamath Falls, Oregon Nonattainment Area; Fine Particulate Matter Emissions Inventory and SIP Strengthening Measures'' (FRL No. 9932–40–Region 10) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on August 14, 2015; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–2680. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Approval and Promulgation of Implementation Plans; State of Missouri, Controlling Emissions During Episodes of High Air Pollution Potential'' (FRL No. 9932–39–Region 7) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on August 14, 2015; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–2681. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Promulgation of State Implementation Plan Revisions; Infrastructure Requirements for the 2008 Ozone, 2008 Lead, and 2010 NO2 National Ambient Air Quality Standards; Colorado'' (FRL No. 9932–52–Region 8) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on August 14, 2015; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–2682. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Approval of North Carolina's Request to Relax the Federal Reid Vapor Pressure Gasoline Volatility Standard for Mecklenburg and Gaston Counties'' ((RIN2060–AS64) (FRL No. 9931–94–OAR)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on August 14, 2015; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–2683. A communication from the Chief of the Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Determination of Distributive Share When Partner's Interest Changes'' ((RIN1545–BD71) (TD 9728)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on August 5, 2015; to the Committee on Finance.

EC–2684. A communication from the Chief of the Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Extension of Time to File Certain Information Returns'' ((RIN1545–BM50) (TD 9730)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on August 13, 2015; to the Committee on Finance.

EC–2685. A communication from the Chief of the Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Procedures for Requesting Competent Authority Assistance Under Tax Treaties'' (Rev. Proc. 2015–40) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on August 13, 2015; to the Committee on Finance.

EC–2686. A communication from the Acting Chief of the Regulations and Disclosure Law Division, Customs and Border Protection, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Liberalization of Certain Documentary Evidence Required as Proof of Exportation on Drawback Claims'' (RIN1515–AE02) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on August 11, 2015; to the Committee on Finance.

EC–2687. A communication from the Chief of the Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Applicable Federal Rates—September 2015'' (Rev. Rul. 2015–19) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on August 21, 2015; to the Committee on Finance.

EC–2688. A communication from the Chief of the Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Transfers of Property to Partnerships with Related Foreign Partners and Controlled Transaction Involving Partnerships'' (Notice 2015–54) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on August 21, 2015; to the Committee on Finance.

EC–2689. A communication from the Chief of the Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Update of Weighted Average Interest Rates, Yield Curves, and Segment Rates'' (Notice 2015–55) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on August 21, 2015; to the Committee on Finance.

EC–2690. A communication from the Chief of the Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Section 4980I—Excise Tax on High Cost Employer-Sponsored Health Coverage'' (Notice 2015–52) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on August 21, 2015; to the Committee on Finance.

EC–2691. A communication from the Chief of the Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Income Tax Treatment of 2014 Fuel Credits Allowable Under Section 6426(c) and Section 6426(d)'' (Notice 2015–56) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on August 21, 2015; to the Committee on Finance.

EC–2692. A communication from the Chief of the Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Updated Static Mortality Tables for Defined Benefit Pension Plans for 2016'' (Notice 2015–53) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on August 13, 2015; to the Committee on Finance.

EC–2693. A communication from the Chief of the Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Revenue Procedure: Procedures for Advance Pricing Agreements'' (Rev. Proc. 2015–41) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on August 13, 2015; to the Committee on Finance.

EC–2694. A communication from the Chief of the Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Basis in Interests in Tax-Exempt Trusts'' ((RIN1545–BJ42) (TD 9729)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on August 13, 2015; to the Committee on Finance.

EC–2695. A communication from the Assistant Secretary, Bureau of Political-Military Affairs, Department of State, transmitting, pursuant to law, an addendum to a certification of the proposed sale or export of defense articles and/or defense services to a Middle East country (OSS–2015–1397); to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC–2696. A communication from the Acting Assistant Secretary, Bureau of Political-Military Affairs, Department of State, transmitting, pursuant to law, an addendum to a certification of the proposed sale or export of defense articles and/or defense services to a Middle East country (OSS–2015–1389); to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC–2697. A communication from the Acting Assistant Secretary, Bureau of Political-Military Affairs, Department of State, transmitting, pursuant to law, an addendum to a certification of the proposed sale or export of defense articles and/or defense services to a Middle East country (OSS–2015–1390); to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC–2698. A communication from the Acting Assistant Secretary, Bureau of Political-Military Affairs, Department of State, transmitting, pursuant to law, an addendum to a certification of the proposed sale or export of defense articles and/or defense services to a Middle East country (OSS–2015–1391); to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC–2699. A communication from the Acting Assistant Secretary, Bureau of Political-Military Affairs, Department of State, transmitting, pursuant to law, an addendum to a certification of the proposed sale or export of defense articles and/or defense services to a Middle East country (OSS–2015–1392); to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC–2700. A communication from the Acting Assistant Secretary, Bureau of Political-Military Affairs, Department of State, transmitting, pursuant to law, an addendum to a certification of the proposed sale or export of defense articles and/or defense services to a Middle East country (OSS–2015–1393); to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC–2701. A communication from the Acting Assistant Secretary, Bureau of Political-Military Affairs, Department of State, transmitting, pursuant to law, an addendum to a certification of the proposed sale or export of

defense articles and/or defense services to a Middle East country (OSS–2015–1394); to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC–2702. A communication from the Assistant Secretary, Bureau of Political-Military Affairs, Department of State, transmitting, pursuant to law, an addendum to a certification of the proposed sale or export of defense articles and/or defense services to a Middle East country (OSS–2015–1395); to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC–2703. A communication from the Assistant Secretary, Bureau of Political-Military Affairs, Department of State, transmitting, pursuant to law, an addendum to a certification of the proposed sale or export of defense articles and/or defense services to a Middle East country (OSS–2015–1396); to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC–2704. A communication from the Assistant Secretary, Bureau of Political-Military Affairs, Department of State, transmitting, pursuant to law, an addendum to a certification of the proposed sale or export of defense articles and/or defense services to a Middle East country (OSS–2015–1398); to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC–2705. A communication from the Assistant Secretary, Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to section 36(c) of the Arms Export Control Act (DDTC 15–025); to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC–2706. A communication from the Assistant Secretary, Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to the interdiction of aircraft engaged in illicit drug trafficking; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC–2707. A communication from the Assistant Legal Adviser for Treaty Affairs, Department of State, transmitting, pursuant to the Case-Zablocki Act, 1 U.S.C. 112b, as amended, the report of the texts and background statements of international agreements, other than treaties (List 2015–0080–2015–0081); to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC–2708. A communication from the Assistant Legal Adviser for Treaty Affairs, Department of State, transmitting, pursuant to the Case-Zablocki Act, 1 U.S.C. 112b, as amended, the report of the texts and background statements of international agreements, other than treaties (List 2015–0085–2015–0092); to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC–2709. A communication from the Assistant Secretary, Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report prepared by the Department of State on progress toward a negotiated solution of the Cyprus question covering the period April 1, 2015 through May 31, 2015; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC–2710. A communication from the Chairman of the National Transportation Safety Board, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Board's Fiscal Year 2014 Annual Report on the Notification and Federal Employee Antidiscrimination and Retaliation Act of 2002; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–2711. A communication from the Assistant Secretary, Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Department's fiscal year 2012 and fiscal year 2013 inventories of commercial and inherently governmental activities; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–2712. A communication from the Special Counsel, Office of the Special Counsel, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled ''Annual Report to Congress for Fiscal Year 2014''; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–2713. A communication from the General Counsel, General Services Administration, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to a vacancy in the position of Administrator, General Services Administration, received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on August 20, 2015; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–2714. A communication from the Acting Director of the Office of Standards, Regulations, and Variances, Mine Safety and Health Administration, Department of Labor, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Fees for Testing, Evaluation, and Approval of Mining Products'' (RIN1219–AB82) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on August 6, 2015; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC–2715. A communication from the Chair of the Community Preventive Services Task Force, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Task Force's 2014–2015 Annual Report to Congress; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC–2716. A communication from the Deputy Director, Health Resources and Services Administration, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Countermeasures Injury Compensation Program: Pandemic Influenza Countermeasures'' (RIN0906–AA79) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on August 6, 2015; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC–2717. A communication from the Secretary of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a petition to add workers who were employed at Westinghouse Electric Corporation in Bloomfield, New Jersey, to the Special Exposure Cohort; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC–2718. A communication from the General Counsel, Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Benefits Payable in Terminated Single-Employer Plans; Interest Assumptions for Paying Benefits'' (29 CFR Part 4022) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on August 12, 2015; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC–2719. A communication from the Director of Regulations and Policy Management Staff, Food and Drug Administration, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Listing of Color Additives Exempt From Certification; Mica Based Pearlescent Pigments; Confirmation of Effective Date'' (Docket Nos. FDA–2014–C–1616 and FDA–2015–C–0245) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on August 11, 2015; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC–2720. A communication from the Program Manager, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Closed-Circuit Escape Respirators; Extension of Transition Period'' (RIN0920–AA60) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on August 11, 2015; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC–2721. A communication from the Deputy Director, National Institutes of Health, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''National Institutes of Health Undergraduate Scholarship Program Regarding Professions Needed by National Research Institutes'' (RIN0925–AA10) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on August 11, 2015; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC–2722. A communication from the Director of Regulations and Policy Management Staff, Food and Drug Administration, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Listing of Color Additives Exempt From Certification; Spirulina Extract'' (Docket No. FDA–2014–C–1552) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on August 24, 2015; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC–2723. A communication from the Secretary of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled ''Health, United States, 2014''; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC–2724. A communication from the Executive Analyst (Political), Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, two (2) reports relative to vacancies in the Department of Health and Human Services, received in the Office of the President of the Senate on August 5, 2015; to the Committee on Indian Affairs.

EC–2725. A communication from the Director, Administrative Office of the United States Courts, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to applications for delayed-notice search warrants and extensions during fiscal year 2014; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

EC–2726. A communication from the Secretary of the Federal Trade Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled ''Hart-Scott-Rodino Annual Report: Fiscal Year 2014''; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

EC–2727. A communication from the Assistant Attorney General, Office of Legislative Affairs, Department of Justice, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled ''Solutions for Safer Communities: FY 2013 Annual Report to Congress''; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

EC–2728. A communication from the Rules Administrator, Federal Bureau of Prisons, Department of Justice, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Contraband and Inmate Personal Property: Technical Amendment'' (RIN1120–AB63) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on August 25, 2015; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

EC–2729. A communication from the Secretary, Judicial Conference of the United States, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled ''Report of the Proceedings of the Judicial Conference of the United States'' for the March 2015 session; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

EC–2730. A communication from the Human Resources Specialist (Executive Resources), Small Business Administration, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to a vacancy in the position of Chief Counsel, Small Business Administration, received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on August 24, 2015; to the Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship.

EC–2731. A communication from the Chief Impact Analyst, Veterans Benefits Administration, Department of Veterans Affairs, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Loan Guaranty: Adjustable Rate Mortgage Notification Requirements and Look-Back Period'' (RIN2900–AP25) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on August 13, 2015; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

EC–2732. A communication from the Chief Impact Analyst, Veterans Benefits Administration, Department of Veterans Affairs, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Additional Compensation on Account of Children Adopted Out of Veteran's Family'' (RIN2900–AP18) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on August 12, 2015; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

EC–2733. A communication from the Chief Impact Analyst, Veterans Health Administration, Department of Veterans Affairs, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Vet Centers'' (RIN2900–AP21) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on August 10, 2015; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

EC–2734. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Airworthiness Directives; Airbus Airplanes'' ((RIN2120–AA64) (Docket No. FAA–2015–0826)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on August 20, 2015; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–2735. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Airworthiness Directives; Airbus Airplanes'' ((RIN2120–AA64) (Docket No. FAA–2013–0834)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on August 20, 2015; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–2736. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Airworthiness Directives; Airbus Airplanes'' ((RIN2120–AA64) (Docket No. FAA–2014–0652)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on August 20, 2015; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–2737. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Airworthiness Directives; The Boeing Company Airplanes'' ((RIN2120–AA64) (Docket No. FAA–2014–0487)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on August 20, 2015; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–2738. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Airworthiness Directives; The Boeing Company Airplanes'' ((RIN2120–AA64) (Docket No. FAA–2014–0348)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on August 20, 2015; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–2739. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Airworthiness Directives; BAE Systems (Operations) Limited Airplanes'' ((RIN2120–AA64) (Docket No. FAA–2015–3139)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on August 20, 2015; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–2740. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Airworthiness Directives; Kidde Graviner'' ((RIN2120–AA64) (Docket No. FAA–2014–0751)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on August 20, 2015; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–2741. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Airworthiness Directives; Rolls-Royce plc Turbofan Engines'' ((RIN2120–AA64) (Docket No. FAA–2015–0095)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on August 20, 2015; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–2742. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Standard Instrument Approach Procedures, and Take-off Minimums and Obstacle Departure Procedures; Miscellaneous Amendments (100); Amdt. No. 3653'' (RIN2120–AA65) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on August 20, 2015; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–2743. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Standard Instrument Approach Procedures, and Take-off Minimums and Obstacle Departure Procedures; Miscellaneous Amendments (32); Amdt. No. 3654'' (RIN2120–AA65) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on August 20, 2015; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–2744. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Standard Instrument Approach Procedures, and Take-off Minimums and Obstacle Departure Procedures; Miscellaneous Amendments (45); Amdt. No. 3651'' (RIN2120–AA65) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on August 20, 2015; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–2745. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Standard Instrument Approach Procedures, and Take-off Minimums and Obstacle Departure Procedures; Miscellaneous Amendments (166); Amdt. No. 3652'' (RIN2120–AA65) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on August 20, 2015; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–2746. A communication from the Deputy Assistant Administrator for Regulatory Programs, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Fisheries of the Northeastern United States; Atlantic Sea Scallop Fishery and Northeast Multispecies Fishery; Framework Adjustment 26; Endangered and Threatened Wildlife Sea Turtle Conservation'' (RIN0648–BE68) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on August 20, 2015; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–2747. A communication from the Deputy Assistant Administrator, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Fisheries of the Caribbean, Gulf of Mexico, and South Atlantic; Coral, Coral Reefs, and Live/Hard Bottom Habitats of the South Atlantic Region; Amendment 8'' (RIN0648–BD81) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on August 20, 2015; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–2748. A communication from the Deputy Assistant Administrator, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Fisheries of the Caribbean, Gulf of Mexico, and South Atlantic; Snapper-Grouper Fishery Off the Southern Atlantic States; Regulatory Amendment 20'' (RIN0648–BE30) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on August 20, 2015; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–2749. A communication from the Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Western and Central Pacific Fisheries for Highly Migratory Species; 2015 Bigeye Tuna Longline Fishery Closure'' (RIN0648–XE037) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on August 20, 2015; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–2750. A communication from the Deputy Assistant Administrator, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Pacific Halibut Fisheries; Revisions to Charter Halibut Fisheries Management in Alaska'' (RIN0648–BE41) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on August 20, 2015; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–2751. A communication from the Chairman of the Office of Proceedings, Surface Transportation Board, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Regulations Governing Fees for Services Performed in Connection with Licensing and Related Services—2015 Update'' (Docket No. EP 542 (Sub-No. 23)—Board Decision 44285) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on August 6, 2015; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–2752. A communication from the Federal Register Liaison Officer, Alcohol and Tobacco Tax and Trade Bureau, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Establishment of the Squaw Valley-Miramonte Viticultural Area'' (RIN1513–AC12) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on August 20, 2015; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–2753. A communication from the Attorney-Advisor, Office of the General Counsel, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to a vacancy in the position of Administrator, Federal Highway Administration, Department of Transportation, received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on August 20, 2015; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–2754. A communication from the Attorney-Advisor, Office of the General Counsel, Department of Transportation, transmitting,

pursuant to law, a report relative to a vacancy in the position of Administrator, Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration, Department of Transportation, received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on August 20, 2015; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–2755. A communication from the Attorney-Advisor, Office of the General Counsel, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to a vacancy in the position of Administrator, Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration, Department of Transportation, received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on August 20, 2015; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–2756. A communication from the Deputy Assistant Administrator for Regulatory Programs, Office of Protected Resources, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Takes of Marine Mammals Incidental to Specified Activities; United States Navy Training and Testing Activities in the Mariana Islands Training and Testing Study Area'' (RIN0648–BD69) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on August 20, 2015; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–2757. A communication from the Chief of the Policy and Rules Division, Office of Engineering and Technology, Federal Communications Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Amendment of Part 15 of the Commission's Rules For Unlicensed Operations in the Television Bands'' ((FCC 15–99) (ET Doc. No. 14–165)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on August 25, 2015; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–2758. A communication from the Secretary of the Commission, Bureau of Consumer Protection, Federal Trade Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Final Action Concerning Review of Interpretations of Magnuson-Moss Warranty Act; Rule Governing Disclosure of Written Consumer Product Warranty Terms and Conditions; Rule Governing Pre-Sale Availability of Written Warranty Terms; Rule Governing Informal Dispute Settlement Procedures; and Guides for the Advertising of Warranties and Guarantees'' (RIN3084–AB24; RIN3084–AB25; RIN3084–AB26) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on August 18, 2015; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–2759. A communication from the Assistant General Counsel, Office of the General Counsel, Consumer Product Safety Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Substantial Product Hazard List: Extension Cords'' (CPSC Docket No. CPSC–2015–0003) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on August 18, 2015; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–2760. A communication from the General Attorney, Office of the General Counsel, Consumer Product Safety Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Substantial Product Hazard List: Seasonal and Decorative Lighting Products'' (CPSC Docket No. CPSC–2014–0024) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on August 18, 2015; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–2761. A communication from the Trial Attorney, Federal Railroad Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Securement of Unattended Equipment'' (RIN2130–AC47) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on August 20, 2015; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–2762. A communication from the Federal Register Liaison Officer, Mission Support Directorate, National Aeronautics and Space Administration, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Removal of Obsolete Regulations'' (RIN2700–AE20) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on August 20, 2015; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–2763. A communication from the Deputy Assistant Administrator for Regulatory Programs, Office of Habitat Conservation, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Resource Agency Hearings and Alternatives Development Procedures in Hydropower Licenses'' (RIN0596–AC42; RIN1090–AA91; RIN0648–AU01) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on August 20, 2015; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

The following reports of committees were submitted:

By Ms. MURKOWSKI, from the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources, without amendment:

S. 145. A bill 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 (Rept. No. 114–124).

By Ms. MURKOWSKI, from the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources, with an amendment:

S. 403. A bill 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, and for other purposes (Rept. No. 114–125).

By Ms. MURKOWSKI, from the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources, with an amendment and an amendment to the title:

S. 521. A bill to authorize the Secretary of the Interior to conduct a special resource study of President Station in Baltimore, Maryland, and for other purposes (Rept. No. 114–126).

By Ms. MURKOWSKI, from the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources, without amendment:

S. 583. A bill 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, and for other purposes (Rept. No. 114–127).

By Ms. MURKOWSKI, from the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources, with amendments:

S. 593. A bill 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 (Rept. No. 114–128).

By Ms. MURKOWSKI, from the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources, without amendment:

S. 610. A bill 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 (Rept. No. 114–129).

By Ms. MURKOWSKI, from the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources, with amendments:

S. 720. A bill to promote energy savings in residential buildings and industry, and for other purposes (Rept. No. 114–130).

By Ms. MURKOWSKI, from the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources, with an amendment:

S. 873. A bill to designate the wilderness within the Lake Clark National Park and Preserve in the State of Alaska as the Jay S. Hammond Wilderness Area (Rept. No. 114–131).

By Ms. MURKOWSKI, from the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources, without amendment:

S. 1103. A bill to reinstate and extend the deadline for commencement of construction of a hydroelectric project involving Clark Canyon Dam (Rept. No. 114–132).

S. 1104. A bill to extend the deadline for commencement of construction of a hydroelectric project involving the Gibson Dam (Rept. No. 114–133).

By Ms. MURKOWSKI, from the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources, with amendments:

S. 1240. A bill to designate the Cerro del Yuta and Rio San Antonio Wilderness Areas in the State of New Mexico, and for other purposes (Rept. No. 114–134).

By Ms. MURKOWSKI, from the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources, with an amendment in the nature of a substitute and an amendment to the title:

S. 1305. A bill to amend the Colorado River Storage Project Act to authorize the use of the active capacity of the Fontenelle Reservoir (Rept. No. 114–135).

By Ms. MURKOWSKI, from the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources, with an amendment:

S. 1483. A bill 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, and for other purposes (Rept. No. 114–136).

By Ms. MURKOWSKI, from the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources, without amendment:

S. 2011. An original bill to provide for reforms of the administration of the Outer Continental Shelf of the United States, and for other purposes (Rept. No. 114–137).

S. 2012. An original bill to provide for the modernization of the energy policy of the United States, and for other purposes (Rept. No. 114–138).

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. BARRASSO (for himself and Mr. BROWN):

S. 2010. A bill to provide for phased-in payment of Social Security Disability Insurance payments during the waiting period for individuals with a terminal illness; to the Committee on Finance.

By Ms. MURKOWSKI:

S. 2011. An original bill to provide for reforms of the administration of the Outer Continental Shelf of the United States, and for other purposes; from the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources; placed on the calendar.

By Ms. MURKOWSKI:

S. 2012. An original bill to provide for the modernization of the energy policy of the United States, and for other purposes; from the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources; placed on the calendar.

By Mrs. FEINSTEIN (for herself and Mrs. BOXER):

S. 2013. A bill to authorize the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to enter into certain leases at the Department of Veterans Affairs West Los Angeles Campus in Los Angeles, California, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

By Ms. BALDWIN (for herself and Ms. COLLINS):

S. 2014. A bill to demonstrate a commitment to our Nation's scientists by increasing opportunities for the development of our next generation of researchers; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. ALEXANDER (for himself, Mr. MCCONNELL, Mr. ISAKSON, Ms. AYOTTE, Mr. BARRASSO, Mr. BLUNT, Mr. BOOZMAN, Mr. BURR, Mr. COCHRAN, Ms. COLLINS, Mr. CORNYN, Mr. COTTON, Mr. CRUZ, Mr. ENZI, Mr. FLAKE, Mr. GARDNER, Mr. HATCH, Mr. INHOFE, Mr. JOHNSON, Mr. KIRK, Mr. LANKFORD, Mr. MCCAIN, Mr. MORAN, Mr. PERDUE, Mr. ROBERTS, Mr. ROUNDS, Mr. RUBIO, Mr. SHELBY, Mr. VITTER, Mr. WICKER, Mr. DAINES, Mr. CASSIDY, Mr. TILLIS, Mr. LEE, Mr. PAUL, and Mr. SCOTT):

S. 2015. A bill to clarify the treatment of two or more employers as joint employers under the National Labor Relations Act; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. KAINE:

S. 2016. A bill to amend chapter 44 of title 18, United States Code, to promote the responsible transfer of firearms; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Ms. MURKOWSKI:

S. 2017. A bill to amend the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act to recognize Alexander Creek, Alaska, as a Native village, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

By Ms. MURKOWSKI:

S. 2018. A bill to convey, without consideration, the reversionary interests of the United States in and to certain non-Federal land in Glennallen, Alaska; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

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

S. 2019. A bill to prohibit brand name drug companies from compensating generic drug companies to delay the entry of a generic drug into the market; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Ms. CANTWELL (for herself, Ms. COLLINS, Mr. KAINE, and Mrs. GILLIBRAND):

S. 2020. A bill to establish a tax credit for on-site apprenticeship programs, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Finance.

SUBMISSION OF CONCURRENT AND SENATE RESOLUTIONS

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

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

S. Res. 249. A resolution honoring the Red Land Little League Team of Lewisberry, Pennsylvania for the performance of the team in the 2015 Little League World Series; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. CASEY (for himself, Mr. TOOMEY, Mr. MCCONNELL, Mr. REID, Mr. ALEXANDER, Ms. AYOTTE, Ms. BALDWIN, Mr. BARRASSO, Mr. BENNET, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mr. BLUNT, Mr. BOOKER, Mr. BOOZMAN, Mrs. BOXER, Mr. BROWN, Mr. BURR, Ms. CANTWELL, Mrs. CAPITO, Mr. CARDIN, Mr. CARPER, Mr. CASSIDY, Mr. COATS, Mr. COCHRAN, Ms. COLLINS, Mr. COONS, Mr. CORKER, Mr. CORNYN, Mr. COTTON, Mr. CRAPO, Mr. CRUZ, Mr. DAINES, Mr. DONNELLY, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. ENZI, Mrs. ERNST, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, Mrs. FISCHER, Mr. FLAKE, Mr. FRANKEN, Mr. GARDNER, Mrs. GILLIBRAND, Mr. GRAHAM, Mr. GRASSLEY, Mr. HATCH, Mr. HEINRICH, Ms. HEITKAMP, Mr. HELLER, Ms. HIRONO, Mr. HOEVEN, Mr. INHOFE, Mr. ISAKSON, Mr. JOHNSON, Mr. KAINE, Mr. KING, Mr. KIRK, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Mr. LANKFORD, Mr. LEAHY, Mr. LEE, Mr. MANCHIN, Mr. MARKEY, Mr. MCCAIN, Mrs. MCCASKILL, Mr. MENENDEZ, Mr. MERKLEY, Ms. MIKULSKI, Mr. MORAN, Ms. MURKOWSKI, Mr. MURPHY, Mrs. MURRAY, Mr. NELSON, Mr. PAUL, Mr. PERDUE, Mr. PETERS, Mr. PORTMAN, Mr. REED, Mr. RISCH, Mr. ROBERTS, Mr. ROUNDS, Mr. RUBIO, Mr. SANDERS, Mr. SASSE, Mr. SCHATZ, Mr. SCHUMER, Mr. SCOTT, Mr. SESSIONS, Mrs. SHAHEEN, Mr. SHELBY, Ms. STABENOW, Mr. SULLIVAN, Mr. TESTER, Mr. THUNE, Mr. TILLIS, Mr. UDALL, Mr. VITTER, Mr. WARNER, Ms. WARREN, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Mr. WICKER, and Mr. WYDEN):

S. Res. 250. A resolution relative to the death of Richard Schultz Schweiker, former United States Senator for the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania; considered and agreed to.

ADDITIONAL COSPONSORS

S. 298

At the request of Mr. GRASSLEY, the name of the Senator from Massachusetts (Ms. WARREN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 298, a bill to amend titles XIX and XXI of the Social Security Act to provide States with the option of providing services to children with medically complex conditions under the Medicaid program and Children's Health Insurance Program through a care coordination program focused on improving health outcomes for children with medically complex conditions and lowering costs, and for other purposes.

S. 469

At the request of Mrs. MURRAY, the name of the Senator from New York (Mr. SCHUMER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 469, a bill to improve the reproductive assistance provided by the Department of Defense and the Department of Veterans Affairs to severely wounded, ill, or injured members of the Armed Forces, veterans, and their spouses or partners, and for other purposes.

S. 498

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

S. 681

At the request of Mrs. GILLIBRAND, the name of the Senator from Illinois (Mr. KIRK) 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. 705

At the request of Mr. COCHRAN, the name of the Senator from Maryland (Ms. MIKULSKI) was added as a cosponsor of S. 705, a bill to amend section 213 of title 23, United States Code, relating to the Transportation Alternatives Program.

S. 774

At the request of Mr. MORAN, the name of the Senator from Missouri (Mr. BLUNT) was added as a cosponsor of S. 774, a bill to amend the Federal Financial Institutions Examination Council Act of 1978 to improve the examination of depository institutions, and for other purposes.

S. 857

At the request of Ms. STABENOW, the names of the Senator from Vermont (Mr. LEAHY), the Senator from Washington (Mrs. MURRAY) and the Senator from New York (Mr. SCHUMER) were added as cosponsors 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. 928

At the request of Mrs. GILLIBRAND, the name of the Senator from Maryland (Mr. CARDIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 928, a bill to reauthorize the World Trade Center Health Program and the September 11th Victim Compensation Fund of 2001, and for other purposes.

S. 954

At the request of Mr. MANCHIN, the name of the Senator from Missouri (Mrs. MCCASKILL) was added as a cosponsor of S. 954, a bill to establish procedures regarding the approval of opioid drugs by the Food and Drug Administration.

S. 1020

At the request of Mr. VITTER, the names of the Senator from Louisiana (Mr. CASSIDY) and the Senator from Mississippi (Mr. WICKER) were added as cosponsors 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. 1099

At the request of Mr. SCOTT, the names of the Senator from Louisiana (Mr. VITTER), the Senator from Idaho (Mr. RISCH), the Senator from Kansas (Mr. MORAN), the Senator from North Carolina (Mr. TILLIS), the Senator from Montana (Mr. DAINES), the Senator from Arkansas (Mr. COTTON), the Senator from Wisconsin (Mr. JOHNSON), the Senator from Arkansas (Mr. BOOZMAN) and the Senator from Colorado (Mr. GARDNER) 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. 1121

At the request of Ms. AYOTTE, the name of the Senator from Ohio (Mr. BROWN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1121, a bill to amend the Horse Protection Act to designate additional unlawful acts under the Act, strengthen penalties for violations of the Act, improve Department of Agriculture enforcement of the Act, and for other purposes.

S. 1140

At the request of Mr. BARRASSO, the name of the Senator from Illinois (Mr. KIRK) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1140, a bill to require the Secretary of the Army and the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency to propose a regulation revising the definition of the term ''waters of the United States'', and for other purposes.

S. 1170

At the request of Mrs. FEINSTEIN, the name of the Senator from Pennsylvania (Mr. TOOMEY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1170, a bill to amend title 39, United States Code, to extend the authority of the United States Postal Service to issue a semipostal to raise funds for breast cancer research, and for other purposes.

S. 1212

At the request of Mr. CARDIN, the name of the Senator from Washington (Ms. CANTWELL) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1212, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 and the Small Business Act to expand the availability of employee stock ownership plans in S corporations, and for other purposes.

S. 1302

At the request of Mr. TESTER, the name of the Senator from Maryland (Ms. MIKULSKI) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1302, a bill to amend the Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993 to provide leave because of the death of a son or daughter.

S. 1383

At the request of Mr. PERDUE, the name of the Senator from Pennsylvania (Mr. TOOMEY) 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. 1387

At the request of Mr. BROWN, the name of the Senator from New York (Mrs. GILLIBRAND) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1387, a bill to amend title XVI of the Social Security Act to update eligibility for the supplemental security income program, and for other purposes.

S. 1431

At the request of Mr. MANCHIN, the name of the Senator from Missouri (Mrs. MCCASKILL) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1431, a bill to provide for increased Federal oversight of prescription opioid treatment and assistance to States in reducing opioid abuse, diversion, and deaths.

S. 1458

At the request of Mr. COATS, the names of the Senator from Wyoming (Mr. ENZI) and the Senator from South Dakota (Mr. ROUNDS) were added as cosponsors of S. 1458, a bill to amend the Surface Mining Control and Reclamation Act of 1977 to ensure scientific transparency in the development of environmental regulations and for other purposes.

S. 1466

At the request of Mr. KIRK, the name of the Senator from Ohio (Mr. PORTMAN) 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. 1495

At the request of Mr. TOOMEY, the name of the Senator from South Carolina (Mr. SCOTT) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1495, a bill to curtail the use of changes in mandatory programs affecting the Crime Victims Fund to inflate spending.

S. 1503

At the request of Mr. BLUMENTHAL, the names of the Senator from Maine (Ms. COLLINS), the Senator from Vermont (Mr. LEAHY) and the Senator from New Hampshire (Mrs. SHAHEEN) were added as cosponsors of S. 1503, a bill to provide for enhanced Federal efforts concerning the prevention, education, treatment, and research activities related to Lyme disease and other tick-borne diseases, including the establishment of a Tick-Borne Diseases Advisory Committee.

S. 1539

At the request of Mrs. MURRAY, the name of the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. MURPHY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1539, a bill to amend the Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act to establish a permanent, nationwide summer electronic benefits transfer for children program.

S. 1562

At the request of Mr. WYDEN, the name of the Senator from Michigan (Ms. STABENOW) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1562, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to reform taxation of alcoholic beverages.

S. 1603

At the request of Mr. FLAKE, the names of the Senator from North Carolina (Mr. BURR) and the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. BLUMENTHAL) were added as cosponsors of S. 1603, a bill to actively recruit members of the Armed Forces who are separating from military service to serve as Customs and Border Protection Officers.

S. 1659

At the request of Mr. LEAHY, the name of the Senator from Alaska (Ms. MURKOWSKI) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1659, a bill to amend the Voting Rights Act of 1965 to revise the criteria for determining which States and political subdivisions are subject to section 4 of the Act, and for other purposes.

S. 1680

At the request of Ms. CANTWELL, the name of the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. BLUMENTHAL) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1680, a bill to improve the condition and performance of the national multimodal freight network, and for other purposes.

S. 1709

At the request of Ms. WARREN, the name of the Senator from Rhode Island (Mr. WHITEHOUSE) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1709, a bill to reduce risks to the financial system by limiting banks' ability to engage in certain risky activities and limiting conflicts of interest, to reinstate certain Glass-Steagall Act protections that were repealed by the Gramm-Leach-Bliley Act, and for other purposes.

S. 1714

At the request of Mr. MANCHIN, the name of the Senator from South Dakota (Mr. ROUNDS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1714, a bill to amend the Surface Mining Control and Reclamation Act of 1977 to transfer certain funds to the Multiemployer Health Benefit Plan and the 1974 United Mine Workers of America Pension Plan, and for other purposes.

S. 1755

At the request of Mr. SCHATZ, the name of the Senator from Maine (Mr. KING) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1755, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to provide for a 5-year extension of the tax credit for residential energy efficient property.

S. 1775

At the request of Mr. MURPHY, the name of the Senator from Hawaii (Ms. HIRONO) 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. 1814

At the request of Mr. VITTER, the name of the Senator from Pennsylvania (Mr. TOOMEY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1814, a bill to withhold certain Federal funding from sanctuary cities.

S. 1830

At the request of Mr. BARRASSO, the name of the Senator from Montana (Mr. TESTER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1830, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to provide for the coverage of marriage and family therapist services and mental health counselor services under part B of the Medicare program, and for other purposes.

S. 1883

At the request of Mr. REED, the names of the Senator from Rhode Island (Mr. WHITEHOUSE) and the Senator

from New Hampshire (Mrs. SHAHEEN) were added as cosponsors of S. 1883, a bill to maximize discovery, and accelerate development and availability, of promising childhood cancer treatments, and for other purposes.

S. 1926

At the request of Ms. MIKULSKI, the names of the Senator from Maryland (Mr. CARDIN) and the Senator from North Dakota (Ms. HEITKAMP) were added as cosponsors of S. 1926, a bill to ensure access to screening mammography services.

S. 1937

At the request of Mr. UDALL, the name of the Senator from Montana (Mr. TESTER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1937, a bill to amend the Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act and the Child Nutrition Act of 1966 to improve nutrition in tribal areas, and for other purposes.

S. 1965

At the request of Mr. BOOKER, the names of the Senator from Pennsylvania (Mr. CASEY) and the Senator from Oklahoma (Mr. LANKFORD) were added as cosponsors of S. 1965, a bill to place restrictions on the use of solitary confinement for juveniles in Federal custody.

S. 1977

At the request of Mrs. BOXER, the name of the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. BLUMENTHAL) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1977, a bill to provide family members and close associates of an individual who they fear is a danger to himself, herself, or others new tools to prevent gun violence.

S. 1992

At the request of Mr. ROUNDS, the name of the Senator from Kansas (Mr. ROBERTS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1992, a bill to amend chapter 44 of title 18, United States Code, to provide that a member of the Armed Forces and the spouse of that member shall have the same rights regarding the receipt of firearms at the location of any duty station of the member.

S. RES. 143

At the request of Mr. SCHATZ, the name of the Senator from Oregon (Mr. WYDEN) was added as a cosponsor of S. Res. 143, a resolution supporting efforts to ensure that students have access to debt-free higher education.

S. RES. 217

At the request of Mr. BLUMENTHAL, the name of the Senator from Delaware (Mr. COONS) was added as a cosponsor of S. Res. 217, a resolution designating October 8, 2015, as ''National Hydrogen and Fuel Cell Day''.

S. RES. 242

At the request of Ms. MIKULSKI, the names of the Senator from Washington (Ms. CANTWELL), the Senator from Nebraska (Mrs. FISCHER), the Senator from New Hampshire (Mrs. SHAHEEN), the Senator from Massachusetts (Ms. WARREN), the Senator from New York (Mrs. GILLIBRAND), the Senator from Missouri (Mrs. MCCASKILL), the Senator from Michigan (Ms. STABENOW), the Senator from West Virginia (Mrs. CAPITO) and the Senator from Iowa (Mrs. ERNST) were added as cosponsors of S. Res. 242, a resolution celebrating 25 years of success from the Office of Research on Women's Health at the National Institutes of Health.

STATEMENTS ON INTRODUCED BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

By Mrs. FEINSTEIN (for herself and Mrs. BOXER):

S. 2013. A bill to authorize the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to enter into certain leases at the Department of Veterans Affairs West Los Angeles Campus in Los Angeles, California, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

Mrs. FEINSTEIN. Mr. President, I rise today to introduce legislation to facilitate additional housing and services for Southern California's veterans. It would allow the Department of Veterans Affairs to leverage the resources of local governments and non-profits to build supportive housing for veterans at the West Los Angeles VA Medical Center Campus. My colleague Senator BARBARA BOXER is a cosponsor of this bill. Congressman TED LIEU is introducing companion legislation in the House of Representatives.

The Department of Veterans Affairs, Mayor of Los Angeles and Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors all support this legislation.

Los Angeles has the largest concentration of homeless veterans in the United States, currently estimated to be 4,300. These are brave men and women who served our nation with honor, and I believe it is our duty to ensure they have access to housing and the clinical services of the Greater Los Angeles VA Health System.

This legislation would provide two authorities to the department. First, it would allow the West Los Angeles VA to use enhanced-use leases to engage in public-private partnerships to provide supportive housing for veterans. Enhanced-use leases allow the department to leverage private or local funding and partners to construct new housing on the campus. For example, California passed a bond measure in 2014 that provides $600 million in funding for the construction of supportive veteran housing. I want to note that this enhanced-use leasing authority is the same authority that the department has for every other VA campus in the nation.

Second, my bill would allow the West Los Angeles campus to enter into outleases to provide critical services to veterans housed on the campus, ranging from education to recreation. Services must be provided to create a healthy and sustainable community for veterans. Veterans housed on the campus will need access to mental health care options, job training, and physical recreation. These services can be provided by community partners leasing property on the campus, such as the University of California—Los Angeles.

I would like to make you aware of the long history of the West Los Angeles VA campus. This campus is approximately 400 acres and is located at the intersection of Wilshire Boulevard and Interstate 405. The land was deeded to the Federal government by former Senator John P. Jones, for use exclusively as a ''soldier's home.'' The beautiful campus has numerous historic buildings, including a church.

In 2007, I included language in an appropriations bill to prohibit the ability of the Department of Veterans Affairs to lease or sale any property on the West Los Angeles Campus, due to reports of mismanagement and inappropriate leasing of VA property to commercial entities. In several cases, these commercial entities had nothing to do with serving veterans.

After the ban was signed into law, questionable practices continued through land-sharing agreements. This led to the American Civil Liberties Union, ACLU, of Southern California filing a lawsuit against the department in 2011 over its mismanagement of the campus.

In a large part due to our new Secretary of Veterans Affairs, Robert A. McDonald, the department reached a settlement with the ACLU earlier this year to return the campus to its original purpose to serve veterans. The ACLU and the department are working to create a new Master Plan for the campus that includes community input, which I expect will include a focus on ending veteran homelessness in Los Angeles. My legislation will provide the department with the tools it needs to get veterans off the streets and ensure the West Los Angeles campus truly serves the veterans of Los Angeles.

This legislation contains important oversight provisions to ensure the management mistakes of the past are not repeated.

First, it maintains a restriction put in place in 2007 that prohibits any part of the West Los Angeles campus from being sold, transferred, or otherwise disposed of.

Second, it requires the VA to report to Congress 45 days before entering into any lease, and to provide an annual evaluation of all land-use and leases on the campus.

Third, it requires regular audits by the Office of the Inspector General, OIG, and restricts the VA from entering into any new leases if the OIG finds any violation of Federal law or policy, or gross mismanagement of the campus. The VA would have to certify to Congress that it addressed any issues found by the OIG before entering into new leases on the campus.

Finally, the legislation requires all land-use, including leases, to be consistent with the new Master Plan that is agreed upon for the campus. It also requires all leases to principally benefit veterans.

I believe these oversight provisions will ensure that the historic mismanagement of the West Los Angeles campus will not recur.

Let me conclude by saying that Congress must meet its responsibility to care for the veterans who have fought for our Nation's freedom and security. It would be a shame to leave private resources untapped in a city where 4,300 veterans are currently homeless. I hope all of my colleagues will support enacting this legislation as quickly as possible.

By Ms. MURKOWSKI:

S. 2017. A bill to amend the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act to recognize Alexander Creek, Alaska, as a Native village, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

Ms. MURKOWSKI. Mr. President, today I introduce legislation, already pending in the House of Representatives, where it was first introduced in 2009, 2011, and 2013 by Alaska Congressman DON YOUNG to finally settle a long-standing injustice to the Native residents of Alexander Creek, a Native village built along the creek that runs into the Susitna River near its entrance to Cook Inlet, north of Anchorage and southwest of Wasilla, AK.

The story of Alexander Creek's Alaska Natives is a sad story, in that it is a story of Natives whose village happened to be located at the site of one of the State's prime salmon fishing locations, a site that may have prompted efforts by some to deliberately prevent the village from rightfully gaining the lands it was entitled to receive under the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act, ANCSA, passed by this Congress in 1971.

It is especially sad since the villagers succeeded in the Federal courts in winning confirmation of their status as a village under ANCSA nearly four decades ago but because of decades of mistakes and misunderstandings, still have received only about 10 percent of the land village residents are entitled to receive.

The legislation I am introducing today would give the Secretary of the Interior the authority to enter into negotiations to settle aboriginal land claims with Alexander Creek, after conferring village instead of group status on the community. It gives the Secretary wide latitude to find a just, environmentally acceptable, and economically reasonable means to bring Alexander Creek to ''approximate parity'' to the other more than 210 villages that were established by the 1971 law that settled all aboriginal lands claims in Alaska.

Alexander Creek, whose Native name is Tuqentnu, traditionally was a healthy Native village with abundant resources, whose residents lived off fish traps located near the mouth of the Susitna River year round. While its population suffered as a result of whooping cough, measles, and influenza epidemics in the early 1900s caused by the influx of the non-Native population into upper Cook Inlet—the village being literally decimated by the 1918 epidemic—by 1939 the village had been reoccupied by Native families. When the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act passed in December 1971, there were 37 residents of the village, 12 more than the 25 needed to be entitled to form a village corporation under the act and to be entitled to receive 69,120 acres around the core townships of the village.

The Bureau of Indian Affairs in 1971 made that determination. But the village had the misfortunate of being located in a prime salmon fishing area that was sought by the State of Alaska at the time of statehood in 1959 and that was later conveyed by the State to the then new Matanuska-Susitna Borough at the time of its creation in the early 1960s. Thus there was opposition to Alexander Creek being allowed to claim its lands. The State, in fact, protested its eligibility for land under ANCSA. A hearing was held before an administrative law judge on July 11, 1974, but oddly the hearing was not widely noticed and a number of village residents were specifically not told of the hearing, so they were not in attendance. When the appeals board released its decision on November 1, 1974, the board ruled that the village only contained 22 residents—3 short of the required number for creation—simply because 5 other families and their children had not appeared at or testified at the hearing.

The board's decision was appealed to U.S. district court that reversed the appeals board's decision on November 14, 1975, ordering the reinstatement of Alexander Creek's ANCSA eligibility. While that decision was appealed by the State of Alaska, the lower court decision was upheld by the DC Circuit Court of Appeals on August 29, 1976, which ordered that the case be remanded back to the Secretary of the Interior for further proceedings. But since all of the land around Alexander Creek had already been conveyed to the State and to the Mat-Su Borough, the village was required to join other Cook Inlet region villages in selecting ''deficiency lands'' near Lake Clark to the southwest of the region. But the creation of the Lake Clark National Monument in 1978, prior to passage of the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act in 1980, further complicated the land selection issue for the village.

Alexander Creek villagers, who could not afford independent legal counsel following the 1976 district court and court of appeals rulings, did not immediately pursue their claims to full village status and apparently did not understand the complexities of the Lake Clark land conveyance decisions. Somehow, they instead were convinced to sign an agreement with Cook Inlet Region, Inc., the regional corporation for the area, and the Interior Department in December 1979, where the village dropped its claim to be a village in exchange for receiving ''group'' status under the ANCSA, and also in return for being guaranteed 7,680 acres of land, some of which was to come from the State of Alaska and or the borough. While the State did provide the village with 1,686 acres, no borough or Federal land was conveyed to complete the 7,680-acre ''group'' agreement reached in 1979 until just recently.

It wasn't until the next generation of Native leaders arrived in the village that they realized that Alexander Creek never received the lands it should have received.

Over the past decade residents of the village have been seeking to have the original court of appeals decision affirmed and implemented. Over the years they have been gaining support for their efforts. First, BIA Alaska Region Field Representative Charles F. Bunch concluded after ''a thorough assessment'' that the BIA's original determination was correct and that Alexander Creek ''met the requirement'' for village eligibility and that the land conveyances should have been implemented. Recently the Alexander Creek village leaders have received support from the Alaska Federation of Natives, Cook Inlet Region, Inc., CIRI, the State of Alaska and the Matanuska-Susitna Borough, all agreeing that the village should receive its full lands promised under ANCSA—plus from a host of other groups.

So this legislation will reinstate Alexander Creek's eligibility, overriding the 1979 ''group'' agreement, reached under section 1432(d) of ANCSA, and giving the village the right to negotiate a fair settlement with the Interior Department. Under the act the Secretary is free, at his sole discretion, to propose what assets are to be provided Alexander Creek to capitalize the corporation, not setting any predetermined amount of land, cash, surplus Federal property or other assistance. The bill does hold the regional corporation for the area, Cook Inlet Region, Inc. harmless from any impacts of the village corporation's creation.

The Alexander Creek case represents a sad chapter in the story of the settlement of Native aboriginal land claims in Alaska. It is a story of Native land owners being actively discouraged from selecting their traditional lands, of being deliberatively misinformed about land selection processes so they would not qualify for their lands, of being pressured to accept inferior compromises so they would gain less land, and of then being ignored for far too long when it came time to consummate the inferior deal they were encouraged to accept. It clearly is time this Congress rewrites that chapter and allows it to have a happier ending.

By Ms. MURKOWSKI:

S. 2018. A bill to convey, without consideration, the reversionary interests

of the United States in and to certain non-Federal land in Glennallen, Alaska; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

Ms. MURKOWSKI. Mr. President, today I introduce legislation to aid an Alaska higher educational institution obtain title to property it no longer needs, and that the Federal Government clearly no longer wants. I rise to introduce legislation to clear the title to a 210-acre parcel in Glennallen, AK, so that the land can be put to more productive uses in the future.

Back in 1926 the Central Alaska Mission began operations in Glennallen. In 1954 it received a Federal land grant from Congress, modified in 1959, and received 210 acres in ''downtown'' Glennallen—the current site of the hospital and radio station and former site of the Alaska Bible College. In 1961 it actually opened the Bible College on 80 acres of the tract, the site apparently having about 64 separate buildings erected on it. The 1959 land grant, like many in first the Territory of Alaska and later the State of Alaska, had a clause that should the property no longer be used for religious/public purposes that it would revert to the federal government. The Bible College, because of a lack of students in Glennallen, moved into the Matanuska-Susitna Borough, to Palmer, AK, last decade. Now it wishes to be able to sell the property to be rid of the maintenance costs on the facilities.

The problem is that there apparently are no non-profits or few businesses in Glennallen that can afford to pay the officially appraised value for the properties. The parent of the Bible College 3 years ago asked the Federal Bureau of Land Management, BLM, administratively to start a process where it would decide the value of the properties and what it would have to pay the government to buy out the value of the ''reversionary clause'' so it could obtain clear title to sell the properties for whatever amount it could get. That appraisal was conducted mutually and came back late last year that the 210-acres, minus a sewage lagoon on the property that has no sales value, is worth $210,000. The college says the college can't afford that amount to buy out the value of the reversionary clause—because regardless of the appraisal, there is no entity in Glennallen that can afford to pay anywhere near that amount for the properties given the level of economic activity at present in the upper Copper River Valley in Alaska.

The college is arguing, correctly, that the Federal Government is wrong in setting the value of the reversionary clause as the full appraised value of the property for tax purposes. If willing sellers can't be found who can afford to pay the ''appraised'' value of the property, then obviously the appraisal process is faulty. Secondly, the college is arguing that it has fully met the goal of Congress in 1959 that the land be used for the public purpose of operating an educational institution. For more than 40 years the property was used by Alaska Bible College, the college only moving into a more urban part of Alaska when student levels proved insufficient to support the school. Clearly it makes no sense for the reversionary clause to remain in effect in perpetuity when land use patterns have changed. Third, the Federal Government does not need the land for any federal purpose. The land, not located in an urban setting in the small town of Glennallen, population, 491, is not suited for a park. The land is not needed for any Federal facility given its location in sparsely populated east central Alaska. Being inside the Glennallen city limits, the land can not be allowed to revert to a natural vegetative state under the town's ordinances. It simply makes good sense for the land to be sold for economic purposes so it can generate more revenues for the town's tax rolls. Given the real estate market in Glennallen, the Federal Government will lose far more money than it will make if it has to tear down the unwanted buildings in order to sell the property, or maintain them until another purpose for the structures can be found, at the current appraised tax values of the properties.

In each case, reversion of the lands to the Federal Government would result in Federal ownership of tracts unneeded for Federal purposes, but lands that would produce greater conveyance and management costs to the Federal treasury than are likely to be recovered through fair market sales. There is just no public policy purpose in the 21st century not to permit these very limited Federal reversion extinguishments, especially since the land did meet the purpose of the reversionary clause for more than four decades.

Passage of this act would cost the Federal Government nothing, but would aid the citizens of Glennallen by allowing the lands to be put to a better use, hopefully adding to the city's economy and perhaps increasing its future tax revenues. I hope this bill will be able to advance and become law within the 114th Congress.

SUBMITTED RESOLUTIONS

SENATE RESOLUTION 249—HONORING THE RED LAND LITTLE LEAGUE TEAM OF LEWISBERRY, PENNSYLVANIA FOR THE PERFORMANCE OF THE TEAM IN THE 2015 LITTLE LEAGUE WORLD SERIES

Mr. CASEY (for himself and Mr. TOOMEY) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on the Judiciary:

S. RES. 249

Whereas on Saturday, August 29, 2015, the Red Land Little League team won the United States championship at the Little League Baseball World Series, defeating a versatile and dynamic team from Pearland, Texas with a walk-off hit in the bottom of the sixth inning to win 3-2;

Whereas on Sunday, August 30, 2015, the Red Land Little League team competed against the Kitasuna Little League team from Tokyo, Japan in the 69th Annual Little League World Series championship and set the record for the most runs scored in the first inning with 10 runs;

Whereas the Red Land Little League is the first York County team to win a national Little League championship and the first team from Pennsylvania to win the national Little League championship since 1990;

Whereas the Red Land Little League team is comprised of: Camden Walter, Braden Kolmansberger, Dylan Rodenhaber, Adam Cramer, Jaden Henline, Chayton Krauss, Kaden Peifer, Cole Wagner, Zack Sooy, Jake Cubbler, Jarrett Wisman, Bailey Wirt, and Ethan Phillips;

Whereas the Red Land Little League team is managed by Tom Peifer and coached by J.K. Kolmansberger and Bret Wagner, among others; and

Whereas the Red Land Little League team has brought tremendous excitement, pride, and honor to the city of Lewisberry, the county of York, the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, and the United States: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) congratulates and honors the Red Land Little League team and its loyal fans, affectionately known as the ''Red Sea'', on the performance of the team at the 69th Little League World Series championship;

(2) recognizes and commends the hard work, dedication, determination, and commitment to excellence of the members, parents, families, coaches, and managers of the team; and

(3) recognizes and commends the people of Lewisberry, Pennsylvania and the surrounding area for their outstanding loyalty, support, and countless hours of volunteerism for the Red Land Little League team throughout the season.

SENATE RESOLUTION 250—RELATIVE TO THE DEATH OF RICHARD SCHULTZ SCHWEIKER, FORMER UNITED STATES SENATOR FOR THE COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA

Mr. CASEY (for himself, Mr. TOOMEY, Mr. MCCONNELL, Mr. REID of Nevada, Mr. ALEXANDER, Ms. AYOTTE, Ms. BALDWIN, Mr. BARRASSO, Mr. BENNET, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mr. BLUNT, Mr. BOOKER, Mr. BOOZMAN, Mrs. BOXER, Mr. BROWN, Mr. BURR, Ms. CANTWELL, Mrs. CAPITO, Mr. CARDIN, Mr. CARPER, Mr. CASSIDY, Mr. COATS, Mr. COCHRAN, Ms. COLLINS, Mr. COONS, Mr. CORKER, Mr. CORNYN, Mr. COTTON, Mr. CRAPO, Mr. CRUZ, Mr. DAINES, Mr. DONNELLY, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. ENZI, Mrs. ERNST, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, Mrs. FISCHER, Mr. FLAKE, Mr. FRANKEN, Mr. GARDNER, Mrs. GILLIBRAND, Mr. GRAHAM, Mr. GRASSLEY, Mr. HATCH, Mr. HEINRICH, Ms. HEITKAMP, Mr. HELLER, Ms. HIRONO, Mr. HOEVEN, Mr. INHOFE, Mr. ISAKSON, Mr. JOHNSON, Mr. KAINE, Mr. KING, Mr. KIRK, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Mr. LANKFORD, Mr. LEAHY, Mr. LEE, Mr. MANCHIN, Mr. MARKEY, Mr. MCCAIN, Mrs. MCCASKILL, Mr. MENENDEZ, Mr. MERKLEY, Ms. MIKULSKI, Mr. MORAN, Ms. MURKOWSKI, Mr. MURPHY, Mrs. MURRAY, Mr. NELSON, Mr. PAUL, Mr. PERDUE, Mr.

PETERS, Mr. PORTMAN, Mr. REED of Rhode Island, Mr. RISCH, Mr. ROBERTS, Mr. ROUNDS, Mr. RUBIO, Mr. SANDERS, Mr. SASSE, Mr. SCHATZ, Mr. SCHUMER, Mr. SCOTT, Mr. SESSIONS, Mrs. SHAHEEN, Mr. SHELBY, Ms. STABENOW, Mr. SULLIVAN, Mr. TESTER, Mr. THUNE, Mr. TILLIS, Mr. UDALL, Mr. VITTER, Mr. WARNER, Ms. WARREN, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Mr. WICKER, and Mr. WYDEN) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 250

Whereas Richard Schultz Schweiker served in the United States Navy during World War II from 1944 to 1946;

Whereas Richard Schultz Schweiker faithfully served the people of Pennsylvania with distinction in the United States Congress;

Whereas Richard Schultz Schweiker was elected to the United States House of Representatives in 1960 and served 4 terms as a Representative from the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania;

Whereas as a Representative, Richard Schultz Schweiker served on—

(1) the Committee on Armed Services of the House of Representatives; and

(2) the Committee on Government Operations of the House of Representatives;

Whereas Richard Schultz Schweiker was elected to the United States Senate in 1968 and served 2 terms as a Senator from the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania;

Whereas as a Senator, Richard Schultz Schweiker served on—

(1) the Committee on Labor and Human Resources of the Senate;

(2) the Subcommittee on Labor, Health, and Human Services of the Committee on Appropriations of the Senate; and

(3) the Select Committee to Study Governmental Operations with Respect to Intelligence Activities of the Senate; and

Whereas Richard Schultz Schweiker was appointed as the Secretary of Health and Human Services by President Ronald Wilson Reagan in 1981 and served as Secretary of Health and Human Services until 1983: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate has heard with profound sorrow and deep regret the announcement of the death of the Honorable Richard Schultz Schweiker, former member of the United States Senate.

Resolved, That the Secretary of the Senate communicate these resolutions to the House of Representatives and transmit an enrolled copy thereof to the family of the deceased.

Resolved, That when the Senate adjourns today, the Senate stand adjourned as a further mark of respect to the memory of the Honorable Richard Schultz Schweiker.

AMENDMENTS SUBMITTED AND PROPOSED

SA 2648. Mrs. FISCHER (for Mr. JOHNSON) proposed an amendment to the bill S. 1603, to actively recruit members of the Armed Forces who are separating from military service to serve as Customs and Border Protection Officers.

TEXT OF AMENDMENTS

SA 2648. Mrs. FISCHER (for Mr. JOHNSON) proposed an amendment to the bill S. 1603, to actively recruit members of the Armed Forces who are separating from military service to serve as Customs and Border Protection Officers; as follows:

Strike all after the enacting clause and insert the following:

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the ''Border Jobs for Veterans Act of 2015''.

SEC. 2. FINDINGS.

Congress finds the following:

(1) Customs and Border Protection Officers at United States ports of entry carry out critical law enforcement duties associated with screening foreign visitors, returning United States citizens, and imported cargo entering the United States.

(2) It is in the national interest for United States ports of entry to be adequately staffed with Customs and Border Protection Officers in a timely fashion, including meeting the congressionally funded staffing target of 23,775 officers for fiscal year 2015.

(3) An estimated 250,000 to 300,000 members of the Armed Forces separate from military service every year.

(4) Recruiting efforts and expedited hiring procedures must be enhanced to ensure that qualified individuals separating from military service are aware of, and partake in, opportunities to fill vacant Customs and Border Protection Officer positions.

SEC. 3. EXPEDITED HIRING OF APPROPRIATE SEPARATING SERVICE MEMBERS.

(a) IDENTIFICATION OF TRANSFERABLE QUALIFICATIONS.—Not later than 60 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Homeland Security, in conjunction with the Secretary of Defense, shall identify Military Occupational Specialty Codes and Officer Branches, Air Force Specialty Codes, Naval Enlisted Classifications and Officer Designators, and Coast Guard Competencies that are transferable to the requirements, qualifications, and duties assigned to Customs and Border Protection Officers.

(b) HIRING.—The Secretary of Homeland Security shall consider hiring qualified candidates with the Military Occupational Specialty Codes, Air Force Specialty Codes, Naval Enlisted Classifications and Officer Designators, and Coast Guard Competencies identified as transferable under subsection (a) who are eligible for veterans recruitment appointment authorized under section 4214 of title 38, United States Code.

SEC. 4. ENHANCEMENTS TO EXISTING PROGRAMS TO RECRUIT SERVICE MEMBERS SEPARATING FROM MILITARY SERVICE FOR CUSTOMS AND BORDER PROTECTION OFFICER VACANCIES.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of Homeland Security, in conjunction with the Secretary of Defense, and acting through existing programs, authorities, and agreements, where applicable, shall enhance the efforts of the Department of Homeland Security to recruit members of the Armed Forces who are separating from military service to serve as Customs and Border Protection Officers.

(b) ELEMENTS.—The enhanced recruiting efforts under subsection (a) shall—

(1) include Customs and Border Protection Officer opportunities in relevant job assistance efforts under the Transition Assistance Program;

(2) place U.S. Customs and Border Protection officials or other relevant Department of Homeland Security officials at recruiting events and jobs fairs involving members of the Armed Forces who are separating from military service;

(3) provide opportunities for local U.S. Customs and Border Protection field offices to partner with military bases in the region;

(4) include outreach efforts to educate members of the Armed Forces with Military Occupational Specialty Codes and Officer Branches, Air Force Specialty Codes, Naval Enlisted Classifications and Officer Designators, and Coast Guard Competencies that are transferable to the requirements, qualifications, and duties assigned to Customs and Border Protection Officers of available hiring opportunities to become Customs and Border Protection Officers;

(5) require the Secretary of Homeland Security and the Secretary of Defense to work cooperatively to identify shared activities and opportunities for reciprocity related to steps in hiring U.S. Customs and Border Patrol officers with the goal of minimizing the time required to hire qualified applicants;

(6) require the Secretary of Defense and the Secretary of Homeland Security to work cooperatively to ensure the streamlined interagency transfer of relevant background investigations and security clearances; and

(7) include such other elements as may be necessary to ensure that members of the Armed Forces who are separating from military service are aware of opportunities to fill vacant Customs and Border Protection Officer positions.

SEC. 5. REPORT TO CONGRESS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, and not later than December 31 of each of the 3 successive years, the Secretary of Homeland Security and the Secretary of Defense shall jointly submit a report to the appropriate congressional committees that includes a description and assessment of the efforts of the Department of Homeland Security to hire separating service members as Customs and Border Protection Officers.

(b) CONTENT.—The report required under subsection (a) shall include—

(1) a detailed description of the proposed efforts under section 4, including—

(A) elements of the enhanced recruiting efforts;

(B) goals associated with those elements; and

(C) a description of how the elements and goals will assist in meeting statutorily mandated staffing levels and agency hiring benchmarks;

(2) a detailed description of the efforts that have been undertaken under section 4;

(3) the number of separating service members made aware of Customs and Border Protection Officer vacancies;

(4) the Military Occupational Specialty Codes and Officer Branches, Air Force Specialty Codes, Naval Enlisted Classifications and Officer Designators, and Coast Guard Competencies identified as transferable under section 3(a) and a rationale for such identifications;

(5) the number of Customs and Border Protection Officer vacancies filled with separating service members; and

(6) the number of Customs and Border Protection Officer vacancies filled with separating service members under veterans recruitment appointment authorized under section 4214 of title 38, United States Code.

SEC. 6. RULES OF CONSTRUCTION.

Nothing in this Act may be construed—

(a) to supersede, alter, or amend existing Federal veterans' hiring preferences or Federal hiring authorities; or

(b) to authorize the appropriation of additional amounts to carry out this Act.

PRIVILEGES OF THE FLOOR

Mrs. SHAHEEN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that Andrew MacDonald, a State Department fellow in my office, be granted floor privileges for the remainder of this session.

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

Mr. KAINE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent for Michael

Pascual, a fellow in my office, to be granted floor privileges during today's session.

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

SPECIAL NEEDS TRUST FAIRNESS ACT OF 2015

Mrs. FISCHER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of Calendar No. 178, S. 349.

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

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 349) to amend title XIX of the Social Security Act to empower individuals with disabilities to establish their own supplemental needs trusts.

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

Mrs. FISCHER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the bill be read a third time and passed and that the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table.

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

The bill (S. 349) was ordered to be engrossed for a third reading, was read the third time, and passed, as follows:

S. 349

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 ''Special Needs Trust Fairness Act of 2015''.

SEC. 2. FAIRNESS IN MEDICAID SUPPLEMENTAL NEEDS TRUSTS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 1917(d)(4)(A) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1396p(d)(4)(A)) is amended by inserting ''the individual,'' after ''for the benefit of such individual by''.

(b) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendment made by subsection (a) shall apply to trusts established on or after the date of the enactment of this Act.

BORDER JOBS FOR VETERANS ACT OF 2015

Mrs. FISCHER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of Calendar No. 196, S. 1603.

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

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 1603) to actively recruit members of the Armed Forces who are separating from military service to serve as Customs and Border Protection Officers.

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 an amendment to strike all after the enacting clause and insert in lieu thereof the following:

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the ''Border Jobs for Veterans Act of 2015''.

SEC. 2. FINDINGS.

Congress finds the following:

(1) Customs and Border Protection Officers at United States ports of entry carry out critical law enforcement duties associated with screening foreign visitors, returning United States citizens, and imported cargo entering the United States.

(2) It is in the national interest for United States ports of entry to be adequately staffed with Customs and Border Protection Officers in a timely fashion, including meeting the congressionally funded staffing target of 23,775 officers for fiscal year 2015.

(3) An estimated 250,000 to 300,000 members of the Armed Forces separate from military service every year.

(4) Recruiting efforts and expedited hiring procedures should be undertaken to ensure that qualified individuals separating from military service are aware of, and partake in, opportunities to fill vacant Customs and Border Protection Officer positions.

SEC. 3. EXPEDITED HIRING OF APPROPRIATE SEPARATING SERVICE MEMBERS.

(a) IDENTIFICATION OF TRANSFERABLE QUALIFICATIONS.—Not later than 60 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Homeland Security, in conjunction with the Secretary of Defense, shall jointly identify Military Occupational Specialty Codes, Air Force Specialty Codes, Naval Enlisted Classifications and Officer Designators, and Coast Guard Competencies that are transferable to the requirements, qualifications, and duties assigned to Customs and Border Protection Officers.

(b) HIRING.—The Secretary of Homeland Security shall consider hiring qualified candidates with the Military Occupational Specialty Codes, Air Force Specialty Codes, Naval Enlisted Classifications and Officer Designators, and Coast Guard Competencies identified as transferable under subsection (a) who are eligible for veterans recruitment appointment authorized under section 4214 of title 38, United States Code.

SEC. 4. ESTABLISHING A PROGRAM FOR RECRUITING SERVICE MEMBERS SEPARATING FROM MILITARY SERVICE FOR CUSTOMS AND BORDER PROTECTION OFFICER VACANCIES.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Homeland Security, in conjunction with the Secretary of Defense, shall establish a program to actively recruit members of the Armed Forces who are separating from military service to serve as Customs and Border Protection Officers.

(b) ELEMENTS.—The program established under subsection (a) shall—

(1) include Customs and Border Protection Officer opportunities in relevant job assistance efforts under the Transition Assistance Program;

(2) place U.S. Customs and Border Protection officials or other relevant Department of Homeland Security officials at recruiting events and jobs fairs involving members of the Armed Forces who are separating from military service;

(3) provide opportunities for local U.S. Customs and Border Protection field offices to partner with military bases in the region;

(4) conduct outreach efforts to educate members of the Armed Forces with Military Occupational Specialty Codes, Air Force Specialty Codes, Naval Enlisted Classifications and Officer Designators, and Coast Guard Competencies that are transferable to the requirements, qualifications, and duties assigned to Customs and Border Protection Officers of available hiring opportunities to become Customs and Border Protection Officers;

(5) require the Secretary of Defense and the Secretary of Homeland Security to work cooperatively to identify shared activities and opportunities for reciprocity related to steps in hiring U.S. Customs and Border Patrol officers with the goal of minimizing the time required to hire qualified applicants;

(6) require the Secretary of Defense and the Secretary of Homeland Security to work cooperatively to ensure the streamlined interagency transfer of relevant background investigations and security clearances; and

(7) include such other elements as may be necessary to ensure that members of the Armed Forces who are separating from military service are aware of opportunities to fill vacant Customs and Border Protection Officer positions.

SEC. 5. REPORT TO CONGRESS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, and not later than December 31 of each of the 3 successive years, the Secretary of Homeland Security and the Secretary of Defense shall jointly submit a report to the appropriate congressional committees that includes a description and assessment of the program established under section 4.

(b) CONTENT.—The report required under subsection (a) shall include—

(1) a detailed description of the program established under section 4, including—

(A) programmatic elements;

(B) goals associated with those elements; and

(C) a description of how the elements and goals will assist in meeting statutorily mandated staffing levels and agency hiring benchmarks;

(2) a detailed description of the program elements that have been implemented under section 4;

(3) a detailed summary of the actions taken under section 4 to implement such program elements;

(4) the number of separating service members made aware of Customs and Border Protection Officer vacancies;

(5) the Military Occupational Specialty Codes, Air Force Specialty Codes, Naval Enlisted Classifications and Officer Designators, and Coast Guard Competencies identified as transferable under section 3(a) and a rationale for such identifications;

(6) the number of Customs and Border Protection Officer vacancies filled with separating service members;

(7) the number of Customs and Border Protection Officer vacancies filled with separating service members under veterans recruitment appointment authorized under the section 4214 of title 38, United States Code; and

(8) the results of any evaluations or considerations of additional elements included or not included in the program established under section 4.

SEC. 6. RULES OF CONSTRUCTION.

Nothing in this Act may be construed—

(a) as superseding, altering, or amending existing Federal veterans' hiring preferences or Federal hiring authorities; or

(b) as authorizing the appropriation of additional amounts to carry out this Act.

Mrs. FISCHER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the committee-reported substitute amendment be withdrawn; the Johnson substitute amendment be agreed to; the bill, as amended, be read a third time and passed; and that the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table.

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

The committee-reported substitute amendment was withdrawn.

The amendment (No. 2648) in the nature of a substitute was agreed to, as follows:

(Purpose: In the nature of a substitute)

Strike all after the enacting clause and insert the following:

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the ''Border Jobs for Veterans Act of 2015''.

SEC. 2. FINDINGS.

Congress finds the following:

(1) Customs and Border Protection Officers at United States ports of entry carry out critical law enforcement duties associated with screening foreign visitors, returning United States citizens, and imported cargo entering the United States.

(2) It is in the national interest for United States ports of entry to be adequately staffed with Customs and Border Protection Officers in a timely fashion, including meeting the congressionally funded staffing target of 23,775 officers for fiscal year 2015.

(3) An estimated 250,000 to 300,000 members of the Armed Forces separate from military service every year.

(4) Recruiting efforts and expedited hiring procedures must be enhanced to ensure that qualified individuals separating from military service are aware of, and partake in, opportunities to fill vacant Customs and Border Protection Officer positions.

SEC. 3. EXPEDITED HIRING OF APPROPRIATE SEPARATING SERVICE MEMBERS.

(a) IDENTIFICATION OF TRANSFERABLE QUALIFICATIONS.—Not later than 60 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Homeland Security, in conjunction with the Secretary of Defense, shall identify Military Occupational Specialty Codes and Officer Branches, Air Force Specialty Codes, Naval Enlisted Classifications and Officer Designators, and Coast Guard Competencies that are transferable to the requirements, qualifications, and duties assigned to Customs and Border Protection Officers.

(b) HIRING.—The Secretary of Homeland Security shall consider hiring qualified candidates with the Military Occupational Specialty Codes, Air Force Specialty Codes, Naval Enlisted Classifications and Officer Designators, and Coast Guard Competencies identified as transferable under subsection (a) who are eligible for veterans recruitment appointment authorized under section 4214 of title 38, United States Code.

SEC. 4. ENHANCEMENTS TO EXISTING PROGRAMS TO RECRUIT SERVICE MEMBERS SEPARATING FROM MILITARY SERVICE FOR CUSTOMS AND BORDER PROTECTION OFFICER VACANCIES.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of Homeland Security, in conjunction with the Secretary of Defense, and acting through existing programs, authorities, and agreements, where applicable, shall enhance the efforts of the Department of Homeland Security to recruit members of the Armed Forces who are separating from military service to serve as Customs and Border Protection Officers.

(b) ELEMENTS.—The enhanced recruiting efforts under subsection (a) shall—

(1) include Customs and Border Protection Officer opportunities in relevant job assistance efforts under the Transition Assistance Program;

(2) place U.S. Customs and Border Protection officials or other relevant Department of Homeland Security officials at recruiting events and jobs fairs involving members of the Armed Forces who are separating from military service;

(3) provide opportunities for local U.S. Customs and Border Protection field offices to partner with military bases in the region;

(4) include outreach efforts to educate members of the Armed Forces with Military Occupational Specialty Codes and Officer Branches, Air Force Specialty Codes, Naval Enlisted Classifications and Officer Designators, and Coast Guard Competencies that are transferable to the requirements, qualifications, and duties assigned to Customs and Border Protection Officers of available hiring opportunities to become Customs and Border Protection Officers;

(5) require the Secretary of Homeland Security and the Secretary of Defense to work cooperatively to identify shared activities and opportunities for reciprocity related to steps in hiring U.S. Customs and Border Patrol officers with the goal of minimizing the time required to hire qualified applicants;

(6) require the Secretary of Defense and the Secretary of Homeland Security to work cooperatively to ensure the streamlined interagency transfer of relevant background investigations and security clearances; and

(7) include such other elements as may be necessary to ensure that members of the Armed Forces who are separating from military service are aware of opportunities to fill vacant Customs and Border Protection Officer positions.

SEC. 5. REPORT TO CONGRESS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, and not later than December 31 of each of the 3 successive years, the Secretary of Homeland Security and the Secretary of Defense shall jointly submit a report to the appropriate congressional committees that includes a description and assessment of the efforts of the Department of Homeland Security to hire separating service members as Customs and Border Protection Officers.

(b) CONTENT.—The report required under subsection (a) shall include—

(1) a detailed description of the proposed efforts under section 4, including—

(A) elements of the enhanced recruiting efforts;

(B) goals associated with those elements; and

(C) a description of how the elements and goals will assist in meeting statutorily mandated staffing levels and agency hiring benchmarks;

(2) a detailed description of the efforts that have been undertaken under section 4;

(3) the number of separating service members made aware of Customs and Border Protection Officer vacancies;

(4) the Military Occupational Specialty Codes and Officer Branches, Air Force Specialty Codes, Naval Enlisted Classifications and Officer Designators, and Coast Guard Competencies identified as transferable under section 3(a) and a rationale for such identifications;

(5) the number of Customs and Border Protection Officer vacancies filled with separating service members; and

(6) the number of Customs and Border Protection Officer vacancies filled with separating service members under veterans recruitment appointment authorized under section 4214 of title 38, United States Code.

SEC. 6. RULES OF CONSTRUCTION.

Nothing in this Act may be construed—

(a) to supersede, alter, or amend existing Federal veterans' hiring preferences or Federal hiring authorities; or

(b) to authorize the appropriation of additional amounts to carry out this Act.

The bill (S. 1603), as amended, was ordered to be engrossed for a third reading, was read the third time, and passed.

RELATIVE TO THE DEATH OF RICHARD SCHULTZ SCHWEIKER

Mrs. FISCHER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the consideration of S. Res. 250.

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

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 250) relative to the death of Richard Schultz Schweiker, former United States Senator for the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.

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

Mrs. FISCHER. 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 PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The resolution (S. Res. 250) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

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

ORDERS FOR THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 10, 2015

Mrs. FISCHER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that when the Senate completes its business today, it adjourn until 9:30 a.m., Thursday, September 10; 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 H.J. Res. 61, with the time equally divided until 4:30 p.m.; further, that the debate be structured with alternating 1-hour blocks controlled by the two leaders or their designees until 4 p.m., and that the majority control the first hour, starting at 10 a.m.

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

ADJOURNMENT UNTIL 9:30 A.M. TOMORROW

Mrs. FISCHER. If there is no further business to come before the Senate, I ask unanimous consent that it stand adjourned under the provisions of S. Res. 250 as a further mark of respect to the late Senator Richard Schweiker of Pennsylvania.

There being no objection, the Senate, at 8:37 p.m., adjourned until Thursday, September 10, 2015, at 9:30 a.m.

NOMINATIONS

Executive nominations received by the Senate:

UNITED STATES SENTENCING COMMISSION

CHARLES R. BREYER, OF CALIFORNIA, TO BE A MEMBER OF THE UNITED STATES SENTENCING COMMISSION FOR A TERM EXPIRING OCTOBER 31, 2021. (REAPPOINTMENT)

RICHARD FRANKLIN BOULWARE, II, OF NEVADA, TO BE A MEMBER OF THE UNITED STATES SENTENCING COMMISSION FOR A TERM EXPIRING OCTOBER 31, 2019, VICE KETANJI BROWN JACKSON, TERM EXPIRED.

IN THE AIR FORCE

THE FOLLOWING NAMED INDIVIDUALS FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE REGULAR AIR FORCE UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 531:

To be major

KATHLEEN E. AKERS
BRETT W. SMITH
SAIPRASAD M. ZEMSE

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES AIR FORCE UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 624:

To be colonel

MICHELLE T. AARON
SUSAN B. BOWES
NORMAN C. FOX
PHILIP E. GOFF
MELISSA R. HOWARD
WILLIAM C. ISLER III
GUY R. MAJKOWSKI
TERRY R. MATHEWS
THERESA J. MEDINA
BRIAN E. MOORE
COREY J. MUNRO
CHRISTOPHER I. PATRICK
PETER D. REINHARDT
TERESA K. ROBERTS
DANELLE K. RODDY
MONICA U. SELENT
LYNN M. SHINABERY
MITZI D. THOMASLAWSON
KIRK P. WINGER

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES AIR FORCE UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 624:

To be colonel

PAUL R. BREZINSKI
TERENCE T. CUNNINGHAM IV
MARY A. GARBOWSKI
KARA A. GORMONT
JOSEPH V. HALE
KEITH A. HIGLEY
EDWARD J. LAGROU
MICHAEL J. ROBERTS
KEVIN P. SEELEY
VITO S. SMYTH
THOMAS E. WILLIFORD

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES AIR FORCE UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 624:

To be colonel

DONNETTE A. BOYD
DAVID L. CARR
SHON NEYLAND
PAUL D. SUTTER

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES AIR FORCE UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 624:

To be lieutenant colonel

QUENTIN D. BAGBY
ALLAN E. BIGTAS, JR.
SEAN M. CHICKERY
BRANDON N. CHRISTENSEN
KWAME A. CURTIS
STEVEN W. DAWSON
STEVEN A. DEZELL
JOSE DIAZ
PAUL R. EDEN
JERRY M. FAUSCH
MARSHALL A. FISCUS
GRETCHEN ANN FIVECOAT
MICHAEL G. FLEMING
JOHNNIE FOSTER, JR.
JAIME RIVAS HARVEY
JEREMY S. HASKELL
ERIC M. HENDRICKSON
DEREC S. HUDSON
SAMANTHA J. KELPIS
WESLEY T. KINERK
JOSEPH B. KIRKMAN
KAREN P. KRAMER
JIMMEY N. LABIT, JR.
THAI H. LE
MICHAEL S. LUBY
WILLIAM E. LUJAN
NATHAN B. MAERTENS
THOMAS J. V. MALLEY
TIMOTHY J. MCDOWELL
MICHAEL A. MILLIS
ELIZABETH NAJERA
JAIME R. K. OKAMURA
ARON R. POTTER
NAYDA O. PROTZMAN
ALEJANDRO RAMOS
PATRICIA ROHRBECK
MICHAEL J. RUTTER
JENNIE S. SHEFFIELD
CHRISTIE SIMPSON MCKENZIE
TRACY L. SNYDER
KIM SUNDERLAND
BRANDON M. TOURTILLOTT
GEORGETTE A. TREZVANT
ANTHONY R. TY
DEREK C. UNDERHILL
DERRICK F. VARNER
KHAI H. VUONG
JANA M. WEINER
CLAYTON D. WILSON III
MARY A. WORKMAN

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES AIR FORCE UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 624:

To be lieutenant colonel

DWAYNE A. BACA
ROBERT D. BARRIENTOS
JONATHAN A. BERGMANN
DANIEL R. BOWEN
ALEJANDRO BRECEDA
MICHAEL A. CLEMENT
STEVEN B. DADD
TIMOTHY M. DEATER
GABRIEL R. DINOFRIO
ERIC L. DOGGETT
JENNIFER LAURIE EDWARDS
WADE S. EVANS
GLEN N. GILSON
CHRISTOPHER G. GONZALES
BRYAN K. A. JERNIGAN
DANA JOSEPHINE LONGO
TARA E. LOVELL
MICHAEL PATRICK METZ
TIMOTHY A. MORRIS
ROBERT J. ORLANDO
MARK W. OVERLIE
AMANDA M. PHLEGAR
ROBERT B. RUSSIN
EDWIN Y. SANTOS
JEFFREY B. SCHULER
STEPHANIE A. STEMEN
JAMES D. ULRICH
RAMON L. VEGLIO
RAYNOLD E. VINCENT, JR.
LIANA LUCAS VOGEL

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES AIR FORCE UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 624:

To be lieutenant colonel

MARIA J. BELMONTE
STEVEN R. BLEVINS
FARA M. BUSS
JONATHAN A. CASEY
ERIKA R. CERANOWSKI
ANITA F. CHAPEL
PAULA M. CHAVIS
JAMES D. COTE
DEBORAH L. DAVIDSON
AMALIA M. DIVITTORIO
KATHERYN W. ELLIS
CYNTHIA L. ENNIS
JASON P. FEESE
TIMOTHY E. GILLISPIE
MICHELE J. HOLDERNESS
DONNA L. HORNBERGER
ROCKY D. HOSIE
SHERRY A. JOHNSON
GWENDOLYN S. KAEGY
KRISTOPHER J. KILLIUS
SHERRY M. KILLIUS
BERNICE S. KING
ERIN J. KNIGHTNER
MICHAEL E. MACLAIN
KRISTI R. NORCROSS
MICHAEL J. OKEEFE
KIMBERLY A. POLSTON
MARQUITA N. PRICE
LEE ANN RICKARD
JENNY PATTERSON SPAHR
PAMELA L. STEARNS
DEBRA J. STORMS
DIANNE M. STROBLE
MATTHEW R. UBER
STEPHEN J. URBAN III
LEWIS S. WILBER
DEVERIL A. WINT

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES AIR FORCE UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 624:

To be major

ROBERT H. ALEXANDER
REBECCA L. ARNESON
WESLEY P. ARNOLD
JACQUELINE L. ASTRERO
JASON L. BAKER
LINDA A. BEEMAN
CANDEE B. BERCK
SHARISE M. BIJOU
JASON R. BINGHAM
KARL F. BITUIN
ALLISON K. BRADFORD
CRYSTALYN E. BROWN
JARED P. BUECHE
MATTHEW P. BUSSA
JAY M. BUTLER
LANCE W. CAMACHO
DIANE L. CAMPBELL
JULIE A. CARPENTER
BENJAMIN H. CARTER
MICHELE L. CHURCH
ELIZABETH K. COMBS
CHRISTOPHER W. DANIELS
GABRIELA T. DANIELS
ZARAH J. DAVIS
NICOLE E. DESCHEPPER
GEORGE Y. DIAZ
WILLIAM R. DICK
LAURA J. DOSSETT
RACHEL L. DUCHOSLAV
CHRISTOPHER A. DUFFORD
AMANDA E. FERGUSON
NICOLE M. FERGUSON
LYNDSEY M. FERRIS
DEREK S. FINDLAY
ALISHA LYNNETTE FLORENCE
ALEXANDER G. FORD
DENISE TORRES GARCIA
ZACHARY K. GARRETT
MEGAN C. GARRISON
ANGELA L. GILBERT
MICHAEL A. GLOTFELTER
JACLYN D. GUESS
WHITNEY N. HASBROUCK
CORY G. HEDIN
MINETTE S. R. HERRICK
JOANNA HESKETT
LINDZI S. HOWDER
DANIEL A. JACOBSON
BRIAN D. JAMAIL
JASON R. JARECKE
BENJAMIN D. JONES
LEAMON P. JONES
CHAD W. KILLPACK
KENNETH A. KIRK II
FRANCIS J. KUCHERA
RYAN R. LANDOLL
RAHEEM R. LAY
ELIZABETH M. LIEBNER
CARRIE L. LUCAS
MEGAN B. MARTIN
DONALD E. MASON
WILLIAM C. MATTHEWS
NAGENIA Y. MCBEAN
BENJAMIN J. MCGARVEY
TRACEY J. MCGAUGHEY
JESSICA H. MCGLADE
JENNIFER M. MIDDLEBROOKS
GEORGE B. MITZNER
CARLI B. MURPHY
ALISON M. NEY
CHI L. NGUYEN JOHNSON
MARK J. NOAKES
MATTHEW P. NOWOCZYNSKI
JOSEPH V. NOYA
ERIN K. OCONNOR
STEPHEN O. OSAKUE, JR.
JESSICA S. PABON
MICHAEL A. PALMER
STEVEN M. PARFITT
RYAN M. PROFFIT
AMANDA C. QUELLY
VENITA S. RAMIREZ
FELIPSON Z. RAMOS, JR.
JUSTIN R. READ
JAIME L. REED
REED T. REICHWALD
BRANDY LEIGH RENNER
GLEN M. ROBINSON
SHANNON N. ROMAN
ELIZABETH A. SALTZ
KEITH A. SANDERS
NATHAN C. SANDMANN
MICHELLE L. SANGER
RACHEL M. SATTER
MICHAEL P. SCANNON
MICHAEL A. SCHMIDT
ROBERT W. SEALS
NICOLE M. SEARS
DEBRA S. SECREST
CHAD P. SHAFFER
LEIGHCRAFT A. SHAKES
CASEY R. SHOOP
DAVID A. SHWALB
JASMINE A. SIMMONS
BRYAN W. SIXKILLER
JONATHAN JOSEPH SNYDER
DAVID W. SPAULDING
CHARLES J. STALLINGS
DANIEL J. STRAIT
NINA J. TACHIKAWA
JOSEPH C. TEODORO
SALLY L. TO
DONALD JOSEPH TRIGG
LETICIA R. TURNER
DANIELLE KAY GLEASON TUTTLE
THERESA P. UMIPEG
DAVID P. VALENTINE
KAREN A. VANDOR
STACEY R. VIERRA
BRYAN H. VRALSTED
STEPHANIE L. WHITE
DANIEL ADAM WILLIAMS
OWEN JOHN R. WILLIAMS
SUMMER L. WILLIAMSON
JENNIFER L. WINCHELL
JUSTIN DAVID WRIGHT

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES AIR FORCE UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 624:

To be major

RENI B. ANGELOVA
ALLISON NIASHAR BAIN
SCOTT A. BAKER
WAYNE EMMANUEL BARNUM
JOHN M. BERNABE
GARY L. BILLINGSLEY
CRAIG M. BUEHRIG
JASON J. CARTER
STEPHANIE A. CERON
KRISTINE L. COTHREN
TENISHA L. DEALBA ASCENCIO
MELISSA S. DELA CRUZ
CARMELLA S. ESSIEN
VANESSA V. EVANS
SEAN M. FINNEY
JAY A. FURY
BRANDEE N. HAYNES
ZANE H. HOLLAND
CHRISTOPHER M. HOLLIS
JAMES N. HOLSTEIN
SEAN RODERICK HOSKINS
TOMMY L. JEFFERSON II
CRYSTAL C. KARAHAN
ELISABETH E. LEONHARDT
ANSON MICHAEL LLOYD
MIJI DALTON MCCONNELL
INNA ALEXANDRA MIKHAILOVA
CYNTHIA L. NEWBERRY
CHRISTOPHER TRAVIS OGREN
CHRISTOPHER D. PARKER
STEPHANIE A. PROELLOCHS

BARRY O. REESE
JEROD B. RIEGER
SUMMER A. ROSE
KENNETH A. ROSENBLUM
MELISSA R. ROUNTREE
KAITLIN B. B. SALLE
TAMMY S. SHY
BLAKE M. SMITH
ALLEN K. SOLENBERG, JR.
GILLIAN T. TAYLOR DORSETT
ANGEL LUIS VARGAS
AMANDA MARIE WEBER
NICHOLAS J. WEIGHTMAN
GRANT W. WISNER

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES AIR FORCE UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 624:

To be major

DAVID R. ALANIZ
MARK CHRISTOPHER ALBRIGHT
LORREN D. ANDERSON
NOEL B. ARAGONA
DENNIS M. BARBER
MADISON L. BASILE, JR.
JERED E. BEAIRD
THERESA A. BEDFORD
MONICA D. BEEBE
SUSAN Y. BERGANIO
KATE M. BERRY
SUZANNE M. BOHN
VIRGIL E. BRECKENRIDGE, JR.
FRANK E. BRISENDINE
WEEADA Y. BROWN
STACEY M. BRUNDRETT
JAMES S. CARPENTER
REBECCA J. CASTANEDA
ELYSSABETH N. CASTEEL
SHERRY D. CHANDLER
JENNIFER M. CHILDRESS
ANNA M. CHO
BRADFORD R. CLOWER
JOHN T. CONNORS
LAWANNA H. COX
MELISSA M. DASSINGER
JANICE D. DAVIS
GRADYNE M. DEARBORN
TANYA L. DESTINHILL
MOHAMED H. DIALLO
SORIYA DIEP
KAREN E. DOMBKOWSKI
YATASHA A. FLYNN
APRIL D. FRANKLIN
ANNA M. FRISCIA
JOANALYN S. GADUANG
REYNEL A. GARCIA
DAWN M. GRANT
BELINDA J. GREEN
MILAINEE J. GRIFFIN
HELENA H. GUERRA
KANDACE N. HARDSON
SCOTT R. HOLCOMB
ADRIANA A. HOLLIS
JODY L. HUSS
KATRINA INEZ JANOUSEK
JOANNA TANAP JIMENEZ
WANDA I. JIMENEZ
MARITESS JINGCO
DONNICA JONESKEOWN
JAIME F. KELBAUGH
KATHERINE L. KNOTT
DIANA L. KOFRON
ELMER M. LACSAMANA
CYNTHIA LEFRERE
JILL A. LEMIEUX
CHERIE ANN LITTLE
JENNIFER B. MAY
JANA J. MCBURNEY
JENNIFER J. MCGOUGH
LISA G. MCIVER
CHARLES R. MCMICHAEL
SUZANNE M. MIRTS
MARISSA D. MULLICAN
ANNEMARIE T. NESBIT
SYRAH E. NICAISSE
JENNIFER E. OLIVER
KRISTEN M. OSTER
MELISSA S. PENN
VERONICA L. PERRY
ELIZABETH T. A. PETERS
KATHY K. PICKEREL
MICHELLE D. PIERSON
RENEL RAMOS
MATTHEW F. RIST
CHERYL A. ROBY
LYDIA G. RODRIGUEZ
MELINDA M. ROVAN
EUGENIA M. RUSH
ERWIN B. SANPEDRO
FREDRICK R. SANTILLAN, JR.
CATARINA J. SCHLOSSER
ELIZABETH E. SHOCKEY
MICHELLE R. SMITH
CAMILLE N. ST JULIAN
TEISHA S. ST ROSE
ANNETTE M. STEPHENS
AMY L. SVANBERG
REGINA A. TAI SEE
JULIE M. THOMPSON
ROBERT P. THORNHILL
PHI T. TRAN
MICHELE L. TRIMBLE
NICOLE TURNER
JENNIFER L. VARNEY
MARGARITA VERA
CARA M. VOMHOF
DORIS C. WAGNER
STEPHANY L. WATKINS
GARY C. WEBB
DEVON L. WENTZ

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE RESERVE OF THE AIR FORCE UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 12203:

To be colonel

JOHN M. GOOCH

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE REGULAR AIR FORCE UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 531:

To be lieutenant colonel

HERMAN W. DYKES, JR.

IN THE ARMY

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR REGULAR APPOINTMENT IN THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES ARMY NURSE CORPS UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTIONS 531 AND 3064:

To be major

JUDITH S. MEYERS

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE RESERVE OF THE ARMY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 12203:

To be colonel

THOMAS W. WISENBAUGH
HAROLD P. XENITELIS

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER IN THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE RESERVE OF THE ARMY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 12203:

To be colonel

KIRBY R. GROSS

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR REGULAR APPOINTMENT IN THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES ARMY NURSE CORPS UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTIONS 531 AND 3064:

To be major

FRANCHESCA M. DESRIVIERE

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE RESERVE OF THE ARMY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 12203:

To be colonel

JERRY L. TOLBERT

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES ARMY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 624:

To be colonel

CHRISTOPHER R. FORSYTHE

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE RESERVE OF THE ARMY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 12203:

To be colonel

FRANCIS G. MARESCO, JR.

IN THE NAVY

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES NAVY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 624:

To be lieutenant commander

REGINE REIMERS

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES NAVY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 624:

To be lieutenant commander

JOEL V. FINNY

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES NAVY RESERVE UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTIONS 716 AND 12203:

To be captain

ERNEST C. LEE

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE REGULAR NAVY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTIONS 531 AND 5582:

To be lieutenant commander

NATALIA C. HENRIQUEZ

WITHDRAWALS

Executive Message transmitted by the President to the Senate on September 9, 2015 withdrawing from further Senate consideration the following nominations:

FOREIGN SERVICE NOMINATIONS BEGINNING WITH JASON DOUGLAS KALBFLEISCH AND ENDING WITH STUART MACKENZIE HATCHER, WHICH NOMINATIONS WERE SENT TO THE SENATE ON JULY 8, 2015.

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

HONORING THE 75TH ANNIVERSARY OF CAMP BOWIE

HON. K. MICHAEL CONAWAY

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 9, 2015

Mr. CONAWAY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the 75th Anniversary of the establishment of Camp Bowie in Brownwood, Texas. This month, the community of Brownwood will gather to mark this occasion with a symposium to honor the history of Camp Bowie.

Camp Bowie, named in honor of a Texas hero James Bowie, was established on September 19, 1940, by the United States War Department. This installation was the first major project authorized during the World War II era. In the same year, President Franklin D. Roosevelt was given the power to mobilize National Guard Units across the nation. Shortly after its completion, Camp Bowie became the new home of the 36th Texas National Guard Division.

After the U.S.'s entry into World War II, the 36th Division was deployed for training at Camp Blanding, Florida. On September 9, 1943, these brave men were the first allied soldiers sent to the beaches of Salerno, Italy to defeat Hitler's European fortress from the west. The 36th Division served 400 days of combat, and five campaigns in Italy, France, Germany, and Austria. The men of the 36th Division came home and demobilized on Christmas Day in 1945.

Since World War II, Camp Bowie has trained over 420,000 service members and is an instrumental part of our nation's defense and preserving our nation's liberty. Camp Bowie's history serves as an example to many generations of what it takes to defend our freedom. I am proud to represent Camp Bowie and Brownwood, and I am honored to share their history with my colleagues in Congress. On September 16th through the 18th, 2015, the Brownwood community will be honoring this historic milestone at Howard Payne University. I would like to commend Tarleton State University, Howard Payne University and the Brown County Museum of History for their hard work in organizing this symposium.

TRIBUTE IN HONOR OF THE LIFE OF SCOTT T. CAREY

HON. ANNA G. ESHOO

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 9, 2015

Ms. ESHOO. Mr. Speaker, I rise to pay tribute to my friend and distinguished constituent, Scott T. Carey, a former Mayor of Palo Alto and a resident of Portola Valley, California, who died at his home on August 11, 2015 after a brief illness at the age of 82.

Scott Carey was born on March 11, 1933, to Paul T. Carey, an artist, and Stanleigh Carey, a pianist. He was raised in Berkeley, graduated from Berkeley High School and earned a bachelor's degree from the University of California. He earned his law degree from Boalt Hall and served our country as a pilot in the U.S. Air Force from 1953 to 1958, rising to the rank of Captain.

Scott Carey practiced law in San Francisco and Palo Alto before joining his uncle Pat Carey's real estate brokerage. Founded in 1935, Cornish & Carey was primarily a residential brokerage firm when Scott joined the company in 1968. He soon upgraded the company's commercial division and it became the brokerage of choice for many Silicon Valley technology companies. He served as Chairman of the firm's Board of Directors.

Scott Carey was known for his honesty, dedication, integrity, wise counsel and his ability to think fast and explain complex deals in a personable, confident manner. He was an ardent and able golfer, and a public servant as a member of the Palo Alto City Council from 1975 to 1979, including a term as Mayor. He was instrumental in obtaining the Council's support for the $7.5 million acquisition of more than 500 acres of lower foothills property which later became the core of the Arastradero Open Space Preserve. He also served on various boards, including that of the Woodside Priory School and the Berkeley Center for Law, Business and the Economy. He oversaw the sale of Cornish and Carey to BCG Partners, an endeavor in which he was deeply involved.

Scott Carey leaves his beloved wife Susan Carey, the great love of his life; his children Michael T. Carey, of San Mateo, Dennis Carey, of Hanoi, Jeff Beaty, of Concord; Cynthia Carey, of Napa Valley, Kimberly Corso, of Menlo Park and Christopher Corso, of Portland, Oregon; Lisa Lamb, of Atherton, and Mike E. Carey, of Santa Barbara; brother Peter Carey of Palo Alto. He also leaves his grandchildren Tyler Woods; Cole T. Carey; Zachary, William and Alexandra Lamb; Sophia Phillips; and Benjamin Carey as well as his nephew, Brendan Carey; and niece, Nadia Carey.

I was privileged to have known Scott for over 35 years and call him my friend. He was a thoroughbred professional, a loyal friend and he was respected by everyone who had the privilege of knowing him.

Mr. Speaker, I ask the entire House of Representatives to join me in honoring the life of Scott T. Carey, a man of many talents and accomplishments and a true patriot. As the full House extends our condolences to his family and friends, we are grateful for his life and his work which made our community and our country stronger and better.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. SUZANNE BONAMICI

OF OREGON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 9, 2015

Ms. BONAMICI. Mr. Speaker, during consideration of the motion to suspend the rules and pass S. 1359, E-Warranty Act of 2015, I was not able to cast a vote because of a delayed flight. Had I been present I would have voted yea.

THE MAJOR CASE SQUAD OF GREATER ST. LOUIS CELEBRATING 50 YEARS OF INVESTIGATIVE EXCELLENCE

HON. JOHN SHIMKUS

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 9, 2015

Mr. SHIMKUS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to acknowledge The Major Case Squad of Greater St. Louis in celebrating 50 years of investigative excellence to the St. Louis Area. This multi-jurisdictional Major Crime Investigative Task Force was established in 1965 to unite the most qualified investigators from Illinois and Missouri law enforcement agencies within the Greater St. Louis Metropolitan area. The goal was to establish a cooperative effort to investigate and provide an expeditious solution to the most heinous crimes constituting a community threat.

Since its inception the Major Case Squad has investigated thousands of crimes and is proud of the fact that more than 86 percent have resulted in arrest clearance with an incredibly high criminal conviction rate.

Throughout the 50 years of operational success, the men and women of the Major Case Squad have perfected the investigative process to deliver a swift and professional response to violent crimes that affect the Greater St. Louis Metropolitan area.

COMMEMORATING THE ONE HUNDREDTH ANNIVERSARY OF THE DEFUNIAK SPRINGS WOMAN'S CLUB

HON. JEFF MILLER

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 9, 2015

Mr. MILLER of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise to commemorate the One Hundredth Anniversary of the DeFuniak Springs Woman's Club. Throughout the last century, the Club has served the local community, and I am privileged to honor and recognize their dedication to bettering the lives of the citizens of Northwest Florida.

As one of the oldest civic organizations in the Florida panhandle, the Woman's Club was

unofficially formed in 1915 when a group of 5 resourceful and determined women representing each of the churches in DeFuniak Springs gathered at the request of the mayor to take on the beautification and sanitation of the town. The group, which would later become the DeFuniak Springs Woman's Club, set about establishing sanitation standards by improving drinking water and sewer systems, as well as working to make the town as aesthetically pleasing as possible. They were able to secure extra law enforcement officials to prevent the free roaming livestock, and they beautified the parks and train depot by planting gardens.

Once their original purpose was met, the Woman's Club began to provide care to women and children, a mission that continues today. In addition to promoting good health and home sanitation, the Woman's Club has taken on projects to provide food for school children, library books, quality woman's clothing at discounted prices, and, as a sponsor for the Children's Advocacy of the Emerald Coast, support for child abuse victims.

Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the United States Congress, it gives me great pleasure to commemorate the centennial anniversary of the DeFuniak Woman's Club in DeFuniak Springs, Florida. My wife Vicki joins me in congratulating all the members past and present on one hundred years of exceptional service to the Northwest Florida community.

IN MEMORY OF ALBERT ''AL'' P. PIANTANIDA

HON. TONY CÁRDENAS

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 9, 2015

Mr. CÁRDENAS. Mr. Speaker, it is with profound sadness that I rise to honor the life of my good friend and community leader, Albert ''Al'' P. Piantanida, who passed away on Monday, August 31, 2015.

Al was not only a great friend to me, but a leader in the Northeast San Fernando Valley. Al's dedication to his neighborhood and the surrounding community will be noticed by future generations.

Al was a proud Vietnam War Veteran, serving for three years. Al shared his familiarity and experience as a member of my Veterans Advisory Committee. He was also a proud member of the American Legion Post 817 in Panorama City.

While born in East St. Louis, Illinois, Al made his home in Arleta, California for more than thirty years. Al believed that building a better world begins in one's own back yard. Al's intrinsic motivation was to inspire others to become involved in the community.

Al was the perfect constituent. He not only engaged his elected representatives, he offered his service and personally invested in finding solutions to the issues facing the community. He was the perfect American.

He was an active member of his community, serving diligently as the President of the Arleta Neighborhood Council for three years as well as President of the Village Green East Home Owners Association.

Al was the founder of the Arleta Community Watchdogs Organization and member of the Arleta ''Looky Loos'' Neighborhood Watch Group for over twenty-five years.

Al was always there and involved, actively participating in community events, projects, and programs. Al had a lifelong commitment to public service and improving the Northeast San Fernando Valley.

Al's dedication went beyond his own neighborhood. He was an active member of the Los Angeles Police Department's Foothill and Mission Division Community-Police Advisory Boards, the Police Foundation, and Valley Traffic Advisory Council.

He devoted his life to the betterment of the students and less fortunate—actively participating in food banks, senior centers, and schools. His tireless efforts were recognized when Al received the 2011 Pacoima Spirit Award for community activist of the year.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring the life of Albert ''Al'' P. Piantanida. Although Al is no longer with us in person, he will always remain in our hearts and memories. His legacy will continue for future generations.

CELEBRATION OF THE 70TH YEAR OF ALBERT ''RED'' SCHOENDIENST IN PROFESSIONAL BASEBALL

HON. JOHN SHIMKUS

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 9, 2015

Mr. SHIMKUS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to acknowledge the celebration of the 70th year of Albert ''Red'' Schoendienst in professional baseball.

During his years involved with professional baseball, 45 seasons were in uniform with the St. Louis Cardinals as a player, manager, and coach. He is still currently involved with the organization as a special assistant to the manager. The organization, players, and fans will be celebrating Red all season long using the hashtag #LoveRed2.

His career with the Cardinals started in 1945 when he left his hometown of Germantown, Illinois, here in the 15th District. He quickly developed into one of the best hitting and fielding second basemen of all time. With multiple World Series wins and National League pennants won as both a player and a coach and as a member of the Baseball Hall of Fame, I am honored to recognize such an accomplished athlete who hails from the district.

I look forward to Red's continued involvement with the Cardinals for many years to come.

INTRODUCTION OF THE GUN TRAFFICKING PREVENTION ACT

HON. CAROLYN B. MALONEY

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 9, 2015

Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York. Mr. Speaker, today I am proud that members of Congress from both sides of the aisle came together to deal with the gun trafficking epidemic that has spread across our country and across our borders.

Our bill, the Gun Trafficking Prevention Act, will create a dedicated federal statute to combat gun trafficking, and impose stiffer penalties for ''straw purchasers'' who buy guns for convicted felons and others who are prohibited from purchasing weapons. The bill also includes important enhancements for organizers of trafficking networks that funnel illegal guns into cities across the country.

These stronger penalties will enable law enforcement and prosecutors to bust these trafficking rings and make our communities safer from the threat of gun violence.

According to the ATF, more than 100,000 guns were recovered from crime scenes in Mexico between 2009 and 2014, and over 70 percent of those originated in the U.S. It's clear that gun trafficking across the border to Mexico is a major national security threat, but our current laws are so weak that it's not worth it to prosecute gun traffickers.

In testimony to the Oversight and Government Reform Committee in 2012, ATF Special Agent Peter Forcelli called the current laws against gun trafficking ''absolutely toothless.'' And the consequences have been dire:

On Christmas Eve, 2012, a convicted felon named William Spengler, who served 17 years in prison for killing his 92-year-old grandmother with a hammer, sat down in his home in Webster, N.Y., and wrote a note vowing to torch his neighborhood.

He promised to ''do what I like doing best, killing people.'' After setting fire to his own house and several others, Spengler ambushed the first responders, killing two firefighters by spraying them with bullets from a 12-gauge shotgun and a Bushmaster rifle.

How did Mr. Spengler—a convicted felon—get his guns? He used his neighbor as a straw purchaser.

And this May, authorities in New York charged 10 people in a gun trafficking ring that had channeled 90 guns from as far away as Maine onto our streets in just the previous six months.

Thank you to Representatives CUMMINGS, MEEHAN, FITZPATRICK, KELLY, KING, DUCKWORTH, and DONOVAN for their steadfast commitment to end gun trafficking, and their support of this critical legislation.

IN MEMORY OF THE HEROES OF BENGHAZI: NAVY SEAL CHRIS DOHERTY, DIPLOMAT SEAN SMITH, AMBASSADOR CHRIS STEVENS, AND NAVY SEAL TYRONE WOODS

HON. PETE SESSIONS

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 9, 2015

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor and in memory of the four American Heroes who died in the Benghazi Terrorist Attack three years ago on 9/11 in service to our country. Ambassador Chris Stevens, Diplomat Sean Smith, Former Navy Seals Chris Doherty and Tyrone Woods. Their courage and service to our Nation will always be remembered. On this third anniversary our thoughts and prayers go out to them and their families. I submit this poem penned in their honor by Albert Carey Caswell.

Out of the Woods, and into the light
Those brave hearts who evil must fight
Those ones who served their country tis of thee so magnificently,

all on that most heroic of all nights
Who stood strong, who stood long,
ever so bright
To see heaven's light
Out of the Woods,
and into the light
The ones who chose to be in harm's way,
standing up for what is right
Indeed, it is but a special breed.
who in the name of public service who will intercede and so fight
Whether, an Ambassador, a Diplomat, or Brothers In Arms,
who together chose to unite
STAND DOWN
HELL NO
Against all odds as into that darkness they'd go
Leave no brother behind was how they all lived and so died
As their Mothers cried,
with tears in their eyes
As Heaven them chose,
they'd rise
In the moment of truth,
only the bravest of all hearts so choose to fight
While, against all odds,
these heroes acted like gods bringing their light
All in their creed,
showing us what we all need to make this world right
Courage and Faith,
and unending Conviction to make it a far better place
Because minutes are all that we have
To make a difference,
all in that fight of Good versus Bad
It's better to live for something noble,
than die for nothing at all
As they went into the darkest of Woods,
with Strength In Honor one and all
Rest
Rest, our four American Sons,
your battle's over now, it's done,
you're out of the Woods and into the light
For Heaven holds a place,
for all of those men and women of such splendid faith
Who to this our world bring their most selfless light
Amen

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. MIKE BOST

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 9, 2015

Mr. BOST. Mr. Speaker, on roll call no. 490 I was unavoidably detained. Had I been present, I would have voted yea.

IN COMMEMORATION OF ARTHUR A. COLLINS' 106TH BIRTHDAY

HON. ROD BLUM

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 9, 2015

Mr. BLUM. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to celebrate the birthday of a true innovator and representative of American ingenuity: Arthur A. Collins. Fascinated and inspired by the invention of the radio, Collins tinkered with homemade antennas and transmitters from an early age at his home in Cedar Rapids, Iowa. As a young adult, Arthur turned his hobby into a basement business where he sold the first complete radio transmitting equipment in the country.

Since its humble beginnings in Iowa in the thirties, the Collins Radio Company evolved and adapted to design and manufacture flight control instruments, first commercially successful data modems, and the communications equipment for the Apollo, Gemini, and Mercury space programs. Today, Rockwell Collins, the largest employer in the First District of Iowa, continues to create innovative technology for both the defense and civilian sectors. The company, still based in Cedar Rapids, Iowa, designs, engineers, and builds electronic communication systems, avionics, and in-flight entertainment systems worldwide.

Arthur A. Collins pioneered one of the greatest technological revolutions in history and left an enduring legacy in the business world. Today, on what would have been his 106th birthday, I honor the genius of this great Iowan and celebrate his American success story. Mr. Collins is an amazing example of the American Dream and a testament to the power of hard work, foresight, and perseverance.

HONORING JULIE CARSON

HON. LOIS FRANKEL

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 9, 2015

Ms. FRANKEL of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Wilton Manors City Commissioner, Julie Carson and her work with the LGBT community.

Commissioner Carson is being presented with the "Community Partner for Equality" award from Equality Florida for her tireless work for the LGBT community.

In 2010, Carson became the first openly lesbian elected official in Broward County. Throughout her tenure as Commissioner, she has focused on helping the homeless, assisting the elderly, advocating for people living with HIV/AIDS, and supporting the Transgender community. Specifically, she sponsored the Equal Benefits Ordinance and the Broward County Vendor Preference Ordinance, which ensured equal benefits to all married couples. She is also proud of her continued dialogue and collaboration between the Transgender community and the Wilton Manors Police Department.

Outside of her duties as Commissioner, Carson is a free-lance paralegal and a guest lecturer at Florida Atlantic University. She enjoys spending time with her partner Susan and horseback riding in her free time.

I congratulate Commissioner Carson on her award and thank her for all her tremendous work for the South Florida LGBT community. I am proud to represent her in the 22nd District and wish her all the best in her future endeavors.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. JAIME HERRERA BEUTLER

OF WASHINGTON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 9, 2015

Ms. HERRERA BEUTLER. Mr. Speaker, on roll call no. 490 I was unable to attend the following vote due to a flight delay from my district in Southwest Washington. Had I been present, I would have voted yea.

HONORING THE LIFE OF JOHN CROSLAND, JR.

HON. RICHARD HUDSON

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 9, 2015

Mr. HUDSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life of John Crosland, Jr., who passed away on Sunday, August 2, 2015 after a long battle with Parkinson's Disease.

Mr. Crosland made a name for himself as a successful real estate developer, but more importantly for his philanthropic work in our community. In 1954, he joined his father at the John Crosland Company. He successfully navigated multiple housing crises through the decades while becoming a champion of affordable housing in the Charlotte area. Additionally, he was the founding chairman of Habitat for Humanity of Charlotte.

Throughout his successful career, he always knew the importance of giving back and helping the local community. In 2012, Mr. Crosland gave $1.1 million for a new school in Charlotte, now named The John Crosland School, that specializes in assisting children with learning disabilities.

His dedication to serving our community has made an everlasting impact on thousands of lives.

He also served his country in the U.S. Army in Korea and Japan. I am grateful for his service to our country, our state, and to our local community.

Mr. Speaker, please join me today in honoring the life of John Crosland, Jr., for his successful career and for his dedication to bettering the lives of so many North Carolinians.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. J. RANDY FORBES

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 9, 2015

Mr. FORBES. Mr. Speaker, due to the recent passing of a beloved family member, I was unable to cast my vote yesterday for an important piece of legislation. Had I been in the chamber, I would have voted yes on S. 1359, the E-Warranty Act of 2015.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. RICHARD L. HANNA

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 9, 2015

Mr. HANNA. Mr. Speaker, on Roll Call number 490 on S. 1359, I am not recorded because I was absent for personal reasons. Had I been present, I would have voted aye.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. JARED HUFFMAN

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 9, 2015

Mr. HUFFMAN. Mr. Speaker, on September 8, 2015, I was absent for rollcall vote 490. Had I been present for rollcall vote 490, on passage of S. 1359, I would have voted "yes".

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. ROD BLUM

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 9, 2015

Mr. BLUM. Mr. Speaker, on roll call no. 490 my flight was unavoidably delayed due to severe weather. Had I been present, I would have voted yes.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. BETTY McCOLLUM

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 9, 2015

Ms. MCCOLLUM. Mr. Speaker, yesterday I attended a visitation for Shane Clifton, a St. Paul firefighter who died while on duty, and missed votes on September 8, 2015. Had I been present, I would have voted in support of the E-Warranty Act of 2015 (S. 1359).

IN HONOR OF ''JOHN'' ARTHUR J. HOWARTH

HON. DONALD NORCROSS

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 9, 2015

Mr. NORCROSS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to offer my sincere condolences and to honor the memory of "John" Arthur J. Howarth for his achievements, contributions, and service to his community as a loving husband, father, grandfather and pillar of civic engagement.

John Howarth spent his life serving his community for 40 years as an electrician for the International Brothers of Electrical Workers (IBEW), putting the needs of others before his own. John was also active as a member of his local union, serving as Recording Secretary. In addition to imparting the importance of citizenship to his children and grandchildren at an early age, he served as an inspiration to IBEW members. He taught them the value of a day's work and to appreciate life's gifts and opportunities.

John also served as general foreman on some of the largest projects in South Jersey. I had the privilege of working under him on the Garden State Park Race Track. He had a passion for passing on his trade to the next generation and I was privileged to be among the many IBEW members to benefit from his years of experience.

Mr. Speaker, John Howarth was an incredible man, devoted to his family, and dedicated to his community. He leaves behind a great legacy and I join my IBEW brothers and sisters and the entire state of New Jersey in honoring the achievements and the life of this extraordinary man.

HONORING SAL ESPOSITO

HON. LOIS FRANKEL

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 9, 2015

Ms. FRANKEL of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Mr. Sal Esposito of Plantation, Florida, who turned 100 years old on August 27, 2015.

Mr. Esposito moved to the 22nd District in 1980 from New York. Before moving to South Florida, he proudly served in the military and was overseas for nearly three years during World War II. He worked in a factory making tools and dies for 45 years.

Mr. Esposito still works with machinery and tools in the Lauderdale West Community. He helps to make toys for children for the Plantation Historical Museum. He also enjoys playing tennis, playing cards, and performing in shows.

I thank Mr. Esposito for his service to our country and wish him many happy and healthy years to come.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. PETER A. DeFAZIO

OF OREGON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 9, 2015

Mr. DEFAZIO. Mr. Speaker, on Tuesday, September 8, 2015, I was not present due to a medical procedure and missed the following vote:

Roll Call Vote 490, On the Motion to Suspend the Rules and Pass H.R. 3154—S. 1359, The E-Warranty Act of 2015. I would have voted "aye."

TRIBUTE TO MARILYNN THANEY

HON. GWEN MOORE

OF WISCONSIN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 9, 2015

Ms. MOORE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Ms. Marilynn Thaney on her retirement. Ms. Thaney has served the 4th Congressional District for over 18 years. She has served in various positions during her tenure including Office Manager, Caseworker, Casework Supervisor and currently Casework Manager for my office.

Marilynn began her employment with the House of Representatives in 1998 beginning in the office of my predecessor Representative Gerald Kleczka. She joined my office in 2005. She was one of my first hires due to her welcoming spirit and knowledge of the district. Before joining federal employment, Ms. Thaney spent six years working for the Silver Spring Neighborhood Center and she also worked for the Better Business Bureau in their Milwaukee office.

Marilynn Thaney is the proud mother of four, three daughters: Jennifer, Rachel, and Rebecca and son Joshua. She is the grandmother of 3: Makayla, Jackson, and Noah; they all reside in Minnesota where she will retire. She has been married to her soulmate Karen Mahler for over 15 years and was officially married to Karen in April 2014 in a ceremony held in Minnesota.

Marilynn has worked tirelessly on behalf of the constituents of the 4th Congressional District; she has tackled some of the most difficult problems and cases with many positive results. She is an exceptional leader and has been an advocate on issues regarding mental health, women, seniors, LGBT, and the disability community.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues of the 114th Congress to join me in congratulating Marilynn Thaney on her well-deserved retirement. She has been a true friend to her colleagues and friends and has exemplified in deed the true meaning of public servant. She has been a treasure for the 4th Congressional District and will be missed by my office, this community and the State of Wisconsin.

HONORING JOSEPHINE DEFINA STETSON

HON. LOIS FRANKEL

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 9, 2015

Ms. FRANKEL of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Josephine DeFina Stetson for her work in the U.S. Army War Department.

Josephine was born in New York City to Pasqual and Antoinette DeSimon, as the youngest of eight children. From a young age, Josephine had a passion for dance, a talent which led her to teach soldiers how to dance as a volunteer for the USO.

Josephine served as a civilian employee for the U.S. Army War Department for four years, developing flow charts illustrating the organizational structures of various commands.

After working for the Army, Josephine began selling real estate in the Palm Beaches, opening her own firm in 1973. She was consistently ranked one of the top firms in the area and the nation. Josephine is an enthusiastic member of the Palm Beach community, serving on the Palm Beach Board of Realtors for many years and as a longtime member and parishioner of the St. Edward's Church guild.

In honor of her years of commitment to her country and dedication to her community, I'm pleased to recognize Mrs. Josephine DeFina Stetson and thank her for her service.

75TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE APPALACHIAN ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE

HON. JOHN J. DUNCAN, JR.

OF TENNESSEE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 9, 2015

Mr. DUNCAN of Tennessee. Mr. Speaker, I wish today to recognize an organization that has had a huge impact on rural areas of my District and the State of Tennessee.

The Appalachian Electric Cooperative is celebrating its 75th anniversary during its annual meeting on September 26th in White

Pine, Tennessee, where up to 2,000 people are expected to attend.

Governor Bill Haslam has proclaimed September 26th as Appalachian Electric Cooperative Day.

Since 1940, the member-owned, non-profit Appalachian Electric Cooperative has been providing reliable and affordable electricity across East Tennessee.

Today, it serves 45,000 people in Grainger, Hamblen, Jefferson and Sevier Counties.

Several years ago, I was named the number one champion of rural America in the entire House of Representatives.

I have always rooted for the little guy or the underdog in life. It is very important to stand up for small towns and rural areas because they do not have the resources of big cities and often get shortchanged.

I read recently that two-thirds of the counties in the U.S. are losing population. There are many small towns and rural areas across the Appalachian region that are barely holding on.

Without affordable, reliable electricity, these rural areas would cease to exist. We must do everything we can to support rural America and help stem this population loss.

Mr. Speaker, the Appalachian Electric Cooperative has been a lifeline for many thousands of people across rural East Tennessee for the last 75 years. I urge my colleagues and other readers of the RECORD to congratulate them on this milestone and thank them for their service to Tennessee.

GREATER LOVE HAS NO MAN THAN THIS THAT A MAN LAY DOWN HIS LIFE FOR HIS FRIENDS

HON. TED POE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 9, 2015

Mr. POE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, etched in white marble on a gravestone in Arlington National Cemetery is the name of Army Staff Sergeant Brian T. Craig. Born on April 2, 1975, he passed away 13 days after his 27th birthday on April 15, 2002 in Afghanistan.

Brian was a son, a friend and, most importantly to him, a Christian. Brian loved his family, and he made it a weekly ritual to call home early on Saturday mornings to let his parents know he was okay. He graduated from Klein Forest High School in 1993 and from there went on to enlist in the United States Army the next fall. His parents had encouraged him to go to college, but Brian was dead set on enlisting; it was in his blood. His father, Arthur, was stationed in Thailand with the Air Force during the Vietnam War. Brian served in Anchorage, Alaska as an Airborne Infantry soldier.

Upon reenlistment, he served in a range of Explosive Ordnance Disposal (E.O.D.) missions in support of the United States and NATO, even serving in Bosnia/Kosovo and The Republic of North Korea. He was deployed in support of Operation Noble Eagle/Enduring Freedom to Kandahar, Afghanistan in November of 2001, when he was later killed.

His parents, Arthur and Barbara Craig, heard news that four U.S soldiers were killed in Kandahar as they dismantled confiscated rockets, they feared their son was among that four.

Barbara was returning from the airport, after dropping her husband off for a mission trip, when she saw an Army car pull up in front of the house. Her worries were confirmed, Brian was among the dead in Afghanistan.

Brian paid the ultimate sacrifice; he laid down his life for not only his family and friends, but people he had never met. He was working to keep the civilians of Afghanistan safe, to make the world a little safer, too. Brian worked with a small team that went around and collected old bombs and rockets. They then took these explosives to a safe location to detonate them, so they would not harm other people. As his father put it, rather than using these weapons of destruction, Brian was cleaning up munitions left by past and present wars.

On the homepage of a memorial website for Brian reads a verse from the Book of John: ''Greater love has no man than this that a man lay down his life for his friends.'' This short scripture is a living testimony of the man that Brian was. He was a man of great faith whose life was a light in dark circumstances.

The website features one of Brian's last letters home. In this three page letter, Brian describes his walk with Christ. He says that during his time in Afghanistan, he had grown spiritually. He was a member of a men's bible study and reiterated that it was an answer to his prayers. He also stated that he never thought he could grow in his relationship with God and the people he worked with and that he wanted to make a difference in these men's lives.

And he did.

On the message board of his memorial website are short messages from Brian's friends, family and coworkers. A comment from Major Chris Miller, Commander, Special Forces, reads: ''He let his silent comportment and deep faith speak for him instead of his words. This is such a rare quality in young people these days.'' In his letter, Brian graciously thanks his parents for their love and support. He let them know, the Lord was answering their prayers for him; he could feel it. He simply asked them to continue their prayers and sent his love.

Brian was a person of tremendous character and faith. He will not be forgotten. For his service, he was awarded the Purple Heart Medal and the Bronze Star Medal.

We should always support our troops, and we should always keep them in our thoughts and prayers. For the warriors across the globe who fight every day ensuring our well-being, there is no greater love.

God Bless our troops, and God Bless Army Staff Sergeant Brian T. Craig.

And that's just the way it is.

IN HONOR OF COUNCILMAN DAVID DUNCAN

HON. DONALD NORCROSS

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 9, 2015

Mr. NORCROSS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to offer my sincere condolences and honor the memory of Bellmawr, New Jersey, Councilman David Duncan for his exemplary life of service to the Bellmawr community. In addition to being a beloved husband, father, and grandfather, Mr. Duncan was a resident of Bellmawr for almost forty-five years and spent his time giving back to his city.

Mr. Duncan was an experienced insurance agent and a member of the Union Ironworker Local #399 for 35 years. For years, he led the effort to get out the labor vote on Election Day. As Councilman, David oversaw the Department of Public Safety, and Department of Health, and served as the Planning Board Liaison. In addition, Mr. Duncan was active in many Bellmawr organizations. He served on the executive board of the Bellmawr Democrat Club, as president of the Bellmawr Lions Club, and as a member of the Bellmawr Men's Club.

Mr. Duncan was also a veteran of the United States Navy, as well as a dedicated member of the Veterans of Foreign Wars, one of the largest organizations for combat veterans in the world and I thank him for his service to our great nation.

Mr. Speaker, David Duncan was an incredible man, dedicated to his family, community and country. He leaves behind a great legacy and I join the Bellmawr community and the entire state of New Jersey in honoring the achievements and the life of this great man.

HONORING VINCENT A. MIRO

HON. LOIS FRANKEL

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 9, 2015

Ms. FRANKEL of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to thank Mr. Vincent A. Miro for his service in the United States Navy and to congratulate him for being presented with eight medals.

Mr. Miro served in the Navy for over 2 years during World War II. He enlisted as soon as he was old enough and served up until the end of the war in Europe. Mr. Miro served in the D-Day invasion, storming the beaches of Normandy when he was just 18. We are honored to present him with the following medals: World War II Victory Medal, American Campaign Medal, Asiatic Pacific Campaign Medal, Navy Expeditionary Medal, European-African-Middle Eastern Campaign Medal (with bronze star appurtenance), Combat Action Ribbon, Discharge Button, Honorable Service Lapel Pin (Ruptured Duck).

In honor of his commitment and sacrifice for his country, I am honored to recognize Mr. Vincent A. Miro and offer him my sincerest congratulations.

HONORING GAYLES MEMORIAL MISSIONARY BAPTIST CHURCH

HON. BILL FOSTER

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 9, 2015

Mr. FOSTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor of the 65th Anniversary of Gayles Memorial Missionary Baptist Church in Aurora, Illinois.

Since 1950, the members of Gayles Memorial Missionary Baptist Church have committed

themselves to serving the west side of Aurora. From humble beginnings, the church has grown into a local institution with over 250 members, nine deacons, 10 associate ministers, and almost 30 ministries offering services including the children's choir, Sunday school classes, and youth bible study. Members are also dedicated to service outside of the church, volunteering at local charities, providing transitional counseling for incarcerated men and women, raising money for scholarship programs to help area youth, and answering many more calls for assistance from Aurorans.

I would like to thank the Reverend George Marshall and the congregation of Gayles Memorial Missionary Baptist Church for their continuing stewardship of our community.

OUR UNCONSCIONABLE NATIONAL DEBT

HON. MIKE COFFMAN

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 9, 2015

Mr. COFFMAN. Mr. Speaker, on January 20, 2009, the day President Obama took office, the national debt was $10,626,877,048,913.08.

Today, it is $18,151,143,313,299.53. We've added $7,524,266,264,386.45 to our debt in 6 years. This is over $7.5 trillion in debt our nation, our economy, and our children could have avoided with a balanced budget amendment.

200TH ANNIVERSARY OF ST. JOHN'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH

HON. ELIZABETH H. ESTY

OF CONNECTICUT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 9, 2015

Ms. ESTY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to celebrate the 200th anniversary of the St. John's Episcopal Church in Washington, Connecticut.

The history of St. John's Episcopal Church in Washington dates to before the Revolutionary War when missionaries celebrated Anglican rites with local residents. A handful of families bound by the mission of faithful service founded St. John's Episcopal Church and built their first wood frame church in Davies Hollow in 1794. In 1815, the wooden structure was moved by wagon to the parish's current home on the Green.

As the church's membership continued to grow, the congregation raised funds to build a new church. In 1915, renowned architect Ehrick Rossiter designed the stone structure that is still in use today. Over the decades, the church flourished. The ministries expanded to include a choir, Sunday school, and many community outreach activities. In 2012, Rev. Susan McCone was installed as the thirteenth Rector of St. John's Episcopal Church, the congregation's first female head.

Over the past 200 years, the Town of Washington grew around the church. Today, St. John's stands as an architectural landmark and spiritual beacon on Green Hill welcoming 200 families in fellowship. St. John's inclusive hospitality and dedication to promoting interfaith dialogue through educational programs and spiritual events builds the sense of community for parishioners and neighbors alike. The congregation supports the town through programs like the St. John's Emergency Fund, which helps Washington residents who experience urgent and unforeseen hardship with monetary assistance for food, medicine, and other necessities.

On August 29, 2015, St. John's Episcopal Church celebrated its 200th anniversary and the 100th anniversary of the historic stone church. Congratulations to Rev. McCone and all the parishioners of St. John's Episcopal Church. I wish you many more successful years ahead.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. LUCILLE ROYBAL-ALLARD

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 9, 2015

Ms. ROYBAL-ALLARD. Mr. Speaker, I was absent due to illness and was not present for roll call votes on Tuesday, September 8, 2015. Had I been present, I would have voted in this manner:

Roll Call Vote #490—S. 1359, E-Warranty Act of 2015—yes.

HONORING THE LIFE OF CAPTAIN JAMES ALAN ''TRUCK'' HICKS

HON. RICHARD HUDSON

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 9, 2015

Mr. HUDSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life of James Alan "Truck" Hicks, who was a Captain in the N.C. Air National Guard.

Captain Hicks died unexpectedly on Monday, July 27, 2015 after helping fight a house fire in Stanly County. He is the first member of the N.C. Air National Guard's fire service to die in the line of duty. On Sunday, Captain Hicks' unit was assigned to bring more water to the fire. However, more firefighters were needed on the interior of the home and Captain Hicks joined the attack.

Throughout his life, Captain Hicks was dedicated to his community and to helping others. In 1986, he began working with the Harrisburg Volunteer Fire Department. As time passed, he also worked with the Flowes Store Volunteer Fire Department as well as the Jackson Park Volunteer Fire Department, where he served as Chief for two years.

In addition, he worked for Concord Fire and Rescue for 10 years and was also with the Badin Volunteer Fire Department. Afterwards, he joined the North Carolina Air National Guard Fire Department for five years and served as Captain for two years.

Captain Hicks was a man of faith and served as a deacon at the Independence Square Baptist Church in Kannapolis. Despite his full schedule, he also served as a fire instructor at the Cleveland Community College in Shelby, N.C.

Mr. Speaker, I am grateful for Captain Hicks' service and dedication to our local communities and I join them now in grieving his passing.

TRIBUTE TO ALISON PARKER AND ADAM WARD

HON. J. RANDY FORBES

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 9, 2015

Mr. FORBES. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to Alison Parker and Adam Ward, the young Virginia TV news reporter and cameraman who were tragically killed during a live broadcast on August 26th, 2015. In the face of such horrific evil, words fall short. But the lives of Alison and Adam will be remembered with great love. The thoughts and prayers of the nation remain with the families and loved ones of Alison and Adam, as well as the whole WDBJ news team and community of Franklin County, Virginia.

HONORING AND WELCOMING CZECH AMBASSADOR PETR GANDALOVIC AND SLOVAK AMBASSADOR PETER KMEC TO MISSOURI'S FIFTH DISTRICT

HON. EMANUEL CLEAVER

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 9, 2015

Mr. CLEAVER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to welcome Czech Ambassador Petr Gandalovic and Slovak Ambassador Peter Kmec to Missouri's Fifth Congressional District, which I proudly represent. The Ambassadors were invited by Kansas City based honorary consuls, Sharon Valášek (Czech Republic) and Ross Marine (Slovak Republic) for a "Celebration of Czechs & Slovaks Collabration." The celebration includes meetings with local business leaders, a tour of The National World War I Museum and Memorial, a commemorative wreath-laying ceremony at the Truman Presidential Library and Museum and a special musical performance by world renowned Slovak violinist, Filip Pogády, sponsored by the National Czech & Slovak Museum and Library in Cedar Rapids, Iowa.

This is an especially notable visit because of the Midwest's strong relationship with their two home countries, the Czech Republic and the Slovak Republic. Thousands of immigrants from these central European countries have come to the heartland since the early history of our country. They farmed, worked hard labor jobs, became teachers and took great pride in being Americans. While the numbers are smaller than in the past, Czech and Slovak people continue to come to the Midwest and assimilate into our economy and our way of life.

The Czech Republic and Slovak Republic have been allies and friends of the United States, dating back to the formation of Czechoslovakia on Oct. 28, 1918, as witnessed by the close relationship of the two presidents, Woodrow Wilson of the United States and Tomáš Garrigue Masaryk of Czechoslovakia.

The United States encouraged political and economic transformation in Czechoslovakia after its liberation from communism in 1989, and established diplomatic relations with the Czech Republic in 1993 after the country split into two republics (Czech Republic and Slovak

Republic). The two sovereign nations are fellow members of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and are important and reliable allies in promoting U.S. interests. The two countries work together to strengthen security, promote economic development and democratic values, and defend basic human rights.

Both nations have growing economies and are immersed in the global marketplace. The Slovak Republic has been recognized as a large and upcoming competitor in technology and automotive industries and was ranked in one of the highest tiers for ''Doing Business'' by the World Trade Organization. Similarly, the Czech Republic is a leader in aerospace and aviation, automotive manufacturing and engineering. The Czech government continues to emphasize Czech-American collaboration in the most demanding fields which require high quality and innovative products.

Missouri's Fifth Congressional District is particularly proud to have been the host of the signing of Czech Republic's NATO admission documents in Independence, Missouri at the Truman Presidential Library. It is appropriate then that the Ambassadors have the opportunity to visit the Truman Library during their visit.

Many communities in the Midwest take pride in their Slavic heritages, and the Fifth District is pleased to be one of them. The rich cultural and historical ties between our District and the Czech and Slovak Republics are a demonstration of the melting pot culture we celebrate in the United States.

Mr. Speaker, please join me in expressing our heartfelt congratulations to the Czech Republic and Slovak Republic for their relentless efforts in extending good will, commerce and democratic principles, not only within their borders, but to the global community, including Missouri's Fifth Congressional District. I urge my colleagues to please join me in expressing our appreciation to these two nations and their Ambassadors, who continue to advance democratic principles.

SENATE COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Title IV of Senate Resolution 4, agreed to by the Senate of February 4, 1977, calls for establishment of a system for a computerized schedule of all meetings and hearings of Senate committees, subcommittees, joint committees, and committees of conference. This title requires all such committees to notify the Office of the Senate Daily Digest—designated by the Rules Committee—of the time, place and purpose of the meetings, when scheduled and any cancellations or changes in the meetings as they occur.

As an additional procedure along with the computerization of this information, the Office of the Senate Daily Digest will prepare this information for printing in the Extensions of Remarks section of the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD on Monday and Wednesday of each week.

Meetings scheduled for Thursday, September 10, 2015 may be found in the Daily Digest of today's RECORD.

MEETINGS SCHEDULED

SEPTEMBER 16

10 a.m.

Committee on Environment and Public Works

To hold an oversight hearing to examine the cause, response, and impacts of EPA's Gold King Mine spill.

SD–406

Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions

To hold hearings to examine achieving the promise of health information technology, focusing on improving care through patient access to their records.

SD–430

Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs

To hold hearings to examine regulatory reform proposals.

SD–342

10:15 a.m.

Committee on the Judiciary

To hold hearings to examine reforming the Electronic Communications Privacy Act.

SD–226

2:15 p.m.

Committee on Indian Affairs

To hold an oversight hearing to examine EPA's Gold King Mine disaster, focusing on the harmful impacts to Indian country.

SD–628

2:30 p.m.

Committee on Veterans' Affairs

To hold hearings to examine S. 290, to amend title 38, United States Code, to improve the accountability of employees of the Department of Veterans Affairs, S. 563, to amend title 38, United States Code, to establish the Physician Ambassadors Helping Veterans program to seek to employ physicians at the Department of Veterans Affairs on a without compensation basis in practice areas and specialties with staffing shortages and long appointment waiting times, S. 564, to amend title 38, United States Code, to include licensed hearing aid specialists as eligible for appointment in the Veterans Health Administration of the Department of Veterans Affairs, S. 1450, to amend title 38, United States Code, to allow the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to modify the hours of employment of physicians and physician assistants employed on a full-time basis by the Department of Veterans Affairs, S. 1451, to amend title 38, United States Code, to authorize the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to adjudicate and pay survivor's benefits without requiring the filing of a formal claim, S. 1460, to amend title 38, United States Code, to extend the Yellow Ribbon G.I. Education Enhancement Program to cover recipients of the Marine Gunnery Sergeant John David Fry scholarship, S. 1693, to amend title 38, United States Code, to expand eligibility for reimbursement for emergency medical treatment to certain veterans that were unable to receive care from the Department of Veterans Affairs in the 24-month period preceding the furnishing of such emergency treatment, S. 1856, 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, S. 1938, to amend title 38, United States Code, to improve the approval of certain programs of education for purposes of educational assistance provided by the Department of Veterans Affairs, and other pending calendar business.

SR–418

SEPTEMBER 17

10 a.m.

Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs

To hold hearings to examine the nomination of Adam J. Szubin, of the District of Columbia, to be Under Secretary for Terrorism and Financial Crimes, Department of the Treasury.

SD–538

Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions

Subcommittee on Primary Health and Retirement Security

To hold hearings to examine biosimilar implementation, focusing on a progress report from FDA.

SD–430

Committee on the Judiciary

Business meeting to consider S. 1814, to withhold certain Federal funding from sanctuary cities, S. 32, to provide the Department of Justice with additional tools to target extraterritorial drug trafficking activity, and the nominations of John Michael Vazquez, to be United States District Judge for the District of New Jersey, Wilhelmina Marie Wright, to be United States District Judge for the District of Minnesota, and Paula Xinis, to be United States District Judge for the District of Maryland.

SD–226

Daily Digest

Senate

Chamber Action

Routine Proceedings, pages S6477–S6542

Measures Introduced: Eleven bills and two resolutions were introduced, as follows: S. 2010–2020, and S. Res. 249–250. **Pages S6532–33**

Measures Reported:

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. Rept. No. 114–124)

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. Rept. No. 114–125)

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. Rept. No. 114–126)

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. Rept. No. 114–127)

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 amendments. (S. Rept. No. 114–128)

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. Rept. No. 114–129)

S. 720, to promote energy savings in residential buildings and industry, with amendments. (S. Rept. No. 114–130)

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, with an amendment. (S. Rept. No. 114–131)

S. 1103, to reinstate and extend the deadline for commencement of construction of a hydroelectric project involving Clark Canyon Dam. (S. Rept. No. 114–132)

S. 1104, to extend the deadline for commencement of construction of a hydroelectric project involving the Gibson Dam. (S. Rept. No. 114–133)

S. 1240, to designate the Cerro del Yuta and Rio San Antonio Wilderness Areas in the State of New Mexico, with amendments. (S. Rept. No. 114–134)

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 in the nature of a substitute. (S. Rept. No. 114–135)

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. (S. Rept. No. 114–136)

S. 2011, to provide for reforms of the administration of the Outer Continental Shelf of the United States. (S. Rept. No. 114–137)

S. 2012, to provide for the modernization of the energy policy of the United States. (S. Rept. No. 114–138) **Page S6532**

Measures Passed:

Special Needs Trust Fairness Act: Senate passed S. 349, to amend title XIX of the Social Security Act to empower individuals with disabilities to establish their own supplemental needs trusts. **Page S6539**

Border Jobs for Veterans Act: Senate passed S. 1603, to actively recruit members of the Armed Forces who are separating from military service to serve as Customs and Border Protection Officers, after withdrawing the committee amendment in the nature of a substitute, and agreeing to the following amendment proposed thereto: **Pages S6539–40**

Fischer (for Johnson) Amendment No. 2648, in the nature of a substitute. **Pages S6539–40**

Death of former Senator Richard Schultz Schweiker: Senate agreed to S. Res. 250, relative to the death of Richard Schultz Schweiker, former United States Senator for the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. **Page S6540**

Measures Considered:

Hire More Heroes Act—Agreement: Senate continued consideration of H.J. Res. 61, amending 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, taking action on the following amendments proposed thereto:

Pages S6478–90, S6490–S6525

Pending:

McConnell Amendment No. 2640, of a perfecting nature. **Page S6478**

McConnell Amendment No. 2641 (to Amendment No. 2640), to change the enactment date. **Page S6478**

McConnell Amendment No. 2642 (to Amendment No. 2641), of a perfecting nature. **Page S6478**

McConnell Amendment No. 2643 (to the language proposed to be stricken by Amendment No. 2640), to change the enactment date. **Page S6478**

McConnell Amendment No. 2644 (to Amendment No. 2643), of a perfecting nature. **Page S6478**

McConnell motion to commit the joint resolution to the Committee on Foreign Relations, with instructions, McConnell Amendment No. 2645, to change the enactment date. **Page S6478**

McConnell Amendment No. 2646 (to (the instructions) Amendment No. 2645), of a perfecting nature. **Page S6478**

McConnell Amendment No. 2647 (to Amendment No. 2646), of a perfecting nature. **Page S6478**

A motion was entered to close further debate on McConnell Amendment No. 2640, and, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, a vote on cloture will occur on Friday, September 11, 2015. **Page S6518**

A motion was entered to close further debate on the joint resolution, and, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, a vote on cloture will occur upon disposition of McConnell Amendment No. 2640. **Page S6518**

A unanimous-consent-time agreement was reached providing for further consideration of the joint resolution at approximately 9:30 a.m., on Thursday, September 10, 2015, with the time equally divided until 4:30 p.m.; that the debate be structured with alternating one hour blocks controlled by the two Leaders, or their designees, until 4 p.m., and that the Majority control the first hour starting at 10 a.m. **Page S6540**

Nominations Received: Senate received the following nominations:

Charles R. Breyer, of California, to be a Member of the United States Sentencing Commission for a term expiring October 31, 2021.

Richard Franklin Boulware, II, of Nevada, to be a Member of the United States Sentencing Commission for a term expiring October 31, 2019.

Routine lists in the Air Force, Army, and Navy. **Pages S6540–42**

Nominations Withdrawn: Senate received notification of withdrawal of the following nominations:

A routine list in the Foreign Service. **Page S6542**

Messages from the House: **Pages S6527–28**

Measures Referred: **Page S6528**

Executive Communications: **Pages S6528–32**

Additional Cosponsors: **Pages S6533–35**

Statements on Introduced Bills/Resolutions: **Pages S6535–38**

Additional Statements: **Pages S6526–27**

Amendments Submitted: **Page S6538**

Privileges of the Floor: **Pages S6538–39**

Adjournment: Senate convened at 10 a.m. and adjourned, as a further mark of respect to the memory of the late Senator Richard Schultz Schweiker, in accordance with S. Res. 250, at 8:37 p.m., until 9:30 a.m. on Thursday, September 10, 2015. (For Senate's program, see the remarks of the Acting Majority Leader in today's Record on page S6540.)

Committee Meetings

(Committees not listed did not meet)

INTELLIGENCE

Select Committee on Intelligence: Committee held closed hearings on intelligence matters, receiving testimony from officials of the intelligence community.

Committee recessed subject to the call.

House of Representatives

Chamber Action

Public Bills and Resolutions Introduced: 14 public bills, H.R. 3455–3468; 1 private bill, H.R. 3469; and 5 resolutions, H.J. Res. 66; H. Con. Res. 75–76; and H. Res. 411 and 413, were introduced. **Pages H5865–66**

Additional Cosponsors: **Pages H5866–67**

Reports Filed: Reports were filed today as follows:

H.R. 1554, to require a land conveyance involving the Elkhorn Ranch and the White River National Forest in the State of Colorado, and for other purposes (H. Rept. 114–257);

H.R. 2223, to authorize, direct, expedite, and facilitate a land exchange in El Paso and Teller Counties, Colorado, and for other purposes (H. Rept. 114–258); and

H. Res. 412, providing for consideration of the resolution (H. Res. 411) finding that the President has not complied with section 2 of the Iran Nuclear Agreement Review Act of 2015; providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 3461) to approve the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action, signed at Vienna on July 14, 2015, relating to the nuclear program of Iran; and providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 3460) to suspend until January 21, 2017, the authority of the President to waive, suspend, reduce, provide relief from, or otherwise limit the application of sanctions pursuant to an agreement related to the nuclear program of Iran (H. Rept. 114–259). **Page H5865**

Speaker: Read a letter from the Speaker wherein he appointed Representative Curbelo (FL) to act as Speaker pro tempore for today. **Page H5853**

Recess: The House recessed at 11:06 a.m. and reconvened at 12 noon. **Page H5860**

Guest Chaplain: The prayer was offered by the Guest Chaplain, Reverend Robert Michaels, Serve and Protect, Brentwood, Tennessee. **Page H5860**

Recess: The House recessed at 12:32 p.m. and reconvened at 10:27 p.m. **Page H5864**

Quorum Calls—Votes: There were no yea-and-nay votes, and there were no recorded votes. There were no quorum calls.

Adjournment: The House met at 10 a.m. and adjourned at 10:28 p.m.

Committee Meetings

THE FUTURE OF AIR FORCE LONG-RANGE STRIKE—CAPABILITIES AND EMPLOYMENT CONCEPTS

Committee on Armed Services: Subcommittee on Seapower held a hearing entitled ''The Future of Air Force Long-Range Strike—capabilities and employment concepts''. Testimony was heard from public witnesses.

RESTORING THE TRUST FOR YOUNG AMERICANS

Committee on the Budget: Full Committee held a hearing entitled ''Restoring the Trust for Young Americans''. Testimony was heard from Saira Blair, Delegate, West Virginia House of Delegates; and public witnesses.

OVERSIGHT OF THE NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

Committee on Energy and Commerce: Subcommittee on Energy and Power; and Subcommittee on Environment and the Economy, held a joint hearing entitled ''Oversight of the Nuclear Regulatory Commission''. Testimony was heard from Jeff Baran, Commissioner, Nuclear Regulatory Commission; Stephen Burns, Commissioner, Nuclear Regulatory Commission; William Ostendorff, Commissioner, Nuclear Regulatory Commission; and Kristine Svinicki, Commissioner, Nuclear Regulatory Commission.

PROTECTING AFFORDABLE COVERAGE FOR EMPLOYEES

Committee on Energy and Commerce: Subcommittee on Health held a hearing entitled ''Protecting Affordable Coverage for Employees''. Testimony was heard from Mike Kreidler, Washington State Insurance Commissioner; and public witnesses.

COULD AMERICA DO MORE? AN EXAMINATION OF U.S. EFFORTS TO STOP THE FINANCING OF TERROR

Committee on Financial Services: Task Force to Investigate Terrorism Financing held a hearing entitled ''Could America Do More? An Examination of U.S. Efforts to Stop the Financing of Terror''. Testimony was heard from public witnesses.

IMPLICATIONS OF A NUCLEAR AGREEMENT WITH IRAN, PART IV

Committee on Foreign Affairs: Full Committee held a hearing entitled ''Implications of a Nuclear Agreement with Iran, Part IV''. Testimony was heard from public witnesses.

AGRICULTURAL TRADE WITH CUBA

Committee on Foreign Affairs: Subcommittee on Terrorism, Nonproliferation, and Trade held a hearing entitled ''Agricultural Trade with Cuba''. Testimony was heard from John Smith, Acting Director, Office of Foreign Assets Control, Department of the Treasury; Phil Karsting, Administrator, Foreign Agricultural Service, Department of Agriculture; and Matt Borman, Deputy Assistant Secretary, Bureau of Industry and Security, Department of Commerce.

THE ROLE OF WATER IN AVOIDING CONFLICT AND BUILDING PROSPERITY

Committee on Foreign Affairs: Subcommittee on Europe, Eurasia, and Emerging Threats; and Subcommittee on Africa, Global Health, Global Human Rights, and International Organizations, held a joint hearing entitled ''The Role of Water in Avoiding Conflict and Building Prosperity''. Testimony was heard from public witnesses.

PLANNED PARENTHOOD EXPOSED: EXAMINING THE HORRIFIC ABORTION PRACTICES AT THE NATION'S LARGEST ABORTION PROVIDER

Committee on the Judiciary: Full Committee held a hearing entitled ''Planned Parenthood Exposed: Examining the Horrific Abortion Practices at the Nation's Largest Abortion Provider''. Testimony was heard from public witnesses.

MISCELLANEOUS MEASURES

Committee on Natural Resources: Full Committee began a markup on H.R. 538, the ''Native American Energy Act''; H.R. 1541, the ''PRISM Act''; H.R. 1644, the ''STREAM Act''; H.R. 1880, the ''Albuquerque Indian School Land Transfer Act''; H.R. 2130, the ''Red River Private Property Protection Act''; H.R. 2168, the ''West Coast Dungeness Crab Management Act''; and H.R. 2288, to remove the use restrictions on certain land transferred to Rockingham County, Virginia, and for other purposes.

VIOLENCE ON THE BORDER: KEEPING U.S. PERSONNEL SAFE

Committee on Oversight and Government Reform: Full Committee held a hearing entitled ''Violence on the Border: Keeping U.S. Personnel Safe''. Testimony was heard from William H. Moser, Deputy Director, Bureau of Overseas Building Operations, Department of State; Gregory B. Starr, Assistant Secretary, Bureau of Diplomatic Security, Department of State; Sue Saarnio, Deputy Assistant Secretary, Western Hemisphere Affairs, Department of State; Robert L. Harris, Director, Joint Task Force-West, U.S. Customs and Border Protection; and a public witness.

RESOLUTION FINDING THAT THE PRESIDENT HAS NOT COMPLIED WITH SECTION 2 OF THE IRAN NUCLEAR AGREEMENT REVIEW ACT OF 2015; A BILL TO SUSPEND UNTIL JANUARY 21, 2017, THE AUTHORITY OF THE PRESIDENT TO WAIVE, SUSPEND, REDUCE, PROVIDE RELIEF FROM, OR OTHERWISE LIMIT THE APPLICATION OF SANCTIONS PURSUANT TO AN AGREEMENT RELATED TO THE NUCLEAR PROGRAM OF IRAN; AND A BILL TO APPROVE THE JOINT COMPREHENSIVE PLAN OF ACTION, SIGNED AT VIENNA ON JULY 14, 2015, RELATING TO THE NUCLEAR PROGRAM OF IRAN

Committee on Rules: Full Committee held a hearing on H. Res. 411, finding that the President has not complied with section 2 of the Iran Nuclear Agreement Review Act of 2015; H.R. 3460, to suspend until January 21, 2017, the authority of the President to waive, suspend, reduce, provide relief from, or otherwise limit the application of sanctions pursuant to an agreement related to the nuclear program of Iran; and H.R. 3461, to approve the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action, signed at Vienna on July 14, 2015, relating to the nuclear program of Iran. The committee granted, by record vote of 9–4, a closed rule for H. Res. 411. The rule provides two hours of debate equally divided and controlled by the chair of the Committee on Foreign Affairs and the Minority Leader or their respective designees. The rule waives all points of order against consideration of the resolution. The rule provides that the resolution shall be considered as read and shall not be subject to a demand for division of the question. The rule also grants a closed rule for H.R. 3461. The rule provides three hours of debate equally divided and controlled by the chair of the Committee on Foreign Affairs and the Minority Leader or their respective designees. The rule waives all points of order against consideration of the bill. The rule provides that the bill shall be considered as read. The rule waives all points of order against provisions in the bill. The rule provides one motion to recommit. Lastly, the rule grants a closed rule for H.R. 3460. The rule provides two hours of debate, with 30 minutes controlled by the chair of the Committee on Foreign Affairs or his designee, 30 minutes controlled by the chair of the Committee on Ways and

Means or his designee, and one hour controlled by the Minority Leader or her designee. The rule waives all points of order against consideration of the bill. The rule provides that the bill shall be considered as read. The rule waives all points of order against provisions in the bill. The rule provides one motion to recommit. Testimony was heard from Representatives Pompeo and Roskam.

HOLDING EPA ACCOUNTABLE FOR POLLUTING WESTERN WATERS

Committee on Science, Space, and Technology: Full Committee held a hearing entitled ''Holding EPA Accountable for Polluting Western Waters''. Testimony was heard from Mathy Stanislaus, Assistant Administrator, Office of Solid Waste and Emergency Response, Environmental Protection Agency; Dean Brookie, Mayor, Durango, Colorado; and public witnesses.

Joint Meetings

No joint committee meetings were held.

COMMITTEE MEETINGS FOR THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 10, 2015

(Committee meetings are open unless otherwise indicated)

Senate

No meetings/hearings scheduled.

House

Committee on Armed Services, Subcommittee on Readiness, hearing entitled ''Optimized Fleet Response Plan'', 8 a.m., 2212 Rayburn.

Subcommittee on Strategic Forces, hearing entitled ''The Obama Administration's Deal with Iran: Implications for Missile Defense and Nonproliferation'', 2 p.m., 2118 Rayburn.

Committee on Education and The Workforce, Subcommittee on Higher Education and Workforce Training, hearing entitled ''Preventing and Responding to Sexual Assault on College Campuses'', 10 a.m., 2261 Rayburn.

Committee on Energy and Commerce, Subcommittee on Energy and Power, markup on H.R. 702, to adapt to changing crude oil market conditions, 10 a.m., 2123 Rayburn.

Committee on Financial Services, Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations; and Subcommittee on Capital Markets and Government Sponsored Enterprises, joint hearing entitled ''Preserving Retirement Security and Investment Choices for All Americans'', 10 a.m., 2128 Rayburn.

Committee on Foreign Affairs, Subcommittee on the Western Hemisphere; and Subcommittee on Asia and the Pacific, joint hearing entitled ''China's Advance in Latin America and the Caribbean'', 2 p.m., 2172 Rayburn.

Committee on Homeland Security, Subcommittee on Emergency Preparedness, Response, and Communications, markup on Committee Print of the ''Promoting Resilience and Efficiency in Preparing for Attacks and Responding to Emergencies Act'', 10 a.m., 311 Cannon.

Committee on the Judiciary, Subcommittee on Regulatory Reform, Commercial and Antitrust Law, hearing entitled ''The State of Competition in the Health Care Marketplace: The Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act's Impact on Competition'', 10 a.m., 2141 Rayburn.

Subcommittee on Courts, Intellectual Property, and the Internet, hearing entitled ''Unmanned Aerial Vehicles: Commercial Applications and Public Policy Implications'', 3 p.m., 2141 Rayburn.

Committee on Natural Resources, Full Committee, markup on H.R. 538, the ''Native American Energy Act''; H.R. 1541, the ''PRISM Act''; H.R. 1644, the ''STREAM Act''; H.R. 1880, the ''Albuquerque Indian School Land Transfer Act''; H.R. 2130, the ''Red River Private Property Protection Act''; H.R. 2168, the ''West Coast Dungeness Crab Management Act''; and H.R. 2288, to remove the use restrictions on certain land transferred to Rockingham County, Virginia, and for other purposes (continued), 10 a.m., 1324 Longworth.

Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, Full Committee, hearing entitled ''GSA: Army Fee Assistance'', 9 a.m., 2154 Rayburn.

Committee on Science, Space, and Technology, Subcommittee on Oversight; and Subcommittee on Energy, joint hearing entitled ''Examining Vulnerabilities of America's Power Supply'', 10 a.m., 2318 Rayburn.

Subcommittee on Research and Technology, markup on Committee Print of the ''Surface Transportation Research and Development Act of 2015''; and H.R. 2886, the ''Future Transportation Research and Innovation for Prosperity Act'', 2:30 p.m., 2318 Rayburn.

Committee on Veterans' Affairs, Subcommittee on Economic Opportunity, hearing entitled ''A Review of Licensing and Credentialing Standards for Servicemembers and Veterans: Do Barriers Still Remain?'', 2 p.m., 334 Cannon.

Committee on Ways And Means, Full Committee, markup on H.R. 692, the ''Default Prevention Act''; and H.R. 3442, the ''Debt Management and Fiscal Responsibility Act of 2015'', 10 a.m., 1100 Longworth.

Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence, Full Committee, hearing entitled ''World Wide Cyber Threats'', 10 a.m., HVC–210.

Next Meeting of the SENATE

9:30 a.m., Thursday, September 10

Senate Chamber

Program for Thursday: Senate will continue consideration of H.J. Res. 61, Hire More Heroes Act

Next Meeting of the HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

10 a.m., Thursday, September 10

House Chamber

Program for Thursday: Consideration of H. Res. 411—Finding that the President has not complied with section 2 of the Iran Nuclear Agreement Review Act of 2015 (Subject to a Rule); consideration of H.R. 3461—To approve the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action relating to the nuclear program of Iran (Subject to a Rule); and consideration of H.R. 3460—To suspend until January 21, 2017, the authority of the President to waive, suspend, reduce, provide relief from, or otherwise limit the application of sanctions pursuant to an agreement related to the nuclear program of Iran (Subject to a Rule).

Extensions of Remarks, as inserted in this issue

HOUSE
Blum, Rod, Iowa, E1241, E1242
Bonamici, Suzanne, Ore., E1239
Bost, Mike, Ill., E1241
Cárdenas, Tony, Calif., E1240
Cleaver, Emanuel, Mo., E1244
Coffman, Mike, Colo., E1244
Conaway, K. Michael, Tex., E1239
DeFazio, Peter A., Ore., E1242
Duncan, John J., Jr., Tenn., E1242
Eshoo, Anna G., Calif., E1239
Esty, Elizabeth H., Conn., E1244
Forbes, J. Randy, Va., E1241, E1244
Foster, Bill, Ill., E1243
Frankel, Lois, Fla., E1241, E1242, E1242, E1243
Hanna, Richard L., N.Y., E1241
Herrera Beutler, Jaime, Wash., E1241
Hudson, Richard, N.C., E1241, E1244
Huffman, Jared, Calif., E1242
Maloney, Carolyn B., N.Y., E1240
McCollum, Betty, Minn., E1242
Miller, Jeff, Fla., E1239
Moore, Gwen, Wisc., E1242
Norcross, Donald, N.J., E1242, E1243
Poe, Ted, Tex., E1243
Roybal-Allard, Lucille, Calif., E1244
Sessions, Pete, Tex., E1240
Shimkus, John, Ill., E1239, E1240

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