

evidence of wrongdoing by Planned Parenthood. Threatening to shut down the government over an organization that annually provides 400,000 cervical cancer screenings, 500,000 breast exams, and 4.5 million tests and treatments for sexually transmitted diseases is completely uncalled for.

Arguments that there are other providers that can fill the important and critical role of Planned Parenthood are not persuasive. According to the Guttmacher Institute, Planned Parenthood serves more contraceptive clients each year than any other similar provider, including federally qualified health centers. In more than 300 counties across the country, safety net providers such as Planned Parenthood are the providers of choice for nearly half of women. Furthermore, Planned Parenthood is the sole safety net provider in nearly 100 of these counties.

Planned Parenthood services cannot be easily replaced. In an attempt to defund Planned Parenthood, one State submitted a list of providers they said could replace Planned Parenthood's critical women's health care services. This list that the State provided included dentists, ophthalmologists, radiologists, and nursing homes. Think about that. Providers are not widgets.

After a Federal judge called their bluff, the State cut their list from over 2,000 providers to just 29 providers who actually are able to provide primary care services to women. Those 29 providers could not possibly absorb the thousands of patients Planned Parenthood served in that State. Planned Parenthood has long been in the crosshairs of the anti-choice movement.

This recent attack on Planned Parenthood is based on heavily edited videos by radical fringe groups. I refer my colleagues to a letter from Planned Parenthood's Cecile Richards to House and Senate leadership dated August 27, 2015.

Instead of improving the lives of women by passing legislation raising the minimum wage, closing the gender pay gap or ensuring paid leave for all workers, my colleagues across the aisle continue to narrowly focus on ways to further marginalize women. Instead of introducing continuing resolutions that contain these kinds of poison pills, such as defunding Planned Parenthood, we must pass clean legislation that keeps our government funded, that provides needed and critical services to the people of this country. I ask my colleagues to join with me.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

EXECUTIVE SESSION

NOMINATION OF KATHRYN K. MATTHEW TO BE DIRECTOR OF THE INSTITUTE OF MUSEUM AND LIBRARY SERVICES

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to executive session to consider the following nomination, Calendar No. 298, Kathryn Matthew; that the Senate vote without intervening action or debate on the nomination; that following the disposition of the nomination, the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no interviewing action or debate; that no further motions be in order to the nomination; that any statements related to the nomination be printed in the RECORD; that the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action and the Senate then resume legislative session.

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

The clerk will report the nomination.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read the nomination of Kathryn K. Matthew, of South Carolina, to be Director of the Institute of Museum and Library Services for a term of four years.

The Senate proceeded to consider the nomination.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the nomination of Kathryn K. Matthew, of South Carolina, to be Director of the Institute of Museum and Library Services for a term of four years?

The nomination was confirmed.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senate will now resume legislative session.

MORNING BUSINESS

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

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

REMEMBERING TROOPER JOSEPH CAMERON PONDER

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I rise to pay tribute to a Kentucky State Police trooper who was tragically lost in the line of duty. Trooper Joseph Cameron Ponder, of Rineyville, was shot and killed while pursuing a suspect on September 13. He was 31 years old.

Cameron Ponder was proud to be a Kentucky State trooper. "He was eager and he absolutely loved his job," is how a State police spokesman described him. He was also new to the job, having just graduated in January of this year

from the Kentucky State Police Training Academy. He was stationed at the State police post in Mayfield.

Before becoming a Kentucky State trooper, Cameron served in the U.S. Navy. He enlisted in September 2007, when he was 23 years old, and became a Navy diver. Over the next 6 years he was stationed in places as varied as Great Lakes, IL; Coronado, CA; Panama City, FL; and San Diego, CA.

During his Navy service he received several awards, medals and decorations, including the Combat Action Ribbon, the Good Conduct Medal, the Navy Expeditionary Medal, the National Defense Service Medal, the Global War on Terrorism Service Medal, the Expert Rifle Marksmanship Ribbon and the Expert Pistol Marksmanship Ribbon.

Cameron was discharged from the Navy in July 2013. He was a member of the Church of Christ in Elizabethtown, KY. He was also a dedicated hunter and fisherman who enjoyed the outdoors.

Sadly, Trooper Ponder is the second trooper from the Mayfield post to be killed in the line of duty this year. In June, Trooper Eric K. Chrisman was killed in a vehicle crash. He also had served with the Kentucky State Police for under a year.

Members of Trooper Ponder's family who are suffering from this loss include his father, Joseph Ponder; his mother, Brenda Tiffany, and her husband Allan; his fiancée, Chrystal Coleman; his sister, Kelly Ponder; his brothers, Damon Tiffany and Travis Tiffany; his grandmother, Erika Shook; his niece, Mahlea Starks; and many other family members and friends.

I am proud to share Trooper Ponder's story with my colleagues here in the United States Senate. We're thinking of his family today as well as his fellow officers of the Kentucky State Police. We are praying for the loved ones he has left behind who are feeling this devastating loss.

We are honored by Trooper Ponder's service and his extraordinary sacrifice on behalf of his fellow Kentuckians. I hold the deepest admiration and respect for Trooper Ponder and for every brave police officer across the Bluegrass State. Law enforcement is both an honorable profession and a dangerous one, and Kentucky is grateful they have made a sacred pledge to protect and defend our communities and our lives.

TRIBUTE TO GENERAL MARTIN E. DEMPSEY

Mr. REED. Mr. President, today I recognize and pay tribute to GEN Martin E. Dempsey, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, for his lifetime of service to our country. His retirement marks more than 41 years of selfless devotion to our military and our Nation. A leader of exceptional character and consequence, his humility, courage, and expertise will be sorely missed.